

SOA: ETERNITY™



DELPHI MISSIONS
RISING STORM





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General Directive #1

From the desk of Quinn Sebastian

Storm Knights, you've all been dispatched on important missions but sometimes targets of opportunity arise.

Marathon Division messengers may deliver these at strange times...we have ways. You'll understand as your Clearance Level increases. Don't ignore these, even though they may seem trivial or less important than your current mission. This a war that'll be won one small battle at a time, and before it's over we'll need resources we can scarcely imagine now. There's not likely another team anywhere near you to pick things up if you can't engage.

Most Marathon deliveries are designed to self-destruct, so you'll need to pay attention to the briefing. Be careful what you write down and where – we're not the only ones with spies. If it's a packet that doesn't destruct you may need something from it, so only destroy it after the mission is completed.

We're still in this thing, never give up hope.

Quinn Sebastian

General Directive #2

From the desk of Quinn Sebastian

No burning stuff while people are in it. Seriously, you're Storm Knights, not vandals. We're gonna want a planet to live on when this war is done.

I can't believe I had to write a directive for that.

Quinn Sebastian



LOST IN THE FOG

BY ED STARK

COSM: NILE EMPIRE

LOCATION: A MARKET AREA SOMEWHERE IN CAIRO, EGYPT AND A WAREHOUSE IN THE SAME AREA

The Storm Knights receive mission orders to locate and assist "Sabella," an operative working undercover in Cairo, Egypt, as a fur merchant. She believes that Wu Han has somehow identified members of her resistance cell and is using his secret police to abduct and torture them.

Sabella is half right. One of Wu Han's operatives, a Nile villain code-named "Iron Crocodile," has identified many of Sabella's compatriots, but a Nile hero operating under the nom-de-plume, "the Fog," has been rescuing them from their would-be abductors. Unfortunately, the Fog hasn't revealed herself to Sabella and this leads to some misunderstandings.

The players arrive in Cairo and try to locate Sabella. As they are doing this, Iron Crocodile's Nile Shocktroops are closing in. This leads to a running battle and escape to one of Sabella's safehouses—a dockside warehouse. The Storm Knights and the Fog realize they're on the same side just in time for Iron Crocodile to catch up to them, and a final battle ensues.

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. The Delphi Council has received a distress message from one of their operatives in Cairo, Egypt. Someone has been identifying and abducting local resistance members and the operative is afraid she's next. The Council wants the Storm Knights to travel to Cairo and make contact with "Sabella" in a particular street market near the Nile River and provide assistance.

Unfortunately, due to heightened security, the only clue they have to Sabella's identity is her code-name. "Sabella" is a derivation of "sable," which refers to the color black.

The action begins when the players reach Cairo and enter the Narsuq, or "river market," on the



Sabella moves in the elite circles of Cairo and secretly reports to the Delphi Council.

banks of the Nile. As late afternoon turns to early evening, a fog begins to roll in over the city...

THE NARSUQ

Before the invasion, Cairo was a city of contrasts—very modern and very cosmopolitan, but with ancient edifices seemingly everywhere. Now, under the rule of Dr. Mobius and his governor Wu-Han, the reality of the Nile Empire encroaches. Gin joints, underground clubs, and street markets spring up around every corner.

The Narsuq is one such street market. When the players arrive, it is late in the afternoon. The market is busy—small traders of all descriptions mix with men and women from all over the world. Many languages are spoken, most shouting loudly about the quality of their wares...but some in short, sharp whispers not meant to be overheard.

And a good thing, too. Among the denizens of the market, the Storm Knights can clearly see “police”

wearing badges identifying themselves as loyal to Wu Han. They might not be Nile Shocktroops themselves, but giving away their intentions to Wu Han’s police won’t do the Delphi Council or Sabella any good.

THE SEARCH FOR SABELLA

The Storm Knights need to identify Sabella and make contact without giving away their intentions to Wu Han’s spies or the “police.” Time is critical—Sabella stated in her distress message that all her compatriots’ disappearances happened in the early evening. Time is getting on and the predators are closing in.

Allow the players to look around the market a little bit and describe the stalls, vendors, and passers-by. Read aloud or paraphrase:

The sights, sounds, and smells of the Narsuq come from all directions. To the west, the Nile River flows south to north, but along the streets of the Narsuq, what flow exists is choppy and unpredictable. One

river hazard is a fire-breather, collecting coins in an earthenware bowl as he spouts gouts of flame to the amusement of those around him. Not far off, a fat man with a pipe plays a strange tune as a young woman, draped in colorful veils, spins and dances to the song. Everywhere, men and women hawk their wares in loud voices as patrons argue over the prices. But there is something menacing here as well. Furtive glances and hushed whispers give away the nervousness felt by all.

Suddenly, there is a sharp crash as a glass bottle hits the cobbled street. A man shouts in Arabic as two uniformed police grab him by the arms. A smaller man, dressed in robes, points at him accusingly. The man staggers back in fear, but the police begin to drag him off. One tosses a small coin to the small, robed man, who makes it disappear with a laugh.

The players see that informants are everywhere. They need to find Sabella quickly, and without attracting undue attention. It is time for Dramatic Skill Resolution.

• **Step A:** The players must locate a merchant they can associate with the codename "Sabella," or "Sable." According to their best information, this means looking for something black as a marker. Allow them to be creative in their searching, but they need to narrow their search by interacting with the locals. Fortunately, most of them speak a variety of languages. The Storm Knights test *streetwise* (DC 10) to speak subtly to patrons or passersby, asking about merchants known for black decorations on their stalls, or particularly black merchandise.

• **Step B:** The players learn there's a merchant meeting the above description located near the northwestern edge of the market. When they go there, they actually see a crowd of people around a food vendor's stall. It appears there is an argument over payment and someone is trying to summon the police. At least one of the Storm Knights must succeed at a Hard (DN 14) *stealth* test to make it through the crowds without getting embroiled in the situation. Otherwise there is much pushing and shoving and the investigators must keep their distance or their cover will be blown.

• **Step C:** Several of the vendors are packing up and trying to get out of the area before the

police arrive. One of them is a larger woman carrying a huge, black cauldron. Another is a woman dressed all in black and carrying what look like tarot cards. The third is a younger woman wearing white, tanned leathers and carrying a small cage containing a furry animal. With a Hard (DN 14) *scholar* test a Storm Knight realizes that the furry animal is a weasel-like animal known as a sable. This must be Sabella! The players can still guess at the identity of Sabella, but even if they pick the right woman it costs valuable time.

• **Step D:** Sabella is suspicious. Even if the players show her their orders with the Delphi Council seal, she insists she doesn't know anything about them and wants to get away. A *persuasion* test against her *willpower* (DN 14) convinces Sabella that they're friends and she offers to take them to her safehouse where they can talk more. Otherwise she plays for time and appears cagey.

The players have five rounds. A Complication may represent police entering the area, setting everyone on guard. A Possible Setback could come from drawing too much attention from the crowds. A Critical Problem usually means Sabella has become suspicious of at least one pursuer, and she's prepared to use flash grenades to make her escape!

Success: They make contact with Sabella and she leads them to her safehouse. See **New Friends**, below.

Failure: The players must track Sabella and only catch up to her during the ambush at her safehouse. See **The Hard Way**, below.

SABELLA

Sabella is a native of Cairo. She lost her parents in the invasion, one to the Storm and one to Wu Han's Shocktroopers. She lives as a merchant dealing in exotic furs and leather goods, but she also works with other independent operatives to funnel information to the Delphi Council and others resisting Dr. Mobius's invasion.

Sabella has transformed to the Nile Empire. She isn't a Storm Knight but is a quite competent Ord. She hates Wu Han and his Shocktroopers, but doesn't trust outsiders, even those who've acted

against her own enemies. She is, however, devoted to those she considers friends and has been devastated by the loss of her comrades.

Quote: "You want to fight something? Fight the urge to interfere in my business!"

Attributes: Charisma 10, Dexterity 10, Mind 9, Spirit 8, Strength 8

Skills: Dodge 12, evidence analysis 13, intimidation 12, maneuver 12, melee weapons 12, profession 11, stealth 14, streetwise 14, trick 12

Move: 10; **Tough:** 10; **Shock:** 8; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: Leather armor, knife, flash grenade (x2), wild sable in cage

Perks: —

Possibilities: None

Special Abilities: —

NEW FRIENDS

If the players successfully completed the Dramatic Skill Resolution and made contact with Sabella, she quickly leads them away from the confrontation at the market to her safehouse, Warehouse 77.

During a quick conversation with Sabella on their way to the safehouse, the players can learn the following information:

- Sabella is one of five informants working indirectly with the Delphi Council and other resistance movements.
- The other informants were abducted on four separate occasions right after they supposedly learned important information and were going to meet with her.
- Sabella believes Wu Han is behind the abductions, but something is strange about them—no big, splashy raids or firefights. They just disappeared.
- She has a safehouse on the docks nearby, an old cannery. She's taking the Storm Knights there.

At the GM's option, the players may learn more about Sabella and her background, but things should progress quickly to Warehouse 77.

THE HARD WAY

If the players failed at the Dramatic Skill Resolution, they're currently tracking Sabella or wondering how to find her when they hear a scream and gunfire. It's coming from the northwest, past the

market and toward the Nile River.

The players make their way to Warehouse 77 just as **The Ambush** occurs (see below).

WAREHOUSE 77

Built right up against the Nile, Warehouse 77 has an office entrance and a riverside dock. Sabella enters through the office entrance, regardless of whether the Storm Knights are with her or not.

Warehouse 77 was once part of a cannery operation but has been defunct for years. With its sheltered riverside entrance and position just outside the Narsuq, it made an ideal safehouse for Sabella and her friends. Now, however, it has been discovered and serves as a scene for battle.

1. Office: A small, dilapidated office with a few banged-up chairs and an old desk. There is a phone on the desk but its cord appears to be broken. In reality, there is a second cord rolled up inside the phone's base that can be plugged into a nearby wall socket and used.

2. Stairs: These heavy, wooden stairs are flanked by the office wall on one side and a series of narrow, iron bars to the other. The bars are spaced six inches apart.

3. Warehouse Floor: The main floor is littered with trash and old crates. The larger crates are four feet tall and the smaller ones are two feet tall.

4. The River: The Nile River flows under the warehouse and this open area is a dock once used for shipping.

5. The Iron Crocodile: The small, weird science sub is the property of Wu Han's enforcer, Iron Crocodile (yes, he's just that egotistical; he named his sub after himself). There are two small hatches, allowing up to two ninja frogmen to enter or exit at a time. The elevated central area houses a harpoon gun on a turret. *Note: The Iron Crocodile surfaces during the ambush (see below).*

THE AMBUSH

Depending on how the players arrive at Warehouse 77, the scene begins a little differently.

If the Storm Knights are with Sabella, she leads them through the office area and gathers up some



notes from a hidden panel beneath the desk. Sabella then heads down into the main warehouse area, telling her new allies that they need to figure out what happened to her friends and how to rescue them. As if on cue, a deep fog rolls in from the dock area and a figure appears.

It is the Fog.

Note: If the Storm Knights are not with Sabella when she arrives at the warehouse, they enter to find the Fog trying to “abduct” the woman as she flees down the stairs into the warehouse.

THE FOG (REAL NAME: ADRIANNA BRUME)

Adrianna Brume was a librarian in a former life. She spent most of her adult life cataloging old texts and brushing dust off museum shelves. But when Dr. Mobius invaded, she found herself embroiled in a desperate effort to protect the ancient tomes she loved from his clutches. Adrianna’s moment of crisis came when she was trying to load yet another crate of sacred

books onto a small sloop and one of Wu Han’s operatives—the Iron Crocodile—appeared and attacked her friends.

Brume never thought of herself as brave, but watching the cackling Iron Crocodile steeled her resolve. She grabbed an armload of texts and her nearest ally, diving into the rising fog. She willed herself to become invisible and, amazingly enough, she did.

Ever since, Brume has fought the Nile Empire as the Fog. She rescues people and artifacts from Dr. Mobius’s clutches, using her ability to disappear into the mists of the Nile as a weapon against the agents of the Empire. Most recently, she caught wind of the Iron Crocodile’s pursuit of Sabella and her band of operatives and has been snatching them up one at a time and spiriting them out of Cairo.

Of course, she failed to tell Sabella or anyone else that she was doing so.

Quote: “That belongs in a—well, I’m not sure where it belongs, but it doesn’t belong to you!”

Attributes: Charisma 8, Dexterity 12, Mind 11, Spirit 11, Strength 8

Skills: Dodge 16, intimidation 13, maneuver 14, reality 13, scholar 14, stealth 20, survival 12, taunt 10, unarmed combat 13, willpower 14

Move: 12; **Tough:** 9 (1); **Shock:** 11; **Wounds:** 3

Equipment: Vision Goggles (gadget). She can see normally at night or in fog. Heavy cloak and cape (functions as light armor)

Perks: Super Skill *stealth* (*Power Enhancement*). Vision Goggles allow her to see through fog or at night (no bonus, just no penalty)

Limitation: Only works within 100 meters of a large body of water (size of a small swimming pool or greater)

Possibilities: 3

Special Abilities:

- **Fog Bank:** Adrianna can instantly create a fog bank and make a *Stealth* check even if she's being directly observed. To anyone she succeeds against, she is completely invisible.

- **Carry Off:** The Fog can extend her invisibility to anyone within five meters, though each person increases her enemies' check by +2.

- **Intimidation:** When she chooses to emerge from the Fog, she's naturally frightening. Her *intimidation* becomes Favored when the Fog appears.

- **Disorientation:** Adrianna becomes Favored on any *maneuver* or Trick checks used against enemies while she has a fogbank up.

Adrianna wants to rescue Sabella, even if she has to use the Storm Knights as a distraction—but she won't out-and-out abandon them. After she gets Sabella to safety, she'll return and use her Intimidation and Disorientation tricks to distract the Storm Knights' enemies. She isn't much of a factor in physical combat, but she can rescue injured Storm Knights and frustrate the Iron Crocodile and his minions.

THE FOG ROLLS IN

When the Fog steps out of her mist, she's quite imposing. In a voice shrouded by her heavy mask, she declares. "Sabella. I am here for you!" and lunges at the woman.

Sabella will try to escape down into the warehouse. If the Fog grabs her, she'll try to take them out the same way. Either way, the players can try to "rescue" Sabella, fight the Fog, or do whatever they think is most effective.

Ideally, the players spend a few rounds chasing the Fog and/or Sabella around the warehouse—a classic, heroic misunderstanding. It should end before anyone gets seriously hurt, and the Fog can even reveal her true intentions (to save Sabella) if necessary. However, once that battle has played out, the real fight begins.

With a tremendous rush of water and air, the *Iron Crocodile* surfaces.

CROCODILE ATTACK

Once the sub appears in the warehouse, it should become apparent the Storm Knights and Sabella need to join forces with the Fog—the true enemy has arrived. The hatches open immediately, and ninja frogmen, members of Wu Han's elite strike forces, arrive and attack.

NINJA FROGMEN (2 PER HERO)

Ninja frogmen are an elite group of Nile Shocktroopers employed by the Crocodile as his main enforcers. They are particularly adept in amphibious assaults.

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 8, Mind 6, Spirit 8, Strength 9

Skills: Dodge 9, find, 8, fire combat 9, heavy weapons 9, intimidation 10, water vehicles 10, maneuver 9, melee weapons 9, streetwise 9, survival 9, taunt 7, trick 8

Move: 7; **Tough:** 9; **Shock:** 8; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: Marine knife (*Strength* +2/11), Harpoon gun (Damage 13, Range 10/15/30)—on a Wound result, the target is pinned and cannot move until succeeding at a *Strength* DN 10 test), snorkel (breathe underwater)

Perks: —

Possibilities: None

Special Abilities:

- **Swim Fins:** Ninja Frogmen move at speed 8 in the water.

Two frogmen emerge from each hatch on the *Iron Crocodile* per round before the villains take actions.

The first out of the upper hatch mans the topside harpoon gun. It works like their personal harpoon guns but uses *heavy weapons* to fire, does Damage 15, and has double the range.

The frogmen are fanatics—or, at least, more scared of the Iron Crocodile than anything their enemies might do to them. They fight until rendered unconscious or killed or until told to retreat by their boss.

Once all the ninja frogmen are deployed, the Iron Crocodile emerges.

THE IRON CROCODILE

Recruited by Wu Han from a band of dockside enforcers, the Iron Crocodile specializes in mob tactics: Shakedowns, extortion, and bullying informants. He isn't above a bit of rough-and-tumble, however, and has a particularly vicious streak. This is only made worse by the suit of iron armor he "inherited" from a disgraced Nile villain who once served as Dr. Mobius's governor.

The Iron Crocodile's exo-suit gives him increased strength and toughness, though he does move rather slowly in it. The thug inside had the foresight to ask his master to install a breathing apparatus, however, so like his namesake the Iron Crocodile can breathe underwater.

Wu Han entrusted the Iron Crocodile with "policing" the dockyards and that's how he ran afoul of the Fog and became aware of Sabella's group's activities. He knows that if he brings in the Nile hero and the Delphi Council operative, Wu Han may arrange to have his suit's power increased still further. Otherwise, the Iron Crocodile may find himself inside a real crocodile.

Attributes: Charisma 8, Dexterity 8, Mind 10, Spirit 10, Strength 15

Skills: Find 12, fire combat 12, heavy weapons 12, intimidation 14, melee weapons 12, reality 14, streetwise 10, survival 10, taunt 12, unarmed combat 10, water vehicles 10, willpower 11

Move: 6; **Tough:** 19 (4); **Shock:** 10; **Wounds:** 3



Drawing too much attention brings trouble from Shock Troopers or a stint in jail.

Equipment: Iron Crocodile Suit (see Special Abilities, below)

Perks: Super Strength (Power), Armor

Possibilities: 3

Special Abilities:

- **Iron Crocodile Armor:** +4 Toughness.
- **Breather:** Can breathe underwater for 1 hour.
- **Iron Bite:** Bite inflicts Str+4 (19) damage.
- **Grapple Gun:** Harpoon gun (Damage 13, Range 10/20/30) with attached grapple. If he hits an opponent, he can immediately make an opposed *Strength* check to drag them up to 10 meters directly toward him. *Strength* test vs. DN 14 to break free on Hero's turn. May only grapple one target at a time.
- **Crocodile Tears:** Once per combat, the Iron Crocodile can launch acid in a Medium Blast as a *fire combat* attack, Damage 15. Anyone who suffers damage is automatically Stymied for one round.

The Iron Crocodile is no coward, but he's not a fanatic. If the tide of battle turns against him, he retreats, either by leaping into the water and sinking to the bottom of the murky Nile (he can breathe underwater, so he'll just take his time walking out) or by signaling his remaining ninja frogmen to gather into the submarine and flee that way. If he does that, the Storm Knights had better retreat—the sub has torpedoes and he fires them into the warehouse three rounds after departing.

THE AFTERMATH

Once the Iron Crocodile and his ninja frogmen are defeated, the Storm Knights rendezvous with the Fog and Sabella. The Fog reveals her name and true nature and thanks the Knights for their help. She also makes it clear, if she hasn't before, that she rescued Sabella's compatriots and spirited them away to Giza. She offers to get Sabella there, too,

so the informant can continue her work. Sabella hates to leave Cairo, but understands her cover is blown. She also thanks the Storm Knights and the pair disappear into the night. The Storm Knights can report that the operatives are safe, though that particular group of informants won't be working in Cairo again in the near future.

FURTHER ADVENTURES

If the GM likes the characters or situations presented here, they can reappear in other adventures in some interesting ways:

Sabella: She isn't giving up her mission to bring down Wu Han or Dr. Mobius. Sabella continues to move in and out of Cairo in secret, making contact with other Delphi Council operatives and resistance fighters. It's likely she gets herself involved with Rex McMasters and the Living Truth Agency. She might initially believe Rex is the one who sold her and her team out, but she doesn't know he's really the Silver Scarab.

The Fog: Adrianna continues her rescue missions and, now that she's on the radar of the Delphi Council, they might ask the Storm Knights to recruit her for more recovery missions. As long as the targets include innocents or artifacts coveted by Dr. Mobius, the Fog lends an ethereal hand.

The Iron Crocodile and His Ninja Frogmen: Assuming the Crocodile survives the battle of Warehouse 77 (and his inevitable dressing-down by Wu Han), he won't soon forget the Storm Knights. And, being a Stormer himself, he and his submarine can follow them just about anywhere, resurfacing (get it?) at just the right moment.



ON THE TRAIL OF THE FOX

BY MIRANDA HORNER

COSM: PAN-PACIFICA

**LOCATION: A KARAOKE BOOTH
WITHIN THE LOVEMELODY
KARAOKE BAR IN TOKYO**

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. A Delphi Council hacker took over a karaoke booth within LoveMelody and invited the group to show up for its briefing. Each of the group members must choose a song to sing and perform it before unlocking the message fully. (Invite players to get into their roles and sing songs if you like, but don't force anyone to do so.) Once they have, they receive their mission briefing via text on the screen while a canned karaoke performance plays. The text is as follows:

The Delphi Council has become aware that a potential operative candidate, who has become known on local social media as Kitsune due to wearing a fox-like hood and mask that hides identity, has just killed one of our operatives during a Kanawa "protective" effort against the Contagion. The death of the operative makes investigating this person a top priority in case Kitsune intends to move against our efforts in the area.

You are assigned to track down Kitsune, make contact, and determine what motives this person has. You have full discretion regarding whether to bring Kitsune into the larger operation—or deal with Kitsune however you need to based on what you learn. We believe this person is still within the area: The incident occurred during the Ōmagari Fireworks festival in Daisen in the Akita Prefecture.

Consider this Alpha Clearance and urgent. It is possible Kanawa agents are also seeking Kitsune out, so be on the watch for them. Good luck!

The song ends, and another message briefly comes on screen:

You have this booth for the rest of this hour—enjoy!

You can use an existing operative that the Storm Knights have worked with in the past to create a difficult decision point for the players: How do they feel about the loss of this operative? Who was he and how did he help them in the past? Will they be angry at Kitsune from the start?



Shadowy agents of Kanawa Corporation are also on Kitsune's trail.

KITSUNE

Kitsune is a recent (and now self-terminated) Kanawa employee who was able to jailbreak a lot of the tech and gear she was working on—she's essentially off the grid now and plans to stay that way using some of this gear, which helps her stay just one step ahead of Kanawa. During her short stint working for Kanawa, she learned of a secret lab on an uncharted island in the Pacific doing "next level" experiments with the Contagion and psis. The day before she ghosted on them, they killed a few of her relatives, which sealed her decision to go rogue and start working against them as much as possible. Vengeance drives her more than anything right now, but she is also compassionate and wants to help those who could be killed due to the draconian methods used by Kanawa.

While she feels a deep obligation to help those who are suffering due to how Kanawa is handling the Contagion, she is also ruthless, so when the

Delphi Council operative (also a former employee of Kanawa) got in her way, she simply dealt with him so that she could quickly move on with her other goals.

Since she is from Earth and is a Stormer, she could be a good resource to the Delphi Council in further missions if the Storm Knights can persuade her to join. She picked up her name from social media, which has been following her exploits for several weeks now.

She knows the secret lab's location and uses it as a bargaining chip as needed.

Quote: "Kanawa must be stopped."

Attributes: Charisma 7, Dexterity 10, Mind 9, Spirit 9, Strength 6

Skills: Dodge 11, find 11, first aid 10, intimidation 12, maneuver 12, missile weapons 11, persuasion 9, reality 10, science 12, stealth 11, streetwise 9, taunt 9, unarmed combat 11

Move: 10; **Tough:** 6+; **Shock:** 9; **Wounds:** 3
(Currently suffering 1 Wound)



Kanawa has heavy security surrounding the Daisen.

Equipment: Chameleon clothing (Stealth +4 when stationary), plexiflex sheathing (Armor +3), electric longbow (Damage 13, AP 2, Range 20/40/80), electric katana (Damage Strength +4/10, AP 2), smoke pellets (4), wall crawlers

Perks: Block Strike, Unflinching

Possibilities: 3

DAISEN

What once was a festival that brought in tourists from all over the world has tragically transitioned into the scene of death and terror. Kanawa's efforts at preventing the spread of the Contagion here not only overwhelmed the local emergency services people, but also killed many of those in the area. And amid it all, a figure who has been given the name Kitsune continues to work—or so several of the locals note.

The heroes have several options for how they find out where Kitsune is. They could try to gain

information from the Kanawa agents onsite, they might ask locals about how things unfolded, and they could follow the Kanawa teams that are seeking out Kitsune.

THE FESTIVAL SITE

An area where folk were watching the fireworks show near the Omono River, which was the focus of Kanawa's operation, has been cordoned off. If the heroes show up here hoping to find out more about Kitsune, they can speak to some of those on duty and find out that only a Kanawa spokesperson is allowed to discuss matters pertaining to the incident. Yutaka Morimoto, the spokesperson, looks harried and tired, and he attempts to brush off the Storm Knights upon first approach. A successful *persuasion* test causes him to pause long enough to answer three questions before he's called off to handle another element of the containment situation.

What Morimoto Knows

- The Contagion started shortly before the first fireworks show. Kanawa immediately responded. Before they could set up their perimeter, though, a figure dressed in a fox mask and hood killed a man in the middle of the crowd, creating a panic. Though the area is contained now, the Kanawa agents had to work hard to track down everyone who might have been exposed to the Contagion after everyone scattered. They expect to be finished within the next 24 hours. (Morimoto reluctantly states, if pressed, that they're also still seeking out some potential Contagion victims who remain undiscovered.)
- The killer is still in the area, trying to prevent Kanawa agents from finding everyone, but Morimoto expects to have this "Kitsune" person captured as part of their efforts soon. He tries to impress on the heroes that they should leave all this in the hands of Kanawa.
- The person who was killed once worked for Kanawa and moved here to retire. More than that, Morimoto refuses to say.
- They did have to "cleanse" several people due to the Contagion today; there should be no further threat. (Feel free to make this be true or simply something Morimoto says to get the Storm Knights to leave.)

WATCHING KANAWA

If the heroes decide to watch the Kanawa operatives to see if they can determine Kitsune's location from their search patterns (or ask locals about them), they can find out the following:

- They seem to be focused on an area near Jusen Temple.
- They have not yet gone inside the temple.

TRACKING KITSUNE

The Storm Knights could use the stories of random local folk to pick up the trail of Kitsune, too. Street vendors just down from where the containment happened are more than willing to provide curious folk with stories about the sighting of Kitsune. In fact, small groups are already gathered around, though in a somewhat

hushed manner given the nearby presence of Kanawa and the recent Contagion.

- The fox-masked person was amazingly fast and was carrying a woman away at one point.
- A couple of vendors noted that Kitsune was limping. One claims that she thinks the fox-masked person was bleeding from a wound to the left leg. (The blood trail can allow the heroes to track her.)
- As with all bystander stories, some might be false (Kitsune has a tail! She is a spirit who flickered in and out of existence!) and others might be exaggerated (Kitsune's eyes glowed! He jumped over a building!).

JUSEN TEMPLE

Whether the heroes came to the temple by following a trail or through the guidance of strangers, they see a modern Buddhist temple that looks as if it has been shut down for a while. The fence around the place is wooden, and the gate is padlocked. Despite that, the greenery in the area seems well-tended.

If they decided to watch the place for a bit, they have a chance to notice that someone is inside—a door opens and shuts. Should they investigate further, they can find out the following:

- Someone still lives here even though it's not an active Buddhist temple.
- It looks as if the trail leads here, though Kitsune went over the wall and not through the main gate.
- Investigating on the inside of the wall shows them that Kitsune went inside the building.

"UNLESS THE JIANGSHI HAVE TAKEN UP GARDENING I'D SAY THIS ABANDONED TEMPLE ISN'T SO ABANDONED."

■ **ZHANG ZHI**



The agents hunting Kitsune may strike at any time.

A frail old man lives in this temple now, and if he spots the heroes, he simply invites them in. He is from Earth, and he introduces himself as Hideaki Okada. Chatting with him gains the group the following information:

- Generally, he avoids Kanawa forces for reasons of his own, so he's not happy that they're wandering around the area.
- If the heroes persuade him that they want to talk to Kitsune for good reasons, he admits that she's there and leads them to her. He admires the work she has done—she directly saved several people from being killed during this most recent Kanawa operation.
- He is aware that something isn't quite right about the Contagion and feels that Kanawa is using the plague to gather and consolidate power.

TALKING TO KITSUNE

If the heroes stopped to talk to Okada, Kitsune listens in, courtesy of a bug she placed on the man. Should the heroes want to talk and are open-minded, she reluctantly lets them into the room Okada has her recovering in. If they have a bone to pick with her, she attempts to flee the building. Give the heroes a chance to catch her at this point; if she gets away, she might help fighting a Kanawa patrol that is seeking her (see **Kanawa Patrol**, below).

The Storm Knights have a limited time to talk to Kitsune before a Kanawa patrol decides to breach the temple. Attempts at *persuasion* (DN 9) go over better than any form of *intimidation* (DN 12) with her. Here's what she shares:

- She does not believe that Kanawa has the best interests of Earth in mind.
- She does not initially admit to killing the operative that brought the Storm Knights to her. If pressed, she states that he identified

himself as a Kanawa employee and attempted to stop her from saving someone. (If the heroes mention that this operative was trying to help, she expresses regret, but notes that his actions seemed more threatening to her at the time, plus they were not helping her help others. She might come to mourn with the group after this information sinks in, though, since it tweaks at her compassion and empathy.)

- She knows about the secret Kanawa lab's location and shares what she knows on a Good or better result. She also reveals more about herself if that seems useful. Her main goal is to recover just enough to leave Daisen, and she knows her time is limited. If the heroes offer to help her escape, she takes them up on that.
- She won't reveal her true name except under the most extreme duress; her former name is dead to her now, and "Kitsune" works well enough for her purposes.

KANAWA PATROL

If at any point the heroes give away their location or linger too long in an area while trying to find Kitsune, have them meet a Kanawa patrol. The patrol consists of one Kanawa Security Trooper per hero (see *Torg Eternity*) plus a one *reality*-rated trooper (a sergeant) with two Possibilities who carries an electric katana. There's an equal-sized patrol elsewhere in the area, but that group has no Stormer. An Oda Hornet (*Torg Eternity*) is on call and arrives on the scene if the heroes suffer a Setback in combat.

THE AFTERMATH

If the heroes decide to recommend Kitsune for recruitment, she goes with them when they report back. Should they simply let her go, she continues her work against the Kanawa forces and saves many people. If they decide to stop her in some way, she tries to escape; if she dies in the attempt, then someone else might take up the mantle of Kitsune. She has already inspired a few others, though they might not have the advantages she has had in her own short career as both a vigilante and protector.





KALI STATION'S GONE DARK

BY JOHN TERRA

COSM: ORRORSH

**LOCATION: ORRORSH MIXED
ZONE, EXTREME NW COAST OF
INDIA**

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. The Storm Knights are on a mission in *The Ruptured Duck*, a 1930s vintage seaplane (it uses the same stats as the PBY Seaplane found in the *Torg Eternity* core rulebook) bound for a rendezvous within the Nile Empire. The plane is flying across the Indian Ocean, laden with a cargo of supplies for the forces fighting Dr. Mobius, a mission authorized by the Delphi Council.

The plane's cargo consists of a dozen 55-gallon drums of gasoline, a crate of dynamite (48 sticks), a box of 12 blasting caps, 100 yards of detonation cord, six plunger detonators in a box, a crate with 20 first aid kits, and two crates of ammunition (.50 and .45 caliber).

At about 7 p.m., local time, as *The Ruptured Duck* is flying over the Indian Ocean, a radio message comes crackling to life. The voice gives the correct recognition codes, then gets down to the real business:

"This is DC Asiatic Division dispatch. The Duck is ordered to immediately divert to new provided co-ordinates. DC listening post Kali Station has gone dark as of eight hours ago. Investigation top A-1 priority. Duck's crew ordered to Kali Station to assess the situation, rescue any personnel, and retrieve all collected data. There is a staff of six currently assigned to the post. Report findings immediately to DCAD, then await further orders. Please acknowledge. End transmission."

The coordinates are 21 degrees 24' North by 69 degrees 49' East. A Challenging Mind test (DN 12) reveals that the coordinates belong to an area on the coast of northwestern India, near the Pakistan border, smack dab in an Orrorsh Mixed Zone. It takes the Storm Knights roughly 90 minutes, flying at top speed, to get there.



Something deadly is brewing near the Gujarat coast.

KALI STATION, INITIAL APPROACH

Everything looks so peaceful and normal from the air. The listening post is an unassuming one-story gray building located on a cliff overlooking the sea, with a few antennae jutting from the roof. A small path leads from the installation down the cliff to a wooden dock 200 yards away. The entire area is deathly still; not a single soul to be seen (or come to think of it, any other kind of life, including birds, fish, or small animals).

There's a stone tower located about two miles up the coast, north of the installation. Light pours from a multitude of windows. The listening station, on the other hand, has no lights on.

If anyone thinks to ask, there's a warship of some sort, a bulky ironclad belching coal smoke, slowly steaming up the coast in the direction of the installation. Any Victorian Storm Knight

recognizes the naval ensign of Her Majesty's Royal Victorian Navy, and correctly identifies it as an ironclad dreadnought.

KALI STATION, INTERIOR

The station is a six-room, single-story building. The front door is wide open. The interior is a total mess, as if a small riot happened—and in a manner of speaking it did. Five dead bodies lie haphazardly sprawled in the main room, blood all over the walls and floors. A Hard *evidence analysis* test (DN 14) reveals that they killed each other. A Challenging *medicine* test (DN 12) shows that the four men and one woman were clearly acting in the throes of madness.

The north wall has a window with a view of the tower in the distance. The words "Tower freed us!" are written in blood under the window itself.

All of the facility's equipment is smashed.

As for the sixth staffer, if a Storm Knight makes a Hard *tracking* test (DN 14), they pick up a trail of footprints that leads back to the dock. They find the sixth person hiding under the dock, in a fetal position, in a catatonic state. This is Augie Lindblom, Delphi Council agent and sole survivor of Kali Station. He still clutches a flash drive that contains all of the listening post's findings over the past two weeks.

TOWER OF SCIENCE!

The north tower belongs to a Victorian scientist, Professor Nicholas Alset, an inventor who is dedicated to creating gadgets to aid the Core Earthers in their struggle against the invaders.

On a recent trip to the Nile Empire (to learn more about their weird science ideas), he found a small bust of Thoth and brought it back as a souvenir, not realizing that he had just acquired a Nile talisman. As a result, the entire tower is now an Orrorsh/Nile Mixed zone, causing the good Professor to veer more into a steampunk mad scientist mindset. And that's not the worst of it...

Unfortunately, during the Professor's Nile absence, a hideous dark entity quietly took up residence in the tower's attic. When Nicholas returned, the thing slowly invaded his psyche, twisting his mind. This slow insanity has corrupted the Professor's invention ideas. His latest project is called the Acquisition Overdrive Engine, a lightning-powered projector that's supposed to extract treasure from the ocean. Thanks to the entity and the Nile's mad-scientist influence, the Engine actually pulls more horrors into Core Earth!

"THE GENIUS OF WEIRD SCIENCE TWISTED BY THE DARKNESS OF THIS CURSED LAND. THAT'S JUST WHAT WE NEEDED."

ANISHAA

To make matters worse, during two brief Engine tests, it sent out radiating waves of sanity-warping energy, driving nearby locals (and the staff of a certain listening post) insane.

A winding dirt path runs from Kali Station to the tower, about two miles up the coast. Whatever the building was in pre-invasion times, it now is unquestionably a 40-foot-tall granite tower with architecture straight out of 19th century Britain. Oil lamp lights flicker from the windows of the four-story tower, with an occasional spark from one electrical apparatus or another. The peaked roof has a large, ominous-looking lightning rod.

Any Storm Knight who manages to beat a Very Hard *Mind* test (DN 16) notices an odd barrel, as if from a very large beam weapon, poking out of a third-story window facing west toward the sea.

There's only one door offering entry, and it's locked, requiring a Very Hard *lockpicking* or *Strength* test (DN 16) to open, depending on how quiet the Storm Knights want to be.

The first floor is taken up with a parlor, decorated like a Victorian-era drawing room with wing-backed chairs, fireplace (the Thoth talisman sits on the mantle), grandfather clock, and sideboard with brandy and whiskey. A winding stairway offers access to the upstairs.

The second floor is divided into two rooms, a kitchen and a bedroom, all with the usual trappings, and more stairs heading farther up.

THE LABORATORY

A sprawling laboratory takes up the entirety of this floor, including test tubes, Bunsen burners, lightning-collecting devices, batteries, and other exotic machinery. There's a stairway leading to the fourth floor. The Acquisition Overdrive Engine is here, humming and aimed out the window, awaiting a live firing to supposedly extract wealth from the sea.

Professor Alset is at the controls. When he sees the Storm Knights, he launches into a monologue worthy of the best Nile pulp villain:

"Ahahahaa! You're too late! My Acquisition Overdrive Engine will help the poor ignorant masses on this world, by extracting riches from

the ocean floor! The voices whispering over my head promised that I was on the verge of a major breakthrough! Now, witness the power of this fully operational Engine!"

...and he throws the switch.

A purple beam shoots out of the Engine and strikes a point several miles out to sea. The ocean boils and bubbles, and gradually, an ancient sailing ship, covered in barnacles and slimy seaweed, rises to the surface and sails directly toward the shore. Numerous figures float around the ship.

The Storm Knights can turn off the Engine with a successful Heroic Mind test (DN 18), but it's too late; the ghost ship and crew of undead are on their way. The Professor looks out at the advancing ghost ship and gives out an uncomprehending shriek.

PROFESSOR NICHOLAS ALSET

The Professor is currently in the throes of Orrorsh's Law of Corruption.



Professor Nicholas Alset has been taken by madness and corruption.

Quote: "Only science and enlightened research can save this helpless world!"

Attributes: Charisma 7, Dexterity 4, Mind 12, Spirit 10, Strength 4

Skills: Evidence analysis 15, find 13, fire combat 7, medicine 13, profession (scientist) 15, scholar (electronics) 15, science (physics) 17, unarmed combat 5

Move: 4; **Tough:** 4; **Shock:** 8; **Wounds:** 3

Equipment: Lab coat, pince-nez, Webley Revolver

Perks: Alchemy, Bulletsmith, Super Skill (science)

Possibilities: 2

Special Abilities: —

THE LURKING HORROR

The tower's fourth floor is filled with barrels, boxes and crates; the Professor's supplies. The only other feature of note is the ladder that leads up to a trap door, accessing the small attic. Nicholas is unaware of the Thing's presence, although he gave a subtle clue earlier when he spoke of "the voices over my head."

The horror lurks quietly and unnoticed. It's slowly testing its powers of influencing people's minds, with the ultimate goal of spreading as much mass insanity and horror as it can get away with.

A Challenging *Perception* test (DN 14) reveals that there's something horribly, horribly wrong nearby, an evil presence of suffocating madness.

THE THING IN THE ATTIC

The Thing is an amorphous black ooze with two slimy gray-green tentacles. It's almost three times as large as an average human. The attic is pitch dark and smells of rot, mildew, and the iron tang of old, dried blood.

The Thing doesn't enjoy speaking, but it can. Its voice is a guttural rasp as delivered by an echo in a stone tomb. When forced to fight, it favors grappling opponents and squeezing the life out of them.

Attributes: Charisma 10, Dexterity 6, Mind 14, Spirit 13, Strength 14

Skills: Dodge 7, find 16, intimidation 16, taunt 13, telepathy 13, trick 17, unarmed combat 10

Move: 6; **Tough:** 14; **Shock:** 13; **Wounds** 4

Equipment: Tentacles (2) *Strength* +3

Perks: Frightening Aspect, Magic Resistance, Relentless

Possibilities: (Common) 4

Special Abilities:

- **Large:** Attacks against the Thing in the Attic gain a +2 bonus.

- **Dread:** The Thing's presence turns a Standard Scene into a Dramatic Scene.

- **Fear:** All Storm Knights must test *willpower* or *Spirit* or become Very Stymied.

- **Cloak of Darkness:** The Thing gains a bonus to its Toughness equal to the visibility penalty of the darkness it's in. It's obscured by Dim shadow (a -2 penalty) if the Storm Knights have a small light source, so gains a +2 increase



The hold of the Charybdis is filled with the bones of its victims-and its crew!

to Toughness. Pitch Darkness grants a +6 Toughness boost.

THE THUNDER LAD

When the Orrorshan invasion hit Core Earth, an Australian Navy missile destroyer on routine maneuvers got caught in the reality wash and turned into a coal-powered dreadnought. The crew, naturally, became stereotypical British sailors of that era, but were uncertain what to do next. The vessel eventually found some Victorians to help them sort things out, resulting in a Gaean Victorian officer (Captain Edmund Baldrick) and a Sacellum Chaplain (Sister Kate Collingwood) joining the crew.

The *Thunder Lad* patrols this area regularly, unfortunately getting slowly exposed to the madness rays from the Engine. The GM should decide just how mad they truly are. Consider the entire crew of 50 Victorians to have the same stats as the Victorian Soldier found in the *Torg Eternity* core rulebook.

Treat the *Thunder Lad* as a coal steamer fitted with eight 12-pounder cannon.

The Storm Knights could conceivably reach the *Thunder Lad* and talk with the Captain, trying to get his help. They'll need all the help they can get because of...

THE CHARYBDIS

This 18th-century vintage sailing ship, formerly manned by a bloodthirsty pirate crew, lay at the bottom of the Indian Ocean until the Engine brought it up as ghost ship. Now it needs new victims and crew replacements!

Consider the *Charybdis* the equivalent of an Ayslish Galleon, crewed by 24 ghosts, though the latter cannot leave the ship until it makes landfall. Once the ship is on the surface, it slowly sails towards the Storm Knights and the tower, eager to disgorge the crew onto land to cause havoc.

The GM should consider both vessels to be wild cards, played for maximum drama and action. Ideally, the Storm Knights could somehow pit the *Thunder Lad* and the *Charybdis* against each other, while they deal with the Thing and the deranged Professor.

AFTERMATH

If the Thing is destroyed, its essence is driven back to whatever dark nightmare dimension it came from, and that's the main goal.

If the Storm Knights already have their hands full, the ghost ship *Charybdis* can simply sail off instead of closing in on the shore at this time. That way, it becomes something to fight and haunt the Storm Knights (figuratively and literally) another day.

The *Thunder Lad* could be a good ally in future fights against the horrors of Orrorsh, if the ship and crew survive.

The Thoth talisman is one of a series of 10, each one in the shape of an Egyptian deity, and fashioned by Doctor Mobius as a means of spreading Nile influence and chaos. Perhaps the Storm Knights can make it their mission to hunt them all down.

Finally, the Storm Knights' reputations are all but made if they can bring Augie back. He eventually recovers to be a good source of new rumors and adventure hooks set in Orrorsh.

HOSTEL TAKEOVER

BY DARRELL HAYHURST

COSM: CYBERPAPACY

LOCATION: A HOSTEL WITHIN ANY CITY WITH ACTIVE RESISTANCE GROUPS

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. A “runner” catches up to the group to deliver a message from the Delphi Council. The GodNet intercepts and decodes all transmissions, so any business from the Council or the resistance is done in person or delivered by couriers to keep information off the grid. The runner is out of breath, indicating that this message is recent and very urgent. She hands a capsule to the Storm Knights, gives a small salute, and then sprints back the same way she came.

Inside the capsule is a hastily scribbled note with the following:

A local resistance crew was involved in a skirmish with Church Police near Rue Jean Moulin and Avenue de la Marche. During the battle the team's cyberwarlock accidentally summoned a demon. The demon fled during the chaos and they were too compromised to pursue it.

Proceed to the area, locate the demon, and eliminate it. Such a creature is pure malevolence and could do untold damage to innocent people. The Cyberchurch doesn't seem to be active in the area. They are almost certainly waiting for the demon to do some damage so they can blame the resistance for summoning it.

This is Alpha Clearance and urgent. Bonne chance, Storm Knights.

The note ends with a stamp, the Delphi Council seal.

RUE JEAN MOULIN

The intersection mentioned in the note is simple to find. The signs of battle are all over. Bullet holes from GodMeeter pisols riddle the walls and scorch marks remain from whatever weapons the resistance used. The street itself is barren of people and traffic in the violent aftermath.



A demon is on the loose, and dark omens fill the night air.

The only person nearby is a shopkeeper repairing damage to his store's sign. He dutifully ignores the Storm Knights unless approached. A successful *persuasion* test gets him to open up about what he saw, otherwise he closes his shop and locks his door.

The shopkeeper, Leon, witnessed some of the battle. Three strangers fought a dozen of the Church's men: a short one in armor who shot fire from his arms, a man dressed in last century's fashions, and the one who brought the demon. He shudders at the memory, and points in the general direction of where it happened. If asked to describe the demon he haltingly mutters something about the worst parts of a man and a worm, glistening with blood.

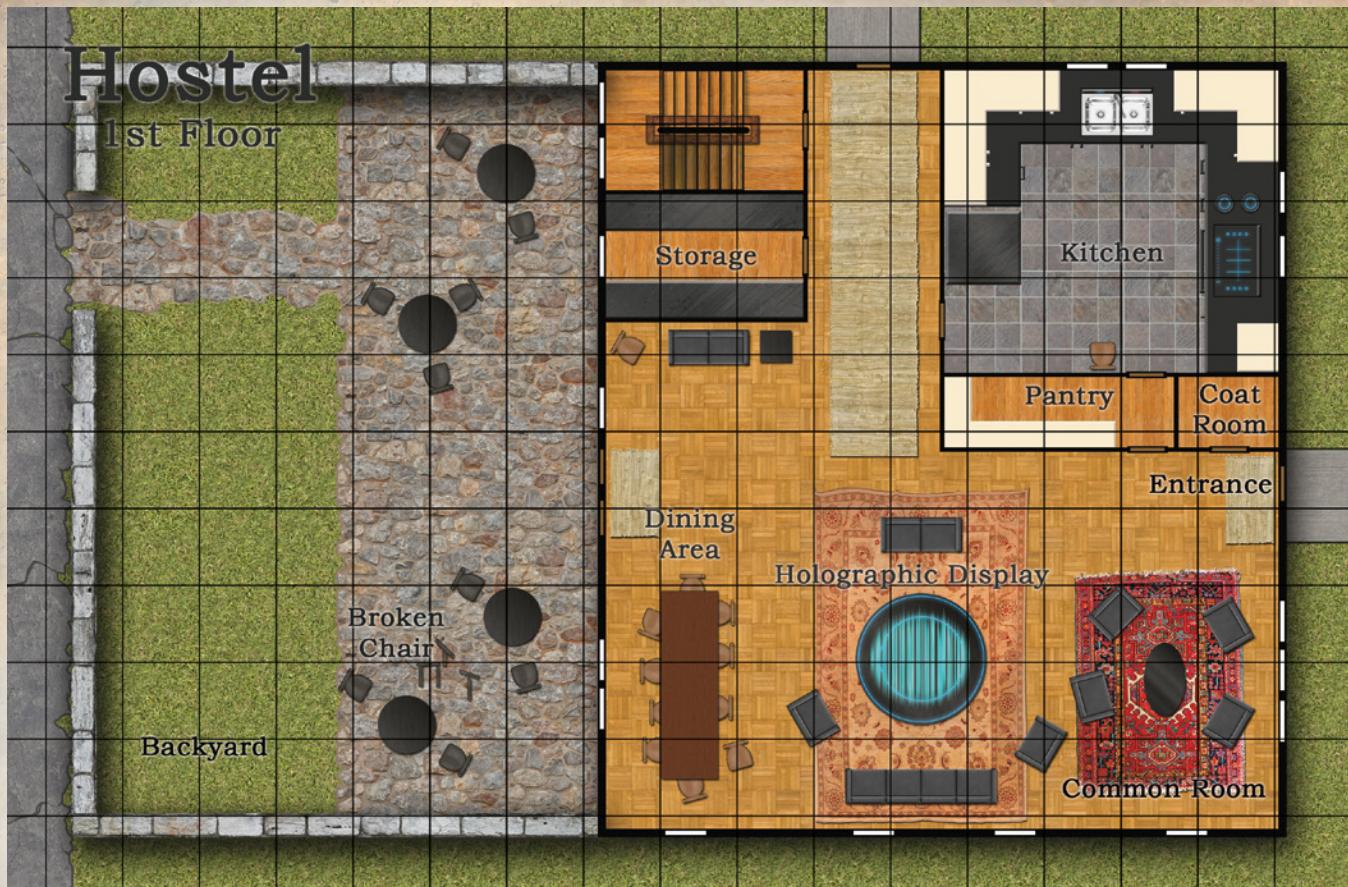
Even without Leon's help a cursory investigation of the area discovers a thin layer of slime and dried blood where the demon appeared, and a trail of the same substance leading back into the alleys.

Finding and following the trail doesn't require a test, but an Easy (DN 8) *find, evidence analysis*, or *tracking* test points out that the trail leads into a quiet residential area nearby.

LE HOSTEL PETIT

The trail ends abruptly at sitting tables in a courtyard outside a large house. The home is actually a business, a hostel that caters to backpackers and youth traveling through the city. Those kinds of trips are unusual now that the Possibility Wars rage, so the place is mostly empty. There are pieces of broken furniture around, and a successful *evidence analysis* test reveals the wreckage was a rocking chair, unlike the other wooden chairs arranged around the tables.

The hostel is closed and the door locked. If the Storm Knights knock, a voice answers from the other side. He introduces himself as Pascale Petit, but informs the visitors that the hostel is closed. He



sounds nervous and agitated. If asked about the broken furniture outside he lies clumsily, claiming a guest was sitting outside, went mad, broke the chair, and ran away. If the group accepts Pascale's story and leaves to search for the guest, there's a grunt and a thump from the second floor. Pascale swears softly.

It's a Very Hard (DN 16) *persuasion* test to convince Pascale to let them inside to look around. The heroes gain a +2 bonus or more if they cook up a plausible story that paints them as authorities or knowledgeable about demons. If the strangers can't talk their way in, a Standard *lockpicking* test opens the lock. Breaking in through one of the large windows is simple and has the same effect. Pascale doesn't try to physically resist the powerful-looking interlopers and doesn't threaten to call the Church Police, which is suspicious in itself.

PASCAL PETIT

Pascale is the gentle owner of the hostel. He made a fair living running the place before the war and especially enjoyed cooking for people. He doesn't believe in Malraux's Cyberchurch, but also has no particular issue with it. He hasn't had any cyberware upgrades installed and has a very low Piety score.

At first Pascale claims to run the hostel alone, but reverses himself if pressed after the characters look around and find evidence of his wife and mother. He knows the demon possessed his mother (see below), but doesn't want the Church Police to come and take her away. He's trying to keep his pious wife quiet until he can figure out how to save his mother. These intruders are yet another threat and obstacle as far as he's concerned.

Quote: "We are closed to guests, go away!"

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 6, Mind 7, Spirit 6, Strength 7

Skills: Dodge 7, find 8, persuasion 7, profession (cook) 8, streetwise 7, taunt 7, unarmed combat 7



Move: 6; **Tough:** 7; **Shock:** 6; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: —

Perks: —

Possibilities: None

Special Abilities: —

INSIDE THE HOSTEL

Pascale rushes ahead of the heroes, nervously moving knick-knacks and blabbering about the backpacker who broke his chair outside. A standard *evidence analysis* test spots recent pictures of Pascale with his wife, Agnes, and his ailing mother, Constance. A Good Success spots items that belong to one or the other, and Outstanding Success finds traces that both still live here. If pressed, Pascale admits they still live here but are “out shopping.”

The entertainment room has several comfortable couches and a holographic projector. Currently the projector is tuned to Jean Malraux’s sermon. The visage of the Cyberpope speaks in the background, preaching about sin.

“Sin is everywhere, my children. On the streets, in our homes, and even within our very flesh. Sin must be cut away and burned like a cancer. If you see sin on the street, alert the Church Police. If you find sin in your home, cast it out. If you feel sin in your flesh, replace it with something clean and Godly. This is the One True Way.”

If a Storm Knight moves to switch the projector off, an automated voice warns, “Changing channels during Cyberpope Malraux’s sermon is a trespass and deducts five points from your Piety Score. Do you wish to proceed?”

The kitchen is open, spacious, and well-stocked. The common room upstairs contains six bunk beds, each with its own footlocker. None of the beds are in use and all the lockers are empty, refuting Pascale’s story that a guest was here. The last two rooms are private and locked. An Easy (DN 8) *lockpicking* or *Strength* test opens either door. It’s also Easy (DN 8) to use *persuasion* or *intimidation* to force Pascale to use his key.

PASCALE'S ROOM

One of the upstairs rooms is the master bedroom. A thump sounds from inside once the visitors get near. Within is Agnes, Pascale's wife, tied up and gagged. She squirms and makes desperate noises to get free.

Agnes is grateful if the Storm Knights release her, and begins crying about how her mother-in-law, Constance, has been possessed by a demon. Before any confrontation she tries to call the Church Police for help. Her mind is set, so it's Hard (-4) to convince her to wait via *persuasion*, *intimidation*, or other means.

Pascale bursts into tears and confesses the truth at this point. He just wants to keep his family together and for things to go back like they were.

AGNES PETIT

Agnes is Pascale's wife. She's a devout member of the Cyberchurch and a true believer. Most of the upgrades downstairs were won with her high Piety Score. Turning in a family member would earn her enough points for another upgrade.

Agnes' neck and spine are cyberware, an elective upgrade she took to improve her posture. She wants to summon the Church Police to the hostel as soon as possible. She's uncooperative once it's apparent the Storm Knights are against Malraux. She loves her husband, but not enough to overlook his recent blasphemous behavior.

Quote: "We must call the Church Police. It's for Constance's soul. The extra points are just a bonus!"

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 6, Mind 6, Spirit 8, Strength 6

Skills: Dodge 7, faith 10, unarmed combat 7, willpower 10

Move: 6; **Tough:** 6; **Shock:** 8; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: HardPlas LifeLock Backup System

Perks: Cyberware

Possibilities: None

Special Abilities: —

CONSTANCE

Inside the last room, Pascale's mother Constance sits quietly in her rocking chair, knitting something with red yarn. Pascale is surprised to see her knitting; she hadn't been able to do that for years due to arthritis pain, and she refused the cyberware

hand replacements Agnes tried to secure for her.

When the strangers approach, they see Constance's eyes are glassy. She looks up with a ghastly grin and speaks in a deep, masculine voice:

"Hmph, you smell like heroes. I'll offer you a deal. Just leave me alone. I'll only murder a few people every now and then, and I'll keep it quiet. You can't defeat me without killing the old woman, so just let this one go."

When the heroes refuse, the demon sighs and stands up from the rocking chair to fight.



ZAPAR-AGENTALUS, MINOR DEMON

Zapar-Agentalus is the demon's name. It thrives on torture, murder, and lies. It actually intends to keep a low profile, but that still means a horrible death for occasional guests who stay at the hostel.

While it possesses Constance, her eyes are solid, glistening black and her lips and tongue are a deep red. It's lying when it says it can't be defeated without killing her. Once it takes eight Shock her body is KO'ed and Zapar-Agentalus must emerge to fight in its true form. If the fiend suffers a Wound, Constance also falls and the demon must emerge. If a hero manages to stabilize her with *first aid* within a round, or the Wound was dealt by non-lethal damage, she survives. If no one stabilizes her or the blow deals two more Wounds, Constance does indeed perish.

In its true form Zapar-Agentalus has a writhing, worm-like lower body. A thick, red slime that smells like blood drips from every inch of its exposed skin. The solid black eyes remain constant.

Attributes: Charisma 8, Dexterity 10, Mind 10, Spirit 12, Strength 14

Skills: Alteration 14, conjuration 14, dodge 12, find 11, intimidation 16, melee weapons 15, unarmed combat 12

Move: 10; **Tough:** 16 (2); **Shock:** 12; **Wounds** 3

Equipment: —

Perks: Spellcaster (*haste, fireball, mage dark*)

Possibilities: 3

Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** Protective ooze +2.

- **Dread:** While a demon is present, a Standard Scene becomes a Dramatic Scene instead.

- **Fear:** Once the demon leaves Constance and reveals its true form all Storm Knights must test *willpower* or *Spirit* or become Very Stymied.

- **Insidious:** Discard a Destiny card from each target's Action Pool when the demon successfully performs an Approved Action.

- **Possession:** At first the demon fights from within Constance's body. Once the host body suffers enough Shock or Wounds to be KO'ed, Zapar-Agentalus must emerge, usually from the target's mouth like a long stream of vomit. This triggers the demon's Fear ability. If Pascale is in the room the demon leaps into him next. Doing so requires its action, but restores all its lost Shock. It can only possess Ords, and can't possess Agnes due to her faith, her cyberware, or perhaps both.

THE AFTERMATH

Once Zapar-Agentalus is KO'ed or defeated in its true form, it screams and melts into a pool of red ooze. The mission is complete. All that remains is dealing with what's left of the Petit household. Any survivors are traumatized and unlikely to be grateful to the resistance or the Storm Knights. If the heroes linger too long the authorities finally arrive, thanks to Agnes or data transmitted by the house's appliances.

- **Cyberpriest (1):** See *Torg Eternity*.

- **Church Police Streetbeaters (2 per hero):** See *Torg Eternity*.

**"WE ARE AS RESPONSIBLE FOR
SUMMONING THIS MONSTER AS MALRAUX
IS. IT IS GOOD AND RIGHT THAT WE SEND
IT BACK TO WHERE IT CAME FROM."**

- FATHER DAMIEN

JUST PLANE DANGEROUS

BY ROSS WATSON

COSM: LIVING LAND

LOCATION: ANYWHERE WITHIN THE LIVING LAND

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. The heroes hear plane engines overhead and glimpse a low-flying cargo aircraft. Most likely operated by a Possibility-rated pilot, the plane's wings rock up and down in a signal for attention. A small package drops from the plane's undercarriage and plummets to the ground nearby, landing amongst the thick vegetation with a solid thump.

The package is a metallic message cylinder, dented but otherwise intact, bearing the emblem of the Delphi Council. Inside is a printed photograph and a note that says the following:

A satellite captured an image of a downed jetliner near your location. The airplane has been identified as Flight 1704, lost en route from Atlanta to New York during the invasion. We're not certain why or how the aircraft has been preserved when so many other technologically advanced vehicles break down and rust away in the Living Land, but this provides us with an opportunity. Make your way to the aircraft and recover the "black box" flight recorder if possible. Search the area for one of the passengers: Dr. Emil Blankenship.

Dr. Blankenship is one of the world's foremost experts on paleontology, and his expertise regarding the flora and fauna of the Living Land could be very valuable to our operations. If you can locate him, bring him back to the aircraft crash site for extraction.

This mission is Alpha Clearance, Storm Knights. Good luck.

HEADING TO THE CRASH SITE

With the assistance of the satellite photo, an Easy (DN 8) find or tracking test can put the Storm Knights on the right track toward the downed aircraft. This part of the Living Land is composed of thick jungle, meaning that the heroes struggle



Any journey into the Living Land is sure to bring danger and surprises.

to move quickly on foot or in a land vehicle. As the group nears their destination, a young human boy emerges from the jungle, running at top speed. He is being pursued by a group of murderous edeinos!

Each Storm Knight should make a DN 12 *find* test. Those who succeed notice that the edeinos have crimson tattoos on their faces, marking them as belonging to the Redjaws clan and loyal to the High Lord. Also, the boy they are chasing is clearly an Ord who has transformed to the Living Land – his clothing is little more than rags, and he moves more like a beast than a man.

If the Storm Knights move to interfere, combat begins. There are a number of edeinos equal to the player characters. All are armed with spears. Baruk Kaah has commanded that outsiders, especially Storm Knights, are to be dealt with

harshly, so the edeinos prefer to target the heroes with their attacks.

Once the fight is over, the boy introduces himself as "Earl," speaking in broken English (because the transformation has reverted him to a more primitive state). Earl invites the heroes to his village, Estak, which he says is close by.

Earl is easily confused and is still very tense after almost being killed by the Redjaws. The Storm Knights can ask Earl about the aircraft or the missing Dr. Blankenship with a successful DN 10 *persuasion* test. Earl knows that the plane is not far, but he says that his tribe avoids that area, because it is bad luck. The boy also knows that "Emil" (as he calls Dr. Blankenship) survived, but Emil has been banished by the village optant (an edienos priest).



THE VILLAGE OF ESTAK

Estak is composed of huts built from wood and lashed together with vines. Here and there are remnants of concrete and steel from before the invasion, but everywhere the heroes look, there are the vibrant colors and thriving flora of the Living Land. Perhaps surprisingly, the village uses a crude stone mill powered by a tethered dimetrodon (sail-back dinosaur). Earl explains that Emil helped them create the mill.

Earl brings the Storm Knights into the village, but any that are obviously wielding “dead things” (such as ion gosoku, dragon armor, etc.), cause many of the villagers—a mix of transformed humans and edeinos—to retreat into their homes.

In thanks for rescuing Earl from the Redjaws, the villagers offer to feed the heroes. The food they serve is composed of cooked dinosaur meat, roots, fruits, and fresh vegetables. Thanks to the Law of Life, the food’s flavors are particularly delightful to the senses—Storm Knights from other cosms have never tasted the like. However, during the meal, a stern edeinos approaches the heroes and berates the “outsiders” for carrying and using “dead things.” Earl explains that this edeinos is the village’s optant, or priest of Lanala. The priest speaks broken English, like Earl, and is grateful to the player characters for saving the boy. However, he is concerned that the presence of the Storm Knights will bring down the wrath of Baruk Kaah upon the village. He tells the heroes that they must not remain in Estak.

A DN 12 *persuasion* test can convince the optant to share what he knows about Dr. Blankenship. The priest explains that he banished Emil for being obsessed with “dead things,” and his refusal to accept Lanala. The optant says that Emil traveled north toward the “thunder waters.” A successful DN 10 *find* or *tracking* test indicates that the satellite photo of the crashed airplane lies in the same direction.

THE OPTANT

The optant is an edeinos priest who leads the village of Estak. He is stern, but kind and generous to the people of his tribe. The optant has no love for Baruk Kaah, considering him and the Redjaws enemies and fools who anger Lanala with their unending desire for conquest.

The optant considers “dead things” (meaning technology in general, and especially any items that were never alive to begin with, such as stone, plastic, and metal) as unworthy of Lanala’s blessings. Emil Blankenship helped Estak with his construction of the mill, but the optant saw it as making the villagers dependent on dead things rather than surviving by Lanala’s will. Thus, the optant felt he had no choice but to banish Emil—a decision that still causes the priest to feel great guilt.

The optant wants to protect Estak from the Redjaws, and the best way to do that is to avoid drawing any attention from Baruk Kaah. That means the outsiders must not remain...

Quote: "Outsiders are not welcome in Estak. You endanger us all with your presence!"

Attributes: Charisma 5, Dexterity 9, Mind 6, Spirit 10, Strength 10

Skills: Beast riding 10, dodge 10, faith 12, find 8, intimidation 10, melee combat 7, unarmed combat 7

Move: 6; **Tough:** 7; **Shock:** 6; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: —

Perks: Miracles (*bless, healing, ward enemy*)

Possibilities: None

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Damage *Strength* +2 (12).

THE CRASHED AIRPLANE

Flight 1704 is surprisingly recognizable when the heroes discover it. The plane has suffered damage in the form of scrapes and dents, but both wings and the tail are fully intact. The cockpit's windows are all broken, and the nose

of the plane looks crumpled by impact. Most surprising of all, however, is that a small group of edeinos have set the plane on fire! Flames gush from one of the engines, beginning to consume remaining fuel fumes in the wing. The Storm Knights must move fast if they want to find and recover the flight recorder!

Locating the black box flight recorder is a Dramatic Skill Resolution. Step A involves a *find* test to locate the flight recorder inside the crashed airplane. Step B requires *science* or *air vehicles* to open the correct panels. Step C requires a successful *Strength* test to remove the black box before the flames consume the cockpit. Step D is a *maneuver* test to get out of the wreckage in time!

Other player characters can fend off the edeinos warriors (one per hero). The edeinos are distracted by the burning plane and suffer a -2 penalty to their *find* tests if the Storm Knights wish to sneak up on them.



Villages with both human and edeinos are uncommon, but not unprecedented.

THE THUNDER WATERS

The “thunder waters” that the optant spoke of back in Estak village are, in fact, a towering waterfall cascading into a river from an enormous rocky cliff. Thanks to the Law of Wonders, the natural formation is truly breathtaking in grandeur and beauty. Suspended on a wooden pole roughly 10 meters from the rocky base of the waterfall is a cage made from sturdy wooden branches tied together

with vines. Inside the cage is a human male, looking disheveled but otherwise normal—he’s even wearing glasses! This indicates that the inhabitant—Dr. Emil Blankenship—has not yet transformed to the Living Land reality.

Taunting the captive in the cage is an edeinos priest wearing a dinosaur skull mask on his face. This is a gotak, and his face is tattooed with the colors of the Redjaw Clan.

Reaching the cage requires the heroes to climb up the cliff or fly. A DN 12 *Dexterity* test is required to successfully clamber up the slick, wet stone of the cliff face. Falling from the cliff face is dangerous—the jagged rocks at the base (even in the water) mean that anyone who falls from the cliff suffers 15+1 bonus die damage! Such are the perils of the Living Land...

If the Storm Knights confront the gotak, he seems unconcerned. Soon enough, the ground begins to shake, trees sway, and an enormous tyrannosaurus rex enters the fray!

Opening the cage requires a successful Very Hard (DN 16) *Strength* test. The cage can also be attacked in combat. It has a Toughness of 12 and requires 2 Wounds to be destroyed.

SKULLCAP GOTAK

This edeinos is a priest of Lanala, similar to the one the Storm Knights met earlier. However, he is a member of the Redjaw Clan, and a gotak—meaning a priest that deals with “dead things” for the good of the people. He wears a prominent mask of bone made from a dinosaur’s skull.

Skullcap wants to defeat the Storm Knights and present their bodies to the Saar (the High Lord) to advance his personal position in the Clan.



Quote: "Die for the glory of Baruk Kaah!"

Attributes: Charisma 5, Dexterity 9, Mind 6, Spirit 10, Strength 10

Skills: Beast riding 10, dodge 10, faith 12, find 8, intimidation 10, maneuver 10, melee combat 11, missile weapons 10, stealth 10, survival 8, unarmed combat 7

Move: 9; **Tough:** 10; **Shock:** 12; **Wounds:** 3

Equipment: hrockt shoot spear (*Strength +2/12*)

Perks: Miracles (*call animals, healing, strike*)

Possibilities: None

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Damage *Strength +2* (12).

DEATHJAW THE T-REX

Few dinosaurs are more dangerous than the mighty tyrannosaurus rex. Deathjaw is one such beast, raised from infancy by the skullcap gotak to serve as a loyal war-beast. Deathjaw lurks in the jungle near the thunder waters, resting after a large meal. Storm Knights need a successful Very Hard (DN 16) *find* test to spot him amongst the jungle foliage until he moves into the combat scene.

Attributes: Charisma 4, Dexterity 9, Mind 4, Spirit 10, Strength 17

Skills: Dodge 10, find 8, intimidation 15, maneuver 10, stealth 10, taunt (9), tracking 9, unarmed combat 12

Move: 11; **Tough:** 20 (3); **Shock:** 14; **Wounds:** 4

Equipment: —

Perks: Vengeful, Whirlwind

Possibilities: Never

Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** Scaly skin +3.
- **Bite:** Damage *Strength +3* (20).
- **Dread:** While a mighty tyrannosaurus is present, a Standard Scene becomes a Dramatic Scene instead.
- **Fear:** The predatory teeth and roar of the t-rex triggers instinctive terror. Test *willpower* or *Spirit* or become Very Stympied.
- **Very Large:** Most adult specimens are up to 18 meters long. Attacks against them gain a +4 bonus.

THE AFTERMATH

Once Deathjaw and the skullcap gotak are KO'ed or defeated, the threat to the Storm Knights is over. As long as Dr. Blankenship survived, the mission is complete. All that remains is to return to the burning plane crash site with the flight recorder and the freed Emil to await pickup by a Delphi Council plane (likely flown by the same Possibility-rated pilot from the beginning!).

- **Edeinos (1 per hero):** See *Torg Eternity*.

"SERIOUSLY GUYS, WHY ARE WE CALLING THAT THING A T-REX? UH-OH, IT'S HEADED THIS WAY. RUN FOR YOUR LIVES, PEOPLE, A T-REX IS COMING."

- AIDAN MCALLISTER



DEMON DEATH RACE!

BY STEVE KENSON

COSM: THARKOLD

**LOCATION: THE BLASTED LAND
(BETWEEN ESTONIA AND ST.
PETERSBURG)**

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. The Storm Knights receive the following message from the Delphi Council, most likely as a printed note, possibly encoded to prevent it from falling into the wrong hands.

Contacts in St. Petersburg have arranged to acquire some salvaged Tharkoldu technology from the black market. The Council feels the tech may prove useful against the invaders. We need a courier to make the overland trip from Narva, on the border of Estonia, through the Blasted Land in Russia to St. Petersburg and back. A contact will meet you in Narva and provide you with transportation for the run. Get in, get the package, and get out as quickly as possible. Good luck.

A Delphi Council contact is indeed awaiting the Storm Knights in Narva, on the Estonian/Russian border. Narva was once a city of some 60,000 people, but many have fled in the wake of the invasion, with the edges of the Blasted Land encroaching on the eastern city limits. In the Near Now, Narva is becoming a combination armed camp, crossroads trading post and jumping-off point into Tharkold territory. The 13th century Narva Castle is a Core Earth hardpoint, helping to protect the city.

The contact goes by the name Dhare Nexus. She provides the Storm Knights with a wasteland junker (see **Chapter 9** of *Torg Eternity*) to get them into and out of the Blasted Land. It's modified to carry up to six passengers. If none of the characters have adds in the *land vehicles* skill, consider having Dhare accompany the team as a driver, and focus the chase on the heroes holding off their pursuers, with one of the players making *land vehicles* tests for Dhare. If multiple characters have *land vehicles*, you can set them up with two regular four-passenger junkers, allowing two of them to drive and splitting the other characters between the vehicles, with the second running



The Blasted Land is filled with scavengers looking for a payday.

interference and serving as a distraction for pursuers.

- **Wasteland Junker:** Tech 25, Top Speed 100 (12) Fast, Pass 6, MR -1, Wnds 2, Tough 15 (2). See *Torg Eternity*.

DHARE NEXUS

Dhare Nexus is a realm runner with spiky, bleached-out hair and a punk attitude and style of dress. She acts like she's in it solely for the thrills and a chance to flip off the Possibility Raiders, but in truth she's seen some remarkable acts of courage and compassion since the invasion that have inspired her to do what she can to help fight for her home.

Quote: "Hang on!"

Attributes: Charisma 7, Dexterity 8, Mind 8, Spirit 9, Strength 8

Skills: Dodge 10, find 9, first aid 9, fire combat 9, land vehicles 10, melee weapons 9, persuasion 8, reality 12, taunt 8, trick 9, unarmed combat 9

Move: 8; **Tough:** 8; **Shock:** 9; **Wounds:** 3

Equipment: Glock 9mm (Tech 22, Damage 13, Ammo 15, Range 10/25/40)

Perks: Realm Runner

Possibilities: 3

Special Abilities: —

GETTING IN

Standard Scene. The trip from Narva to St. Petersburg takes about three hours, involving following undamaged parts of the major roads and occasionally going off-road to avoid massive craters, damaged roadways, debris, and other obstacles. Along the way, the characters pass by or through battered-looking ghost towns, largely abandoned except for the desperate and the hopeless, unable to flee to the relative safety of St. Petersburg or the Core Earth zones of Eastern Europe.

The inbound trip is primarily intended to convey the bleak nature of the Blasted Land. The Storm

Knights make it to St. Petersburg without serious incident unless you want to extend the initial trip with an encounter or two, such as a roving gang of thralls (possibly with a junker of their own) or an abomination. See **Chapter 11** of *Torg Eternity* for their stats. A short chase where the characters outrun and fight off some thralls can provide a good warm-up for the main event later on and get players familiar with chase mechanics, if they're not already.

GETTING THE PACKAGE

Standard Scene. Once the Storm Knights reach St. Petersburg, they can make their prearranged meeting with Russian black marketeer Sergei Sokolov. He has made a name for himself by salvaging Tharkoldu tech from the Blasted Land and selling it to the highest bidders, often the Delphi Council. Unfortunately, Sokolov's reputation has become a bit too widely known, and one of his associates has sold him out to other parties interested in acquiring technodemon occultech—or at least ensuring the Core Earthers do not.

The meeting takes place at an abandoned parking garage in St. Petersburg. Sokolov and his lieutenants and bodyguards hand off a sealed case containing an intact cylinder of Tharkoldu nanotech to the characters as part of an arrangement with the Delphi Council. Sokolov doesn't expect anything from the "delivery crew"—he has made his own deal and values having the Council in his debt for the long term.

Right after the exchange, someone launches a rocket into the parking garage! The blast destroys some cars and kills some of Sokolov's henchmen, but has negligible effects on the characters:

- **Sergei Sokolov:** Use the **Soldier (Officer)** from **Chapter 11** of *Torg Eternity*, if his stats are needed.
- **Russian Mobsters (8):** Use the **Soldier** from **Chapter 11** of *Torg Eternity*, if their stats are needed.

RUN FOR THE BORDER

Dramatic Scene. This scene is the bulk of *Demon Death Race!* With the nanotech package in hand, the Storm Knights have to make it out of the Blasted Land and back to Narva, escaping their pursuers and avoiding hazards along the way.

As soon as the heroes make it clear of the blast that spectacularly ends their meeting, a Pan-Pacific hovercraft pursues them, having discarded the now-empty rocket launcher. The chase is on! Two rounds after, a group of four Church Police streetbeaters on hoverbikes join the chase, starting at Step A. Three rounds after that, two wasteland junkers filled with Tharkoldu thralls join the chase at Step A.

All the pursuers want to stop the Storm Knights from escaping with the nanotech canister, but also would like to salvage the technology for themselves, so they initially avoid tactics that would result in the complete destruction of their targets. They use Stunts to Stymie the fleeing vehicle, making it harder to gain steps in the chase. They do fire weapons at the fleeing characters and you can run the combat alongside the chase as the heroes try to escape.

- **Pan-Pacific Pursuit: Kanawa Security Troopers (6)** with *land vehicles* 9, in an **Oda PG-3 patrol hovercraft** (Tech 24, Top Speed 200 (13) Fast, Pass 6, MR -1, Wnds 4, Tough 23). It is equipped with a 15mm swivel gun (Tech 24, Damage 22, Ammo 200, Range 50/1K/2K, Long Burst).
- **Cyberpapacy Pursuit: Church Police Streetbeaters (4)** with *land vehicles* 10, mounted on **Peugeot Hoverbikes** (Tech 26, Top Speed 200 (13) Fast, Pass 1, MR -0, Wnds 1, Tough 12). See *Torg Eternity*.
- **Tharkold Pursuit: Thralls (8)** with *land vehicles* 10, riding in two **Wasteland Junkers** the same as the characters' except limited to the usual four passengers (Tech 25, Top Speed 100 (12) Fast, Pass 6, MR -1, Wnds 2, Tough 15 (2)). See *Torg Eternity*.
- If any of the pursuers fall away during the chase, you can always have them show up later, starting a new chase sequence, if you want to extend the scene. Otherwise, assume if the Storm Knights escape (see **The Chase**, following) they escape from all their pursuers.

THE CHASE

Consult the **Chases** rules in **Chapter 4** of *Torg Eternity*. Some key things of note in this scene related to those rules are:

- When the next available step in the Dramatic Skill Resolution occurs, the drivers of each of the vehicles involved in the chase make a DN 13 *land vehicles* skill test with a +2 bonus due to vehicle speed, to advance to the next step.
- The Storm Knights' junker is Speed value 12, for a +2 bonus to the *land vehicles* skill test to advance to the next step of the chase.
- Their Cyberpapal and Pan-Pacific pursuers have Speed value 13 vehicles, setting the DN for each step of the chase at 13, and giving them a +2 bonus to the *land vehicles* test as well. The Tharkoldu thralls have the same bonus, but a Speed value of 12.
- The Storm Knights' vehicle(s) and *each* of the groups of pursuers separately progress through the steps of Dramatic Skill Resolution:

If the Storm Knights complete Step D first, they escape. If a pursuer completes Step D first, the Storm Knights are cut off or otherwise forced to stop and fight.

- Each dramatic step of “distance” between attacker and target in the chase subtracts 2 from attack and vehicle stunt tests.

The various pursuers are primarily focused on the Storm Knights, but they’re also hostile toward each other, something the characters can potentially turn to their advantage. A successful maneuver or interaction test might get pursuers shooting at or colliding with each other. Called shots against enemy vehicles can also potentially disable them (see **Called Shots** in the **Vehicles** section of **Chapter 4** of *Torg Eternity*).

If any of the pursuers are on the same resolution step as the fleeing characters, they can bring their vehicles close enough for characters to jump between them with a DN 10 *Dexterity* or *Strength*



Mechanical troubles in Tharkold can take many different forms.

test (see **Leaping** in Chapter 4 of *Torg Eternity*) allowing opportunities for attackers to try and board the heroes' junker, or for the Storm Knights to leap from their vehicle to engage pursuers in close combat. This might allow them to even seize control of other vehicles, either using them to escape or grounding them to a halt.

If you want to extend the chase a bit, you can have the Storm Knights escape one pursuer, only to pick up another, starting a new chase sequence, such as losing the Kanawa hovercraft, and then having the Cyberpapal hoverbikes show up, with the Tharkold thralls coming into the chase a few rounds after that.

DILEMMAS

The following are possible dilemmas that can arise during the chase. The GM should feel free to improvise and come up with others or interpret these as best suits the story.

- **Possible Setback:** Obstacles may include derelict or parked vehicles, debris, rubble, or even bystanders or one of the opposing vehicles getting too close. Failure on the *land vehicles* test results in the loss of a step.
- **Complication:** If the *land vehicles* test fails, the vehicle suffers some damage, most likely from a glancing weapon attack, hitting debris or an obstacle, or the like. This imposes a -1 cumulative penalty for the rest of the chase. A DN 13 *Mind + land vehicles* test can eliminate a -1 penalty.
- **Critical Problem:** This may include unexpected damage to an existing road, a roadblock, a bridge out, a temporary technical problem, or the like. The driver must make an additional *land vehicles* test. Failure means the vehicle drops back to Step A. If already at Step A, treat this like a Complication.

THE AFTERMATH

Once clear of the Blasted Land and in the relative safety of the Core Earth zone of Narva, the Storm Knights are in the clear; their pursuers are not going to risk a confrontation with Core Earth military forces on their own terms, especially if they have already suffered some losses during the

chase. They break off and retreat to fight another day, unless you want to stage an all-out fight in the border city to wrap up the adventure.

Likewise, you can have the Storm Knights hand the tech off to the Delphi Council and move on to the next mission, or you can extend this adventure by having the courier job take them across occupied Europe—and Cyberpapacy territory—to reach another Core Earth contact or safehouse. You can certainly bring the salvaged tech back into play at a later point when the Delphi Council manages to turn it into a weapon against high-tech invaders like Pan-Pacific, the Cyberpapacy, or Tharkold, needing only a team of capable Storm Knights to deploy it!





The Route: 368 kilometers

- Take the E20 towards Narva and the border.
- Fill fuel tanks in Narva, there are no reliable refueling stations inside the Blasted Land.
- The only border control is on the Estonia side, you're already cleared.
- Once into the Blasted Land follow A-180 to 41K-015.
- Turn off at 41K-011 then 41K-038, merge with the A-118 into St. Petersburg.

Note: No official Tolls are operating inside the Blasted Land. Any toll encountered is likely a trap or a fraud.

Watch for:

Reality Storms, Narrow Roads, Poor Driving Conditions, Mud and Rockslides, Enemy Agents, Unassociated Raiders, and Mutated Bears. Avoid getting too close to Kingisepp, a technodemon is known to reside there.

THE BLAZE IN THE NORTHERN SKY

BY ROBERT SCHWALB

COSM: AYSLE

LOCATION: SOMEWHERE IN THE SWEDISH WILDERNESS

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. A great gray owl bearing a message tied to its leg finds the heroes. The owl permits a character to handle it enough to retrieve the message capsule. It flies off once the capsule is removed. Unscrewing the lid reveals a tiny scroll on which has been written:

Mobs of undead have attacked several remote towns and villages in the north over the last few weeks, with Gällivare the site of the most recent attack. Much of the town now lies in ruins with many of the townsfolk dragged off. Head to the area, learn all you can, and put an end to whatever or whoever is behind this threat.

This is Alpha Clearance and urgent. Good luck, Storm Knights.

The Delphi Council seal ends the note.

A TOWN IN RUINS

Gällivare stands in ruins. Most buildings are smoldering cinders, the smoke rising to mingle with the falling snow. Body parts litter the ground in frozen pools of blood, but no intact corpses can be found amidst the carnage. The few survivors who have not fled the ravaged community pick their way through the debris, searching for loved ones or prized possessions in the rubble.

The scant survivors are numbed by loss and fear and ignore the Storm Knights, so it is Challenging (DN 12) to get them to open up using *persuasion* or *intimidation*. The horror of their experiences makes it Hard (DN 14) to pluck the information from their minds using *telepathy*. If the characters help the survivors by clearing rubble, rescuing trapped people, or tending to the injured, the characters can automatically gain some or all of the following information.

- The dead came the night before last, hundreds of them, shuffling through the streets.



Vikings are even more dangerous when they're dead.

- The dead went door-to-door, dragging out people and carrying them off into the night.
- Those who resisted were killed and carried off too.
- Not all the attackers were zombies; some were alive. They were men and women, their faces painted in white and black, bodies clad in furs and mail. They seemed to be directing the undead.
- When the attack was over, the dead and their leaders went back the way they came. Later that night, a strange red light blazed in the north.
- If the heroes helped the survivors in any way, they provide the characters with horses to speed them on their way.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

Neither the undead nor their human masters made any effort to conceal their trail. A path of trampled snow spotted here and there with blood and

littered with body parts stretches north across the wilderness. It takes about six hours by foot to reach the trail's end or half that time if the characters have horses. Sporadically, the heroes spot a flare of ghastly red light rise from the ground and leap for the heavens, piercing the clouds above.

Halfway into the characters' journey, two cauldron zombies per hero rise up from the snow around the group and attack.

CAULDRON ZOMBIE

Hideous corpses animated by the power of the Hag's Cauldron, these zombies shuffle about, reaching out to grasp and bite whatever they can catch. While slow and stupid, their relentless makes them dangerous, especially when encountered in numbers.

Quote: "Nnnggghhh."

Attributes: Charisma 4, Dexterity 5, Mind 4, Spirit 8, Strength 12



A few well placed arrows won't be enough to solve the problem posed by the cauldron.

Skills: Find 6, dodge 6, maneuver 6, trick (7), unarmed combat 9

Move: 5; **Tough:** 12; **Shock:** —; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: Torn and ragged clothing

Perks: —

Possibilities: Never

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Damage *Strength* +2 (14).
- **Fear:** These eerie creatures cause instinctive fear. Test *willpower* or *Spirit* or become Very Stymied.
- **Mindless:** Cauldron zombies are immune to *intimidation* and *taunt* interactions.
- **Relentless:** Cauldron zombies ignore Shock.
- **Undead:** Cauldron zombies are immune to poison and other effects that require breathing, eating, or other "living" processes.

CAMP OF THE DEFILERS

The heroes eventually come upon a large camp established at the base of a large, snow-covered

hill. A low wall of piled snow borders three sides of a square-shaped area, about 50 meters across. The hill forms a natural boundary at the back.

ZOMBIE PEN

Off to one side of the compound, a three-meter-high chain-link fence topped with barbed wire encloses a 20-meter-square area. Inside, 36 cauldron zombies mill about, groaning. A locked, closed gate allows access to the interior. It requires a Hard (DN 14) *lockpicking* test to open the lock. If the heroes open the gate, four zombies leave the area each minute and attack the nearest living thing.

PRISONER PEN

Adjacent to the zombie pen stands a second fenced-in area identical to the first. Instead of holding zombies, it contains 12 frightened men and women from Gällivare who wait their turn to be dropped into the cauldron and transformed into zombies. From time to time, one of the people

calls out through the fence to the cauldron zombie of a loved one, but the zombies merely gnash their teeth and groan.

THE TENTS

A haphazard arrangement of six tents covers the ground on the side of the compound opposite the two pens. The "Warriors of the Northern Blaze" spend their time here when not leading bands of zombies to attack unsuspecting villages. There are 16 warriors in all and they sleep two to a tent. Most warriors sleep during the day and move around the camp in groups of two to four at night (see **Vigord and the Cauldron**, below). They won't lead another force of zombies until all the prisoners have been turned.

If the heroes are spotted, one warrior per hero confronts them and tries to take them prisoner. If a fight breaks out, another two warriors join each round until all the warriors have joined the fight.

WARRIORS OF THE NORTHERN BLAZE

The warriors in service to Vigord, their leader, are utterly loyal and devoted to their master and his vile cause. Strong and capable in a fight, they wear mail and furs and carry swords and axes. They paint their faces white and black, looking something like the corpses they create.

Quote: "Hail Vigord!"

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 8, Mind 7, Spirit 8, Strength 8

Skills: Dodge 9, find 8, intimidation 10, maneuver 9, melee weapons 9, stealth 9, unarmed combat 9, willpower 10

Move: 8; **Tough:** 10 (2); **Shock:** 8; **Wounds:** 1

Equipment: Chain mail (Armor +2), battleaxe or longsword (Damage Strength +3/11)

Perks: Hard to Kill, Vengeful

Possibilities: Rare (2)

Special Abilities: —

VIGORD AND THE CAULDRON

An enormous cauldron of black iron situated atop a blazing bonfire sits at the base of the hill. At all times, two warriors stand near the cauldron. A large tent has been set up near the cauldron for the warriors' leader, Vigord.

The cauldron is a device of terrible darkness and evil. If a living person drips his blood into the cauldron, he becomes the cauldron's owner. While the cauldron has an owner, it can be used to create undead. When a living or dead person is placed inside the cauldron, a dazzling pillar of red light shines from within the cauldron, reaching up for the clouds. Ten minutes later, a cauldron zombie clambers free, the body transformed into an abomination by its dark magic. Cauldron zombies obey any command given to them by the cauldron's owner, which just so happens to be Vigord. The cauldron can be used in this way just once per hour.

VIGORD

A powerful warrior dedicated to Darkness, Vigord set out to chase down the legends concerning a magical iron cauldron, which would give him power over life and death. The old stories claimed a hag named Retzlenoff kept the relic in her hut somewhere in the northern hinterlands. Vigord and his followers made the journey, confronted the witch, and by force took from her the cauldron.

The cauldron was as good as the legends told, but it came with a dreadful curse, one laid upon him by the hag with her dying breath. Vigord must feed the cauldron bodies or rot away. Each day he goes without feeding the cauldron, his body rots a bit more, costing him fingers, toes, and other extremities. It took him a few days to realize what was happening, long enough to make him monstrous, lacking a nose, one ear, and missing a few fingers on each hand.

Vigord feeds the cauldron as the curse demands, but he struggles to find a way to rid himself of the affliction. So far, his efforts have been for naught and thus he grows an unholy army of undead with which he intends to push south until he finds a way to lift the doom that has fallen upon him.

Quote: "I have sacrificed my soul, my body, my everything for this power. Think you that I will surrender it now?"

Attributes: Charisma 10, Dexterity 11, Mind 8, Spirit 10, Strength 11

Skills: Dodge 12, find 9, intimidation 12, maneuver 12, melee weapons 13, missile weapons 12, reality 11, survival 9, unarmed combat 13, willpower 11

Move: 11; **Tough:** 13 (2); **Shock:** 10; **Wounds:** 3

Equipment: Chain mail (Armor +2), great axe (*Dexterity* +4/15), heavy crossbow (Damage 13)

Perks: Frightening Aspect, Whirlwind

Possibilities: 3

Special Abilities:

- **Fear:** Test *willpower* or *Spirit* or become Very Stymied when first encountering this warrior of Darkness.

- **Dread:** Thanks to the power of the cauldron, when Vigord is present, any Standard Scene immediately becomes a Dramatic Scene instead.

- **Gloater:** When *taunt* or *intimidation* are Approved Actions, the villain may affect the entire party without a Multi-Target penalty. Affected heroes lose a random card from their hand.

- **Minions:** Vigord may transfer any hit to Warriors of the Northern Blaze within a few meters if he succeeds at a *reality* test.

CAMP ACTIVITIES

The heroes can conceal themselves behind snow piles or the few trees around the camp. Doing so requires a Very Easy (DN 6) *stealth* test. Any hero who fails this test attracts attention from warriors in the compound, who sound the alarm. Otherwise, the characters can observe the camp to see what is going on.

A few minutes after the characters arrive, two warriors grab one of the prisoners from the pen and drag the person to the cauldron. There, Vigord directs the warriors to drop the prisoner in the cauldron, causing the flare of infernal light. Ten minutes later, a cauldron zombie climbs out and is then led back to the zombie pen. This continues each hour on the hour for 10 hours, at which point Vigord, flanked by four warriors, walks over to the zombie pen. He gives the zombies orders to go to a nearby village and capture and bring back as many people as they can. He sends the warriors with the two dozen zombies, who head off in a direction of



Even once Vigord is defeated the Storm Knight's must deal with the curse.

your choosing. Unless stopped, the zombies return a few hours later with 40 prisoners and corpses, who are all thrown into the prisoner pen.

Meanwhile, Vigord sends out two warriors every few hours to scour the lands for old tomes that might offer some clue about how to lift his curse. The Storm Knights should see people coming and going, hauling all kinds of strange occult items to their master, who examines and then discards them in disgust.

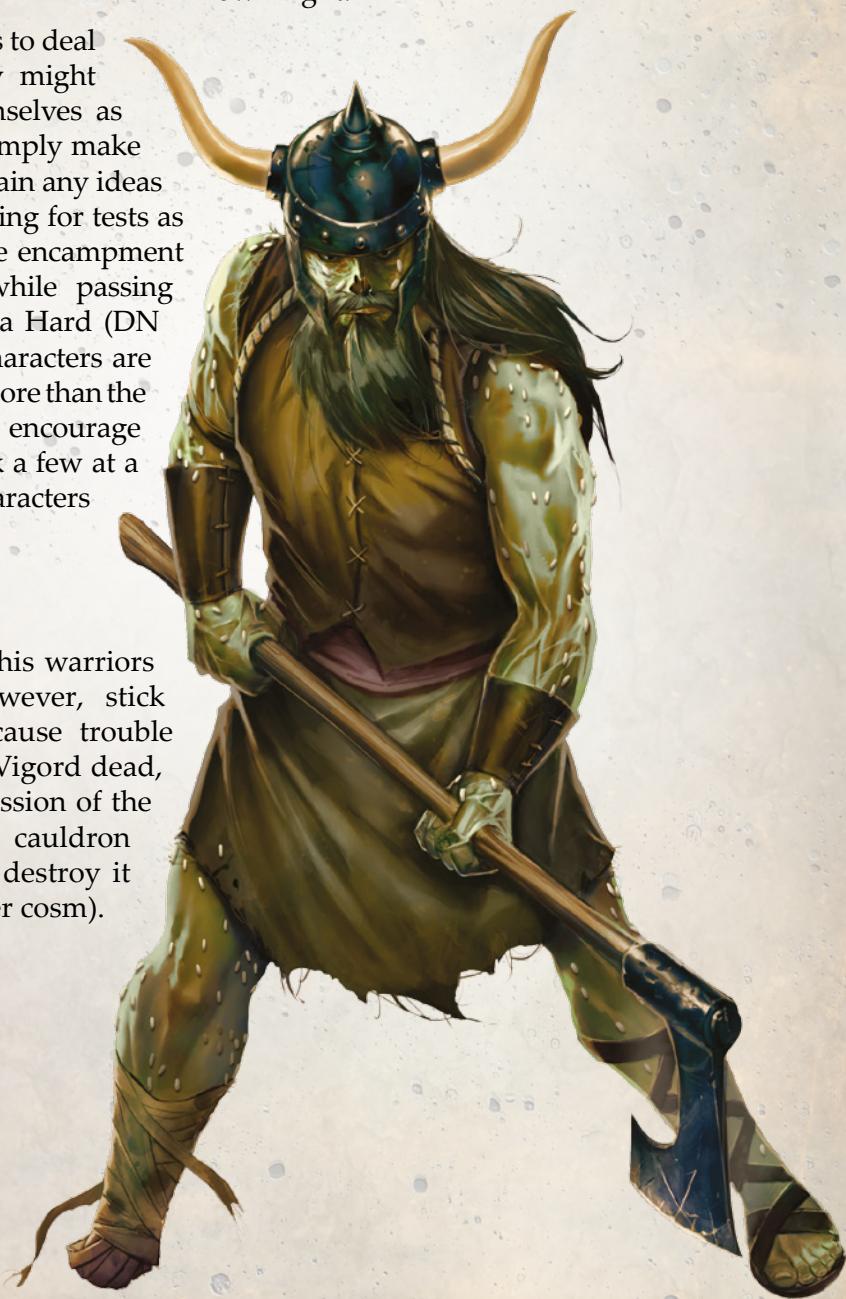
STOPPING VIGORD

The Storm Knights have several ways to deal with Vigord and his cronies. They might sneak into the camp, disguise themselves as Warriors of the Northern Blaze, or simply make an all-out assault on the place. Entertain any ideas the players might come up with, calling for tests as you feel necessary. Sneaking into the encampment should be Very Hard (DN 16), while passing themselves off as warriors requires a Hard (DN 14) *persuasion* test if the disguised characters are confronted. A direct attack might be more than the characters can handle, so you might encourage them to draw off warriors and attack a few at a time, or create a distraction so the characters can get to Vigord and the cauldron.

AFTERMATH

Once the characters defeat Vigord, his warriors flee the camp. The zombies, however, stick around or might wander off to cause trouble unless they are all destroyed. With Vigord dead, the characters are free to take possession of the cauldron. They might return the cauldron to the Delphi Council for study or destroy it using magic or explosives (in another cosm).

A character might decide to keep the cauldron and bond to it by dripping her blood into it. If this happens, the character becomes cursed: Each day the character goes without creating an undead using the cauldron, she reduces her Strength by 1 as her body begins to rot. If the character's Strength drops to 0, the character dies, her body dissolving into stinking soup. A character might lift the curse by returning the cauldron to the hag's lair from which it was stolen, or through some other action as you decide—which could be an adventure in its own right!





SEARCH AND RESCUE

BY MONICA VALENTINELLI

COSM: LIVING LANDS

LOCATION: A MAKESHIFT CAMP OCCUPIED BY "RESISTANCE" GROUPS IN THE DEEP JUNGLE

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. A "runner" catches up to the group to deliver a message and a crudely drawn map from the Delphi Council. Unable to use technology, to get messages out of the Living Lands its denizens must resort to older methods of communication off the grid. In this case, the story is even more troublesome, for the Delphi Council has intercepted a message scratched on a bloodied animal skin in Morse code. The runner is anxious and tells the group the Delphi Council demands they drop everything and take on a new directive. Then, she hands a capsule to the Storm Knights, gives a small salute, and then sprints back the same way she came.

Inside the capsule, the Storm Knights find the original message, its translation, and a communique from the Delphi Council. The crude message's translation reads:

Bone Tower still on Baruk's side. Will need more convincing to join Crystal Cave. Meet at Five Forks River.

The communique is as follows:

Two policemen accidentally intercepted this message while shaking down a thief in Boston, and immediately handed it over to us. We have verified the contents of the message are genuine, and expect this to be confirmation that a coup to overthrow Baruk is in progress. Your mission is to pick up the trail and meet at Five Forks River. From the map provided, the landmarks will help pinpoint your location just outside of Boston. From there, you are to assess the situation and find out what all parties know. Then, you are to report back and await further instructions. We expect this mission will be straightforward, and will rendezvous with you in Boston.

This is Alpha Clearance and urgent. As they say in the Living Lands, may you draw breath another day, Storm Knights.



A jungle ambush can come from any direction.

The note ends with a stamp, the Delphi Council seal.

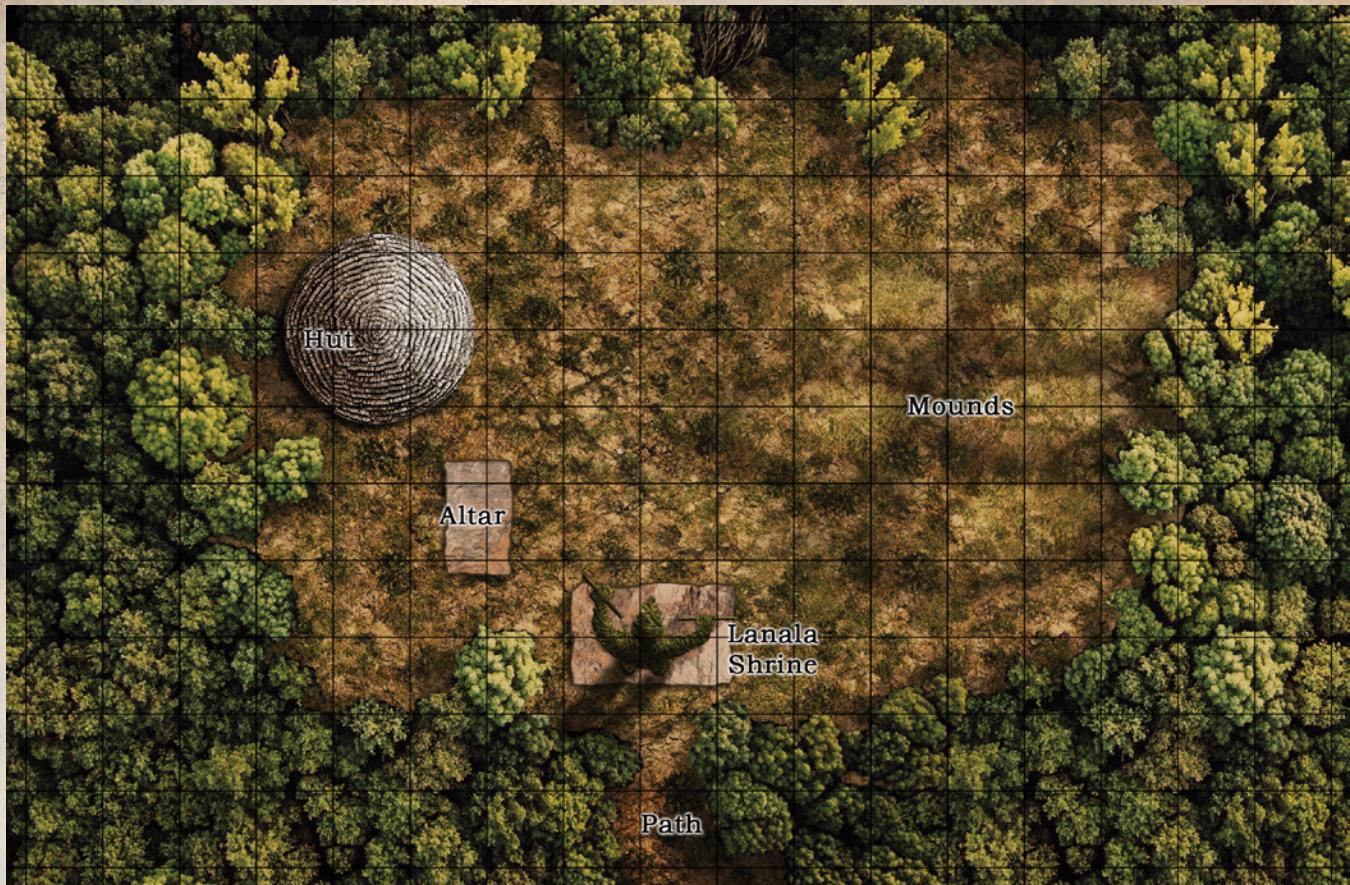
FIVE FORKS RIVER

Despite the density of the jungle and the occasional roar of a hungry dinosaur, the rendezvous point is easy to find. It is clear from the warmth of a dying fire that the site was recently occupied. Whomever waited in the camp had been there for a while, and they were clearly expecting company. A closer look at the scene, however, yields fresh clues. Torn ferns, broken branches, and a splintered spear indicate the Storm Knights have just missed a skirmish, and muddy trails clearly show the victor captured not one but three hostages.

Storm Knights inspecting a wider circumference of the area discover a human survivor who has been marked by Baruk Kaah's loyal Redjaws. Hiding in a small cave, the man's leg is bleeding and the image of a lizard's skull has been hastily

burnt into his forearm, branding him for life. The man is curious, anxious, and afraid he is being watched. Always looking over his shoulder, he does not leave his hiding place to engage with the Storm Knights. A successful *persuasion* test convinces the man the Storm Knights are there to help, but he does not leave the cave under any circumstances.

Once inside the cave, Geoffrey whispers hurriedly, telling the Storm Knights he's thankful the Delphi Council got his message in time. His crew of "Resistance" fighters and explorers have been secretly mapping an underground city they dubbed "Paradise." Referred to by many names—Eden, Shangri-la, Arcadia—Geoffrey relays tragic news: A band of Redjaws ambushed their camp's guards a few days ago, and the rest of his crew has scattered. Only a handful of "Resistance" fighters remain, and he believes they will attempt to rescue the captured to protect Paradise's location.



Storm Knights investigating the area find evidence that the Redjaws have searched for Geoffrey, and they were not subtle. Leaves have been torn, stems have been slashed, and shreds of clothing have been left behind.

Now that the Storm Knights have discovered the truth of the message they received, they are forced to rescue the hostages. What they decide to do with Geoffrey, however, is up to them. Savvy Storm Knights demand that he draw them a map of Paradise, hoping to find the mythical city themselves. Geoffrey reminds them that the Redjaws do not want to occupy Paradise: They want to destroy it. If they want to enter the city, they have to help rescue his crewmates first. Finding and following the Redjaws' trail doesn't require a test, but an Easy (DN 8) *find, evidence analysis, or tracking* test points out that the trail is very fresh—the Redjaws are still in the area and can be found praying to Lanala nearby.

SHRINE OF LANALA

The trail seems to vanish, and the foliage thickens with every step they take. The faster the Storm Knights advance, the more rapidly the dense jungle closes in around them. Forcing their way through unfurling leaves and rapidly growing tree trunks, the group finds themselves at the foot of a tall, growing "statue" formed from intertwining branches and leaves. Savvy Storm Knights recognize that the statue is a depiction of Lanala, and the odd effects they've been experiencing are a sign of Her presence—or *are they?*

A cursory check around the site reveals a decorated priestess whose sole purpose in life is to tend to the goddess and her shrine. To the left of the statue is a modest-sized hut where the priestess, S'laa du Kaah, sleeps, and a sacrificial altar that has not been used in some time. To the right are a series of small, mysterious mounds that are discernible to the naked eye.

S'laa du Kaah is fiercely protective of the shrine, and thwarts the group's efforts to inspect the site further. She does not hesitate to defend Lanala's living incarnation with her life, and ensures the group does not move any further. Pressing S'laa du Kaah results in an attack, especially if the Storm Knights realize she was responsible for their barred passage. The priestess is a master of optical tricks she learned long ago, and uses her lapsed training to protect the shrine from outsiders.

S'LAA DU KAAH

S'laa du Kaah maintains the small shrine, and considers herself to be a "neutral" party when it suits her. She may not look the part, but she once trained as an edeinos warrior and served Baruk many years ago—until she was exiled. Ordered to remain behind, S'laa du Kaah has been waiting for the opportunity to help her former master, and regain the glory for which she has long thirsted.

At first, S'laa du Kaah plays the part of a dutiful penitent, and goes so far as to help the visitors make a proper offering to the goddess of life. She appears disinterested in their affairs, and devoted to maintaining the shrine at all costs. However, as soon as the crew or the Storm Knights identify themselves in some way she does whatever she can to ensure they remain in the shrine. If they decide to leave, S'laa du Kaah starts attacking them in order of weakest to strongest until reinforcements arrive. Then, when the battle appears to be in her favor, she begins sacrificing them to Lanala.

S'laa du Kaah knows her environment well, and uses the foliage to her advantage. She has replanted many of the shrubs and bushes into earthen pots covered in moss; a Very Hard *find* check reveals her deception, and allows the Storm Knights to better maneuver the area.

Quote: "The jungle ensnares you, binds you to it, to my will. I think you will be my next sacrifice."

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 11, Mind 7, Spirit 9, Strength 10

Skills: Dodge 12, faith 10, find 9, intimidation 11, maneuver 12, melee weapons 12, missile weapons 12, stealth 14, taunt 8, trick 9, unarmed combat 12

Move: 11; **Tough:** 10; **Shock:** 9; **Wounds:** 3

Equipment: Hrockt-shoot spear (*Strength* +2/12).

Perks: Chameleon Skin, Whiptail

Possibilities: 2

Special Abilities: —

- **Bite/Claws:** Damage *Strength* +2 (12).

- **Superior Camouflage:** While S'laa du Kaah is in dense foliage ranged attacks suffer a -6 penalty.

INSIDE THE STATUE

Once S'laa du Kaah feels duly threatened, she retreats to Lanala, and "disappears" into the statue. Believing she is safe, the priestess *taunts* the Storm Knights, ensuring they remain on site so Ma'haak can arrive and verify she is still loyal to Baruk Kaah.

"Why do you fight a priestess of Lanala? Do you not know how she protects me? I know what it is you seek. This...Paradise. I have heard the city's name



whispered on the lips of all who've passed me. Lanala will bless our warriors and we will find it soon. It is to be burned, this heretical city, for no shrine or village or city is more blessed with life than the Living Lands of the goddess. Heathens and blasphemers... BEWARE!

The longer S'laa du Khaa speaks, the more time she has to block the Storm Knights from following after her. The base of the statue, which is about five meters wide by six meters long, has a clear path cut into the foliage. S'laa is crafty, however, and she has a seemingly endless supply of thorny bushes, giant leaves, and other greenery she uses to mask her passage.

Once through, the Storm Knights find themselves in another thicket. At this point, the group should know the plants are portable and can use this to their advantage in the fight. As they clear the area in their pursuit of S'laa du



Khaa, they hear the roar of an unfamiliar beast—a triceratops! Sitting atop this bony marvel is a Redjaw warrior preparing to charge!

MA'HAAK

Deftly hidden behind Lanala's statue in the dense foliage, Ma'haak is a senior scout and veteran Redjaw. She is devoted to the goddess, and believes her prayers hide her tracks. Trusted and feared by her peers, she is often defended by three other Redjaw loyalists: Ka'aat, B'laas, and Santuk.

Ma'haak is a simple, seasoned warrior who does as she's told. Utterly devoted to Baruk Kaah, the scout makes decisions in his best interests, but does not hesitate to kill anyone who threatens his rule. She believes any outsiders must be tortured and questioned before killed, however, and lunges for the Storm Knights. If they resist, she kills hostages and resorts to the grisly, fear-based tactics she's known for. When the heroes refuse, Ma'haak—and her Triceratops—will attack.

Quote: "Surrender."

Attributes: Charisma 5, Dexterity 9, Mind 6, Spirit 8, Strength 10

Skills: Beast riding 10, dodge 10, faith 9, find 8, intimidation 10, maneuver 10, melee weapons 11, missile weapons 10, stealth 10, survival 8, tracking 8, unarmed combat 11

Move: 9; **Tough:** 10; **Shock:** 10; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: Hrockt-shoot spear (*Strength +2/12*)

Perks: Beastrider, Whirlwind

Possibilities: 2

Special Abilities:

- **Bite/Claws:** Damage Strength +2 (12).

Note: Ma'haak is often accompanied by one Redjaw edeinos warrior (see *Torg Eternity*) for each hero present. Should the battle with S'laa du Kaah end quickly, they ambush the group shortly after they leave the shrine.

MA'AK THE TRICERATOPS

Similar to what was once thought triceratops of ancient Earth must look like, this Living Land creature has a bony, plated head and three sharp horns. Ma'ak is larger-than-average, and its hide is decorated in a lizard's skull. Raised from an egg, the Triceratops defends her warrior-master, Ma'haak, to the death.

Attributes: Charisma 4, Dexterity 6, Mind 4, Spirit 8, Strength 16

Skills: Dodge 11, find 8, intimidation 10, maneuver 7, stealth 7, unarmed combat 10

Move: 8; **Tough:** 19 (3); **Shock:** 12; **Wounds:** 3

Equipment: —

Perks: —

Possibilities: Never.

Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** Bony crest and thick hide +3.
- **Charge:** +2 damage to an attack after the creature moves more than a walk.

THE AFTERMATH

After the hostages are rescued, S'laa du Kaah and Ma'haak must be KO'ed or defeated if Paradise's location is to remain safe. The mission is then complete. Following this, the Storm Knights should reunite the hostages with Geoffrey, who has fallen ill and died. Survivors are traumatized and beg for the Storm Knights' protection. Taken into their care, the Storm Knights have a new mystery to unravel—verifying Paradise's location and protecting it from Baruk's wrath. But first, they must return to The Delphi Council and report their findings.



THE DUMAS GAMBIT

BY JOHN WICK

**COSM: CYBERPAPACY,
TOULOUSE, FRANCE**

**LOCATION: A HOTEL, THE
GRAND ROBERT**

The original handwritten pages of *The Three Musketeers* have been found in Toulouse. The Delphi Council wants to use this Eternity Shard to help uproot the stelae near Bourge and severely cripple the Cyberpope's control over France.

Unfortunately, it's a trap. The Cyberpope is luring Storm Knights into Toulouse to extract information about the Delphi Council. He wants to know what they know and convert the Knights into faithful warriors under his control. When they arrive, their contact gives them "the pages" in a suitcase with a tracker. The pages are a forgery. The Knights are attacked by agents of the Cyberpapacy and must escape the hotel without being captured.

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. A message arrives from the Delphi Council. Because of the GodNet's constant monitoring of electronic communications, the message arrives by hand in a locked Halliburton briefcase. Inside the case is a sealed envelope. Inside the envelope are the following instructions:

We've received notice of an Eternity Shard recently unearthed in the Cyberpope's cosm: the original handwritten draft of Alexandre Dumas's The Three Musketeers. One of our agents has the pages and needs assistance getting out of the cosm.

Meet the agent at The Grand Robert hotel in Toulouse. The agent's codename is D'artagnan. He will be in room 232 at 12:00 a.m., Friday.

This is Alpha Clearance and urgent. Bonne chance, Storm Knights.

The note ends with a stamp, the Delphi Council seal.

THE GRAND ROBERT

The majority of this adventure takes place in The Grand Robert. It was once a magnificent hotel in the heart of Toulouse, but since the Cyberpapacy washed



The Church Police know who the Storm Knights are, and eyes are always watching.

its reality over the city, it has become something of a haunted building. Still a "hotel" in the strictest sense of the word, it looks more like a tall medieval dungeon. The hallways are like a twisted nightmare, the rooms full of darkness and shadow, every heavy wooden door barred with iron locks. The agents of Pope Jean Malreaux used The Grand Robert as a makeshift prison for heretics and dissenters, but a recent attack by the resistance left the place a hollow shell of its former self. Burned-out rooms, blasted windows and doors, treacherous floors. The place is a deathtrap. You can still smell the smoke and electricity and blood. If you're very quiet, you can hear echoes of the screams.

The place is now filled with squatters and criminals: five stories of dilapidated elegance and horror. Street gangs, drug addicts, crippled dissenters. The Cyberpope's teams have covertly placed explosives at key points inside the hotel if he ever wants to be rid of it once and for all, but for now, he's glad to have so much sin and wretchedness in one place so he can keep a cybernetic eye on them. Also, Malreaux uses agents to manipulate the two gangs inside the hotel against his enemies. And he's placed secret cameras inside the hotel. Watching suffering of sinners is one of his favorite pastimes. Almost as if he was given a private screening of Hell.

Because the place is usually free of Malreaux's forces—or so the Delphi Council believes—The Grand Robert seems to be a perfect place to meet. Unfortunately, the Cyberpope has other plans.

FACTIONS IN THE HOTEL

Within the hotel are three factions: the Street Rats, the Black Eyes and a faction lead by a disillusioned revolutionary named Armand.

The three factions know about each other and keep a kind of ceasefire. They all know who the real enemy is and try to keep their heads down to avoid his notice. However, once the Storm Knights arrive, that delicate balance is thrown off. Add one of Malreaux's best strike teams to the mix and all bets are off.

ROSELLE GAGE: THE HEAD OF THE BLACK EYES

The head of the Black Eyes is Roselle Gage. Roselle has short-cropped black hair and tattoos up and down her arms. She has not yet been converted to the Cyberpapacy's reality, but she can feel her personality slipping away. It's only a matter of time. She's decided she will break every law and commit every sin until that day happens. She's given up hope and



that makes her a very dangerous woman. She was a soldier when the storm flooded across France, sworn to protect her homeland. When she saw the whole world transforming before her eyes, her mind nearly broke. Now, instead of being a soldier, she's a woman desperately clinging to what's left of her sanity.

Roselle could be both an enemy and an ally for the Storm Knights when they enter the hotel. With the Storm Knights, she could escape the Cyberpapacy and not be transformed under the weight of its reality. Or, she could resent the Storm Knights. "Why didn't the world choose me to be a hero?" she screams at them as she fires bullets at the Storm Knights. "Why not me?"

Quote: "Storm Knights, huh? Lucky for you."

Attributes: Charisma 7, Dexterity 9, Mind 7, Spirit 8, Strength 8

Skills: Dodge 11, find 9, fire combat 12, melee weapons 10, missile weapons 10, persuasion 9, streetwise 7, taunt 8, unarmed combat 10

Move: 9; **Tough:** 12 (4); **Shock:** 10; **Wounds:** 1

Equipment: AK-47 (Damage 14, Rapid Fire), Ballistic Vest (Armor +4, Torso), Disruptor

Grenade (Damage 16, Medium Blast, non-lethal)

Perks: Endurance, Sniper

Possibilities: None

Special Abilities: —

Moïse Daniau:

THE HEAD OF THE STREET RATS

Moïse Daniau was a common street thief before the Cyberpapacy invaded. Once that happened, he turned into something else. The Cyberpapacy transformed him into a criminal mastermind, a cybernetic version of Charles Dickens' Fagan. Daniau has a small army of street urchins picking pockets and running scams all over the city. But he doesn't have only children at his beck and call. He also has a personal guard of heavies who protect Daniau and his "*neveaux et nièces*."

Daniau honestly cares about the children under his care, but he is ruthless about protecting them. He will cut throats without a second thought. Break legs, shatter jaws, it doesn't matter. You cross his kids and you pay the price. The children generally love their "Uncle" as well. Most of them were orphans

of the Cyberpapacy invasion, and now they have a family. They will protect him, no matter the cost.

Daniau has about a dozen heavies monitoring the halls and walking the streets. Not all of them have the same devotion as Daniau when it comes to protecting the children, but many of them do. Some of them are simple mercenaries who will turn on Uncle Daniau the moment a better deal comes along. Something to remember when everything goes south.

Quote: "Get out of my house!"

Attributes: Charisma 9, Dexterity 10, Mind 8, Spirit 6, Strength 7

Skills: Dodge 12, energy weapons 11, find 10, lockpicking 11, persuasion 10, stealth 12, streetwise 11, taunt 10, trick 10

Move: 10; **Tough:** 7; **Shock:** 6; **Wounds:** 1

Equipment: Godlight Laser (Damage 14, Small), Hologram Clasp (Ranged attacks suffer -2)

Perks: Cyberware (Cyberham Fingerprint and

Retina Mimics, Bellevue Low-Light MK II)

Possibilities: None.

Special Abilities:

- **Insidious:** When Daniau successfully performs an Approved Action, remove one card from any affected hero's Action Pool.

THE FALLEN DISSENTER: PHILLIPE BOUCHARD

Phillipe was once the head of the resistance in Toulouse, but a failed attempt to sabotage the Cyberpope's headquarters resulted in a dozen lost lives and the loss of his arm. He has since replaced the arm with cybernetics: a constant reminder of his failure. He has a small group of mercenaries who now use their skills to survive in the Cyberpope's horror realm, trying to keep their heads low enough to avoid his attention. Little do they know they are under *constant* observation by Malreaux's security forces. That's because Phillippe's arm is bugged. Malreaux hears and sees *everything* Phillippe does.



Allies are hard to find and harder to keep in the rampant paranoia of the Cyberpapacy.

One of the reasons Malreaux has not yet raided The Grand Robert is Bouchard. He is an amazing and cunning warrior. A resource too valuable to simply throw away. Malreaux wants him on his side and he's playing the long game to get him. He is *inches* away from surrender, losing hope every day. And when he does, Bouchard will belong to the Church, body and soul.

Quote: "You know what you did? You brought him with you!"

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 10, Mind 7, Spirit 7, Strength 9

Skills: Dodge 11, find 8, energy weapons 12, fire combat 12, maneuver 11, melee combat 11, stealth 11, streetwise 7, unarmed combat 11

Move: 10; **Tough:** 13 (4); **Shock:** 6; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: Ballistic Vest (Armor +4, Torso), GodMeeter (Damage 15, Hacked), Riot Stick (Damage *Strength* +3/13, Painful)

Perks: Cyberware (Encrypted Comms, Hardplas Arm), Double-Tap

Possibilities: None.

Special Abilities: —

BUILDING OCCUPANTS (COMBATANTS)

Each faction has people willing to fight for their turf. Most only have a .38 revolver and a shock stick. One of every five combatants has a hacked GodMeeter. Bouchard's forces all have ballistic vests and AK-47s.

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 7, Mind 7, Spirit 6, Strength 8

Skills: Dodge 8, energy weapons 8, find 8, fire combat 8, melee weapons 8, stealth 8, streetwise 7, taunt 7

Move: 7; **Tough:** 8; **Shock:** 6; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: Varies (see above)

Perks: —

Possibilities: None.

Special Abilities: —

THE CONTACT: AMBROSE DUFOUR

Ambroise Dufour is an agent of the Cyberpope, specializing in counterintelligence. He introduced the plan of luring Storm Knights deep into Cyberpapacy territory for the purpose of capture and conversion and Malreaux quickly approved.

Dufour looks like a simple man. In his early 50s, dumpy, plain brown hair. He wears pale brown clothes and has a balding hairline. When he speaks, it is with quiet desperation and fear. Of course, this is all an act. He is actually a dangerous opponent, equipped with the tools, skills, and equipment to avoid the Storm Knights if needed. However, once the trap has been sprung, he will prove his *true* skills to the Storm Knights.

His plan is to show them the Dumas papers (forgeries) and win their trust. He's terrified. He was a librarian and discovered the documents in a basement just a few days ago. He needs to get these out of the city and into a Core Earth realm as soon as possible. He will not let go of them and will insist on the Storm Knights taking him along. Remember: desperate and terrified.

Then, when Cassandra Laurent (see below) shows up, he puts a small device over his nose and mouth and hits the Storm Knights with a stun gas pellet, hoping to knock them out. That's when the fun begins.

Ambrose has a secondary goal here: the conversion of Phillippe Bouchard. Malreaux told Ambrose to win over Bouchard if he can, or at least push him closer to conversion. This will spell trouble with Cassandra Laurent, however (see below).

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 7, Mind 10, Spirit 8, Strength 6

Skills: Dodge 8, find 12, evidence analysis 12, missile weapons 8, persuasion 9, stealth 10, streetwise 9, taunt 8, trick 12, unarmed combat 7

Move: 6; **Tough:** 7; **Shock:** 6; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: Chameleon Clothing, Godlight Laser (Damage 14, Small), Stun Gas Pellet (Everyone in a Large Blast is poisoned unless they're wearing breathing apparatus. Each person affected must make a DN 8 *Strength* test or be KOed. Success leaves the character Very Stymied instead. A Good Success reduces that to Stymied, and an Outstanding Success ignores the gas completely.)

Perks: —

Possibilities: None

Special Abilities: —

THE INQUISITOR: CASSANDRA LAURENT

Cassandra Laurent is one of Malreaux's most trusted Inquisitors. Armed with cyber-enhanced senses and an electrified scourge, she is devoted to the Church and eager to capture Storm Knights... to punish them for their sins and convert them to the One True Faith, of course. She has a small strike force (Church Police Streetbeaters, see *Torg Eternity*) waiting with her in an abandoned building nearby. As soon as the Storm Knights head up to the fifth floor, she'll enter the front door and start making her way up. She is confident the residents of The Grand Robert will stay out of her way. Nobody in that place wants trouble. They will all stay in their rooms and act like the little cockroaches they are: skittering at the first sign of light.

Of course, Cassandra is a woman of the One True Faith, and that One True Faith demands that sinners pay for their degradations. The moment she catches *anyone* peeking out their door, she will find a reason to punish them and punish them *harshly*. Whether that's a member of the Black Eyes or the Street Rats doesn't matter. All sinners are sinners.

Cassandra knows her job is to capture the Storm Knights, but she also sees this as an opportunity to do some "real good." She plans to terrorize the inhabitants of The Grand Robert, proving herself to the Cyberpope. At least, that's what she *thinks* her actions are doing.

Cassandra also knows Phillip Bouchard. In fact, she is the reason he lost his arm. If she sees or hears about Bouchard, she makes herself a new goal: finish off the job she started. She may even send her mercs to take care of the Storm Knights while *she* takes care of Bouchard. This, of course, flies in the face of Ambrose Dufour's secondary goal. However, she doesn't like or trust Dufour (liars are liars are liars) and will ignore him. Or maybe even arrange for an accidental incident for the spy...

Attributes: Charisma 8, Dexterity 8, Mind 9, Spirit 11, Strength 7

Skills: Dodge 9, energy weapons 10, evidence analysis 11, faith 14, find 11, fire combat 10, intimidation 12, land vehicles 9, maneuver 9, melee weapons 12, persuasion 9, stealth 10, taunt 11, trick 10, unarmed combat 9, willpower 11

Move: 8; **Tough:** 9 (2); **Shock:** 11; **Wounds:** 3

Equipment: GodBeam Laser (Damage 14, Short Burst, AP1), Power Scourge (Damage Strength +3/11, Reach 2 meters, Painful)

Perks: (Cyberware: Bellevue 20-20 Cyber Eye, Hardplas Arm, Trigon Body Plating), Trademark Weapon (Power Scourge), Whirlwind

Possibilities: 3

Special Abilities:

• **Gloater:** When *taunt* or *intimidation* are Approved Actions, Laurent may affect the entire party without a Multi-Target penalty. Affected heroes lose a random card from their hand.

CONSEQUENCES

What we've provided here is a setup. You have the three factions inside the hotel plus the Inquisitor and her mole. What happens after the trap has been sprung depends entirely on your players and their choices.

When they enter the hotel, they could run into any of the three factions, establishing a relationship with them right away. If they win any of the factions to their side, that's a definite advantage. If they make enemies out of any of the factions, that's a disadvantage.

Roselle Gage and her Black Eyes want nothing to do with the Church. When Cassandra shows up, Roselle panics.

If the Storm Knights have made contact with her and made her an ally, she reluctantly helps them, realizing they may be her last hope of retaining her own reality.

If the Storm Knights have not made contact with her or made her angry, she may work *with* Cassandra to capture them. The enemy of my enemy is still my enemy.

Moïse protects his nephews and nieces at all costs, even if that means turning over the Storm Knights. Of course, if the Storm Knights protect one of his charges, that might change his mind.

As for Phillip Bouchard, he wants nothing to do with the Church. Once the Inquisition makes its presence known, he does everything in his power to avoid them... unless the Storm Knights can win him to their cause.

AFTERMATH

If the Storm Knights escape the hotel, they have a clear shot to getting out of the city. At least, that's how it seems.

If they do not escape...well, that's just the start of a new adventure, isn't it?

TOMBSTORM

BY GREG GORDEN

COSM: CORE EARTH

LOCATION: ANYWHERE

PLOT SYNOPSIS

Heketon plays a twisted long game with the Gaunt Man. The Darkness Device created the Tombstorm, a reality storm that snatches the life forces of those who are crossing the threshold to death. Heketon has become aware of the Storm Knights, and believes they have sufficient possibility energy to complete an important goal: perfecting a new variety of Nightmare Tree. The tree changes the nature of death from an end of being to the beginning of servitude to Heketon. Everything that dies within range of the Nightmare Tree then serves Heketon.

DELPHI COUNCIL BRIEFING

The reality storm can be located anywhere the Game Master wishes the game narrative to go; the default location is Core Earth near refinery complexes close to Houston, Texas. The longevity, location, and stationary nature of the storm are mysteries. Reality storms are not known to appear in stable dominant realities, nor sit for days on end.

The Delphi Council calls in the Storm Knights after a first, less-experienced team of operatives was sent to investigate the Tombstorm. Led by Kayleigh Corcoran, the team fell out of contact minutes into the storm. The team has not exited the storm by the extraction hour. The heroes need to investigate the storm, and if possible rescue survivors of the first team.

STORMFRONT

The Tombstorm has unprecedented ferocity, even for reality storms. Approaching and first entering the storm, the heroes experience several details:

- The winds howl and shift, the rain pelts down hard enough to raise welts on unprotected flesh, and cracks of lightning and thunderous booms are deafening. Electromagnetic communications (radio, cell phone, telegraph) are blocked; re-establishing communications



The strange lightning of a reality storm means trouble is nearby

requires a standard *reality* test (DN 10). Characters need to speak loudly to be heard by anyone within two meters; a standard *Strength* test (DN 12) is needed if a hero wants to be heard by anyone more distant.

• Inverted rainbows emerge from clouds at the edge of the storm; the bend and the colors are opposite to those found in nature. Success at a standard *reality* or *science* test (DN 12) reveals this is an occult process drawing light from the center of the storm, and excreting it outside the periphery of the storm, making the center unnaturally dark.

• The wind and rain are savage, varying in ways not explained by weather. Success at a standard *find* test (DN 10) reveals the rain is always lighter immediately around the heroes, out to a range of 15 meters. Beyond 15 meters the rain is extremely heavy, providing cover to any creatures in the heavier rain. Storm Knights can never benefit from this cover, no matter how they

position themselves, but a successful *maneuver* in combat can be used to move in a way that denies opponents the benefit of cover for the round.

• Mud devils, vortices averaging eight meters in height, spring into and out of existence. Mud devils emit a keening roar in the presence of *reality*-rated characters. Heketon's minions can hear this roar above the din of the storm, and know the rough position of the heroes. Mud devils are filled with muck and rock from the saturated soil, and getting hit by one is like getting tossed into a rapidly spinning cement mixer. Normally slow-moving and easily avoided, during combat they whirl up and move with pace. If the investigators experience a Drama Deck setback in combat, each hero must make a standard *dodge* test (DN 12). Success avoids all the mud devils; fail, and a mud devil hits the hero for damage $15 + 1\text{BD}$ as he is spun, tumbled and smashed about. The hero emerges Very Stymied and Very Vulnerable.

KNIVES ON THE WIND

As the heroes move deeper into the storm, they sense they are being stalked. Storm sentries pace them, two storm sentries per Storm Knight. The creatures keep cover in the rain, taking shots at the heroes for one or two rounds to gauge the difficulty of their opposition, and to select their targets. They then attack in earnest, exploiting any weakness found through their reconnaissance by fire.

The Storm Sentries do not fight to the last, preferring to flee when the odds are too great. There are others in the storm, and the Game Master can decide if another attack is imminent, and how powerful that attack might be.

When the Storm Knights are deep enough into the storm to encounter the sentries, they also start to see the dying lights glimmering in the rain. The dying lights flit and dart about the characters, just missing contact by veering away at the last split-second. Once a Storm Knight suffers a Mishap, that Storm Knight is hit by a dying light. From that point forward, each character not yet hit by a dying light may be hit by one (at the Game Master's discretion), as the investigators march toward the Nightmare Tree and Plantation.

STORM SENTRYES

Storm Sentries are slender, taloned humanoids, a mixture of hues of green, blue and brown. Sentinels are covered by vitreous skin, rough in many places, but polished smooth in the eyes, talons, fangs, and clawed feet.

Storm Sentries may have a glowing, polished nodule holding their one Possibility.

Attributes: Charisma 8, Dexterity 12, Mind 11, Spirit 10, Strength 10

Skills: Dodge 12, fire combat 15, intimidation 11, melee weapons 13, perception 11, taunt 10, trick 15, willpower 10

Move: 10; **Tough:** 10; **Shock:** 10; **Wounds:** 1

Equipment: —

Perks: —

Possibilities: Rare (1)

Special Abilities:

- Bone Breaker:** The Storm Sentinel fires small shards of its own body like bullets (Damage 14, Range 25/50/100).

- Compactable:** Storm Sentries often begin in a compacted form about a quarter of their usual size. While compact the sentry may not move or attack, but it counts as Small (-2) to find or hit with ranged attacks. If a Storm Sentry takes an Active Defense it compacts for the rest of the round.

- Storm Touch Sliver:** Shards of the sentinel drive into the target and deal electrical shocks. Damage *Strength* +2 (12) and the attack is Painful (increase the Shock dealt by one).

- Wind Rider:** Storm Sentries may jump 24 meters, but become Vulnerable when they do so.

THE DYING LIGHTS

Dying lights are dimly glowing strands of viscous luminescence floating in the darkness of the storm. They coagulate and harden, then crack and dissolve in the cold rain, returning slightly less luminescent each time through the cycle. Dying lights are the final thoughts and experiences of the beings killed in the Tombstorm. Careening erratically on the winds of the storm, an innate need slowly drives them toward the living. When a dying light makes contact with a living character, he goes through the experience held in the dying light. Storm Knights must make a test or suffer a fate which echoes the manner of death of the dying light.

- The Storm Knight hears the whir of rotors, feels a violent shaking. He hears a voice say, "Nonsense lad, with the Horus Four stabilizers, this autogyro can fly through any storm!" The Storm Knight makes a standard *air vehicles* test (DN 12). On success the sounds and feeling fade. On failure, he takes damage from the crash, Damage 22.

- A roar of thunder leaves the hero's ears ringing as the earth rattles beneath her feet. Someone shouts "Dr. Corcoran! Crap, a bolt just hit Kayleigh. See if she is still breathing so we..." and then a crackling boom. The hero makes a standard *reality* test (DN 13); success and lightning arcs harmlessly around her. On failure, she takes Damage 21 from the lightning strike.

- The investigator is bewildered, and he muses, "There should not be a nightmare tree here. Who would dare plant one without our lord's express permission?" A sound like the snapping of a dozen trees follows. The investigator makes



Nightmare trees are the Gaunt Man's tool, but they're connected to Heketon, not him!

a standard *dodge* test (DN 12); success and he finds himself standing in a five-meter crater, shaking violently. Failure and he takes a Tomb Pulse from Plantation, Damage 24 +1BD.

• The Storm Knight clutches a coat collar while running through the rain. Footsteps splash behind her. The moment she no longer hears those footsteps, she spins and slices upward with a shimmering ionized blade at the three storm sentinels leaping upon her. The Storm Knight makes a standard *melee weapons* test (DN 19); on success she feels the sentinels shatter on her blade as the scene fades. On a failure she takes storm touch Damage 14, 14, and 19.

• The hero tugs at the hand of someone larger as he says, "We cannot wait for tow truck, Mama. We have got to run. We have got to run now!" He makes a standard *persuasion* test (DN 14); success and the scene fades. Failure and there is the sound of car windows shattering, screams, and blow after blow as the car is tossed and crushed around him. He takes Damage 22.

• The Storm Knight pounds her chest and bellows a challenge, "I do not fear you, I do not fear my wounds. Come, thing of death, come face the living wrath of Lanala!" She makes

a standard *faith* test (DN 12); success and the scene fades as she screams out her triumph. Failure and she takes Damage 19.

PLANTATION, DR. CORCORAN, AND THE NIGHTMARE TREE

Near the eye of the storm, rain falls gently in darkness illuminated only by numerous lightning strikes and the flaming brush and trees ignited by those strikes. The investigators see a woman, a dark twisted tree, and a 14-meter tall anthropomorphized rotting mass. From the briefing, the heroes recognize the woman as Dr. Kayleigh Corcoran. She sprints and maneuvers around the monster. Kayleigh takes aimed shots at every opportunity. She hunts for a vital spot; Plantation seems to have none.

The twisted tree is a nightmare tree. The tree is the center of the storm; Plantation shares its life force with the tree, and guards the tree ferociously. Damaging the tree has little effect, and missing branches are quickly repaired with what looks like crystalline pus. However, damage to Plantation is reflected by damage to the tree; this damage

does not repair. Plantation's death destroys the nightmare tree as well.

PLANTATION

Plantation was once a gospog field in tropical Gaea. Heketon absorbed it into the Tombstorm. Into this mouldering malignancy the Darkness Device stitched the life forces of Stormers and Storm Knights. These victims are the source of Plantation's possibilities, and its surprising intelligence.

Plantation is a huge twisted amalgam of branches, rotting moss, gospog limbs, and the corpses of Possibility-rated victims. It tends to focus on one target until the target is down, but *maneuvers*, *tricks* or *taunts* can get Plantation to switch targets.

Attributes: Charisma 8, Dexterity 9, Mind 9, Spirit 10, Strength 18

Skills: Dodge 10, find 10, intimidation 16, missile weapons 16, taunt 10, trick 10, unarmed combat 12, willpower 12

Move: 15; **Tough:** 18; **Shock:** —; **Wounds:** 5

Equipment: —

Perks: —

Possibilities: 4

Special Abilities:

- **Abomination Before God:** Plantation can be attacked directly by *faith*; no need for Miracles. The attacker uses her *faith* value to attack Plantation's spirit, and the attack has a damage value of her *Spirit* +8.

- **Ground Smash:** Plantation can make an attack with each of its huge fists. Each unarmed combat attack does damage *Strength* +1(19).

- **Huge:** +4 to hit Plantation.

- **Relentless:** Ignores Shock.

- **Tomb Pulse:** On the heroes' turn, Plantation can spend a Possibility to activate a ranged attack which harnesses the screams of the dying into a fearsome blast. The heroes can hear the screams build, and see pieces of Plantation begin to glow. On Plantation's turn, it makes a



- Some visions of death from the Dying Lights are all too real.

missile weapons attack; the attack has a damage value 24 and a Large Blast radius.

- **Undead:** Plantation is immune to poison, and other effects that require breathing, eating or other “living” processes.

DR. KAYLEIGH CORCORAN

A storm chaser, Kayleigh was the only varsity athlete in her department at Purdue University to graduate with honors. Dr. Corcoran was recruited by the Delphi Council after she garnered a reputation from her daring studies of reality storms. Dying in the Tombstorm, Heketon claimed her. Her mark is a functioning, glassy right eye the color of the talons of a storm sentinel. She remembers being struck by lightning, then floating above her own body as a dying light. Kayleigh felt impelled to re-enter her own body, regaining consciousness as she did. She currently suffers from one wound.

Attributes: Charisma 9, Dexterity 11, Mind 12, Spirit 9, Strength 10

Skills: Dodge 15, find 13, fire combat 13, intimidation 9, fire combat 13, maneuver 12, reality 11, taunt 11, trick 13, unarmed combat 12, willpower 10

Move: 10; **Tough:** 13 (3); **Shock:** 10; **Wounds:** 3 (1 wound taken)

Equipment: M-16 (Damage 13), stab vest (+3)

Perks: Realm Runner, Tenacious

Possibilities: 2

Special Abilities: —

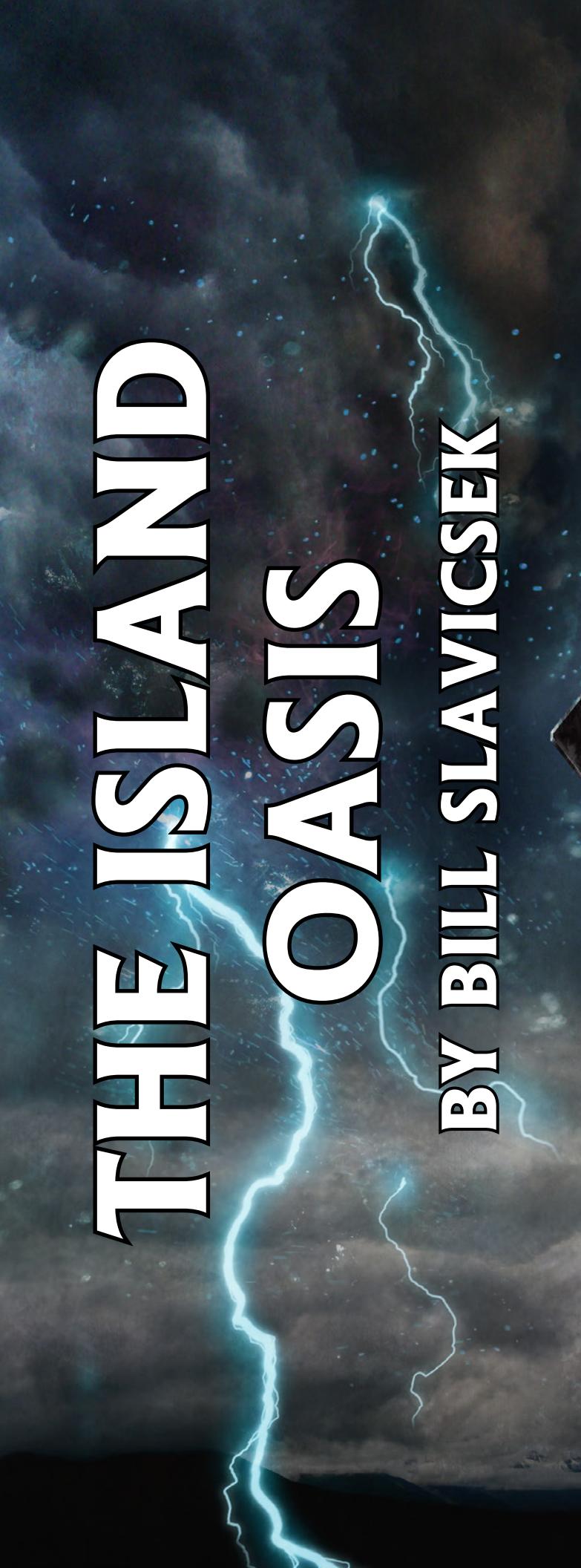
“I’VE BEEN CURSED BEFORE. I DON’T RECOMMEND IT.”

— THOMAS BROWNSTONE

DEATH IN THE TOMBSTORM MEANS SERVICE TO HEKETON

Heketon finally achieved success with this iteration of the Tombstorm. Characters who die in the storm become dying lights. When the dying lights re-enter their body, death is spiritually transformed from a physical state into a state of eternal servitude to the Darkness Device. The hero is not alive, she is not dead or undead; she is some inexplicable “other,” an incarnation of service to Heketon.

- When the dying light re-enters their body, a hero returns to consciousness with one wound. All other damage is healed. This wound may be healed normally.
- Those who die to serve Heketon gain a physical mark. The mark need not be associated with the location of the Tombstorm or its creatures, but often is.
- The Darkness Device does not directly control those dead in its service. They act of their own free will.
- Heketon occasionally guides a servant through nightmares, hallucinations, or even bouts of insanity. This guidance is always directed at undermining the Gaunt Man in some way. The Darkness Device never provides any other assistance or communication.
- A Storm Knight can free himself from servitude to the Darkness Device with a *reality* test (DN 28). The hero is free, changing death back to its original meaning; he is dead. There is no known way of freeing the Storm Knight from servitude and giving him life. Eventually the Storm Knight may hear rumors of a cult near Hyderabad, and an occult ritual that might work.
- Should the Storm Knight die again, outside of the Tombstorm, death regains its usual meaning: She is dead.



THE ISLAND THE OASIS

BY BILL SLAVICKSEK

COSM: THARKOLD

**LOCATION: KIZHI ISLAND,
NORTHWESTERN RUSSIA,
THE BLASTED LAND**

SUMMARY

While in St. Petersburg on other business, the Storm Knights receive new orders to make contact with a Blasted Land scavenger and investigate and verify his claims. Upon meeting the man, he tells the group an amazing story about an oasis in the middle of the Blasted Land, somehow untouched by the devastation all around it. This is the claim the group must investigate as they try to determine why the area—a place called the Kizhi Pogost—resists the corruption of the demonic fallout that typifies the Blasted Land. Traveling from St. Petersburg to Kizhi Island, the group finds that the walled churchyard and the entire island radiate peace and tranquility in stark contrast to what they experienced during the trip here. Once at the Pogost, the group meets Bishop Rafa, sees the legendary Kizhi Axe, and helps repel marauders enhanced by the effects of a dangerous nanodemon mist. Finally, the group must defeat or drive off the technodemon Kratzhen before deciding to leave the axe with the bishop (and preserve this oasis) or take the valuable Eternity Shard back to the Delphi Council (leaving the island to be reclaimed by the Blasted Land).

DELPHI BRIEFING

Standard Scene. The heroes rendezvous in St. Petersburg, a Core Earth hardpoint in western Russia. The Delphi Council sent them to do some legwork for the Bureau of Psychic Research when a trusted contact provides them with new orders. She hands them a fax that bears the seal of the Delphi Council. The fax reads:

"Make contact with a Blasted Land scavenger known as Feofan of the Wastes. He has information that we want you to investigate and verify. He'll wait for you each morning this week at an out-of-the-way coffee shop for exactly one hour, between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m."



Never ignore an opportunity for salvage in the Blasted Land.

If you don't reach the location and make contact by the end of the week, Feofan will disappear back into the Blasted Land, taking the vital information with him.

"To verify that you represent the Council and to identify himself, Feofan will ask, 'Does it look like rain to you?' You must answer, 'No, but I fear we'll get snow before the week is out.' Find out what he wants to tell us, then investigate to confirm his information to the best of your ability."

It ends with the name and address of the coffee shop where the meeting will take place.

If the group arrives at the specified coffee shop at the appropriate time, they spot a large bear of a man in scavenger clothing sitting alone and sipping from a steaming mug. He has a wary look to his hard eyes, and his shaggy dark hair and bushy beard with streaks of gray are in desperate need of a wash and a trim. Feofan examines your group for a long moment before he asks, "Does it look like rain to you?" If the group provides the proper

response, the world-weary scavenger provides the following information:

"Have you heard of the Kizhi Pogost, a rural church on an island some 350 kilometers to the northeast?" Feofan asks in a subdued tone. "The place, situated on Lake Onega, consists of two churches and a bell tower surrounded by a wooden fence. It's right in the heart of the Blasted Land, but the island remains as clear and as beautiful as it was before the maelstrom bridges fell from the sky. Something miraculous occurs there. Something important."

With that, Feofan of the Wastes finishes his coffee and stands to leave. He promised to make contact and pass along the information, and now he wants to get back to his work in the Blasted Land. The group can ask Feofan to help them acquire transportation to Kizhi Island, or they can let him go and make their own way through the Blasted Land.

RESEARCH

The group can use Core Earth technology in St. Petersburg to research the Kizhi Pogost, the site of a 17th-century church that was constructed entirely of wood and built without the use of a single nail. A legend related to the place claims that the main builder used a single axe throughout the construction and then tossed it into Lake Onega upon completion, proclaiming, "There was not and will not be another axe to match it."

LAKE ONEGA

The trek across the Blasted Land can be as dramatic or as uneventful as you decide. It all depends on how you want this adventure to play out and where you want to put the emphasis of the action. You could present the group with a frightful journey through a desolate and savage landscape in the tradition of your favorite post-apocalyptic road warrior movie, or you could decide that the trip passes quietly and without incident until the group reaches the shore of Lake Onega.

If you do decide to play through part or all of the journey to the northwest, here are two encounters you can use to illustrate the wonders and dangers of travel through the Blasted Land.

SALVAGE IN THE WASTES

Standard Scene. The group comes upon the wreckage of a jet aircraft as they make their way across the Blasted Land toward Lake Onega and Kizhi Island. The airplane appears to be a downed commercial airliner. It bears the logo of Globus Airlines and seems relatively intact, with only one major crack in the fuselage and one wing sheared off and lying nearby. If the group decides to explore the wreckage and search for salvage, make sure to describe the scene in an ominous and tense manner. Even if you determine that no threat lingers here other than the usual dangers associated with 32 meters of torn metal and shattered plastic, make sure you describe the interior so as to make the group assume that something terrible could leap out to attack them at any moment. For example:

Frayed and dangling cables spark and sputter, making the dark interior of the damaged aircraft dance with occasional flashes of light and shifting shadows. The passengers, many still belted into

their seats, appear long dead and well beyond the cares of the mortal world. Most of the overhead bins hang open, and luggage lies scattered across the length of the aisle. A noise, like metal tapping on metal, emanates from somewhere in the bowels of the aircraft. It repeats a few times, stops, and repeats again a few moments later. Then silence returns to fill the dark, desolate cabin.

What made the noise? Wind causing a loose piece of debris to strike against the hull? A curious animal caught in the hold? Something more sinister? We leave that to the machinations of the Game Master, along with whatever valuable salvage the group may or may not find if they search the wreckage.

WOLVES AMONG THE RUINS

Dramatic Scene. Another possible encounter as the group travels across the Blasted Land concerns a salvager's truck and the demonically altered wolves that have trapped the sole remaining scavenger inside. As the group comes upon the scene, read:

A salvage scavenger's truck idles near the concrete entrance to an underground power station. The driver's side door hangs open, and five large wolves, various pieces of disturbing metal jutting from their flesh, surround the truck. Three of the abominations prowl by the door at the back of the truck, while the remaining two takes turns ripping chunks of meat from the body of a salvager lying by the wheel on the passenger's side of the vehicle.

If the group decides to move closer and investigate, they hear someone shouting from inside the rear compartment of the truck. This is Taavi, the surviving partner in this salvage operation. When the wolves attacked, she leaped into the rear of the truck even as her partner was taken down by the savage creatures.

The group needs to defeat the wolves to save Taavi, as she can't get into the truck's cab without leaving the safety of the rear compartment and getting ravaged by the wolves. If they defeat or drive off the wolves, Taavi gives them a random piece of equipment for their trouble and tells them what she knows about the Kizhi Pogost.

"Beautiful place," she says, "and Bishop Rafa is a saint. But I heard that one of the Tharkoldu bastards has her eyes set on the place. A duke wannabe who calls herself Kratzen."



The wolves of the Blasted Land have been corrupted and mutated by Occultech and radiation.

ABOMINATION WOLF

A large gray wolf mutated by maelstrom bridge shrapnel that juts at disturbing angles from its body into a demonic dire wolf with glowing red eyes and a deadly breath weapon.

Attributes: Charisma 3, Dexterity 12, Mind 3, Spirit 6, Strength 12

Skills: Dodge 14, find 12, intimidation 12, maneuver 13, stealth 12, taunt (11), tracking 9, unarmed combat 13

Move: 11; **Tough:** 14 (2); **Shock:** 6; **Wounds:** 1

Equipment: —

Perks: —

Possibilities: Never

Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** Bio-mechanical plating +2.

- **Bite:** Strength +2 (14).

- **Fiery Breath:** Damage 16, Ammo 1, Range 10/15/20, small blast.

- **Pack Attack:** When two or more abomination wolves work together to attack

a party, they each receive a +2 bonus to attack and damage.

- **Immunity:** Radiation.

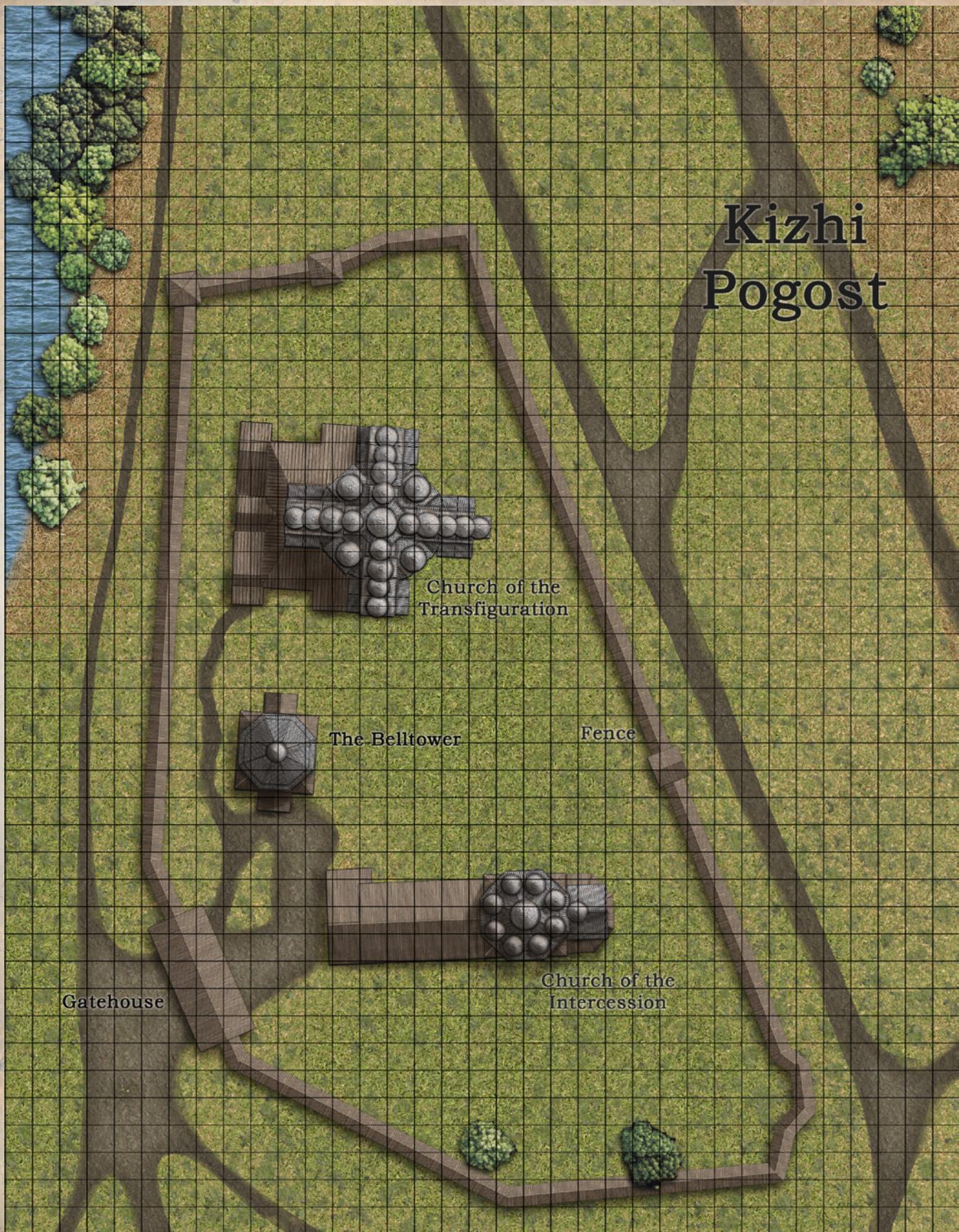
THE KIZHI POGOST

Standard Scene. When the group reaches Kizhi Island, it isn't hard to spot the walled compound and the three structures rising from inside it—two domed churches and a bell tower. The Transfiguration Church features 22 domes, while the smaller Intercession Church boasts nine domes. Read:

A tall wooden fence surrounds the compound ahead. You can see the domes of two wooden churches rising above the fence line, as well as a bell tower that stands between them. As promised, the entire island appears to be shielded somehow from the degradations of the Blasted Land.

As long as the group approaches peacefully, people stationed at the gate open the fence so they can enter. A tall, bald man with a long gray beard and wearing a priest's outfit calls out in a booming

Kizhi Pogost



voice, "Enter and be welcome, for the Kizhi Pogost is a sanctuary to all who come in peace and faith."

Bishop Rafa leads the inhabitants of the Pogost. He has two acolytes to aid him, as well as a dozen men, women, and children who appear to have been residents of the area for some time. In addition, another two dozen refugees have taken up residence within the confines of the Pogost.

BISHOP RAFA

Bishop Rafa has been the spiritual leader of the Kizhi Pogost since before the start of the Possibility Wars. He's a bear of a man with a gentle soul, deeply religious and pious, with a good sense of humor despite the troubling times in which he lives. He claims that a dream led him to pull the Kizhi Axe from Lake Onega. He believes the axe is the axe of legend, the one that was used to build the Pogost and set all the wood in place without the need of a single nail.

Although there have been attempts to raid the Pogost by scavengers and other marauders, Bishop Rafa has faith that the island is protected and immune to such incursions. He even believes that the Tharkoldu will never find the place. "We are hidden from the likes of those creatures." He gladly shows the group around, as he is evidently proud of the Pogost and its unique architecture. The Kizhi Axe is on display above the altar in the Transfiguration Church.

Quote: "All may share in our blessed tranquility."

Attributes: Charisma 9, Dexterity 6, Mind 8, Spirit 9, Strength 6

Skills: Dodge 7, faith 12, find 9, first aid 10, persuasion 11, streetwise 10, unarmed combat 7, willpower 11

Move: 6; **Tough:** 6; **Shock:** 9; **Wounds:** 1

Equipment: —

Perks: Miracles (*bless, healing, ward enemy*).

Possibilities: 1

Special Abilities: —

MARAUDERS IN THE NIGHT

Standard Scene. As dusk falls on the island, one of the watchers on the wall raises the alarm. Twelve raiders approach from the northern shore of the island, led by the marauder, Orpheus Demonhand, whose name is derived from the piece of Occultech

grafted to the end of his left arm. Orpheus has coveted the Pogost and its oasis effect from the moment he learned of its existence, but his previous efforts to take the island came to naught. He believes his chances have improved significantly, however, since his meeting with the Tharkoldu, Kratzhen. The technodemon provided Orpheus with an Occultech weapon that she claims will make the marauders invincible. "Just activate it before you reach the walls and you and your raiders will discover power you never knew you possessed."

The weapon, a small metal sphere, releases a cloud of nanodaemons when activated. The nanodaemons swarm into the nearest living creatures (in this case, the marauders) and ignite their blood with rage-inducing micro-machines, turning them into ferocious ferals. Kratzhen has no illusion that the feral marauders will conquer the Pogost, but she knows they will leave the defenders reeling for her own follow-up attack.

When the raiders near the northern walls of the Pogost, read:

"I told you the Pogost would be mine, Rafa!" the raider known as Orpheus Demonhand calls out. He removes a small metal sphere, about the size of a soft-ball, from his pack. When he presses a button on the sphere, it floats above the raiders and sprays blood-red mist from jets along its circumference. The mist flows into the mouths, eyes, and noses of the raiders, driving them into a frenzy. Then, screaming in unison, they charge the fence.

The group must defend the Pogost from the Occultech-crazed marauders. Four of the Pogost's current inhabitants are the equivalent of Core Earth police officers; use those stats as these defenders assist the Storm Knights during this battle. This battle occurs in dim light, so all attacks receive a -2 penalty. Orpheus and his raiders have one goal once the nanodaemons flood their minds—to breach the fence and open a path into the Pogost. Orpheus and two of the other raiders carry grenades for just such a purpose. Note that as the fence is breached and the final raider falls, Kratzhen arrives for the final encounter of this adventure.

ORPHEUS DEMONHAND

This powerful and charismatic marauder becomes even more dangerous when exposed to the feral-inducing nanodaemons.

Attributes: Charisma 8, Dexterity 9, Mind 8, Spirit 11, Strength 13

Skills: Dodge 12, energy weapons 11, fire combat 12, intimidation 11, maneuver 11, melee weapons 13, taunt 11, unarmed combat 15

Move: 8; **Tough:** 17 (4); **Shock:** 11; **Wounds:** 2

Equipment: Ballistic vest (Armor +4), M4 assault rifle (Damage 13, Short Burst, Range 50/100/200), Pain Gauntlet attachment (+1, Painful, Stagger), Alph Sprayer attachment (Damage 14, Long Burst, Range 40/80/160, bulky), grenade (to breach the fence)

Perks: Double Tap, Occultech Implants

Possibilities: 1

Special Abilities:

- **Feral:** The nanodaemons raging through the raider's blood makes him more ferocious in battle. He adds +1 to attacks and damage, but at the end of every round the pain caused by the micro-machines inflicts 1 Shock on the raider.

FERAL RAIDERS

Orpheus Demonhand's loyal men and women, they have been made even more ferocious by the feral-inducing nanodaemons burning through their bodies.

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 7, Mind 6, Spirit 8, Strength 10

Skills: Dodge 9, fire combat 10, intimidation 9, maneuver 8, unarmed combat 11

Move: 8; **Tough:** 14 (4); **Shock:** 8; **Wounds:** —

Equipment: Ballistic vest (Armor +4), M4 carbine (Damage 13). Note that two raiders carry a grenade each to use to breach the fence.

Perks: —

Possibilities: None

Special Abilities:

- **Feral:** The nanodaemons raging through the raider's blood makes them more ferocious in battle. They add +1 to attacks and damage, but at the end of every round the pain caused by the micro-machines inflicts 1 Shock on each raider.

ON HOLY GROUND

Dramatic Scene. A mutated, hairless bear of immense size bounds in through the opening after the raiders blast a hole in the wooden fence. Read:

A creature out of a nightmare bounds through the opening in the fence and into the sacred grounds of the Pogost. It appears to be a huge hairless bear, mutated or genetically altered as bony, armorlike plates cover its body. It stands on hind legs, spreads its arms wide, and throws back its head to unleash a pained and anguished wail. Its flesh rips apart, splitting from stern to stern like a zipper, and a Tharkoldu steps out of the body cavity, shaking off viscera as though it just stepped out of a shower. "Rejoice, pitiful humans, for Kratzhen brings pain and dominion for you all!"

It took Kratzhen weeks to locate this rumored oasis and figure out a way to circumvent the holy ground lent strength by the Kizhi Axe, which weakens her power considerably while she walks within the Pogost. That's the reason for the abomination, which Kratzhen has altered to serve as a sort of body armor. While in the abomination, Kratzhen is limited to bite and claw attacks, but she isn't weakened by the nearby Eternity Shard or subject to its continuous Shock damage. That ends when the armored body she wears like a suit is destroyed.

Kratzhen gladly spends a few moments conversing with Bishop Rafa and the Storm Knights, attempting to talk them into accepting her rule and handing over the Eternity Shard that protects the place. At the first inclination of a hostile action, she steps back into the bear and seals herself inside as the pitiful creature wails in pain.

Depending on how the group fares against Kratzhen in the first few rounds of combat, Bishop Rafa retrieves the Kizhi Axe from its place above the altar. He offers it to the member of the group who seems most able to wield a melee weapon and then steps back, ready to use a miracle in defense of the Pogost or to aid its defenders.

KRATZHEN

Kratzhen isn't as large and fearsome as others of her kind, but that only makes her more determined... and more dangerous. This technodemon sees a path to power by dominating the Pogost and claiming its Eternity Shard. She has been searching for the rumored oasis since hearing whispers about it shortly after the dukes established their dominance over Moscow. She won't let a little pain or a few insignificant Storm Knights ruin her plans.

Quote: "I offer you the gift of pain. If you prefer, I can instead bestow upon you the gift of death—which I promise to make even more painful."

Attributes: Charisma 9, Dexterity 8, Mind 10, Spirit 12, Strength 14

Skills: Conjuration 14, dodge 12, energy weapons 15, find 11, intimidation 16, melee weapons 15, reality 14, unarmed combat 12

Move: 8; **Tough:** 17 (3); **Shock:** 14; **Wounds:** 5

Equipment: Chain Whip (*Strength* +3/19, Reach 5 meters), Alph Pulverizer (Damage 17, Range 20/40/80)

Perks: Occultech (Alph Weapon Dock, Digan Darksight Eyes MKIII, Vav Sensation Suppressor), Whirlwind

Possibilities: Common (3)

Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** Cybernetic plating +3.
- **Chains:** A technodemon may use *conjunction* to summon chains and attack a target within 50 meters (Damage 15). This attack may use the standard grappling rules (see *Torg Eternity*).
- **Dread:** While a technodemon is present a Standard Scene becomes a Dramatic Scene instead.
- **Fear:** Technodemons inspire instinctive horror in creatures who see them. When first encountering one heroes must test *willpower* or *Spirit* or become Very Stymied.
- **Flight:** Move 10 in the air.

IN MODIFIED ABOMINATION

Attributes: Charisma 7, Dexterity 10, Mind 10, Spirit 14, Strength 16

Skills: As above

Move: 10; **Tough:** 16 (2); **Shock:** 10; **Wounds:** 1

Equipment: —

Perks: —

Possibilities: As above, but can use them while on holy ground

Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** Bio-mechanical plating +2.
- **Bite/Claws:** *Strength* +2 (18).
- **Immunity:** Radiation.
- **Large:** This is based an altered kodiac bear. Attacks against a Large creature gain a +2 bonus.

THE KIZHI AXE

Cosm: Core Earth

Possibilities: 6

Tapping Difficulty: 16

Purpose: To inspire hope and innovation while imbuing an area with holy protection.

Description: The Kizhi Axe appears to be an ordinary tool for chopping wood, except for the blue and red swirl that appears as a burst of color within the gleaming metal blade (Damage: *Strength* +4). Because the blade acquired its legendary powers while constructing a church, it is forever tied to holy and spiritual power.

Powers: The axe, when combined with a place it was used to create, exudes an aura of holy ground that weakens and repels demonic and occultish entities. Such entities cannot use Possibilities while on holy ground, and attacks and damage they inflict suffer a -2 penalty. In addition, the axe provides +4 Toughness to the wielder, and the wielder can spend a Possibility to reroll the axe's bonus dice, always using the new result.

Restrictions: If removed from the Pogost, the axe loses its aura power until it can be used to craft a new Pogost in a new location. In addition, the axe's Possibilities can only be spent when used to build something or to enhance attacks against demonic and occultish entities.

AFTERMATH

Once Kratzhen is defeated, the group has a choice to make. They can either leave the axe on the island so that the Pogost can retain its protective powers, or they can take it as a valuable Eternity Shard and turn it over to the Delphi Council. Bishop Rafa will beg them not to take the axe, but he won't try to stop them if that's what they decide to do.

If they leave the axe, the Kizhi Pogost remains an oasis in the middle of the Blasted Land. If they take it, the Delphi Council gains a powerful Eternity Shard, but the protection around the Pogost fades within a week's time and the devastation of the Blasted Land floods the area.

THE HEART OF THE UKHAAN



COSM: THE LIVING LAND

LOCATION: MANHATTAN ISLAND

This adventure was originally run as an introduction to *Torg Eternity*. It ties directly into the events depicted in the *Day One* Living Land adventure. If the group played that adventure, Quinn may reference the survivors as the source of the report. They may even be the lost team referred to in the briefing!

THE BRIEFING

The team is gathered by aircraft from their current location and transported to an aircraft carrier in the Atlantic, just outside the Pure Zone covering New York. Aboard the ship and delivering this briefing in person is the leader of the Delphi Council, Quinn Sebastian himself!

Quinn is a rough-looking man in his 60s, with close-cropped gray hair and craggy worry lines in his face.

"The Delphi Council received a report from someone who found something extraordinary in the wreckage of Manhattan. A strange tower from another world—the graveyard of a realm reaped by the High Lords long ago. Somehow it's reappeared here. Based on the report we suspect it contains an Eternity Shard—pure Possibility energy condensed into physical form.

"Unfortunately, the edeinos have come to the same conclusion. Some lizard warlord that folks are calling 'One-Eye' has surrounded the place, and he's got his brutes trying to break in.

"Get in as quicky as you can, get the shard before One-Eye does, and get out of there. There's a whole city full of edeinos that want to skin you alive and wear your bones like jewelry, so only engage them when you have to.

"Insertion is by boat. The weather is clear enough, but could turn rough without notice. We can't afford to wait for nightfall, so it's likely you'll be spotted on the way in.

"Get ashore by boat and find your way to the rooftops as quickly as you can. You'll probably meet some



The tower of the Ukhaan.

resistance along the way. Battery Park is a gospog field, which means most edeinos avoid it—but you'll have to go through those monsters instead. If you land up past the park you'll avoid the gospog, but edeinos warbands roam all over that area. You've been issued silencers for your weapons either way.

"Edeinos don't like 'dead things' like buildings so those should be mostly clear. Recon showed us that there's a construction crane across from the target structure. You should be able to knock that down to break into the upper levels. There are lakten in the area, big winged dinosaurs. Those are the main reason we're using a boat instead of aircraft. We tried to fly in another team—they didn't make it. If you see any survivors try to bring them back; we take care of our own."

Quinn attempts to answer any questions. He has access to satellite images of the area, weather reports, and a few reports from edeinos contacts

within the city. The boat for the mission is a small, quiet attack craft. It's only Tech 20 and doesn't require *water vehicles* just to get to shore, but if the assembled Storm Knights don't have anyone with the axiom to use it Quinn operates the boat himself.

He knows anything about the spire that the players learned in *Day One*—which may be very little. He knows its location shifts from time to time and a heavy crystal sheath has formed around the base to keep the edeinos out.

There is some information available on One-Eye. He's a Stormer, which makes him extremely dangerous. Rumor has it he lost his eye to a Storm Knight, and he has a special hatred for them.

The first team that was sent in may include any of the archetypes. They may appear as a source of characters if a *Contact* or *Romance* card is played, or as a temporary replacement if a Storm Knight falls in battle.

SCENE ONE: LANDING ZONE

Standard Scene. The carrier is just outside the Living Land's zone of influence, so the boat ride is turbulent but short. The water is rough, and anyone looking swears they see huge dark shapes moving in the water below. If a Storm Knight is foolish enough to play Dino Attack! a Mosasaurus swimming below takes an interest in the boat.

Mist swirls in pockets around the devastated city. The buildings are cracked and time-ravaged. Thick vines tangle the sides of buildings, perhaps the only thing keeping them standing, and streets are covered in thick brush and rusted-out vehicles.

The intruders have a choice here. They can set aground at the nearest point—the southern tip of the island where Battery Park is now a dreadful gospog field—or they could risk going farther up the East River or Hudson River in an attempt to avoid the gospog, but possibly face even more edeinos warriors.

If the team risks moving upriver, have them each roll a *stealth* test against DN 8. How many edeinos they encounter is based on the worst result. On a failure, four edeinos warriors per hero attack once the Storm Knights come ashore. On a success only three warriors per hero are in the area, and a Good Success drops that to two per hero. On an Outstanding Success, the Storm Knights slip by the edeinos without an encounter at all.

SHORELINE ENCOUNTERS

The battle takes place either in the open, swampy paddies of the gospog fields in Battery Park or the crumbling city streets up the shore. The Storm Knights face different foes depending on the choice made above.

- **Gospog of the First Planting (3 per hero):** See *Torg Eternity*.
- **Edeinos Gotaks (1 per 2 heroes):** See below.
or
- **Edeinos Warriors (2 to 4 per hero):** See *Torg Eternity*.

EDEINOS GOTAK

Gotaks are the edeinos priests of death. They serve Lanala, the goddess of life, and consider death just another part of her divine blessing. Recently some gotaks have become secretive, and answer only to Baruk Kaah.

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 9, Mind 6, Spirit 11, Strength 10

Skills: Dodge 10, faith 14, find 8, intimidation 13, maneuver 11, melee weapons 11, missile weapons 11, survival 9, unarmed combat 11

Move: 9; **Tough:** 12 (2); **Shock:** 11; **Wounds:** 1

Equipment: Hrockt-shoot spear (Damage Strength +2/12), hrockt-root armor (Armor +2, Torso)

Perks: Miracles (*Curse, strike*)

Possibilities: Rare (3)

Special Abilities:

• **Bite/Claws:** Damage Strength +2 (12).

For this encounter, a Setback for the heroes signals the arrival of another gotak or another group of edeinos warriors (one per hero), depending on which set foes the heroes face. Likewise, a Setback for the villains sends a gotak or a group of warriors scurrying away to get more help.

SCENE TWO: MANHATTAN SKYLINE

Standard Scene. After dispatching their foes, the Storm Knights get inside a building and ascend to the roof. The briefing was vague on the exact location of the spire within the city, and they need line of sight to find it. The streets are also thick with edeinos warriors, but they shun the interiors of buildings.

From the rooftop vantage point a steel spire is clearly visible deeper inside the city. It gleams in the light, without a vine on it. The base of the spire is covered in thick crystal that slowly pulses red and then blue.

Hundreds of edeinos brutes crowd the streets around it and chip away at the crystal with stone hammers and other tools. Priests beat drums and chant to Lanala. There are no visible entrances.

The observers do spot a possible way to the building, but it won't be easy. A tall, partially

completed skyscraper stands near the spire, with a vegetation-encrusted construction crane atop it. Fallen debris and winding vines form a potential pathway above the dangerous streets.

With some effort the group could cross the rooftops to the skyscraper, then the crane could be toppled to break through the crystal walls of the spire and form a bridge across. It's certain that once the heroes start moving the lakten flying above will spot them and attack, so let them know the full details of the situation before they start.

THE CROSSING

The tricky operation of getting inside the spire is a Dramatic Skill Resolution. Normally a Dramatic Skill Resolution must be completed within five rounds, but in this case the limit is the growing number of edeinos who arrive on the scene.

TASK STEPS

To cross over, the Storm Knights must complete the four stages of the task.

- **Step A:** Find a path across the rooftop. There are plenty of vines and trees linking the buildings, but unfortunately not all of the vegetation is harmless. Several patches are decidedly flesh-eating, and must be bypassed. Discovering a safe route is a Hard (DN 14) *find* test.

- **Step B:** Create a bridge. One section across two buildings is too distant to jump. Someone needs to make a temporary bridge from vines or something else. This operation is a Hard (DN 14) *science* or *Mind* test.

- **Step C:** Knock the crane into position. A Heroic (DN 18) *Strength* test sends the crane crashing into the tower, opening an entrance. The players know the DN or each step, and they may need to cooperate to get it done.

- **Step D:** Knock the crane down to cut off pursuit. A final Hard (DN 14) *Strength* test sends the crane (and many unfortunate edeinos) plummeting to the street far below. Why does this require a D step on the card? That's how long it takes all the friendly characters to get across!

A Critical Problem represents sections of buildings crumbling and possibly collapsing. If the test for the current step fails, or nobody attempts one, a section of the building falls and a new path to the crane must be found.

A Complication represents rising wind and interference from the edeinos. On a Possible Setback, more of the vegetation reveals itself as dangerous or carnivorous. The test for the current step suffers an extra -2 penalty this round, and if it fails (or no one tries) the previous step is undone and needs to be completed again.

On the first round, lakten riders above screech warnings to their fellows on the ground and hurl spears at the heroes. The lakten stay at a range of 20 meters, and each rider throws a hrockt-shoot spear at medium range (-4). On the second round they move to close range (five meters) and throw again. On subsequent rounds the lakten and their riders both attack in melee.

While the lakten attack, edeinos below are busy clambering up the sides of buildings or rushing up stairs. On the fourth round the first group reaches the rooftop, one warrior per two heroes. Every round after that one warrior per hero arrives to join the fight.

Proactive Storm Knights may use ranged attacks or interactions against the climbing edeinos due to arrive next round, or try to block approaches in creative ways to gain more time.

- **Lakten (1 per 2 heroes):** See below.

- **Edeinos Warriors (1 riding each Lakten):** See *Torg Eternity*.

- **Edeinos Warriors (1 per 2 heroes on the fourth round, then 1 per hero each round thereafter):** See *Torg Eternity*.

LAKTEN

Lakten are leathery-skinned dinosaurs with a five-meter wingspan, short stubby bodies, and a beak full of razor-sharp teeth. Lakten are prized mounts for edeinos scouts.

Attributes: Charisma 5, Dexterity 11, Mind 4, Spirit 7, Strength 12

Skills: Dodge 13, intimidation 9, find 9, maneuver 12, unarmed combat 12

Move: 11; **Tough:** 13 (1); **Shock:** 9; **Wounds:** 2

Equipment: —

Perks: —

Possibilities: Never

Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** Scaly skin +1.
- **Bite/Claws:** Damage Strength +2 (14).
- **Flight:** Flies at Move 13.
- **Large:** Most adult specimens have a wingspan over five meters. Attacks against them gain a +2 bonus.

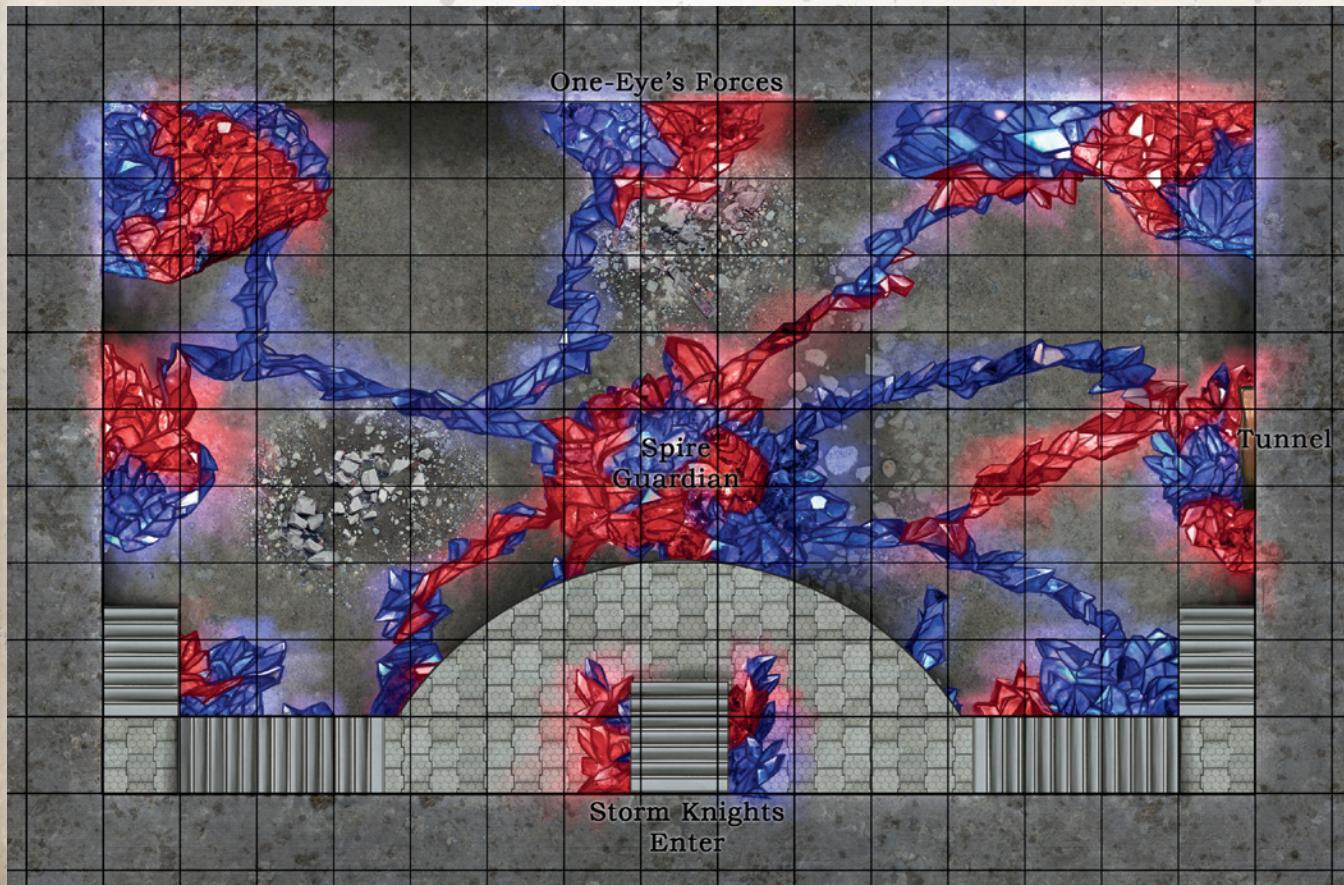
SCENE THREE: THE LOST SPIRE

Dramatic Scene. Inside the structure, lines of crystal pulse slowly between blue and red, tracing patterns almost like a circuit board. The pulses seem to be leading somewhere, traveling inward and downward.

A voice emanates from the gem-encrusted walls, repeating the same message. Each hero hears the voice speaking in their own native tongue. Read the message aloud:

"We are lost, crushed by the savage world of Takta Ker. Its warlord, Baruk Kaah, is a Possibility Raider, a dreadful High Lord who invades other realities. He sucks the Possibility Energy from his victims and their lands. We do not know what end these invasions serve. All we gleaned was a single word: Torg."

"This spire is the last remnant of Ukhaan, a world of great scientific advancement, reason, and peace. We were invaded by the Living Land. This outpost is where we made our last stand."



"We failed. We used what we learned of Possibility Energy to transmit our knowledge, our art, the very essence of our people away from the Living Land. So little was saved. Hopefully someday, after the storm, explorers will hear this message and find our remains below.

"If a Possibility Raider hears these words, beware: All our power courses through our last guardian. While the storms still rage it will destroy any intruder. If instead you battle against the High Lords, remember Ukhaan, for her daughters and sons can do so no longer."

The pulses lead downward into winding corridors. There are other doorways along the passages, all overgrown and encrusted with jagged, translucent rock. As the heroes descend they can feel a growing power below them, crackling with Possibility Energy. It must be the Eternity Shard!

Finally, they descend into a large chamber, which must be at or below ground level. The passage opens into a gallery above the chamber, with stairs on either side leading down to the ground below. The floor of the chamber is covered in rubble, some seemingly from the spire, much of it recognizable as from Manhattan ruins.

Directly across from where the Storm Knights enter is a similar platform, blocked off by a cracked mineral wall. Edeinos hammer at the stone furiously, and the cracks are growing wider by the moment. Behind them a large, one-eyed warrior bellows. His single, yellow eye fixes on the heroes with hatred, and the lizard-men seem to double their effort.

Down below are underground exits to the tunnels of Manhattan, sewers, and even the subway. All these passages are currently covered in walls of crystal.

Also at the bottom of the chamber, directly under the interloper's platform, is a huge humanoid made out of sharp glowing crystal. It's nearly transparent, but lit from within by a "heart" that glows, pulsating blue and red. All the Storm Knights can feel the heart's power—it is the Eternity Shard!

Some Knights may question the ethics of destroying this relic of Ukhaan to get the shard. Let them, although it should become clear that the creature is doomed to be destroyed by the edeinos

anyway. Some may even attempt to reason with the guardian, but it attacks without provocation as soon as someone tries.

If the Storm Knights take too long debating a course of action, the guardian attacks or the crystal wall holding back One-Eye's forces shatters.

THE SPIRE GUARDIAN

The guardian is a hollow, humanoid form composed of transparent crystal shards. It pulses with energy in time with the heart and the veins that line the floor and walls around it. Its face has no features except for a pulsating eye of energy which flares brightly before it fires one of its deadly beams.

Inside the creature's chest pulses the Heart of Ukhaan (see below). The shard powers the guardian, but is also its weakness. Once the guardian has taken a Wound or more than 10 Shock its crystalline shell cracks enough to expose its heart. Called shots don't do more damage to the heart, but a Player's Call on a *maneuver* interaction plucks it from the creature's chest. The shell shatters and crumbles into fragments the moment the heart leaves its body.

Attributes: Charisma 6, Dexterity 10, Mind 12, Spirit 13, Strength 14

Skills: Dodge 10, intimidation 15, energy weapons 15, find 11, maneuver 10, reality 15, taunt 8, trick 12, unarmed combat 14

Move: 10; **Tough:** 16 (2); **Shock:** —; **Wounds:** 4

Possibilities: 5

Special Abilities/Equipment:

- **Large:** The Guardian stands four meters tall, and attacks against it gain a +2 bonus due its size.

- **Construct:** The creature is immune to Shock damage and effects that require breathing, eating, or other "living" processes. Shock can't KO the creature, but 10 or more Shock cracks open enough of the creature's shell to reveal the heart.

- **Crystal Fists:** Damage 15, after damage is done the target becomes Stymied.

- **Energy Beam:** Short range reaches everything inside the chamber, Damage 13. The beam either Multi-Targets three heroes, or fires a Short Burst at a single hero each round.

- **Possibility Transfer:** Each time a hero rolls a Mishap the guardian gains one Possibility.

THE HEART OF UKHAAN

Once the Guardian is defeated the Storm Knights gain possession of the Eternity Shard within. If the Guardian spent all its Possibilities the shard is empty for now, but refills each act normally.

Cosm: Ukhaan

Possibilities: 5

Tapping Difficulty: 12

Purpose: To protect the memories of Ukhaan against destruction.

Powers: When the Ukhaan cosm drains a Possibility from anyone, the Heart gains one Possibility. Beings in physical contact with the Heart count as being in a Dominant zone of the Ukhaan reality.

Restrictions: The heart's Possibilities may only be used against invaders.

Description: The Heart of Ukhaan is a icosahedron composed of a mixture of red and blue crystals. It's roughly double the size of a human heart. Anyone holding the heart hears faint whispers from a multitude of voices speaking some alien tongue.

ONE-EYE ATTACKS

If a Setback appears on the Conflict Line (or it seems dramatically appropriate) the wall blocking One-Eye cracks enough for him and some of his warriors to squeeze through. First one warrior per hero enters the fight. The next round One-Eye himself appears, followed each round by the same number of warriors.

When the spire guardian loses its heart the walls begin to collapse, scattering any edeinos who came through and cutting off any further reinforcements. This also cuts off One-Eye (if he's still alive), and opens an escape path into the tunnels. After the guardian has been dealt with, the explorers get back to their boat and off the island without further trouble.

- **One-Eye:** See below.

- **Edeinos Warriors (1 per hero each round):** See *Torg Eternity*.

ONE-EYE

One-Eye has been waiting for this breakthrough, and the fact that there are Storm Knights here to kill makes it all the better. He doesn't hide his damaged eye, which has an unsettling milky film over it. He likes to snarl challenges and make comments about the shape of his foes' eggs.

Quote: "The dead thing is mine! Leave it and I'll allow you to savor a long death!"

Attributes: Charisma 7, Dexterity 11, Mind 7, Spirit 10, Strength 12

Skills: Beast riding 12, dodge 12, faith 12, intimidation 12, maneuver 12, melee weapons 14, missile weapons 13, reality 12, survival 9, taunt 11, unarmed combat 12

Move: 11; **Tough:** 14 (2); **Shock:** 10; **Wounds:** 3

Equipment: —

Possibilities: 3

Perks: Death Claw, Stone Skin

Special Abilities:

- **Armor:** Scaly skin +2.
- **Claw/Bite:** Damage Strength +3 (15) AP 2.

THE DELPHI COUNCIL NEEDS YOU!

Rising Storm is the first of a series of adventures designed to enhance any Torg Eternity campaign. Each of the eleven adventures inside is suitable for an evening of play, and may be dropped into an existing story or played on its own. These dangerous missions add opportunities and complications to the Storm Knight's lives.

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