

# TORG

## CENTRAL VALLEY GATE



A Small Town with a Terrible Secret



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By Gregory W. Detwiler and Bill Smith

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## Roleplaying the Possibility Wars™

### Central Valley Gate

Gregory W. Detwiler, Bill Smith  
Design

Greg Farshtey, Bill Smith  
Development and Editing

Stephen Crane, Richard Hawran  
Graphics

David Mann  
Cover Illustration

Aaron McClellan  
Interior Illustration

Stephen Crane, Cathleen Hunter  
Maps and Diagrams

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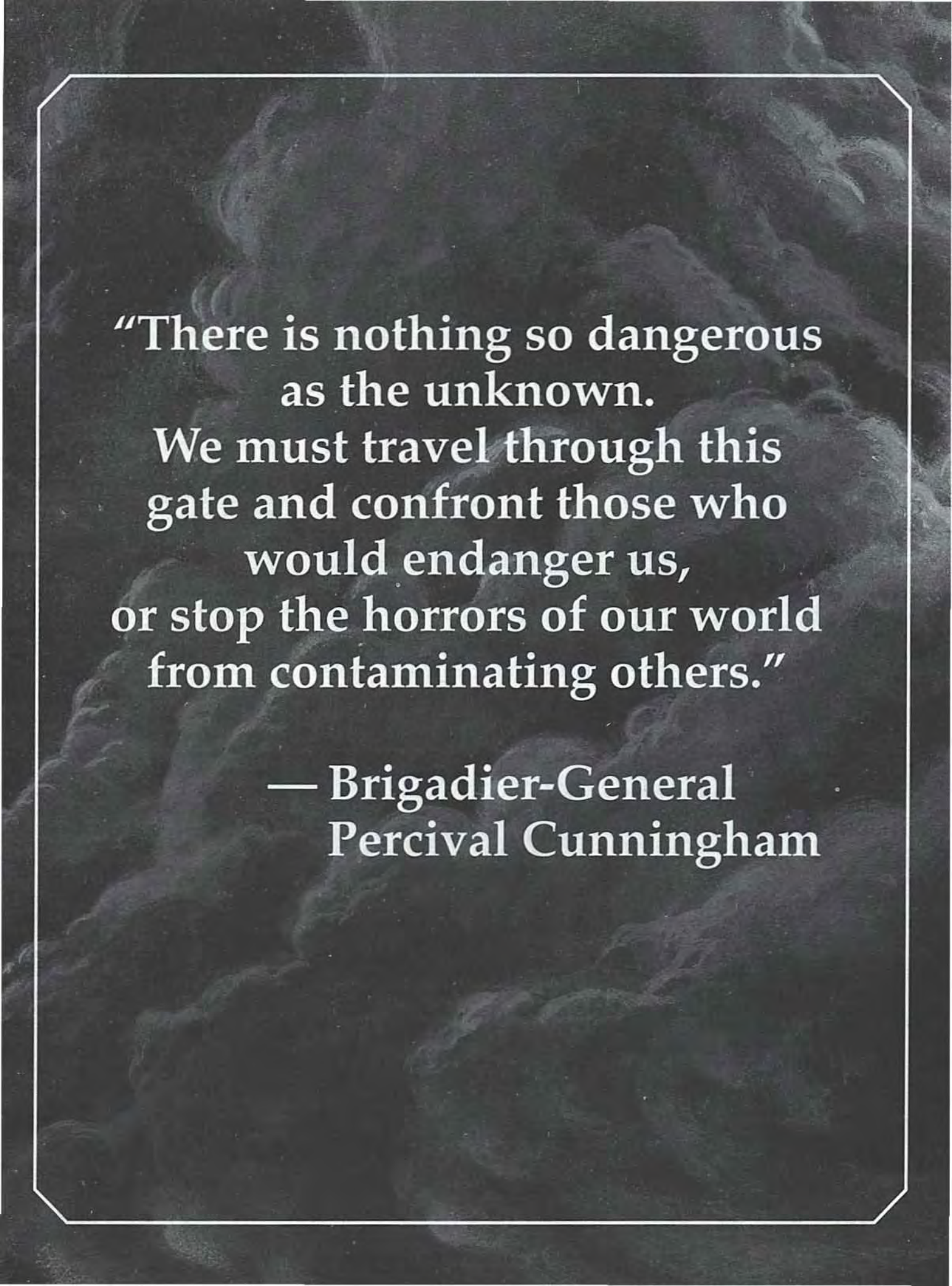
Editors: Greg Farshtey, Bill Smith, Ed Stark • Art Director: Stephen Crane • Graphic Artists: Cathleen Hunter, John Paul Lona  
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**“There is nothing so dangerous  
as the unknown.**

**We must travel through this  
gate and confront those who  
would endanger us,  
or stop the horrors of our world  
from contaminating others.”**

**— Brigadier-General  
Percival Cunningham**



# Prologue

**T**hunder crashed and lightning lit the jungle clearing in its entirety, as the last words of the spell were spoken. As the Orrorshan wizards flung their hands skyward in mad triumph, the pack of werewolves squatting around them howled in equally dark ecstasy. A gate to a new part of this world, a part not yet torn by the ravages of war, and it was all theirs ...

The staccato crackle of rifle fire and the whine of machine guns interrupted the cries of triumph. Wizards and werewolves alike all went down in rows before the hail of lead and silver bullets that swept through their ranks. One wounded werewolf tried to crawl through the gate, then stopped, nailed to the ground by the silvered bayonet that pierced him between the shoulders. He gave a hoarse cry of agony, and then the only sounds were those of the storm.

Brigadier Percival Cunningham of the 63rd Regiment, Royal Surreys of Birmingham reclined in his camp chair and listened as his adjutant gave the final tally. "Five wizards and a score of werewolves, Sir. No casualties on our side. Bloody good thing we attacked when we did. However, the chaplain believes that the gate will be up about three weeks."

"I knew that storm would provide superior cover," Cunningham said. He stood up, his lean, trim figure seeming to tower over the diminutive adjutant. "Well, we've stopped them from going through their bloody gate, but we don't know where it leads, or what might come through the other side. And there's only one way to find out. Find Major Reynolds and tell him his 23rd Lancers can go in first, scouting out the area as they go. With luck, we can stop an invasion of either our realm, or someone else's, in its tracks."

The Victorian soldiers, in their neatly pressed uniforms, in neat rows, bravely marched through the gate into some unknown world. They knew not what to expect, but they knew that their help would most certainly be needed. With all thoughts given to God, Queen and Country, none thought to perchance look over their shoulder.

Slowly, silently, a shifting black mass, thick and viscous, trailed at a distance. Just as the last soldier disappeared through the opening, a tentative tendril reached out and through the gate. Soon, all that was left in the forest was the chill of the night air.

\* \* \*

It was another warm, sunny morning in central California. The Central Valley had seen many such mornings, and the small number of remaining residents had grown accustomed to the eternal sunshine. While the area had been through much since the invasion — first, the primitive reality of the Living Land, and now the troubles in Los Angeles with the horrifying techno-demons — the people knew they could count on some constants, and beautiful mornings were part of the deal.

Lurking in a distant cave, far from any peering human eyes, the black mist, now in its form as the creature Dagarathov, pondered its situation. *A permanent home ... someplace from which to rule and gain power. Someplace near these simple-minded cattle, from which to control their shallow minds. I must summon a servant.*

\* \* \*

Donnie Shears was pretty content as ten-year-olds went. He had a bike, a little sister he could abuse to his heart's content, and tonight — tonight would be something special. He and his friends were to meet at the graveyard for "truth or dare" night. To see who was the bravest of the gang and could stay all

night in the graveyard. He was determined to stick it out no matter what.

But, first he had to make sure that he didn't have to worry about his friends trying something. "Yep, fifteen minutes ahead of time." As he closed in on the old graveyard, he noticed the gate had been left open — pretty unusual. Slowly working his way through the rows of gravestones, he already felt the hair on the back of his neck start to rise. "Calm down ... there's nothing here. Be brave." Shadows seemed to grow to monstrous proportions, he heard twigs snap off in the darkness, movement off to the side, and then nothing. A ten-year-old's imagination can be worse than anything that can really happen.

As he neared the back fences, he saw another shadow dart and move. He almost gave in, ready to run home and crawl under the covers. Maybe this wasn't such a good idea. Standing still, just watching, listening, hearing his own heart beat uncontrollably.

That's when his imagination went on overtime. At first it looked like a couple of friends had crawled behind a pair of nearby tombstones, and were slowly rising up to try to scare him. "Billy, that's not funny. Stop it." Then, he saw the shadows stretch ... a strange "click, click" sound ... the shadows became wings ... rising up out of the mists, nearly eight feet tall, the beast froze the small boy in his tracks. A tuft of brown hair slipped out from under the Rams cap, gum long forgotten and swallowed, mind desperately screaming, "RUN! RUN!" but legs refusing to act.

No one heard the stifled scream coming from the back of the graveyard. Silently, a darkened shadow leaped into the night sky, headed for a multi-story building. Minutes later, a gaggle of kids gathered in front of the graveyard. "Where's Donnie?" "Dunno ... musta backed out. What a baby."





# Introduction



*Central Valley Gate* is an adventure for *Torg: Role-playing the Possibility Wars*. You must have the roleplaying game to play

this adventure. Adventures for *Torg* take place on Earth in the Near Now—an Earth that has been invaded by seven powerful beings from other realities. These invaders, called *High Lords*, have the power to conquer realities different from their own and impose their reality upon their victims.

Our world has been invaded because it is rich in *possibility energy*, a spiritual force that courses through every being. It is the goal of each High Lord to gather enough possibility energy to become the Torg, a being of near infinite power who seeks only destruction and chaos.

It is this same possibility energy that is responsible for the existence of Storm Knights, a select group of heroes who are the only true obstacle to the plans of the High Lords.

In this adventure, the players' group of Storm Knights venture to the Central Valley area of California, deep in the Tehachapi Mountains. The area is sandwiched between a Living Land/Nippon Tech mixed zone to the north and the recently arrived Tharkold realm, which has taken control of the Los Angeles area to the south.

The contents of this adventure are for the gamemaster only. Any player reading this adventure will ruin the adventure for herself and everyone else.

## Adventure Format

Gamemasters must read through the entire book before attempting to run the adventure. By doing this, the gamemaster can familiarize himself with the various characters and situations involved in the adventure and the motives and circumstances that drive them. This way, if the players do something unexpected during the course of the adventure, the gamemaster will be able to handle it in a

manner that will not conflict with later details of the story.

Because of the conflicting factions involved in this adventure, it is necessary for the gamemaster to be thoroughly familiar with the timetable of actions for each group of individuals. It is assumed that the players will have their characters do things that neither the authors of the adventure nor the gamemaster could possibly have anticipated. Because of this, the format is set up to allow characters to leave the established path for a while but eventually, out of necessity, return to the basic storyline of the adventure.

## Acts and Scenes

*Torg* adventures are divided into large sections called "acts." *Central Valley Gate* has four acts. Each act starts with its own synopsis, called "The Major Beat," which outlines what the player characters (also called Storm Knights) are likely to encounter.

Each act is broken down into several major encounters, called "scenes." Scenes are defined as either *standard* or *dramatic*, and this determines which conflict line of the drama deck is used for conflict resolution (see page 59 of the *Torg Rulebook*). Each scene begins with "The Situation" and is followed by "The Action." If applicable, a scene may also contain certain sections entitled "Events," "Flags," "Variables," and "Cut to ..."

"The Situation" section gives the gamemaster basic information for the scene from the point of view of the Storm Knights. Parts of this section can be read out loud to the players or paraphrased by the gamemaster to set the scene.

"The Action" section describes what is going to happen in the scene and gives details to be revealed to the players as the scene unfolds. This is the part that covers what happens in a scene in a linear sequence. Sometimes, however, it is convenient to have events occur in a more fluid manner.

In these cases, the "Event" sections provide new bits that can occur at almost any time within a scene. "The Action" usually gives guidelines as to when within a scene events should occur. Events are always optional, and it is up to the gamemaster to decide whether or not to use them.

"Flags" are like events, but they are triggered by something specific. The triggers can be in the same scene or can be carried over from another scene. For example, if the Storm Knights kill an edeinos tribe's optant in one scene, and then are captured in the next scene, the edeinos will treat the Storm Knights very differently than if they had allowed the optant to live.

"Variables" give tips on how to keep a scene running smoothly. As mentioned above, players often come up with ideas that are not covered directly in this adventure. The role of the gamemaster is not to discourage the imaginations of his players, but to creatively deal with how they play their characters. "Variables" help the gamemaster keep the adventure on track without frustrating the players.

At the end of some scenes there may be several options for the Knights to take. "Cut To ..." list the different actions the Storm Knights can take and the name of the scene that lets the characters follow through on that choice. It is possible that some scenes will be completely passed over by the Storm Knights. If there is only one scene to go to, only one scene will be listed.

Between acts there are sometimes "Interludes." These are usually points in the adventure where the players have some information to sort out or the characters have a lot of traveling to do. When a long passage of time takes place in a movie, a quick montage of pictures is used to suggest that a lot of time and distance has gone by. An "Interlude" is like that. You can assume that the time between acts goes by or, if you wish, you can play it out. "Interludes" are also used to convey information to the gamemaster (and,





at her discretion, the players) regarding the behavior of characters not interacting with the Storm Knights at the present time.

On the last page of the adventure is a section entitled "Stacks." Stacks are scenes that are not covered in the adventure text, but may occur at any time, probably triggered by subplot cards in the Drama Deck (see page 66 of the *Torg Rulebook*). The "Stacks" section outlines some guidelines on how to use these subplots within the context of the current adventure, should the cards come into play.

## Adventure Background

Central California has become a highly contested area of Earth in the past few months, and *Central Valley Gate* plunges Storm Knights into the thick of the battle. Most of northern California has been under the control of Baruk Kaah since the early months of the invasion. However, as told in *Operation: Hard Sell*, 3327, High Lord of Nippon Tech, secretly took over the Sacramento region of California, stealing a huge chunk of territory from the edeinos High Lord. The public perceives the change to be a "victory" for the government of the United States, but not even the Delphi Council knows that 3327 has landed a maelstrom bridge in California. The Council has known about and encouraged massive investment by the Kanawa Corporation in California simply because it would provide monetary resources that the United States' economy needed so desperately.

Kanawa has invested a fortune in central and southern California, with trillions of yen put into the Los Angeles area, which was evacuated soon after the initial invasion. The Nippon Tech High Lord thought that he stood to make a windfall until the arrival of the Tharkold realm on Earth.

Tharkold, the realm of the technodemons, and home to Thratchen, was repelled from Earth in the initial invasion (made possible by Soviet psychics and Nippon Tech agents). Tharkold has come to Earth seeking revenge

upon 3327 for his treachery, and made its presence known very quickly by dropping a maelstrom bridge into the heart of Los Angeles.

The Tehachapi Mountains of California, including Central Valley, lie right in the middle of the disputed territories. To the north is the Living Land/Nippon Tech mixed zone, and to the south is the Tharkold realm. The most important investment in the area is the Kanawa-owned Seisaku, Inc. weapons factory. Central Valley is in a most uncomfortable situation ...

Half a world away, in the horror realm of Orrorsh, a group of renegade occultists have built a gate into the Central Valley region. Their motivation was simply to go someplace new to amass power and glory.

However, they were surprised and annihilated with their werewolf followers by a Victorian regiment just as the gate was created. Mindful of what started their involvement in the war in the first place, Brigadier Percival Cunningham, commander of the 63rd Regiment, Royal Surreys of Birmingham infantry and the attached 23rd Regiment, has decided to lead an expedition into this new region, either to provide support for a new area being attacked, or to forestall a new invasion of his own realm. However, a horrific Orrorshan entity named Dagarathov has also slipped through the gate, hoping to be able to amass more power before returning to the realm.

## Adventure Synopsis

When this adventure begins, the Storm Knights will be on their way to Central Valley after replying to a call for "experienced security agents" for a weapons factory in the area. The area has been visited by rampaging biker gangs, and the citizens must also fend off various creatures from the Living Land.

In Act One, the Knights will rescue a young woman who has been kidnapped by a biker. They will learn from the woman that one of the biker gangs will attack her home town soon. The particular biker in the scene is the last survivor of a rival group that was wiped out by the 23rd Regiment.

The Storm Knights will go to investigate, and run into the "relief" expedition of Victorians. With luck, a temporary alliance may be formed between the two sides, aimed against the bikers and any Living Land raiders that also show up.

In Act Two, the Knights and Victorians escort the young woman back to her home town of Redside, only to find it under attack by edeinos raiders and various other creatures. The attack is fought off, but the edeinos have captured a number of factory employees, and the Knights must venture into the Living Land to get them back. Before they set out, they will meet the town's mayor, the factory's manager, a mysterious monster hunter, a team of Spartans sent to the area by the government, and a group of Nippon agents posing as survivalists and real estate brokers.

The Kanawa group's primary goal is to foil Baruk Kaah's plans for expansion, and then make land purchases in southern California and Mexico to prepare for the planting of stelae, but part of the group has its own contradictory agenda.

Act Two ends with an arduous trek to the spiritually-fortified edeinos village, and a vicious battle against the edeinos and gospog guarding the prisoners, after which the freed captives can be escorted back home.

Act Three sees the various anti-Nippon elements make their move. A small group of edeinos trying to penetrate the plant's defenses sets off alarms, which draws the Storm Knights back to the facility. After uncovering an Occultech device (obviously indicating Tharkold involvement), the Storm Knights learn that the rogue elements of the Nippon group are attempting to destroy the weapons factory. If the Storm Knights decide to investigate the factory, they will learn that the Nippon company is manufacturing more than weapons, and that 3327 has an elaborate scheme in place. They will also learn that 3327 is slowly losing control of the plant, which has become the new residence of an Orrorshan horror that followed the Victorians through the gate.

In Act Four, the Knights are contacted by a defector from the biker









gang, whose boyfriend was spiritually enchanted into joining the gang. In exchange for valuable inside information the Knights must rescue Tony (the boyfriend) and pull out his friends. Tony then explains the battle plan to the Knights, who must lead the defense of Redside. The act concludes with the attack on Redside by bikers, edeinos and Tharkoldu.

## New Living Land Miracles

Several new miracles have been granted to optants loyal to Baruk Kaah in the Western Land. At this time, these miracles are only available to a few of these optants, although, in time, it is certain that most optants throughout the realm, even those opposed to Baruk Kaah, will gain access to these miracles.

### Decreased Touch

**Spiritual Rating:** 11

**Community Rating:** 9

**Difficulty:** 12

**Range:** touch

**Duration:** 16 (30 minutes)

**Effect:** numbs the recipient's sense of touch

*Decreased touch* is the reverse variant of the common miracle *heightened touch*. The recipient of this miracle loses his sense of touch for the miracle's duration. Normally, this ritual ceremony is used as a form of punishment for recalcitrant Jakatts, as it causes the victim to lose some contact with life and Lanala. However, since the Possibility Wars began, Baruk Kaah has been persuading his optants (with great difficulty) to cast this miracle on warriors about to go into battle.

The warriors are never allowed to know the true duration of the miracle; they believe it will be permanent unless they do their Saar's bidding. When the survivors (if any) return from battle, the optants will make false mystical gestures and pretend to remove the "curse." As resistance to the Saar's constant wars and use of "dead" things such as gospog and stelae in-

## Perserverance Checks

Several times during the course of this adventure the Storm Knights are required to make *Perserverance* checks. If the gamemaster wishes to have the Orrorshan element of this adventure remain a mystery, tell the Storm Knights to simply generate a bonus number, while the gamemaster keeps track of the *Perserverance* total.

creases, this new version of an old miracle helps force recalcitrant warriors into battle. It is especially useful when the Jakatts are human "new-comers" who do not have the stamina of edeinos warriors.

In combat, *decreased touch* reduces the recipient's ability to feel pain, so the Jakatt may ignore all shock damage, although wounds and KO results still have full effect. After the miracle's duration is up, all shock damage that has been accumulated will take effect. If four or more individual shock causing injuries have been inflicted on the warrior, she must make a successful *Toughness* roll against a difficulty equal to their *Toughness* +10, or fall unconscious for ten minutes.

### Earth Swallow

**Spiritual Rating:** 14

**Community Rating:** 10

**Difficulty:** 16

**Range:** touch

**Duration:** until eliminated by removing soil from area

**Effect:** lets the land itself seize any trespassing enemies

*Earth swallow* is another defensive miracle invoked by Jakatts, this one designed to take an enemy alive. A patch of the land is consecrated, generally along a path or some other area an enemy might cross. When a non-Jakatt steps onto the consecrated ground, the earth opens up and swallows him (up to his hips in the case of a humanoid being). The earth immediately closes in again around the pris-

oner, not harming him, but holding him helpless with a *Strength* of 25 until a party of Jakatts comes to check on the trap. The person will not be pulled any further under the surface, but merely held immobile.

When this miracle is called upon, the Jakatt touches a specific spot; a two meter radius is affected. The land within the effect radius is "alive," and will actually seem to ooze back to the person being held unless the soil is deposited outside the effect radius. The miracle will affect anyone who enters within the effect radius, so entire groups of Storm Knights might become entrapped by trying to rescue their friends.

If shovels and spades are available, it will take a single person half an hour to dig a companion out. For each additional person who coordinates on this, reduce the time value by one. Digging with hands will be useless: the soil will flow back into place as soon as it is moved aside unless removed from the effect radius.

### Grass Blossom Spear

**Spiritual Rating:** 14

**Community Rating:** 10

**Difficulty:** 13

**Range:** within three meter radius of consecrated spot

**Duration:** until triggered

**Effect:** turns the grass in a consecrated area into a javelin version of the *blossom spear*

*Grass blossom spear* is a more powerful version of *grass spear*. It works in the same manner, doing the same damage, but has the added powers of the *blossom spear*: if the javelin causes any damage, thorns blossom along the tip of the shaft and cause one additional wound. Non-Jakatts cause an additional wound to the victim when removing the javelin unless they beat the miracle's *Spiritual* rating with a *medicine* total. A Jakatt, on the other hand, can remove the javelin easily by simply pulling it out, as the thorns will fall away once it is touched by "holy" hands. The javelin returns to its original form of a blade of grass once removed or if it misses its initial attack.





### Grass Spear

**Spiritual Rating:** 14

**Community Rating:** 9

**Difficulty:** 12

**Range:** three meter radius from consecrated spot

**Duration:** until triggered

**Effect:** turns the grass in a consecrated area into a javelin

*Grass spear* is another defensive miracle the Jakatts use to defend their holy places from unbelievers. A small patch of ground is consecrated, with the spiritual power centered on a single blade of grass. When a non-Jakatt comes within three meters of the consecrated spot, Lanala will transform the grass blade into a javelin, which will impale the trespasser. To determine whether or not the javelin hits, the Jakatt summoning the miracle must make a *faith* total when the spot is consecrated; the target must make a higher *faith* total to avoid damage. The javelin's damage total is 18 plus the bonus number rolled when the miracle is called upon. The javelin re-

turns to its original form of a blade of grass once removed or if it misses its initial attack.

### Great Club

**Spiritual Rating:** 9

**Community Rating:** 9

**Difficulty:** 11

**Range:** touch

**Duration:** until re-planted

**Effect:** turns a hrockt shoot into a two-handed club

*Great club* enables a Jakatt to pray to Lanala to turn a hrockt shoot into a two-handed club. This club is covered with vines and leaves, and, when used with two hands, causes a damage value of STR+4. If used one-handed, it only causes STR+3.

### Intensify Emotions

**Spiritual Rating:** 12

**Community Rating:** 11

**Difficulty:** 11

**Range:** voice

**Duration:** result points +5

**Effect:** intensifies the emotions of a character

*Intensify emotions* is a miracle which increases the character's love of life by whipping his normal, everyday emotions into almost a hurricane frenzy of feeling. A true Jakatt will cherish this miracle, just as he would any other which increased his appreciation of life, but Baruk Kaah has had his optants concentrate on using it in militarily-useful applications, such as to increase dislike of an enemy to sheer hatred, or turn mild trust of a priest into unshakable loyalty.

### Pleasure Plant

**Spiritual Rating:** 11

**Community Rating:** 11

**Difficulty:** 12

**Range:** 2 meter radius of plant

**Duration:** permanent until plant is destroyed

**Effect:** creates a device for stopping enemies by invoking their own desires





*Pleasure plant* is used by optants to defend edeinos tribes or sacred sites from attack. It only affects intelligent non-Jakatts, and unlike pain sacks, easily allows capture of the victim for conversion to Keta Kalles or ceremonial slaying.

The plant must be planted in an hour long ceremony (which calls upon the miracle). At the completion of the ceremony, a plant of incredible beauty, fragrance, and softness, with red, green and yellow flowers, standing about two meters tall, will grow up to mark the burial place and give off the miracle's effects.

Any intelligent non-Jakatt who comes within two meters of the plant will be suddenly overwhelmed with desire for it. The beauty, fragrance and soft feel of the plant will overwhelm the victim, and they will become transfixed to the plant, unwilling to leave its side. The plant's captive will have no real awareness of his surroundings, and will violently resist any attempts to drag him away from his beloved plant — a victim dragged away will constantly fight to rejoin the plant unless restrained somehow.

The plant has a *Toughness* of 9; if it is destroyed, the victim will lapse into a stupor lasting anywhere from ten minutes to a full day (gamemaster's discretion, depending on the situation).

## Sharpen Animal's Senses

**Spiritual Rating:** 13  
**Community Rating:** 10  
**Difficulty:** 10

**Range:** sight

**Duration:** 16 (25 minutes)

**Effect:** sharpens the senses of an animal

This prayer allows a worshipper of Lanala to increase all five senses of a summoned animal, almost invariably a predatory one, making it a more effective hunter in tracking down the Jakatt's enemies. Usually the same Jakatt that has prayed for control of the beast also performs this miracle, but this is not necessary.

Only one animal at a time may be affected by a single miracle. The animal's *Perception* and related skills are increased by the amount of success achieved by the miracle. *Minimal* success increases the animal's *Perception* by +1, *average* +2, *good* +5, *superior* +10, and *spectacular* by +15.

## Simple Club

**Spiritual Rating:** 9  
**Community Rating:** 8  
**Difficulty:** 10

**Range:** touch

**Duration:** until re-planted

**Effect:** turns a hrockt shoot into a club

*Simple club* allows a Jakatt to take a hrockt shoot and pray to Lanala to turn it into a club. It looks like a one-handed club, covered with vines and leaves. The damage value is STR+3.

## Spiked Club

**Spiritual Rating:** 14  
**Community Rating:** 10  
**Difficulty:** 12

**Range:** touch

**Duration:** until re-planted

**Effect:** turns a hrockt shoot into a spiked club

*Spiked club* allows a Jakatt to turn a hrockt shoot into a spiked club. It looks like the Simple Club, but is heavily studded with thorns, causing a damage value of STR+4.

## Spiked Great Club

**Spiritual Rating:** 14  
**Community Rating:** 11  
**Difficulty:** 13

**Range:** touch

**Duration:** until re-planted

**Effect:** turns a hrockt shoot into a spiked two-handed club

*Spiked great club* turns a hrockt shoot into a spiked, two-handed club, covered with vines and thorns. The damage value is STR +5 (only STR +4 is used one-handed).





## Act One

# Enter the Victorians

### The Major Beat

In this act, the heroes, while traveling to the town of Redside, California, rescue a young woman from a rogue biker who has kidnapped her. Upon questioning, both will have news of intruders, in the form of a huge motorcycle gang and what will turn out to be a Victorian force from Orrorsh, which arrived courtesy of a newly-made gate.

The Storm Knights will stumble upon the Victorian army encampment, and attempt to negotiate with the Victorians for help against the bikers and any additional raiders who may come from the Living Land.

### SCENE ONE: A Plea for Help

#### The Situation

**Standard.** The adventure begins with the Storm Knights having decided to come to Redside, CA, because they have been hired to work as a security force for a weapons factory owned by Seisaku, Inc. They accepted the job after strong urging from the Delphi Council, under the provisions of the Storm Knight Registration Act. The Storm Knights may approach this as a straightforward job, or be suspicious and cautious.

This first scene will be run early in the morning, just as they have descended from the mountains into Central Valley. The early morning sun has burnt off some of the haze, and temperatures are rapidly starting to climb. The terrain around the mountains and in the valley is dry forest and sparse grassy plains.

The Storm Knights will already be familiar with some of the problems faced by residents of this region. The motor-

cycle gangs of the western states have been pouring into California at an alarming rate. The Central Valley region is in the Tehachapi Mountains, stuck between the chaos of the Tharkoldu realm to the south in Los Angeles and the ongoing struggle between the Living Land and Nippon, just a few miles to the north. The events of the past few months have left the area disorganized and most of the troops and police have been sent to one of the war fronts.

### The Action

While the heroes are travelling down the deserted and poorly maintained highway or resting by the side of the road, they hear the sound of a lone motorcycle in the distance. It is rapidly closing in on their location.

Soon, the bike appears, carrying two people: a scruffy, unkempt young male with a leather jacket, sunglasses and boots, and a young woman whose hands are tied, with an additional rope binding her to the bike. The man is battered, bruised and bloody.

As soon as the biker sees the Knights, he will stop and try to turn his bike around. The young woman will scream, "Please! Help me!"

The biker will then try to escape by going cross country if necessary. If he appears cornered, he will stop the bike, grab the woman and hold a switchblade to her throat, trying to force the Storm Knights away.

The biker is named Snake; his captive is a local geologist named Janet Gilman. Snake is an undisciplined and dangerous man. He was with his gang for several years, but just a few hours ago all of his friends were wiped out by a Victorian force that came through a gate a few days earlier. He is now looking for a place to take refuge. He figured that by taking Janet Gilman captive he would be able to ransom her to the town. While dangerous, he





isn't very bright. When confronted by the Storm Knights, his only concern is escape, and he doesn't care if Janet has to die for him to get away.

#### Snake

##### DEXTERITY 8

Fire combat 9, lock picking 9, melee weapons 10, unarmed combat 10

##### STRENGTH 9

Lifting 10

##### TOUGHNESS 10

##### PERCEPTION 7

Land vehicles 11, trick 8

##### MIND 6

##### CHARISMA 6

Taunt 8

##### SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 11

Possibilities: none

**Equipment:** Chain (damage value STR +5/19), knife (damage value STR+3/17), leather jacket (armor value +2/20), motorcycle (speed value 14/120 mph/195 kmh, passengers 2, TOU 15, Tech 22).

Janet Gilman is an attractive woman in her late '20s, with shoulder-length light brown hair. She is very capable and intelligent, and a shrewd negotiator. She is a native of Redside, and returned home from college after the invasion began. She has taken a job with Seisaku, Inc., and was studying soil and mineral types in the mountains before she was taken captive by Snake.

#### Janet Gilman, Geologist

##### DEXTERITY 8

Running 9, swimming 9

##### STRENGTH 6

##### TOUGHNESS 6

##### PERCEPTION 9

Evidence analysis 11, find 10, land vehicles 9, scholar (geology) 13

##### MIND 10

Science 11

##### CHARISMA 10

Charm 11, persuasion 11

##### SPIRIT 8

Possibilities: none

**Equipment:** none

Once the rescue has taken place, Janet will thank the Storm Knights for rescuing her. She will explain that she was collecting soil samples when Snake and his buddies grabbed her. She overheard talk among her captors about meeting up with a gang led by a

biker named "Hog" for a big raid they have in mind for her home town of Redside sometime in the next couple of days.

Janet will explain that Snake's gang was all but wiped out in a battle with some strangers on horseback, dressed in 19th-century war uniforms, and that Snake was fleeing them when he blundered into the Storm Knights.

If Snake is still alive, he will refuse to cooperate unless threatened. However, once his resolve starts to go, he will tell the Storm Knights whatever they want to know: "We got jumped by a bunch of weirdos, man. They were men instead of scales, but they were still weirdos. All of them on horseback, with old-fashioned rifles. A lot of us got taken out by their rifles before we even had a chance to fight back."

About the upcoming attack, Snake will only tell the following: "I don't know, man! We're just gonna work with Hog's Boys on this one raid, and we were gonna split the booty. Money, weapons, the whole deal. I don't know anything else."

Janet will be willing to lead the Storm Knights to the battle site. Snake can be intimidated into doing the same with a *stymied* result or better, or a persuasion result of *negotiated agreement* or better.

## Variables

If the Storm Knights allow Snake to kill Janet, you may have them find out about the "weirdos" on horseback by questioning Snake (if he's still alive), or by continuing on toward Redside. As they near the town, have them make a *find* or *Perception* total of 7 to see what appear to be hundreds of motorcycle trails going off the road and leading toward the mountains. If they follow these trails, they will find the battle scene (about one mile in from the main road).

## Cut To ...

If the heroes decide to investigate Janet and Snake's stories, or follow the motorcycle trails leading from the highway, cut to "Scene Two: The Victorian Encampment."

If they decide to continue on to Redside, cut to Act Two.

## SCENE TWO: The Victorian Encampment

### The Situation

**Standard.** The Storm Knights discover the site of the recent battle, with dead bikers strewn around with a few other corpses; the uniforms are those of Gaean Victorian cavalymen. Describe the scene:

After about a mile of travelling through the scrub of the valley, you top a small hill and see a ghastly sight. Several dozen corpses lie strewn about the immediate area — most of the bodies are those of bikers dressed much like Snake, but there are a few others in crisp, red military uniforms of the nineteenth century. (If the Storm Knights are familiar with the Victorians, you can openly describe them as such.)

Nearly thirty motorcycles are lying on the ground, along with countless melee weapons: knives, chains, sabers and bayonets. There are a few small pistols and some primitive rifles as well.

### The Action

This is the battle scene where the 23rd Lancers Victorian troops wiped out Snake's gang. After the Storm Knights have had a few seconds for observation, read aloud:

Off in the distance, you see a glimmer of sunlight on metal. There are about a dozen figures, about man-sized, some 200 meters away.

Any character making a *Perception* total of 12 (or with binoculars, no total needed) will be able to see that the men are Victorians, dressed in their familiar red coats, with white helmets and blue pants. They are digging a huge mass grave for the dead bikers, as well as





individual graves for their fallen comrades (there are only a few individual graves). A priest is performing last rites for each of the bodies.

Three rounds after the Victorians are spotted, the Victorians will spot the Storm Knight group. The Storm Knights will see a flurry of activity, as the men rush to their horses and grab their rifles. Two men mount their horses, and head away from the group, while the other ten close toward the Storm Knights. These soldiers are part of the 23rd Regiment.

The soldiers will approach cautiously, with their weapons leveled at the Storm Knights, and the leader, a Corporal Douglas, will ask, "Who are you, and what is your intent. Speak now, or face our weaponry!"

The Victorians have no idea where they are, and are looking for Orrorsh monsters that may have come through the gate. They are also present to prevent yet another invasion of the Orrorsh realm from wherever the gate

landed. They have only been in California for two days, and haven't yet realized they are still on Earth.

The troops have made camp about one mile from the battle site. Corporal Douglas really no desire to go into battle without reinforcements (especially if the Storm Knights are obviously well-armed). Douglas has the same stats as a typical soldier (given below). If the Storm Knights are cooperative, he will order them to accompany him to the encampment and confiscate their weapons.

Another two dozen cavalry men will arrive on horseback six minutes after the Victorians first spot the Storm Knights (provided the Storm Knights didn't stop the two messengers sent to the camp).

#### **23rd Lancers/Regiment Cavalrymen**

**DEXTERITY 9**

Dodge 11, beast riding 12, fire combat 10, maneuver 10, melee weapons 12, unarmed combat 10

**STRENGTH 10**

**TOUGHNESS 9**

**PERCEPTION 9**

**MIND 8**

Willpower 10

**CHARISMA 7**

**SPIRIT 8**

Faith (Sacellum) 9

**Possibility Potential: none**

**Equipment:** Lee-Hollings rifle (damage value 18, 3-40/300/1800, ammo 8, Tech 19), bayonet (damage value STR+5/19), lance (damage value is speed value +6 or STR +4/14)

#### **Horse**

**DEXTERITY 9**

Dodge 10, running 11, unarmed combat 10

**STRENGTH 13**

**TOUGHNESS 10**

**PERCEPTION 6**

**MIND 3**

Willpower 8

**CHARISMA 3**

**SPIRIT 3**

**Possibility Potential: none**

**Natural Tools:** Hooves (damage value STR +2/15)





## Flag

If the Storm Knights haven't found out about the impending attack on Redside by the biker gang (either through Janet or Snake), have one of the Storm Knights discover a hand scrawled set of instructions, covered in blood, that was dropped in the soil during the battle. The instructions read:

*"Join up with Hog's Boys in Mountains. 150 men.*

*Redside; arms factory."*

## The Encampment

The Victorian encampment is under the command of Brigadier-General Percival Cunningham. His second in command is Captain Michael Tompkins, and the Chaplain is Captain William Ambrose. There are 36 mounted cavalymen with the 23rd Regiment. The 63rd Regiment, Royal Surreys of Birmingham, has 150 infantry troops, as well as five artillery

men (for the five Armstrong heavy guns). There are 15 support personnel. Additionally, 40 infantry have been stationed on this side of the gate to make sure that no further creatures emerge from Orrorsh. The rest of the two regiments have remained on the other side of the gate, in Orrorsh.

Once the Knights have been brought to the encampment, they will be introduced to Cunningham.

A tall, slender middle-aged man, Brigadier Cunningham is in excellent physical condition, as much from his love of hunting as from his military experience. He has black hair and a thin mustache.

### Brigadier-General Percival Cunningham

#### DEXTERITY 10

Beast riding 12, dodge 12, fire combat 12, maneuver 11, melee weapons 12, swimming 11, unarmed combat 11

#### STRENGTH 11

Climbing 12, lifting 12

#### TOUGHNESS 11

#### PERCEPTION 9

Find 10, first aid 10, scholar (military tactics) 13, tracking 11, trick 13

#### MIND 8

Survival 10, test of will 10, will-

power 12

#### CHARISMA 11

Charm 14

#### SPIRIT 10

Faith (Sacellum) 11, intimidation

12, reality 11

#### Possibilities: 12

**Equipment:** Harford revolver (damage value 15, 3-5/15/40, ammo 5, Tech 19), sabre (damage value STR+5/19), Lee-Hollings rifle (damage value 18)

Captain Michael Tompkins is Cunningham's trustworthy advisor and assistant. A relatively short man with brown hair and the inevitable thin mustache, Tompkins is somewhat more intellectual than his superior (hence his position as adjutant). He does try to fit in with more the common Victorian troops.





# Central Valley Gate: Map 1 Central Valley

Edeinos Tribe

LIVING LAND/NIPPON  
MIXED ZONE



Fillmore

Victorian  
Encampment

Redside

Original Victorian  
Encampment

Battle Scene

To Interstate 5 →

The Gate

Hog's  
Biker Gang

Key

- Mountain
- Hill
- Forest

Thousand  
Oaks

← To Route 58





## Captain Michael Tompkins (Adjutant)

### DEXTERITY 9

Beast riding 12, dodge 11, fire combat 11, maneuver 10, melee weapons 10

### STRENGTH 9

### TOUGHNESS 11

### PERCEPTION 11

Find 12, first aid 13, scholar (military tactics) 13, tracking 13, trick 14

### MIND 10

### CHARISMA 9

Persuasion 10, taunt 10

### SPIRIT 8

Possibilities: none

**Equipment:** Harford revolver (damage value 15), sabre (damage value STR+5/19), Lee-Hollings rifle (damage value 18)

Chaplain Ambrose is the most open-minded of the officers, and while he too believes that the Victorians are morally superior, he is more willing to take advice and knowledge from non-Victorians. A middle-aged, balding man with gray hair, the chaplain is less forceful than the average Victorian priest, being

more eager to negotiate with those who are not obviously enemies. He will be the Knights' only real ally in their negotiations with the Victorians.

## Captain William Ambrose (Chaplain)

### DEXTERITY 8

Beast riding 9, dodge 9, fire combat 9

### STRENGTH 9

### TOUGHNESS 10

### PERCEPTION 10

### MIND 9

Test 11

### CHARISMA 12

Charm 13, persuasion 14

### SPIRIT 12

Faith (Sacellum) 14, focus 15, intimidation 14

Possibilities: none

**Equipment:** Harford revolver (damage value 15), sabre (damage value STR+5/19), Lee-Hollings rifle (damage value 18), Sacellum bible, silver crucifix

**Miracles:** *bless, bless missile, hell's fire, staff of righteousness, ward danger, ward enemy*

The average troops are illiterate, stubborn, and are convinced of their natural superiority, especially in light of their easy victory over the "ruffians on motorized bicycles." The Victorian troops know little outside the sphere of soldiering, but are tenacious fighters who will not admit defeat.

## 63rd Regiment Soldiers

### DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 11, fire combat 11, maneuver 10, melee weapons 10, unarmed combat 10

### STRENGTH 10

### TOUGHNESS 9

### PERCEPTION 9

### MIND 8

Willpower 10

### CHARISMA 7

### SPIRIT 8

Faith (Sacellum) 9

Possibility Potential: none

**Equipment:** Lee-Hollings rifle (damage value 18), bayonet (damage value STR +5/19)

There are five artillery men, with the same stats as the general soldiers, plus *heavy weapons* at 12. They are



equipped with a Harford revolver (damage value 15). Their heavy guns are 12-pounder Armstrongs (damage value 25, range 3-300/1200/3km, ammo 1, shell blast radius of 0-4/10/25; has a +1 add at all ranges). A gunner and assistant is required to load and then fire in the same round; if the gunner is operating the weapon by himself, reloading takes an entire round, and he can fire on the next round.

## Forming a Tenuous Alliance

The opening moments of the meeting should convince both sides that they are dealing with characters from two completely different worlds. Brigadier Cunningham will immediately attempt to usher Janet and any female Storm Knights into a separate tent to relax while the men discuss important matters. This may make for amusing culture shock situations.

As the Knights approach the tent, they will each be touched with Chaplain Ambrose's silver crucifix, for fear that the strange visitors may be werewolves or other hideous creatures.

Brigadier Cunningham will show obvious distaste for any non-humans (such as dwarves, elves or edeinos) or any cybernetically enhanced or obvious magic-using humans.

Janet is recognized by several of the Victorian soldiers, who, unfortunately, were unable to rescue her during the battle.

During negotiations, the Victorians start out as *neutral*. A Knight such as a werewolf, who is obviously an

Orrorshan monster, will make things two steps more difficult by his very presence. Non-human Knights will make things one step more difficult, as will any Knights, especially female ones, who make harsh and tactless complaints about Cunningham's attempt to separate the sexes before the meeting. Janet's testimony, if allowed, will make things one step easier.

The Storm Knights should try to hammer out an alliance with the Victorians. Since they already know about the size of the biker gang, the Knights know that Redside will be all but defenseless unless they can recruit the Victorians. Assuming things end on a happy note, the alliance will be sealed with whiskey and cigars (only for the males) and handshakes, and the Victorian force will take up the march toward Redside.

A *negotiated agreement* result means the Victorians will help, but only if the Storm Knights promise to help them hunt down any evil creatures in the area. A *yes* or *vow* agreement will convince the Victorians to help defend the town, but they will still retain their prime objective of finding any creatures that have come through the gate. If the negotiations fail, Janet will plead with Cunningham and his staff to defend her almost helpless town, and her pleading will have its affect — treat the result as a *negotiated agreement*.

## The Victorians and Their Horrors

During the course of the negotiations, the gamemaster should portray Cunningham as cautious and suspi-

cious, not at all ready to make a deal without assurance that he is doing the right thing. If the Storm Knights can convince him that he is indeed on Earth, he will seem to open up, and will detail the battle in Orrorsh and the deaths of the werewolves and wizards prior to the Victorians coming through. As soon as he completes this tale, have the Storm Knights make a *Perseverance* check against the monster's fear rating of 15 (see Act Four for more information), bearing in mind that the beginning value for the group is 8. If successful, their *Perseverance* goes up by 1. For more information on *Perseverance* and Orrorshan horrors, see the *Orrorsh* sourcebook.

## A Just Ending

If Snake is still alive and with the Storm Knights, Cunningham will insist on hanging him as an "uncivilized barbarian totally lacking in morals." If the Storm Knights press the issue, Cunningham will refuse to back down, explaining that Snake's friends killed several of the Victorian scouts "without provocation."

## Awards

The Knights each get one Possibility if they convince the Victorians to defend Redside. If Janet had to strike the alliance, or no alliance was forged, the Storm Knights receive no Possibilities.

## Cut To ...

Cut to Act Two, "Danger in Redside."







## Act Two

# Danger in Redside

### The Major Beat

The Storm Knights and Victorians arrive in Redside during the middle of an attack by a sizable force of edeinos, gospog, stalengers, and a pair of benthe-controlled baragons. After the Storm Knights and Victorians drive off the attackers, they encounter many of the townsfolk, including the mayor; Reggie Blake, manager of the Seisaku plant and the employer of the Storm Knights; a mysterious Orrorshan monster hunter; Spartans sent by the Delphi Council; and, "survivalists" who have rescued residents captured in earlier raids.

With the assistance of the survivalists and the Spartans, the Storm Knights must enter the Living Land/Nippon Tech mixed zone to rescue villagers captured in the most recent raid. The climax of this act is the attack on the spiritually-protected edeinos tribe encampment, where the captives are being held.

### SCENE ONE: The Relief of Redside

#### The Situation

**Standard.** In the forefront of the combined force, the Storm Knights arrive at the outskirts of Redside, to hear the continuous crackle of rifle fire. Hurrying forward, they discover that the town is under siege, and apparently losing the fight. Edeinos and stalengers are routing the town, while gospog provide covering fire in the distance. Describe the scene:

The edeinos and stalengers are taking their toll on the town. Their lack of tactics has clearly thrown the

town's meager defenses into chaos, and it appears that the town only has a few people capable of fighting. Nearly a dozen stalengers waft above the buildings on the air currents, while at least two score of edeinos are rampaging mindlessly, destroying cars, setting fires and attacking at random. Up on the hill, you can see nearly a hundred more edeinos readying a charge with a pair of baragons, while it appears that there are several gospog sharpshooters to provide cover. Several edeinos are carrying captives away to the north.

### The Action

Redside is clearly a town in trouble. One hundred edeinos warriors are massing for a rush with their spears, and two huge baragons are in the center of the line. Heroes who look closely at the beasts with binoculars or the like will discover that each baragon has a benthe attached to it.

#### **T**he Arms Factory

The Seisaku arms factory in town has been subcontracted to make M16s for the Delphi Council and U.S. government. Unfortunately, the biker gangs have stopped shipments of metals for the manufacture of the guns, virtually shutting down the factory, and ammunition is also in extremely short supply (the factory hasn't been tooled to manufacture ammo, so it must be shipped into town). The Delphi Council, with the goings-on in Los Angeles, has been unable to deploy more forces to Redside for its defense — all that can be spared are the Storm Knights.



Backing up the force are a score of gospog of the First Planting, armed with M16s, and a half dozen gospog of the Second Planting, armed with M1 Garand rifles.

The Knights can see many human corpses in the streets, while the residents of Redside are fighting from whatever provides cover.

The edeinos have assaulted the town from the north, and their battle line is about 100 meters north of the town's shopping center (building 12 on Map 2, "The Town of Redside"). Lacking the ability for true strategy, their deployment is very simple: the Second-Planting gospog are stationed at the top of a small hill, acting as

snipers. The edeinos and baragons are still forming their battle line, with the gospog deployed to either side to act as supporting fire. Within the town, there are at least two score edeinos and a dozen stalengers wandering about, attacking the town's defenders, destroying buildings and the like.

The town's defenders are scattered

## **F**orces of the Living Land

This attack has been started by the Teraks Kest tribe, located just over the border of the Living Land/Nippon mixed zone. The warriors were told to destroy the weapons factory on the southern side of town (location 3 on Map 2), and if that was impossible, they were to capture as many townspeople as possible, either for conversion to Keta Kalles or ritual sacrifice.

### **Edeinos Warriors (140)**

#### **DEXTERITY 11**

Dodge 12, missile weapons 12, stealth 12

#### **STRENGTH 9**

#### **TOUGHNESS 10**

#### **PERCEPTION 9**

Language 10, tracking 10, trick 10

#### **MIND 9**

Test 11, willpower 10

#### **CHARISMA 8**

Taunt 9

#### **SPIRIT 10**

Faith (Keta Kalles) 11, focus 11, intimidation 10

**Possibility Potential:** some (55)

**Natural Tools:** Claws (damage value STR +3/12), teeth (damage value STR +2/11), tail (damage value STR)

**Equipment:** Hrockt spear (damage value STR + 3/19)

**Miracles:** *Simple spear*

**Note:** The edeinos warriors are currently affected by the following miracles: *Heightened Dexterity* (adds +2 to all *Dexterity*-based actions)

### **Stalengers (12)**

#### **DEXTERITY 8**

Dodge 11, flight 12, stealth 11, unarmed combat 12

#### **STRENGTH 8**

#### **TOUGHNESS 8**

#### **PERCEPTION 9**

Find 11, tracking 11

#### **MIND 8**

Artist 10, survival 10

#### **CHARISMA 7**

#### **SPIRIT 8**

Faith (Keta Kalles) 11, focus 12

**Possibility Potential:** some (65)

**Natural Tools:** Tentacles (damage value STR +4/12), flying pump (speed value 11)

### **Baragon (2)**

#### **DEXTERITY 11**

Running 12, stealth 12, unarmed combat 14

#### **STRENGTH 18**

#### **TOUGHNESS 19**

#### **PERCEPTION 6**

Trick (10)

#### **MIND 5**

Test (10)

#### **CHARISMA 4**

Taunt (10)

#### **SPIRIT 2**

Intimidation 10

**Possibility Potential:** none

**Natural Tools:** Teeth (damage value STR), claws (damage value STR)

### **Gospog of the First Planting (20)**

#### **DEXTERITY 8**

Energy weapons 9, fire combat 9, melee weapons 9, missile weapons 9, unarmed combat 9

#### **STRENGTH 8**

Climbing 9

#### **TOUGHNESS 8**

#### **PERCEPTION 7**

Find 10, tracking 8

#### **MIND 7**

Willpower 10

#### **CHARISMA 7**

#### **SPIRIT 7**

**Possibility Potential:** none

**Natural Tools:** Flexible internal structure (armor value TOU +2/10)

**Equipment:** M-16 (damage value 20, 3-40/250/400, ammo 10)

### **Gospog of the Second Planting (6)**

#### **DEXTERITY 12**

Dodge 14, energy weapons 13, fire combat 14, melee weapons 13, missile weapons 13, unarmed combat 13

#### **STRENGTH 11**

Climbing 12

#### **TOUGHNESS 12**

#### **PERCEPTION 9**

Find 11, tracking 10

#### **MIND 8**

Test (11), willpower 10

#### **CHARISMA 7**

Taunt (10)

#### **SPIRIT 7**

Intimidation 11

**Possibility Potential:** none

**Natural Tools:** Armored hide (armor value TOU +2/14), claws (damage value STR +2/13), teeth (damage value STR +3/14), tail (damage value STR)

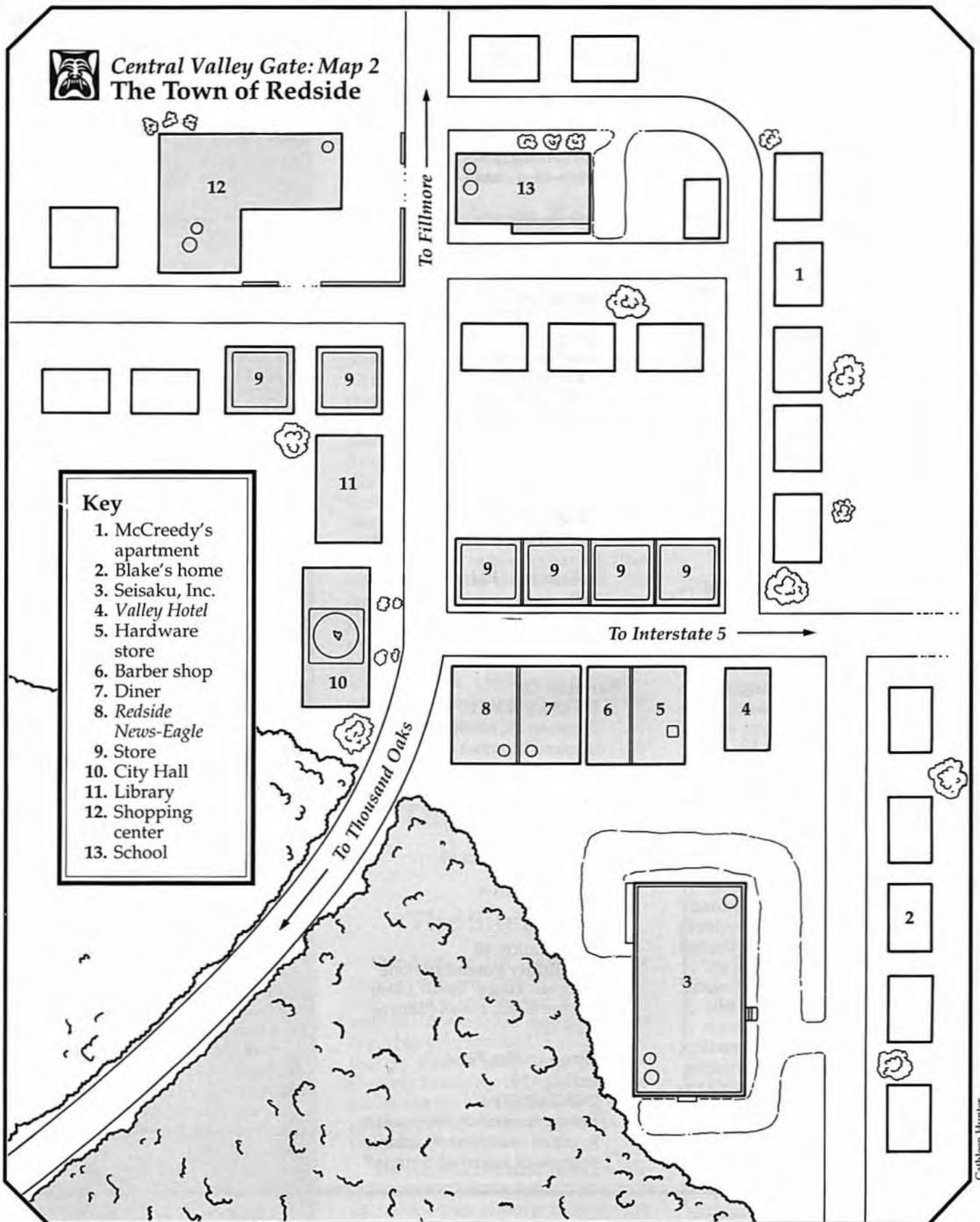
**Equipment:** M1 Garand (damage value 20, 3-40/400/600, ammo 8)







## Central Valley Gate: Map 2 The Town of Redside



### Key

1. McCreedy's apartment
2. Blake's home
3. Seisaku, Inc.
4. Valley Hotel
5. Hardware store
6. Barber shop
7. Diner
8. Redside News-Eagle
9. Store
10. City Hall
11. Library
12. Shopping center
13. School



## Running the Battle

It would be time-consuming and frustrating to run the entire Battle of Redside during this scene. An alternate way to run this type of scene is to concentrate on the activities of the Storm Knights, while using the other events as background detail.

The Storm Knights will probably want to force the invaders back — after the initial attack by the baragons, edeinos and stalengers, the Storm Knights may attempt to take out the gospog or remaining edeinos. After the first encounter, once the Storm Knights have taken out five Living Land foes or more than ten rounds have passed, the enemy will start a haphazard retreat. The Storm Knights should be encouraged to lend aid to the town, by tending to the wounded, putting out fires, and

so forth, rather than pursue the enemy back into the Living Land — that will come soon enough.

In terms of Storm Knight activities, and to simulate the chaos of battle, roll a die for each Storm Knight for each turn (roll as if generating a skill total, rerolling on 10s and 20s). If a 15 or less is rolled, there is no encounter; if a 16-19 is rolled, the Storm Knight in question will come into melee range with an edeinos or stalenger; if a 20-22 is rolled, a creature comes into melee range, but as soon as the Storm Knight closes, a Victorian infantryman shoots the opponent before they can actually engage in battle. If a 23 or higher is rolled, one of the gospog sharpshooters will decide to shoot at the Storm Knight.

The way the encounter occurs can be done any number of ways

— the Storm Knight sees the opponent out in the open and charges, a stalenger attacks from the air, an edeinos leaps off a rooftop to attack from behind, a miracle is used to stop the Storm Knight, and so forth.

For “background action”, the gamemaster is at liberty to describe typical scenes: townspeople shooting from their windows at the edeinos, an edeinos and a Redside resident rolling around on the ground in mortal combat, a building goes up in flames, a pole falls, killing somebody with the still charged electrical lines. From the background action, the course of the battle should be described — if the residents of Redside are winning, describe more encounters where the citizens defeat the invaders.

about: four riflemen are taking cover on the roof of the shopping center, another pair are in the parking lot (pulling cover from the cars), and a half dozen men are holed up in the school. The rest of the men are scattered randomly amongst the other buildings of the town. The townspeople who are unable to fight are holed up in their basements and other “secure” areas.

Once the Victorians see the battle, they will insist upon engaging the Living Land creatures. Cunningham will insist that the Storm Knights attempt to rally the forces of the town by leading a charge, while the cavalrymen and infantry will be sent on a separate charge to confuse the enemy. The Armstrong guns will be set up immediately.

The first shells are remarkably successful — one bursts squarely on a baragon, killing it outright, while the second one seems confused. Characters making a *Perception* total of 16, or with the aid of binoculars, a total of 10, will show that shrapnel from the shell bursts has shredded the benthe con-

trolling the beast, leaving it confused by the noise and the smoke. Setting out at random, it charges directly at the Storm Knights. Behind it, two dozen edeinos, thinking this is the signal to attack, charge in behind, with all of the first-planting gospog on their heels to provide fire support. Because the cavalry and infantry are preoccupied with the other edeinos and gospog, the Storm Knights will have to deal with these foes by themselves.

After five rounds of combat, ten stalengers will come to the aid of their allies, attempting to surprise the Storm Knights from above (make *stealth* rolls).

Barely two dozen men are healthy enough to defend Redside, but they are trying their best to hold off the invaders. The town used to have far more men to defend it, but previous raids have taken a heavy toll — there are about 50 men in the hospital, too injured to fight. This is one reason the support of the Victorians and Storm Knights is important — without outside aid, either the edeinos or bikers could quickly crush Redside’s defenses.

### Men of Redside (25)

**DEXTERITY** 7

Fire combat 8, unarmed combat 8

**STRENGTH** 8

Lifting 9

**TOUGHNESS** 8

**PERCEPTION** 7

First aid 8, land vehicles 9

**MIND** 7

Survival 8

**CHARISMA** 6

**SPIRIT** 7

**Possibility Potential:** some (60)

**Equipment:** M16 (damage value 20, range 3-40/250/400, ammo 10), baseball bat (damage value STR +3/18)

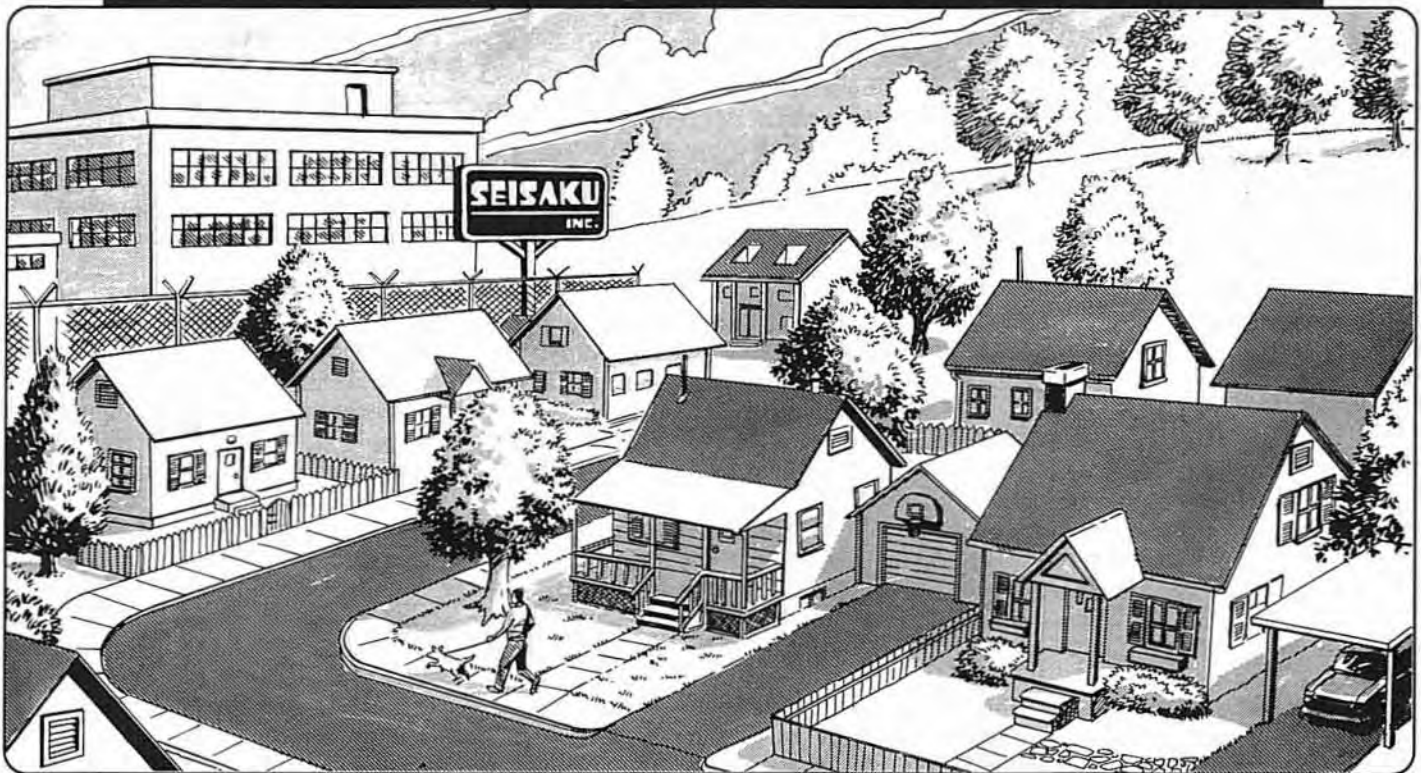
## SCENE TWO: Foes, Friends and a Mystery

### The Situation

**Standard.** Once the edeinos attack on Redside has been repulsed, Janet will guide the Storm Knights and







Brigadier Cunningham's staff to City Hall, where they will receive the gratitude of Mayor Albert Marlin and meet their employer, Reggie Blake, manager of the arms factory. During this scene, they will also meet McCreedy, a mysterious Victorian who claims to be on the trail of an Orrorshan horror, as well as a group of "survivalists" who have become a symbol of resistance to the predations of the edeinos.

## The Action

The battle is over, but the clean-up has just begun. Dead bodies, both human and edeinos, litter the streets, with the pavement stained by the pools of blood. Several of the town's buildings have been set on fire. Some of the townspeople, both those who were fighting and those in hiding, come out to begin the grim prospect of cleaning up, but also to thank the Storm Knights and Victorians for their efforts. For some sample encounters, the Storm Knights may come upon someone who

is still alive (barely) and have to administer first aid or use the *medicine* skill to save him. Brigadier-General Cunningham will order his troops to help with the clean up. Janet (if she is with the group) will see her mother emerge from one of the buildings, but during the course of the encounter, will learn that her brother Patrick was just killed in the raid. All of these sights are meant to help the Storm Knights realize what a tragic series of events has plagued Redside, and that the people are barely holding on to their sanity.

## Rescue

There is still a major piece of unfinished business concerning the edeinos. Half a dozen of the townspeople have been kidnapped by the edeinos. Frightened relatives plead to the Storm Knights to rescue these people. If desired, the gamemaster could have Captain Tompkins and several of the regular Victorian troops volunteer to ac-

company the Storm Knights into the Living Land where the edeinos tribe is located.

## The Boss

While the Storm Knights are in the midst of cleaning up, they will be approached by two men. The leader of the pair is Albert Marlin, Mayor of Redside, and now de facto police chief. Second in line is Reggie Blake, the Australian manager of the Seisaku arms factory in town, and the man who recruited the Storm Knights to defend the town.

Upon seeing the two men, Janet will run toward Marlin, screaming, "Mayor Marlin, we're in serious trouble. There is a biker gang somewhere near here, and they are planning to attack the town in two days! These people here saved me from one of the bikers."

The Mayor will visibly pale when she mentions the upcoming attack, and when she is finished, he will quickly



turn his attention to the Storm Knights.

"Well, thank you for your efforts. As you can see, our situation is getting worse, and there are only a few people left who are capable of fighting. I believe that you were hired by this gentleman, Reggie Blake, manager of the arms factory."

At that point, Blake an Australian, will step forward, heartily shaking each Storm Knight's hand, with a cheerful, "G'day mate!" After the pleasantries, Blake will quickly get to business:

"Well, as you can see, the town's defenses have been battered by the blimey scales! My rate is \$1000 per week, per individual; while in my employ, you are on 24-hour call. I'd like you to be available for a couple weeks, at least until we can get a convoy of ammo trucks into town and some of the folks here have healed up a bit."

"I'd like you to lead a rescue party for those people who got kidnapped in that last raid. Some of 'em are my workers, and we need your 'elp. It's worth a \$500 bonus to ya."

Blake is cheery, but underneath his charismatic veil, he is deadly serious, and fully expects the Storm Knights to accept his deal with no complaints and no negotiating. After the deal is settled, he explains to the Storm Knights that he'll meet them at the factory tomorrow morning, and he'll give them a tour. While they're in town, they have a room for each Knight above The Valley Hotel, the only bar/hotel in town (building 4 on Map 2).

### Albert Marlin (Mayor of Redside)

#### DEXTERITY 6

Fire combat 7, melee weapons 7, unarmed combat 7

#### STRENGTH 8

#### TOUGHNESS 7

#### PERCEPTION 9

Evidence analysis 10, trick 11

#### MIND 9

#### CHARISMA 8

Charm 10, persuasion 12, taunt 11

#### SPIRIT 6

Intimidation 9

Possibilities: none

Equipment: .38 revolver (damage value 14), pocketknife (damage value STR +1/16)

**Description:** A somewhat portly, middle-aged man with half-red, half-gray hair, Albert Marlin is a shrewd politician and an open-eyed realist. Painfully aware of his lack of experience in military matters, he will willingly turn Redside's defense over to the Victorians, Storm Knights, or anyone else who is apparently capable of protecting his town.

### Reggie Blake, Businessman

#### DEXTERITY 7

Lock picking 10, prestidigitation 9, stealth 10

#### STRENGTH 7

#### TOUGHNESS 6

#### PERCEPTION 11

Disguise 13, find 12, language (Japanese) 13, scholar (economics) 14, trick 13

#### MIND 12

Business 16, test 14, willpower 14

#### CHARISMA 8

Charm 10, persuasion 10, taunt 10

#### SPIRIT 9

Reality 11

Possibilities: 6

**Equipment:** 13mm Chunyokai (damage value 18, range 3-10/40/50, ammo 9), Zamfttech Monolith

**Description:** A sandy-haired man of medium height, Blake is not very dangerous physically, but more than makes up for it with his cunning.

Blake, as the Storm Knights might already suspect, is a Nippon Tech agent, although if asked, he'll say that the company is "merely a Japanese corporation"; of course, he'll deny any knowledge of a "Nippon Tech" cosm. He needs the Storm Knights to defend the plant, because with the increasing number of raids by both edeinos and bikers, he feels that a major assault on the town is imminent. Despite his loyalty to Nippon, he genuinely cares about his workers and the town as a whole, and he hopes that the Storm Knights will be able to do some good.

The mayor and Blake will insist on going to the mayor's office to discuss the current situation. Once inside, they will merely provide more detail — Blake will explain that he wants the Storm Knights to place prime emphasis on the plant, but they also must help the town out. Blake will explain that the manufacture of weapons has

been halted because of the assaults of the bikers, who have effectively stopped the delivery of metals.

Marlin will ask the Victorians to make camp just outside the town and to also assist in its defense, and Cunningham will quickly agree to the idea.

## Event: Survivalists

After the Knights, Marlin and Blake have had a few moments to discuss the current situation, the Mayor's attention will be drawn to a stir outside the office. It appears the Storm Knights and Victorians aren't the only heroes showing up in town today. They will see a tearful reunion between four children and their parents. The mayor will inform the Knights that these children had been missing since late yesterday, and his pitiful manpower resources had prevented him from mounting much of a search before the edeinos attack trapped everyone in town.

The rescuers are standing off in a knot to one side of the families: nine husky men in outdoor clothing, armed with shotguns, pistols, and knives. Without any explanation, Blake and the Mayor usher the Knights outside. Once the Knights and Victorian officers come over to the new visitors, their leader, a strikingly handsome, clean-shaven blond fellow, steps forward to introduce himself. With a modest swagger, he introduces himself as "John Birch Harris," the leader of a small band of survivalists who have been trying to help the town.

Harris and his fellow survivalists are apparently living refutations of the survivalist stereotype, being quite polite and showing considerable intelligence. Harris will actively attempt to strike up a relationship with any female Storm Knights. When questioned about his normal occupation, he proudly flashes the ornate card of a real estate company, of which he is the president. He casually mentions that his company was responsible for the placement of the arms plant in Redside. He also mentions that he wishes to expand his holdings into Los Angeles





and San Diego, and hopefully the economic and war situations will stabilize soon. He notes that he was based in Bakersfield up until a few months ago, and then relocated to Redside.

After the invasion, he and his friends "got patriotism" and formed a survivalist band to justify running around armed, and their leader changed his first and middle names specifically to make him seem all the more like your typical superpatriot. The "survivalists" are a major, if capricious factor, in this adventure.

After speaking a sentence or two of Spanish (to show off his proficiency in that language), he will also mention that he would even be interested in expanding into Mexico, particularly Mexico City ("With that free trade agreement, the market is gonna boom down there.").

His band was "on maneuvers" when they came across a biker gang, getting some kicks out of terrorizing the lost children they had captured. Naturally, they did the "red-blooded American thing" and rescued the children, wiping out the biker gang in the process. If the Knights question any of the children about their rescue (and rescuers), they will learn nothing except that it was over in seconds. One moment the bikers were bullying them and the next, the bikers were all dead and the survivalists were bringing them home. Harris will promptly volunteer his group's services when he learns of the coming attack, and will insist that he and his men stay in town to help teach the people survival skills and fortify the village.

John Birch Harris and his "boys" are not what they seem. They are Nippon Tech agents, having originally been US businessmen visiting Japan when Kanawa took over. Seeing the economic opportunities in the realm, Harris and his companions promptly allied with the High Lord's agents, and returned home to begin their investment schemes. They have recently been directed to keep a careful eye on the activities here in Redside because it is so close to the Living Land and the Tharkold realms. Reggie Blake doesn't know that Harris was the one who scouted the area, and doesn't realize

his true affiliation — as far as Blake is concerned, the survivalists are exactly what they appear to be.

As long as the Storm Knights are fighting Baruk Kaah and the bikers, Harris will be a loyal ally, but he will kill them if they happen to learn his true identity or unwittingly threaten his own agenda (which is to further Kanawa profits, so he can make himself wealthy).

Although he lies to suit his purposes, Harris will be totally sincere when he says he will do anything to stop "those lousy scales."

Harris' plans will not run as smoothly as he wishes. Within his group of survivalists, there are four men, including his second-in-command, Jack Redburn, who have sold out to the Tharkoldu, in exchange for the wealth and power promised to them. They expect to be the foremost dominators of the region once it has been fully tamed, and it is within their best interests to undermine the actions of Harris and the Kanawa Corporation.

Depending on how things turn out, Harris and the Storm Knights might become temporary allies even after his cover is blown, as he seeks to save his own hide from his treacherous followers and prevent expanded Tharkoldu influence (to most Storm Knights, Nippon Tech will certainly be seen as the lesser of the two evils).

#### **John Birch Harris, Survivalist**

##### **DEXTERITY 13**

Acrobatics 14, dodge 16, fire combat 15, lock picking 14, maneuver 15, melee weapons 14, missile weapons 14, running 14, stealth 15, unarmed combat 15

##### **STRENGTH 11**

Climbing 13

##### **TOUGHNESS 13**

##### **PERCEPTION 11**

Evidence analysis 12, find 12, first aid 14, land vehicles 12, language (Japanese) 15, language (Spanish) 14, tracking 14, trick 15

##### **MIND 10**

Medicine 11, survival 13, test 12, willpower 12

##### **CHARISMA 10**

Charm 13, persuasion 14, taunt 12

##### **SPIRIT 13**

Intimidation 14, reality 15

##### **Possibilities: 15**

**Equipment:** M249 SAW automatic rifle (damage value 23, range 3-150/550/1.3k, ammo 24), 2 .45 Colts (damage value 16, range 3-10/15/40, ammo 7), extra ammo clips, knife (damage value STR +3/18), first aid kit, two-way radio, flares, tent, sleeping bag, rations, climbing gear

#### **Jack Redburn, Survivalist/ Tharkoldu agent posing as**

##### **Nippon Agent**

##### **DEXTERITY 12**

Dodge 14, fire combat 15, maneuver 13, melee weapons 13, stealth 13

##### **STRENGTH 12**

##### **TOUGHNESS 13**

##### **PERCEPTION 11**

Evidence analysis 12, find 12, first aid 12, land vehicles 13, language 12, trick 13

##### **MIND 11**

Survival 13

##### **CHARISMA 9**

##### **SPIRIT 10**

Intimidation 11, reality 13

##### **Possibilities: 7**

**Equipment:** M249 SAW automatic rifle (damage value 23), 2 .45 Colts (damage value 16), extra ammo clips, knife (damage value STR +3/18), first aid kit, two-way radio, flares, tent, sleeping bag, rations, climbing gear

**Description:** A short, brown-haired man with a thin mustache.

#### **Survivalist (7)**

##### **DEXTERITY 11**

Dodge 13, fire combat 13, melee combat 12, unarmed combat 12

##### **STRENGTH 10**

##### **TOUGHNESS 10**

##### **PERCEPTION 9**

Find 10, first aid 11, land vehicles 11

##### **MIND 8**

Willpower 9

##### **CHARISMA 6**

##### **SPIRIT 11**

Intimidation 13

##### **Possibility Potential: none**

**Equipment:** M249 SAW automatic rifle (damage value 23), 2 .45 Colts (damage value 16), extra ammo clips, knife (damage value STR +3/18), first aid kit, two-way radio, flares, tent, sleeping bag, rations, climbing gear



## Event: Help From Headquarters

This event can occur anytime after the Storm Knights have met the survivalists, and the mayor and Blake are still in the town square area.

A car pulls up along the curb, in the space normally reserved for official vehicles. Al Marlin, mindful of his new duties as police chief, promptly storms over to chew the fellow out. In reply, the driver will hold out a small card. Marlin slowly turns to Blake and motions for him to come over to the car.

Before Blake can reach the area, a Kevlar-jacketed man of obvious Oriental extraction will step out of the car and look around, followed by four similarly-garbed men.

The newcomer is Sam Mogami, a Nisei (American-born of Japanese ancestry) and head of the team of Spartans which has just arrived. Sam's mission to Redside is multi-purpose; first, he looks at Blake, and sneers, "I've got to talk to you!" Then, without even waiting for a reply from Blake, he heads over to the Storm Knights and introduces himself:

"I'm Sam Mogami, and as a duly appointed representative of the Delphi Council, and as per the Storm Knight Registration Act, while you're in town you are to take orders from me. We thought this situation could be handled by your group, but certain recent developments have required me and my agents to come here."

Sam isn't in Redside to make friends, and with his gruff manner, he certainly won't be making any. He will get an explanation of the situation, either from the Storm Knights or Mayor Marlin, and then decide that the Victorians should set up camp near the town for defense, while the "survivalists" should help the town refortify itself; he will insist on going on to rescue the captured townspeople because it will help him and the other Spartans "assert the strength of the enemy forces."

During the course of these few minutes, the Storm Knights should certainly get the idea that nobody really likes being ordered around by Sam, but they

don't really seem to have much choice. The townspeople are far from enthusiastic as they are already dependent on "foreigners" for defense, and are indignant that their government would leave them to the mercy of the bikers.

Cunningham will absolutely refuse to take orders from a "bloody native." This will go over poorly with Sam, and by the time he has finished threatening to make Cunningham eat his own mustache, the atmosphere will have chilled considerably.

Sam Mogami is a bit of a wild card in this adventure. Although he will make a nuisance of himself by trying to get at least the Storm Knights to "toe the line," he is an ordinary patriotic agent trying to do his job, and will be a trustworthy ally during the adventure.

Since the Victorians will have their hands full with defending the town from external assaults, he will be the only reliable ally the Knights have once the survivalists make their move. Of course, his appearance is meant to fan the flames of suspicion in the Knights' minds because of his ancestry.

### Sam Mogami, Spartan Leader

#### DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 12, fire combat 14, missile weapons 13, unarmed combat 12

#### STRENGTH 10

#### TOUGHNESS 11

#### PERCEPTION 9

Air vehicles 11, evidence analysis 11, find 11, land vehicles 12, language (Japanese) 13, tracking 11, trick 10, water vehicles 10

#### MIND 9

Survival 12, test 10, willpower 10

#### CHARISMA 10

Persuasion 13, taunt 12

#### SPIRIT 9

Intimidation 12, reality 10

#### Possibilities: 9

**Equipment:** Uzi (damage value 17, range 3-15/40/100, ammo 11), 9mm beretta (damage value 15, range 3-10/25/40, ammo 9), short bow (damage value STR +5/19, range 3-10/40/100), 30 arrows, combat knife (damage value STR +4/18), kevlar body armor (armor value TOU +5/22), polarized sunglasses, two-way radio, compass

**Description:** A short, wiry man, quite strong for his size.

### Spartans (4)

#### DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 12, fire combat 12, melee weapons 12, missile weapons 12, stealth 12

#### STRENGTH 10

#### TOUGHNESS 11

#### PERCEPTION 8

Find 10, tracking 10

#### MIND 7

Survival 9

#### CHARISMA 8

Taunt 10

#### SPIRIT 8

**Possibilities:** None

**Equipment:** Uzi (damage value 17), short bow (damage value STR +5/19), 30 arrows, combat knife (damage value STR +4/18), kevlar body armor (armor value TOU +5/22), two-way radio, compass, survival kit

## Event: A Victorian Mystery

While the Storm Knights are still being introduced to Redside and its people, a strange looking man in simple black clothes approaches them. He simply says, "We've got to talk. I'm McCreedy, and I know of something ... evil ... in this place. Things in this town are not as they seem. Don't talk to anyone about this now — here is my address. Meet me there tonight. There is a terrible horror that you must put a stop to."

He hands them a crumpled note of paper, scrawled on it is an address:

*8 Schoolhouse St., Apt. 2.*

If the Storm Knights can suggest a place where they can talk immediately in peace, McCreedy will refuse, only saying, "I can't ... not yet. My research isn't complete." If the Storm Knights insist, the adventure can jump to Act Two, Scene Two, "The Monster Hunter," but it is strongly suggested that the Storm Knights be hurried along by the Spartans to go on the rescue in the Living Land.

After the encounter, have the Storm Knights make a *Perseverance* total; if successful, increase the group's total by +1.

If the Storm Knights ask around, they'll learn that the man moved into Redside only about three days ago,





and he has kept to himself mostly. Most people regard him as "peculiar but harmless."

### Cut To ...

Scene Three, "The Jungle Trek," as the Storm Knights and Spartans head into the Living Land/Mixed zone to rescue the townspeople captured in the last raid.

## SCENE THREE: The Jungle Trek

### The Situation

**Standard.** The party plunges into the Living Land/Nippon mixed zone, whose border is only a few miles to the north of Redside. Because of the mixed zone's nature, all weapons below tech 24 can be used without creating a contradiction.

### The Action

As they proceed grimly on their way, the Knights will find scattered traces of others who have gone before them: abandoned motorcycles, trampled and smashed to bits by some huge animal, torn leather jackets and scattered (and clean-picked) bones. Obviously, some gang members got lost in the Deep Mist, only to meet a horrible fate.

After a mile has been covered, these signs will cease. The rain forest is eerily still, with no animal cries to disturb the silence. Abruptly, the Knights hear a puffing, whooshing sound similar, but not identical to, the sounds made by stalengers as they fly through the air. The sounds seem to be all around them, as if some creatures are circling them, several meters above.

### The Attack

The sounds are coming from creatures called tromblen, which are manta ray-like creatures from the stalenger homeworld. There are a dozen of these creatures, but they only attack one

target at a time, each of them making a swooping bite in a single-file formation. Randomly determine which individual (either Spartan or Storm Knight) will be their first target.

Have each character make a *Perception* total against a difficulty of 12. If successful, the character will know that an attack is imminent from a specific direction, and will be allowed to make an *unarmed combat* or *melee weapons* active defense roll or shoot in the general direction. If a character fails the roll, it is surprised by the attack and can do nothing.

Describe the scene:

**Suddenly the whooshing sounds seem to change tone, and then from out of the mist, about three meters above ground level, emerges a green and black creature, vaguely reminiscent of a manta ray. It swoops down on (the target), making a piercing squeal. Then, before the first can**

**swoop away, another appears, making an identical pass, and then another, and then another ...**

**Within a few seconds, you count one dozen of the creatures that have attacked (the target).**

Tromblen normally attack solitary creatures or small groups, trusting to their fast flight speed and maneuverability to kill a target. They will attack only one target at a time, attacking it until it is dead, and then moving on to another target. These creatures have killed almost all other game in the area, and thus have been forced to attack the Storm Knights in a desperate attempt to get food. If more than half of them are killed or seriously wounded, they will flee the area.

#### Tromblen

**DEXTERITY 9**

Dodge 10, flight 13, stealth 11

**STRENGTH 12**

**TOUGHNESS 9**

### The Mixed Zone

Because of the peculiar mixture of Nippon Tech and Living Land realities, visitors to the area gain many benefits. With a mixed zone, to determine contradictions, use the higher axiom of the two realities. In effect, the zone has a Tech of 24 (from Nippon), Spirit of 24 (from Living Land), Magic 2 (from Nippon), and Social of 22 (from Nippon). If a character disconnects from reality, they must reconnect depending upon which type of tool they were using: if using a Tech, Magic or Social tool, use the Nippon Tech reconnection number; if using a Spiritual tool, use the Living Land reconnection number.

The area is also constantly bombarded with reality storms, as the two realms battle for domination of the area. The storms can appear in an instant, and last for hours or maybe only seconds. A storm will be attuned to one of the two realities — Living Land or Nippon — and concentrate on attacking objects and beings of the other reality, although ob-

jects and beings of other realities, such as Aysle, Core Earth, the Nile and so forth, will also be targets of the attacks.

The majority of storms should have an effect value of 18 or less (although more powerful storms can occur), and can affect beings and people in many ways — winds and lightning may make physical attacks, spiritual cones of energy may make spiritual attacks. Items may be transformed in the storm. During storms, depth perception is warped, causing a -3 penalty for any *Perception*- or *Dexterity*-based skill.

Some very powerful storms cause vivid hallucinations and fear-inspiring alterations of reality. These storms can temporarily bring into being wildly unusual realities.

Reality storms are best used as a means of increasing drama and tension in a scene. Of course, reality storms don't discriminate, and may attack anyone, Storm Knight or enemy.



**PERCEPTION 9**

Tracking 12, trick (13)

**MIND 6**

Test (7)

**CHARISMA 4**

Taunt (8)

**SPIRIT 4**

Intimidation 8

Possibility Potential: none

Natural Tools: teeth (damage value

STR +1/13), wings (speed value 12)

## Event: Quicksand!

The Storm Knights and their companions encounter a pool of quicksand. It is a deep brown, much like very moist mud, and thus blends into the surrounding terrain very well. The edge of the pool is only a couple of feet deep, much like wading through a moist swamp. Have each party member roll a *survival*, *evidence analysis* or *Perception* check against a difficulty of 15; anyone who succeeds will realize that something is amiss.

Anyone who enters the quicksand will realize their precarious position soon enough — about two meters in from the edge of the area, it abruptly drops to a depth of seven meters. Any character who enters the deep portion of the quicksand must make a *will-power* or *Mind* total against a difficulty of 12 to not panic and start thrashing about wildly, which will only cause the unfortunate character to sink faster. Anyone who fails the check will sink from sight in one minute's time; those who succeed in their check have about ten minutes before they go under.

Anyone who enters the shallow portion of the quicksand to assist their companions who have fallen in must make an *acrobatics* or *Dexterity* check against a difficulty of 10 each round to avoid falling in. When pulling a victim out of the quicksand, the puller will have to make a successful *lifting* or *Strength* roll of 12 (other characters coordinating on the action make rescue much easier).

The quicksand area is roughly circular, about 10 meters in diameter, and will require the Storm Knights to maneuver around trees and through swampy areas to get back on the trail on the other side.



## Event: The Rogue Bull

As the Knights proceed on their way, they will hear the occasional great crash of some huge body moving through the forest in the general direction they are going. Characters making an *evidence analysis* or *Perception* total of 10 or higher will be able to determine that the sound is coming from directly behind them. If the Storm Knights rush along, have them make additional *evidence analysis* or *Perception* checks against the same diffi-

culty every few minutes; if successful, they know that the creature is following them, and it seems to be closing in on them (if the party has separated, the creature has followed the largest group).

Within a few rounds, the characters will hear several large trees come crashing down, and from the mist will emerge a carnel, one of the nastier denizens of the Living Land. Describe the scene:

The first thing you notice is its speed. Running on long hind legs, it bursts from the mist with a roar and a charge. Nearly twice as long as a car,





it stands nearly double your height, and moves faster than anything that big has a right to. As it swings its head around on a short, stubby and well-muscled neck, you can see the huge spikes, nearly two feet long, that run in a crest from head to tail. Two forelimbs, laughably short, hang uselessly at the midpoint of its torso. Its deep red skin glistens with moisture, and as it runs, almost leaping, the ground shakes with the bulk. The mouth opens to reveal two rows of canines, perfect for rendering flesh, and even meters away, you can smell its last meal of flesh or carrion, the blood stains still ringing its outer gums and making its saliva a sickening pink color. It is too much to take in, as it swoops low and prepares its attack ...

The carnol attacks with both its teeth and its immensely strong spiked tail. It is an intelligent fighter, making use of the terrain for cover and tactical advantage, and its quickness allows it to get out of the way of many attacks. Its purpose in this attack is to gain a quick meal — if it can grab someone and run away it will be satisfied.

#### Carnol

##### DEXTERITY 13

Dodge 16, maneuver 15, unarmed combat 17

##### STRENGTH 26

##### TOUGHNESS 30

##### PERCEPTION 6

Tracking 8, trick (15)

##### MIND 5

Test (12)

##### CHARISMA 4

Taunt (10)

##### SPIRIT 3

Intimidation 22

Possibilities: none

**Natural Tools:** Thick hide (armor value TOU +2/32), teeth (damage value STR +6/32), spiked tail (damage value STR +2/28)

An edeinos or other Living Land expert can tell that the bull is an old one (from the jowls that descend down to its neck), and will inform the party that carnol that are too old to breed become solitary and vicious beasts that will attack anything they meet (a *scholar* (Living Land), general *scholar* for anyone who has spent any amount of time in the Living Land or *survival*

total of 10 will be enough to reveal this). It was the only animal in the area the tromblen could not bring down.

Sam, if asked about how to handle it, will answer "You don't live to become a veteran by locking horns with a damned beast like that — let's try to clear the area. If you have some fresh meat packed with you, leave it out, and it will be enough to distract it."

If no one has any meat, Sam will shout and yell to attract the dinosaur's attention, then lead it off into the forest (a Storm Knights with a better *stealth* score can also attempt this). If the party waits ten minutes, Sam will have given it the slip and rejoin them, wondering aloud how they could ever get along without the presence of an expert.

## On the Right Track

The party comes across a small clearing where the edeinos stopped to rest. The tracks of human captives, gospog, and the lizard men themselves will be everywhere, and the putrid stench of the gospog will still be noticeable. If the area is searched, several scraps of clothing will be found. Have each character searching the "far" side of the clearing make a *find* or *Perception* total of 10 or higher. If successful, a real prize will be found: a crude arrow drawn by one of the captives. (The other captives stood around to hide the sketcher from view while he did this, so this is a genuine clue and not a trap.)

## SCENE FOUR: The Rescue

### The Situation

**Dramatic.** In this scene, the Storm Knights must penetrate the spiritual outer defenses of the edeinos village, which is littered with pleasure plant traps, as well as grass spear traps. Once through, they must fight their way through a throng of edeinos warriors to rescue the captives, then use the confusion to escape the village. After that, they must retrace their steps back to Core Earth territory, conducting a running fight much of the way.

## The Action

The Storm Knights and Spartans come upon the edge of the village, which is in an artificially cleared out grove. Through the mist, they'll see a gradual decrease in the amount of vegetation. Up ahead, they see a series of tall, flowing plants of unearthly beauty, with simple patches of grass in between. The first structures of the village can be seen at the edge of the mist, the primitive leaf covered hroctk shoot huts common to edeinos tribes (if desired, the gamemaster may have the Storm Knights enter the village near the Tharkoldu quarters instead). The chanting and rhythmic drum beating of a Keta Kalles conversion ceremony can be heard rising up from the center of the village, as hundreds of edeinos voices are raised in a chaotic and disharmonious melody. The ceremony is nearly complete, and the captives will be faced with the choice — join the tribe or die.

## The Village's Outer Defenses

Once the party actually gets to the edeinos village, it will discover the hard way that it is guarded on all sides by a variety of Living Land miracles that they have never encountered before. The zone of defenses appears to be no more than a grassy glade, with slender, supple, man-sized flowers standing up here and there. There are only a few plants, standing at wide intervals, of such unearthly beauty that the Knights might well decide to steer clear of them. This is a good idea, since they are pleasure plants (see the Introduction for a full description), and the "gaps" between them are covered by patches of ground blessed with the miracles *grass spear*, *grass blossom spear*, and *earth swallow*.

Once the village is sighted, Sam will motion to his team and the Storm Knights. Not daring to speak above a whisper, he'll explain, "I've done this many times. I'll send the men around the perimeter, and we'll slowly sneak through their outer defenses — ready your weapons and prepare for the assault. Funny, none of the typical de-



fenses; no pain sacks. Johnson, go to the other side of the village and prepare those explosives — if you hear gunfire, set them off and take out a few trees. That should throw them off long enough for us to escape.”

Within seconds, the Spartans, except for Sam, who stays with the Knights, have dispersed into the mist. The Knights can see a Spartan to the left and to the right. Sam suggests that they proceed slowly, cautiously, and points out that the Spartans are only going to open up if things obviously go poorly.

Just as the Knights and Sam approach the edge of the glade, both Spartans within view experience a brutal and quick death — while walking on the grassy areas, it seems that spears sprout from the ground, impaling them in less than a second. A short scream of pain, a stream of blood, and then they are limp on the ground, the spear seemingly shrinking back down to the size of a blade of grass.

In horror, Sam will realize that the “damned scales” must have some new miracles at their disposal. Against these specific miracles, countermeasures will be of dubious effect. Probing the earth ahead of the party or tossing objects on it will not uncover these defenses because the miracles only reacting to sentient non-Jakatts. The pleasure plants may be burned, but there should be a fear that the flame might be seen through the Deep Mist or, more likely, the wind will blow the smoke into the village. Explosives or magic may well create enough noise to draw the attention of every warrior in the tribe. The best plan is to find a safe path through the area (perhaps by destroying a specific pleasure plant), and then progress single file through the defenses and into the village (of course, they should probably mark the path to make sure that they can leave the area without triggering more traps).

If the battle is so overwhelming or confusing that it is possible that the characters get confused, it is perfectly appropriate to have them make *find* or *Perception* checks to find the markers indicating the safe path out (the difficulty should be determined by how noticeable the markers are).

Going over the defense zone is prob-

ably the best option — the trees are close enough that vines and ropes could be used to swing over the defenses (an *acrobatics* total of 10 would be enough).

## The Distraction

Despite the sounds of the conversion ceremony, which are so loud that they can even be heard outside the village, a loud noise like that of an exploding grenade will bring a squad of a dozen edeinos warriors, a stalenger, and one of the optants to investigate (if the Storm Knights or Sam fire their guns, Johnson, on the other side of the village, will set off such a distraction — while it will distract the edeinos, it will also place all of the villagers on alert, so Sam will suggest waiting until the thick of battle before firing).

## The “Quicksand” Trap

*Earth swallow* should be the most nerve-racking of traps for the Knights to deal with. This is a case where vivid referee descriptions can mean everything — the first time someone literally falls for this trap, the Knights will not know that this is merely a holding trap. Mindful of their unfortunate experience with the quicksand, they may well believe that this is some “artificial” quicksand trap. Describe the slight shifting of the soil as the character tries to free himself, stating that the soil appears more fluid than usual (it is; the soil around the trap is alive), and generally giving the impression that it might be a form of quicksand. Require the trapped character to make a *willpower* roll against a difficult of 10 to see whether or not the victim gives in to panic (if the roll is failed, the victim will scream so loud that a squad of half a dozen edeinos warriors and one of the optants will come to investigate).

Once the true nature of the trap is apparent, the process of rescue will still be a creepy one. Describe how the soil scraped away from the victim’s legs flows like water back around the prisoner, almost as soon as it is re-

moved. This living soil should give the incident an aspect of terror seemingly more suited to Orrorsh than the Living Land. Let the players find out on their own that the only way to successfully dig a trapped character out is to hurl or lug the dug-up soil at least six feet away from the victim. If the players are taking too long to discover this, wasting too much time on a simple holding trap, then give them some hints, especially if an idea card is played.

State that the victim’s frantic scraping at the soil has thrown dirt all over the place, and that the soil flung farthest away is not flowing back into the trap. If the players aren’t too bright, they may believe that it is the spot itself that nullifies the soil’s spiritual life, not the distance. This could slow down the digging-out process considerably, as the free characters get in each others’ way while carrying the dirt to just that one spot.

Remember that, whatever the Storm Knights do, the process of digging out a trapped character will be a slow and tedious one. Take advantage of every means to hurry them along through anxiety, with every sound from the surrounding jungle seeming to be an approaching beast of prey, and every change in the ceremonial chanting the approach of an edeinos patrol. No one will imagine they could have so many thrills merely being stuck in one spot.

## Flag

If the trapped character blows his *willpower* roll, and a *hero setback* card is in play, then his screams will attract the attention of the an edeinos hunting party returning to the village (10 more warriors) or the carnol (if it didn’t suffer any wounds in the previous encounter).

## A Wild Celebration

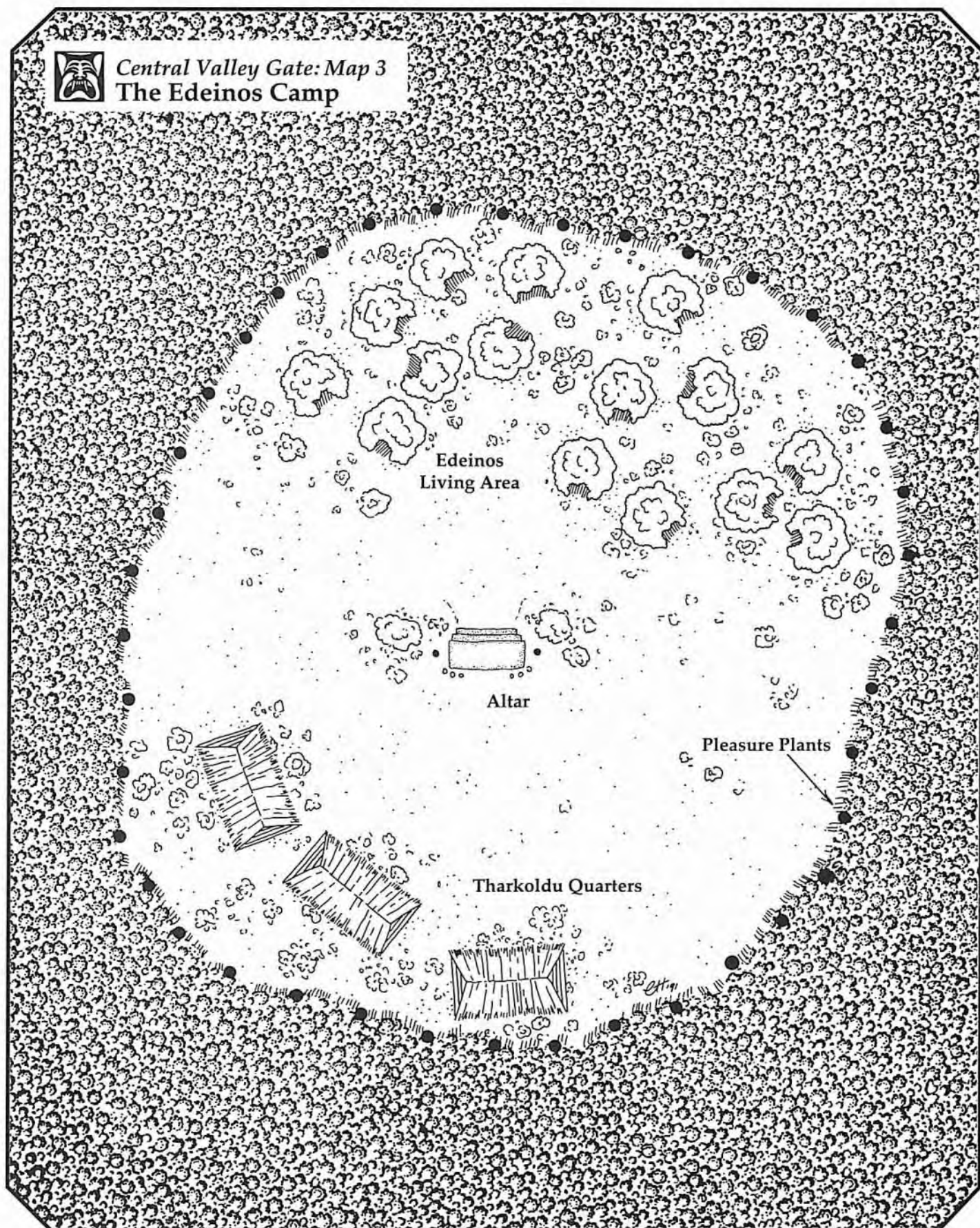
As has already been hinted earlier, the ceremony at the village has begun. Branches are beaten against trees to produce a drumming sound, while the bulk of the warriors are dancing wildly around the captives. There are at least 100 warriors here, and as many







Central Valley Gate: Map 3  
The Edeinos Camp



Cathleen Hunter



females and young. Flying overhead are ten stalengers. There will be two dozen gospog of the Second Planting, plus whatever gospog survived from the first battle (both groups are still armed). Also present are two benthe, two optants, and two gotaks.

### Edeinos Optants

#### DEXTERITY 11

Dodge 12, missile weapons 12, stealth 12

#### STRENGTH 9

#### TOUGHNESS 10

#### PERCEPTION 9

Language 10, tracking 10, trick 10

#### MIND 9

Test 11, willpower 10

#### CHARISMA 8

Taunt 9

#### SPIRIT 12

Faith (Keta Kalles) 14, focus 14, intimidation 10, reality 13

Possibilities: 5

**Natural Tools:** Claws (damage value STR +3/12), teeth (damage value STR +2/11), tail (damage value STR)

**Equipment:** Hrockt spear (damage value STR +3/19), simple club (damage value STR +3/19), spiked great club (damage value STR +5/21)

**Miracles:** *Animal rage, blind, blossom spears, cause pain, decreased touch, earth swallow, earth's ear, grass blossom spear, grass spear, great club, healing, heightened Dexterity, heightened hearing, increased Strength, increased Toughness, intensify emotions, pleasure plant, see through mist, simple club, simple spear, spiked club, spiked great club*

### Edeinos Gotaks

#### DEXTERITY 11

Dodge 12, missile weapons 12, stealth 12

#### STRENGTH 9

#### TOUGHNESS 10

#### PERCEPTION 9

Language 10, tracking 10, trick 10

#### MIND 9

Test 11, willpower 10

#### CHARISMA 8

Taunt 9

#### SPIRIT 12

Faith (Keta Kalles) 14, focus 14, intimidation 10, reality 13

Possibilities: 5

**Natural Tools:** Claws (damage value STR +3/12), teeth (damage value STR +2/11), tail (damage value STR)

**Equipment:** Hrockt spear (damage value STR +3/19), simple club (damage value STR +3/19), spiked great club (damage value STR +5/21)

**Miracles:** *Animal rage, blind, blossom spears, cause pain, decreased touch, earth's ear, grass blossom spear, grass spear, great club, healing, heightened Dexterity, heightened hearing, increased Strength, increased Toughness, intensify emotions, pain sacks, see through mist, simple club, simple spear, spiked club, spiked great club*

### Benthe

#### DEXTERITY 7

Beast riding 10, stealth 9

#### STRENGTH 7

#### TOUGHNESS 12

#### PERCEPTION 17

Evidence analysis 19, find 18, trick 19

#### MIND 14

Survival 15, test 16, willpower 17

#### CHARISMA 11

#### SPIRIT 11

Faith (Keta Kalles) 13

Possibilities: none

**Natural Tools:** Pheromone manipulation

## The Defenders

The six captives are in the center of the dancing horde, numb with terror and bound with vine ropes, only a few feet from the altar. The two optants are closes to the captives, with a dozen warriors just a few meters away. The rest of the tribe is dancing in a huge circle extending almost to the edge of the village's defenses. The gotaks and gospog have been segregated from the rest of the villagers, and are gathered near the Tharkoldu quarters.

The Storm Knights may be able to sneak to the edge of the ceremonial area by sneaking through the series of edeinos huts, which are all vacant during the ceremony. If the Storm Knights have gone undetected by the village, once they are first noticed, they will have four rounds before anyone but the optants and warriors can act (due to the confusion of the moment). After the first four rounds, 20 warriors per round will join the battle — with 100 warriors in the village, speed is of the essence. During the chaos of the

battle, two warriors will carry the benthe into the mist and follow the Storm Knights back to Core Earth, in the hope that the benthes' pheromone attack can be used on them before the escape is complete.

The way back to Core Earth should be an on-again, off-again running fight until they reach the boundary of the Living Land; if the Knights get this far, they will not be followed back to Core Earth.

## Tharkoldu Quarters

If the Storm Knights decide to investigate the strange tents on the side of the tribe opposite the edeinos huts, they will soon realize that the plot to destroy the arms factory has many different involved parties. The tents are a combination of metal and wood, with cloth doors. Each of the tents is abandoned.

The interior of each of the tents is similar — if they investigate more than one tent, change the exact contents only slightly. Describe the scene:

**Each tent, although large, has only one room. There is a long board with a thin mat and a huge chest. There are several bins.**

All around are parts of technological equipment, all of its futuristic in nature; any Storm Knight making a scholar total of 15 or higher will know that this is very advanced stuff, and any Storm Knight who has encountered techno-demons or their technology before will instantly recognize the stuff as occulttech, the evil mixture of technology and occult magic.

The tents look more like dens of vermin, as the gear and rubbish (cloth, trash, tools and so forth) is nearly a foot deep, requiring a Storm Knight to wade carefully through the tent. There are no useful devices in the tent, nor are there computers, diaries or anything of that nature to indicate the plans or involvement of the Tharkoldu.

Storm Knights looking into a bin must make a willpower total of 12 to not get physically ill at the sight and smell — blood is splattered everywhere, with body parts such as fingers, hands, arms, legs and head, scattered liberally about.





The Tharkoldu themselves are away from the tribe, helping cement their alliance with Hog. In order to further their plans, they have used the *monkey form* spell to disguise themselves as humans (this is an *alteration/entity 13* spell). This adventure is written so that the Tharkoldu and the Storm Knights don't get into direct combat until the final scene, but if the characters are persistent enough to wait at the village for a day (dodging hunting parties all the while), the Tharkoldu will return to the tribe later the next afternoon. See Act Four, Scene Three, "The Second Stage" for complete statistics.

Any Storm Knight who is somehow able to ask the edeinos about the tents or their inhabitants, will learn that each tent belongs to a human. All of them are tall, thin with jet black hair and black eyes. They have dealt with the gotaks, who have in turn convinced the optants and the rest of the tribe to go along with their plans. They are away for the now, but said they will return later.

## Aftermath

Once the party is back in Core Earth territory, the freed prisoners will chat with their rescuers. If asked, a man named Dan will volunteer that he worked in the weapons factory in shipping, but of course, things have slowed down since the biker attacks started. He will also say that he saw some

strange packages, and it was rumored that a lab on the second floor has been experimenting with explosives. He'll explain that it was some weird chemical explosive he'd never heard of before, but it certainly was effective (this operation was supposed to be a secret, but considering the stress and confusion of the moment, Dan didn't really think before just blurting out the information).

Sam will comment that he finds the information very interesting — his reason for coming to Redside is to help straighten out the arms shipments, but the Delphi Council hasn't authorized Seisaku to construct new explosives at the factory (the Delphi Council's contract calls for strict controls over what activities occur at the factory).

If asked about the conversion ceremony, they will explain that the only reason they had not been converted before the Knights showed up was because the edeinos were waiting for an "expert" to come and question them about the factory: someone referred to only as "the Swordsman."

There are two other factory workers, named Joanie and Mark. If the Storm Knights ask any of them about specific routines at the plant, they will answer in an identical dull monotone, "Every day we just finish the weapons." If the Storm Knights ask them about a specific day or specific occurrence, their faces will simply go blank, and in the same dull monotone they will say, "I don't remember." Once the

Storm Knights hear the same phrase more than once, or hear that the workers don't remember, have them make a *Perseverance* check; if successful, the group's *Perseverance* total goes up by +1. If any of the Storm Knights elect to use *True sight* on the workers, they will see a black aura around each worker — have them make another *Perseverance* check, which if successful, increases the group's total by +2.

Once arriving in town, there should be a properly tearful reunion as the freed captives are brought back to Redside. It should be early evening of the first night the Storm Knights have been in town. At this point, they may decide to talk to McCreedy or Blake, while Sam will definitely storm off to talk with Blake. Meanwhile, the Victorians have been working on their defenses for the upcoming attack, and most of the streets have been barricaded, with Victorian soldiers and townsfolk mounting checkpoints at the edge of Redside.

## Act Awards

The player characters should receive three Possibilities for this act. If their play was below average, cut this to two; if above average, make it four.

## Cut to ...

Act Three, early evening in Redside.



## Act Three

# Factions in Action

### The Major Beat

In this act, the Tharkoldu and their minions make preliminary moves against the Nippon Tech arms factory and the town of Redside, drawing the Storm Knights into the thick of the action. The edeinos attempt to penetrate the factory's security, while Harris' Tharkoldu-loyal agents attempt sabotage. In the course of repelling these attacks, the Storm Knights discover that the truth behind the Seisaku plant is much more sinister than they ever imagined.

### Which Way to Go

This act is structured with the presumption that the Storm Knights will be returning to Redside during the evening. If, instead, they return the morning after the rescue, Blake will call them to the factory and give them a tour of the facility, as well as introduce them to some of the workers. If this happens, cut to "The Tour" in Scene Four; during the course of the day, they may talk to McCreedy (see Scene Two). Then, play out Scene Four as occurring later that evening.

If the Knights return to Redside at night, they have several options. If the Storm Knights decide that they want to talk to Blake about what is going on at the factory, go to Scene One, "Something's Rotten in Redside." If the Storm Knights want to talk to McCreedy, go to Scene Two, "The Monster Hunter." If they decide to investigate Harris, cut to Scene Three, "Kicking Back." If the Storm Knights decide to go to the factory, go to Scene Four, "Failed Espionage." If Sam learned of the explosives experiments in Act Two, Sam will insist on going to

Blake's house immediately, and alone if necessary.

If the Storm Knights decide that they must discuss matters with Mayor Marlin, cut to "The Mayor's Office" in Scene One. If they decide to get some rest before pursuing the matter more, cut to Scene Four (or, you can have them spot Harris in the bar on the way to their rooms, as described in Scene Three).

### The Barricades

In the scant hours that the Storm Knights have been away from Redside, the Victorians and townspeople have built barricades at each of the roads running into town. The barricade is simple, but effective: two or three heavy trucks or pickups, with several armed guards. There is also a watchtower so that the hills off in the distance may be observed, giving the town more warning in case of an assault.

At the checkpoint, the Storm Knights will be able to get directions to Blake's or McCreedy's house, as well as information on the location of the mayor, Blake, McCreedy, Harris or the Victorian officers.

When the Victorians spot the Storm Knights, they will quickly be ushered through the checkpoint, and the townspeople will react with joy at the sight of their rescued neighbors. Of course, there will be a tearful reunion, statements of gratitude, invitations to dinner, etc. This is a good time to introduce or develop already used game-master characters — potential rivals in the town, love interests, curious children engaging in hero-worship and similar bits of flavor.





## SCENE ONE: Something's Rotten in Redside

### The Situation

**Standard.** The Storm Knights have several clues to indicate that something unusual is underway at the factory. Sam had come to straighten out the delayed weapons shipments, while the factory's workers claim to be making strange explosives, yet curiously, cannot remember their day-to-day activities while at work. They have come to Blake's house seeking answers.

### The Action

The Storm Knights have no trouble finding Blake's small but very comfortable house (he is, after all, one of the better known individuals in Redside). If the Storm Knights decide to check out the house before proceeding, they will see nothing of an unusual nature — Blake is merely reading in his study (room 4). When the Storm Knights knock on the door, he will quickly open it up, smile, and ask, "So you're back. I guess the rescue went well then, eh?"

If the Storm Knights don't immediately confront Blake with their accusations, he will simply try to rush them away from the scene, asking them to stop by the factory in the morning to begin their duty. If asked about the explosives, or about the missed weapons shipments (this will certainly occur if they accompany Sam to Blake's house), he will show obvious surprise that the Storm Knights have learned this, and then refuse to discuss the matter. He will tell the Storm Knights that it is none of their concern, and that they aren't being paid to pry into his affairs.

If the Storm Knights attempt a *True sight*, or some other spiritual or magical means of divining his true nature, they will merely divine a black aura around him (exactly like the workers



in Act Two, Scene Four). Have the Storm Knights make a *Perseverance* check against the difficulty of 15; if successful, they get +1 to their total. If they attempt this kind of magical or spiritual divination, or ask him about the memory lapses of the workers, he will seem to stumble a second, and pause. He will slowly turn toward them, saying, "I don't know ... I don't feel well." He will then seem to blank out, and won't respond to any questions, but will simply head to the kitchen with a mindless determination, and grab a huge knife (damage value STR +3/19) and lunge after the nearest Storm Knight.

After the Storm Knights subdue Blake and summon a doctor or Mayor Marlin, a quick examination will reveal that there is nothing "unusual" about him and that his behavior is "inexplicable." The doctor reassures them that Blake will be kept under observation for the rest of the night.

### Brainwashed

Dagarathov, the Orrorsh horror that has come to Redside, has only limited influence, being only able to take over a person while they are within the confines of the factory. The beast has only manipulated a few of the workers in order to gain power while not straining itself by taking over the entire town. However, the creature has continually probed Blake's mind to learn what it can, and has been able to plant a subliminal suggestion in Blake's mind, since Blake has been preoccupied with the arrival of the Storm Knights for several days. The suggestion, of course, is to kill anyone who mentions the mysterious behavior of any workers.

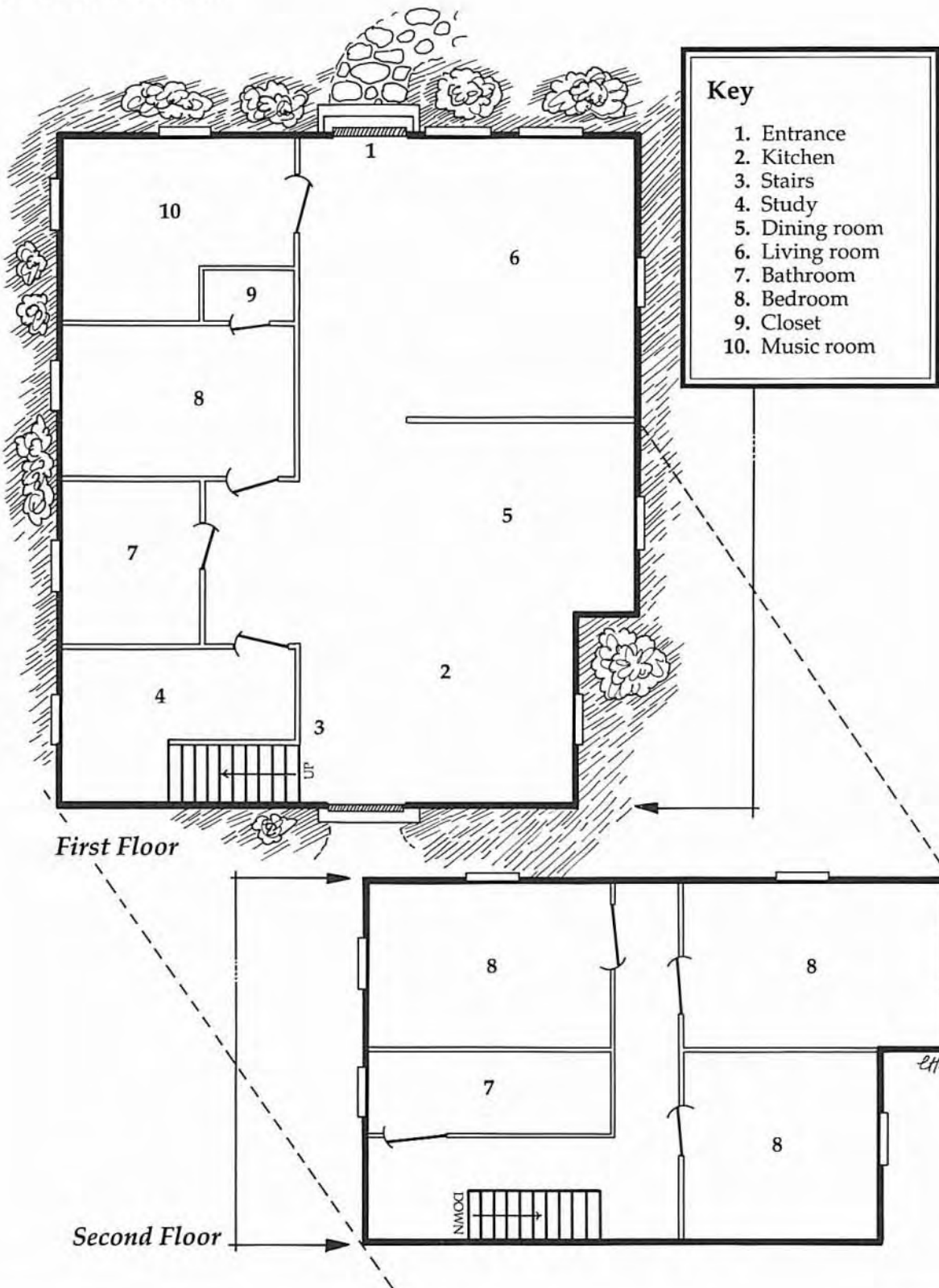
### Flag

If Sam went to Blake's house prior to the Storm Knights arriving, Blake has already killed Sam and placed his body in the top left bedroom on the second floor.





Central Valley Gate: Map 4  
Blake's House







If Sam is with the Storm Knights and survives the attack of the aarkcino, he will insist on going to the factory immediately.

## The Mayor's Office

Mayor Marlin's office is a hive of activity, as people are scurrying about with preparations for any upcoming assault. When the Storm Knights arrive, there are two office workers, a Victorian strategist and the mayor in the office, busy planning the manning of the barricades.

The mayor will greet the Storm Knights and take a few minutes to listen to their concerns. He will be quite disturbed if the Storm Knights bring up the explosives, the inexplicable memory loss of the workers, the possibility of an edeinos/biker alliance, or Seisaku's ties to this "strange Nippon Tech place" (remember that most people are still unaware of Nip-

pon Tech's true nature). He may even send two armed townspeople with the Knights to Blake's house to arrest him.

## Cut To ...

If the Storm Knights wish to go see McCreedy, cut to Scene Two. If they want to talk to Harris, cut to Scene Three. If they wish to investigate the factory, cut to Scene Four.

## SCENE TWO: The Monster Hunter

### The Situation

**Standard.** The Storm Knights come to McCreedy's apartment looking for information on this mysterious "monster" he claims has come to the area.

## The Action

McCreedy's apartment is located in a three story house, with a white picket fence and a large yard. He has Apartment 2, which can be entered from the front porch.

When McCreedy comes to the front door, he opens it with a smile, beckoning, "Come in, come in." His apartment has a very strong scent of cinnamon (due to some recent cooking, but the Storm Knights are at liberty to take this as something more sinister). As soon as they cross the threshold to his house, he holds up a silvered cross, obviously trying to ward any monsters disguised as humans (this could be very interesting if there is a shapeshifter in the party). After the preliminary check, he takes their coats and ushers them into the living room, offering them a warm cinnamon tea.

After some quick pleasantries, McCreedy will sit down in his Victorian style chair, and explains that he has come to Redside from New Lon-



don, in search of an awful horror named Dagarathov. As his relates his tale, it steadily becomes clearer that this man is obviously obsessed with the creature — he explains that it was responsible for the death of his uncle Samuel, and “since I first glimpsed the power of that demonic beast, my heart has thirsted for revenge. For two decades I have researched it, tracked it, followed the trail of corpses, yet no one would believe me. Finally, it has come here, seeking I know not what, but it has entranced the entire town. You must stop it before more people die at its hands.”

McCreedy will relay some of the tales of his research and the details of some of the more grisly deaths the creature has caused. He will also explain that he has found its true death — called the “Ritual of Fire,” it requires a squared area, marked by four burning torches. The creature must be lured into the area, and then struck by a flaming weapon of some kind.

While the creature is in the square, the phrase, “Death unto demonkind, death unto Dagarathov, back to the beginning of the endings, blackness, cinder, to the void,” must be spoken. At the end of the ritual, the creature will be killed.

At the completion of the description of the ritual, have the Storm Knights make a *Perseverance* total; if successful, increase the group’s total by +1.

After the total has been generated, describe the following scene:

A chill runs through you, yet it is nearly 80 degrees outside. It is a noticeable presence, and you all notice it, except that is, for McCreedy. He simply sits in his chair, takes a quick sip of his tea, and place the cup and saucer on the table by his chair.

Abruptly he stands, suddenly cheerful. “Come, come, my friends. Drink up. Now, no matter what happens, there is someone to stop this beast, and my life’s mission is now complete. My soul will rest easier.”

As he speaks, it seems that the flesh around his jaw and eyes is slowly rotting away, as globules of blood drip from the exposed muscle and bone. His body starts shriveling, as his eyes turn to a blackened goo. He smiles as a green and yellow pus,

thick with stains of blood, oozes from his eye socket and down his face.

Then as suddenly as it started, it seems you all snap back to reality, and it is merely McCreedy, standing, talking, waiting for you to respond to an unheard question.

Have the Storm Knights make another *Perseverance* check. If successful, increase their total by +1. This sequence is actually an occult illusion, and any Storm Knight who actively chooses to disbelieve, must make a *willpower* or *Mind* total of 14 or higher to disbelieve the illusion.

## The Occult Strikes

Have the Storm Knights make a *Perception* check against a difficulty of 12; if successful, they will hear a slight rapping on the window just outside, as if a tree limb was gently swaying in the breeze and striking the pane of glass. Unfortunately, there is no breeze, and there are no trees near the house.

Suddenly, the pane of glass shatters, as an inhuman screech, almost bird-like, wails through the room. In a burst of energy, McCreedy exclaims, “It’s found me.” and heads for the stairs and up to his study (Room 11).





Crashing through the window are eight small demon-like creatures. Each of the demons stands about half as tall as a human, and they are ignoring the Storm Knights and heading straight for McCreedy. Any Storm Knight making a *scholar (occult)* or *occult* total of 14 or higher will know that the creatures are aarkcinos, a kind of demon that is often summoned by occult rituals.

#### Aarkcino (8)

##### DEXTERITY 11

Dodge 12, maneuver 13, unarmed combat 13

##### STRENGTH 13

##### TOUGHNESS 14

##### PERCEPTION 8

Find 10, tracking 11, trick (14)

##### MIND 5

Test 9 (12)

##### CHARISMA 4

Taunt (14)

##### SPIRIT 6

Intimidation 15

Possibility Potential: some (75)

Natural Tools: Talons (damage

value STR +3/16), acidic blood (damage value 14 — anyone within one meter of a creature that takes a wound is splattered with the blood)

**Special Abilities:** Illusion (a group of three or more creatures can generate an illusion up to four cubic meters at a range of 50 meters. The base disbelief value is 8 plus the Many-on-One value of the number of additional creatures adding to the illusion)

The creatures' main objective is to kill McCreedy, although they will battle the Storm Knights if they are attacked first. Once McCreedy has been killed, they will leave the building. Once either McCreedy has been killed or the creatures have been stopped, have the Storm Knights make a *Perseverance* total; if successful, they receive a +2 to their total. If McCreedy has been killed, drop their *Perseverance* by -2 due to the horror of the event, but add +2 the next morning, after they have had time to rebuild their resolve to stop the creature responsible for this attack.

## McCreedy's Study

McCreedy's study (room 11) is a typical occultist's place of research: a huge library of occult related books is crammed into the shelves running along the walls. In the center of the room is a desk, with several rolled up, musty scrolls. Also on the desk is McCreedy's diary, which details his attempts to track Dagarathov over the past ten years.

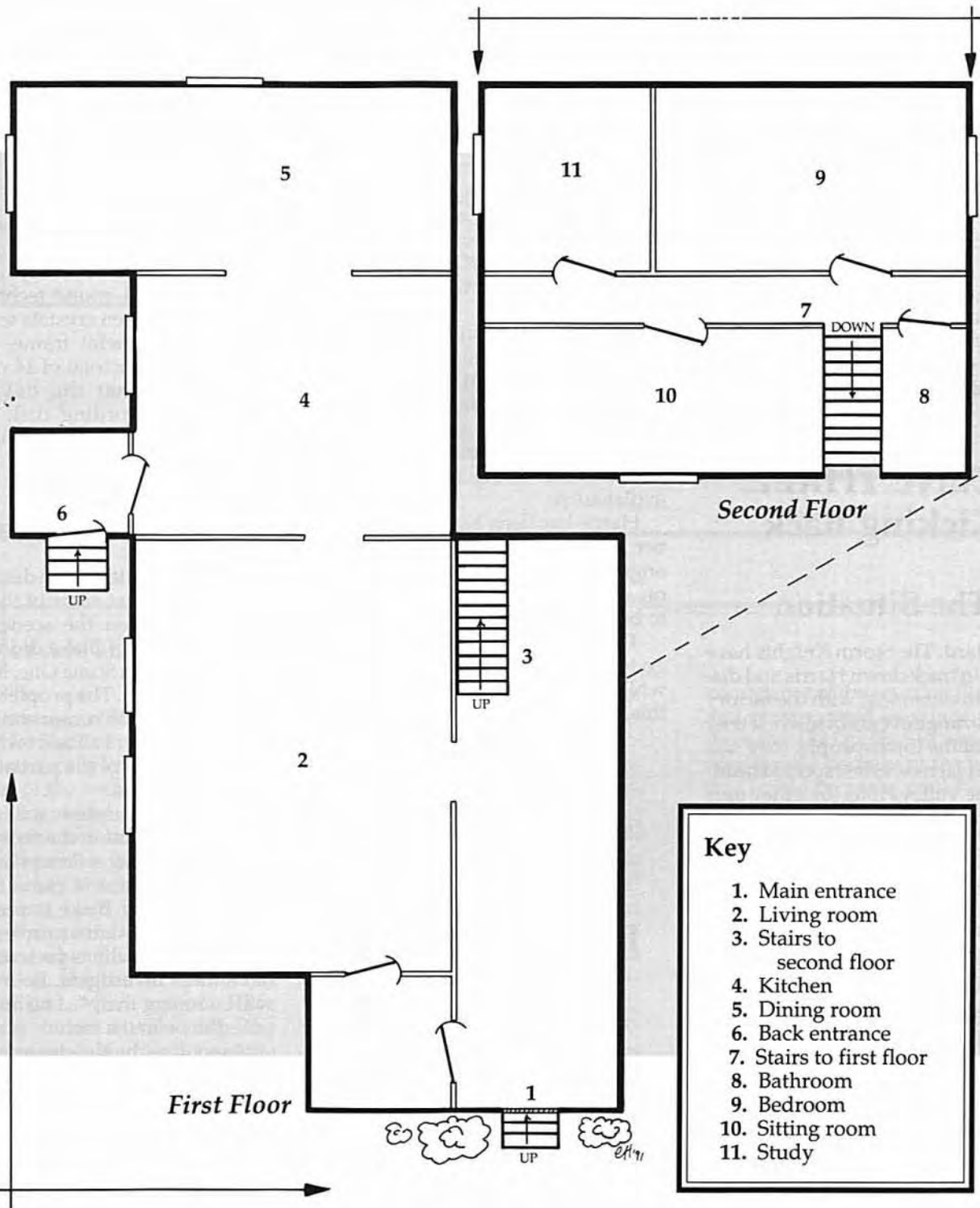
Storm Knights who take the time to read the diary will learn the following information:

- McCreedy has thoroughly researched the creature's True Death — it is as he explained it to the players.
- The creature has a *weakness* to runes blessed by a priest and wielded by an individual of the same faith.
- The creature has a *severe weakness* to sunlight.
- The creature has resided for many months in the Glade of the Queen (the setting for the prologue). Over that





**Central Valley Gate: Map 5  
McCreedy's Apartment**





time it had dominated the group of shapeshifters/werewolves that lived in the area, but one of the beasts went rogue and summoned a group of occult wizards to help either cast out the creature or help them escape. The wizards created a gate to someplace else on Earth, with the intent of bringing themselves and the werewolves through to dominate a new area.

- McCreedy tracked the gate to just outside Redside, and has learned that Dagarathov has come through as well. His research indicates that the gate will be up for only about three weeks.

## Cut To ...

If it is early evening and the Storm Knights decide to head to their rooms, cut to Scene Three. If it is late in the evening or the Storm Knights decide to investigate the factory, cut to Scene Four.

## SCENE THREE: Kicking Back

### The Situation

**Standard.** The Storm Knights have decided to track down Harris and discuss his involvement with the factory and the strange events in town. If they ask any of the townspeople, they will hear that Harris was last spotted heading for the Valley Hotel (or if they pass by, they will see him in the bar). While

### What is Going On?

The "survivalists" who have sold out to the Tharkoldu are making their move. They have decided to approach the plant at night (when there is no one working) and destroy it so that the techno-demons can send in a few agents to quickly soften up the place before planting new stelae and taking this area of California.

talking with Harris they will learn that his fellow "survivalists" have betrayed him.

## The Action

The Valley Hotel is quiet, and two of the townspeople are busy pounding a few beers trying to forget the battle earlier this morning. Alone at a table is Harris, nursing a beer.

If the Storm Knights approach, Harris will offer them a chair and order a round of beers for them. If the Storm Knights ask about the other survivalists, he will comment that they are on guard duty at the barricades, and he is taking a well deserved night off.

Within a few minutes, three Victorian guards will come rushing into the bar, and head straight for Harris. They are taking an accusing tone, and tell him that they have seen four of his agents headed for the arms factory, and they are clearly expecting a full explanation.

Harris has been backed into a corner, and will be both surprised and angry. "I have no idea what's going on. As far as I know, they're supposed to be at the barricades."

The Victorians will suggest that they go to the factory and investigate, and while Harris will not be eager to do this, he will reluctantly go along.

## Cut To ...

Scene Four, "Failed Espionage."

## SCENE FOUR: Failed Espionage

### The Situation

**Dramatic.** The alarms around the arms factory go off, waking up the entire town. Someone has obviously failed to infiltrate the factory. During the course of the investigation, the Storm Knights begin to learn more about the true nature of the factory.

## The Action

The Storm Knights may be anywhere when this scene begins, including at Blake's or McCreedy's house, at the Valley Hotel, in their rooms or at the barricades on the edge of town. This scene begins late at night, perhaps two or three in the morning.

The scene begins when the alarms at the arms factory go off, sending a piercing shriek of sirens through the air. The Storm Knights are the first on the scene, and make a startling discovery — at the edge of the factory, three edeinos have been killed by some kind of energy field. Their bodies are on the ground, slowly decaying into a puddle of blackened goo, and laying beside them is a small, round technological device with seven crystals set into an ornate black metal frame. Anyone making a *science* total of 14 or higher will realize that the device is a Tharkoldu recording disk used to make holograms of particular locations or individuals.

## The Mystery Deepens

Within minutes of the discovery of the dead edeinos, some of the townspeople arrive on the scene, led by Mayor Marlin (if Blake didn't attack the characters in Scene One, he will be with this group). The people will literally be abuzz with rumor and speculation, and they will all react with revulsion at the sight of the partially disintegrated edeinos.

A series of gunshots will ring out, coming from within the factory. Any character making a *Perception* total of 12 will know that it came from the ground floor. If Blake is present, he will order the Knights to investigate; if only Mayor Marlin is present, he will have them investigate. Both of them will comment that, "... no one is supposed to be in the factory at night."


As soon as the Knights approach to within four meters of the factory walls, they will feel a tingling chill — like someone grabbed the base of their spine and injected Freon into their bodies. For each non-human in the group, have him or her roll a *willpower* or *Mind* total against a difficulty of 16;

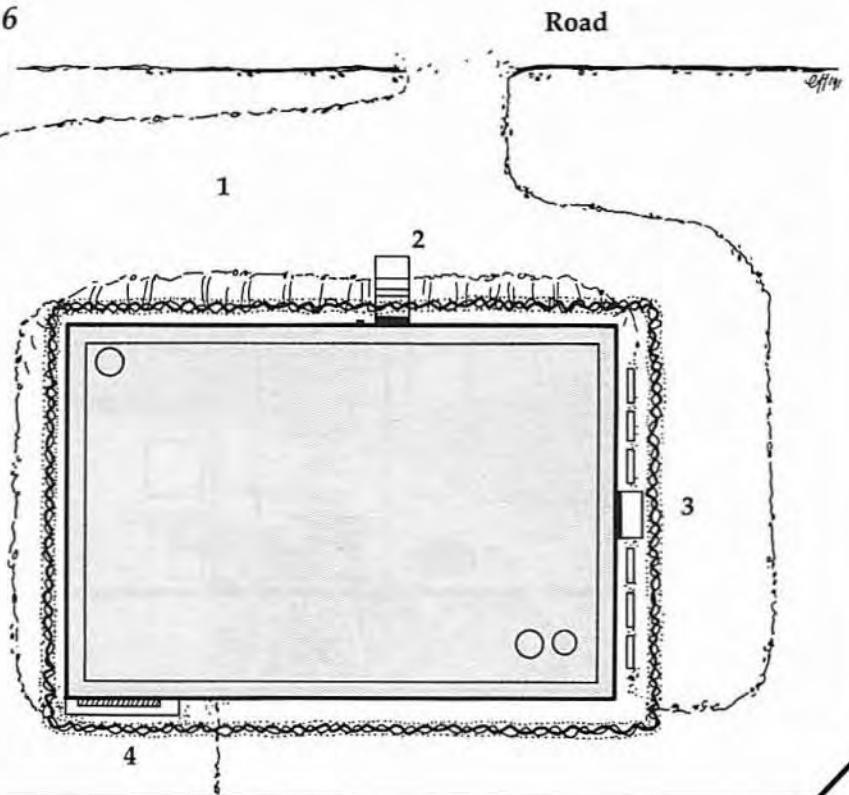




### Central Valley Gate: Map 6 Seisaku, Inc. Arms Factory — Grounds

#### Key

- 1. Parking lot
- 2. Employee entrance
- 3. Main entrance
- 4. Loading bays
-  Occult barrier



## R edside and the Arms Plant

The construction of the Seisaku arms factory was a blessing for Redside, which had been economically crippled since the start of the war. Before the war, Redside relied on local farmers and produce brokers for much of its business, but its continuing proximity to the front lines of the Western Land have motivated most people to leave the area.

Just when things looked their darkest, the military situation stabilized, with a garrison force being stationed at Redside. The presence of the troops gave the remaining local businesses a slight boost, but the decisive factor was the appearance of Seisaku representatives, led by Australian businessman Reggie Blake. Seisaku decided to construct a weapons factory in Redside soon

after Sacramento was reclaimed, and its close location to the Living Land makes it an ideal facility to supply U.S. troops in combat. This factory is secretly owned by the Kanawa Corporation. Like the rest of the United States, the townspeople are oblivious to the true nature of what has occurred in Japan and Sacramento.

The Seisaku plant's location was chosen for three main reasons: cheap land (values plummeted with the invasion), proximity to major shipping centers (the weapons are trucked to either San Francisco or Los Angeles if not used at the war front or domestically), and a stable market (with the war, the market for weaponry is VERY stable). Redside was deemed to be far

enough out of the way that Blake and Harris could convince the town that the factory was a good idea simply because of the jobs that would be made available.

Once the plant was established, it was expected that the local military would provide ample protection. However, the seeming Core Earth victory up around Sacramento (really the replacement of Living Land stelae with those of Nippon Tech) caused the brass in the state to move some of the forces north to capitalize on the success, while the rest of the troops have been dispatched to Los Angeles to deal with the Tharkold crisis. Now that the edeinos and bikers are starting to direct their attention to Redside, the town is desperately short of defenders.



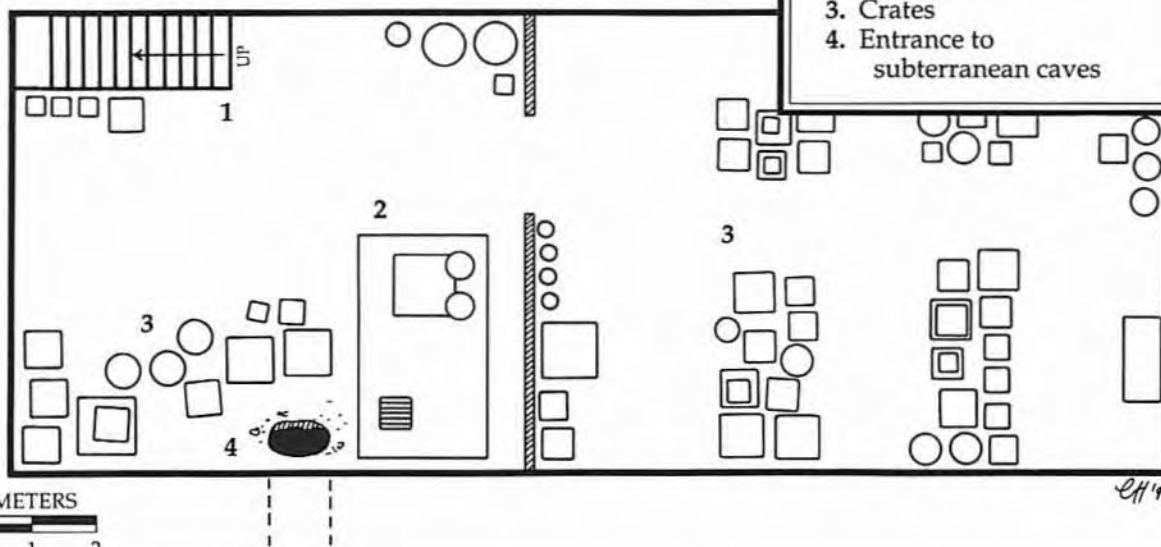




## Central Valley Gate: Map 7 Seisaku, Inc. Arms Factory — Basement

### Key

1. Stairs
2. Generator
3. Crates
4. Entrance to subterranean caves



if the roll is successful, the character is attacked by a kind of “energy surge” which takes the form of whirling green and yellow patterns of light, and does damage value 14; if the roll is failed, the same energy surge attacks them, but does a damage value of 26, and if the character is killed, their body slowly begins to dissolve into a puddle of black goo. For purposes of fairness, the gamemaster may want to subtly encourage non-humans to spend possibilities to succeed at the *Mind* total. The Storm Knights have just crossed an occult ward put up by the creature Dagarathov to keep out non-humans (it is intended primarily for use against edeinos).

After the barrier has been crossed, have each character make a *Mind* roll against a difficulty of 12 — if successful, they will feel a “mental presence” that tries to look into their minds, but it has been repelled; if the roll is failed, they will definitely feel the presence, and in fact, it is combing through their mind right now, as if going through a filing cabinet. Have the group make a new *Perseverance* check — if successful, add +1 to their total. Of course, this mental presence is Dagarathov, who

is trying to determine who the Storm Knights are, and what they intend to do at the factory.

## The Source of the Gunshots

The factory has been infiltrated by the “survivalists” who are actually in the employ of the Tharkoldu. They intend to destroy the factory by planting explosives. The shots occurred on the first floor as they were using the stair wells and encountered some workers from a mysterious night shift. According to their information, there isn’t supposed to be a night shift ...

## The Agents

The “survivalist” agents have penetrated the plant in order to plant explosives throughout the factory. The four agents each have five bundles of dynamite (damage value 24, blast radius 0-5/15/30). Two of the agents were sent to the second floor to plant dynamite throughout the halls, while the other two placed dynamite on the

first floor in areas 3, 6 (one bundle each), 8 (four bundles) and 9 (four bundles).

It was believed that the only problem would be the night shift guards — they were quickly and efficiently killed by the agents (their bodies, with throats slit by knives, were left in the reception area). However, the agents were forced to shoot one of the workers on the “night shift,” completely throwing the plans into chaos, and the triggering of the alarms (by the failed edeinos expedition) was the final straw. Only three bundles were planted in area nine and three bundles on the second floor. The bundles are set to explode five minutes after the Storm Knights enter the factory. Bundles of dynamite can be spotted with a *find* or *Perception* total of 8, and they can be deactivated simply by turning off the timer.

The agents pulled back to area three to try a quick escape, but then the Storm Knights and townspeople arrived. They are armed as described in Act Two.

If the Knights enter via the main entrance, they will be outlined against the darkness, making a good target. If the agents are noticed by the Storm Knights, they will open fire; if the Storm Knights







wander right by, the agents will let them pass and then try to sneak out. Once outside, some fire in the general direction of the crowd out front will allow them to escape the grounds and then sneak outside the town's borders. Storm Knights with a *Perception* total of 12 or higher will hear the shots outside if the agents sneak past them.

## Flag

If Sam came to the factory by himself, he was killed in the reception area (first floor, area 3) by the agents. They dragged his body into the men's restroom (first floor, area 5), and grabbed all of his weaponry. Upon entering the area, have the Storm Knights make a *find* or *Perception* check against a difficult of 12 to find the bloodstains; if they have a flashlight with them to illuminate the room, the difficulty is only 8.

## Seisaku Plant Facilities

The factory itself is a two-story structure, also with a huge basement. It is dedicated to the manufacture of M16s. When the Storm Knights first enter the factory, they will be coming through either the main entrance (first floor, area 1), the employee entrance (first floor, area 2) or the loading bays (first floor, area 11).

### Basement

1. **Stairs.**
2. **Generator.** The backup generator for the plant in case power is cut to the town.
3. **Crates.** This area is for storage of extra office supplies, and spare heavy equipment (replacement gears for the manufacturing equipment and so forth). The pile of crates and equipment is nearly three meters tall, and each crate weighs at least 400 kilograms (the replacement machinery weighs about 1000 kilograms).
4. **Cave.** Hidden behind the crates and equipment is the entrance to the subterranean caves of Dagarathov's

lair, which is nearly three meters across. The cave is dark and seems to run straight down into the ground. Turn to Act Four, Scene Three, "The Lair" for more information.

Once the Storm Knights enter the area, Dagarathov will awaken the aarkinos and send them after the Storm Knights (unless they have already been killed at McCreedy's).

## Flag

If the Storm Knights decide to investigate Dagarathov's lair, cut to Act Four, Scene Four, for the creature's stats. Also, if the characters find the cave entrance, it will attempt to take over their minds instead of merely observing.

### First Floor

1. **Main entrance.** This is a door of bullet-proof glass (*Toughness* 19). If Sam preceded the Knights, the door has been busted open; otherwise, they will have to destroy or open the door themselves—a *lock picking* total of 18 is necessary to open the door. Since the alarms have already been triggered, there is no real

penalty for failing the roll.

2. **Employee entrance.** This is a solid door with a *Toughness* of 19. A *lock picking* total of 18 is necessary to open the door. Since the alarms have already been triggered, there is no real penalty for failing the roll.

3. **Reception.** There are two desks on either side of the entrance way, with phones, fax machines, and photocopiers. On the wall opposite the entrance is a poster, showing two U.S. Army soldiers wielding M16s in the Living Land, shooting at edeinos. It reads, "In defense of our country and our lives. Seisaku, Inc."

If Sam has been killed, the bloodstains are near the stairs (see the "Flag").

4. **Stairs.**

5. **Restrooms.**

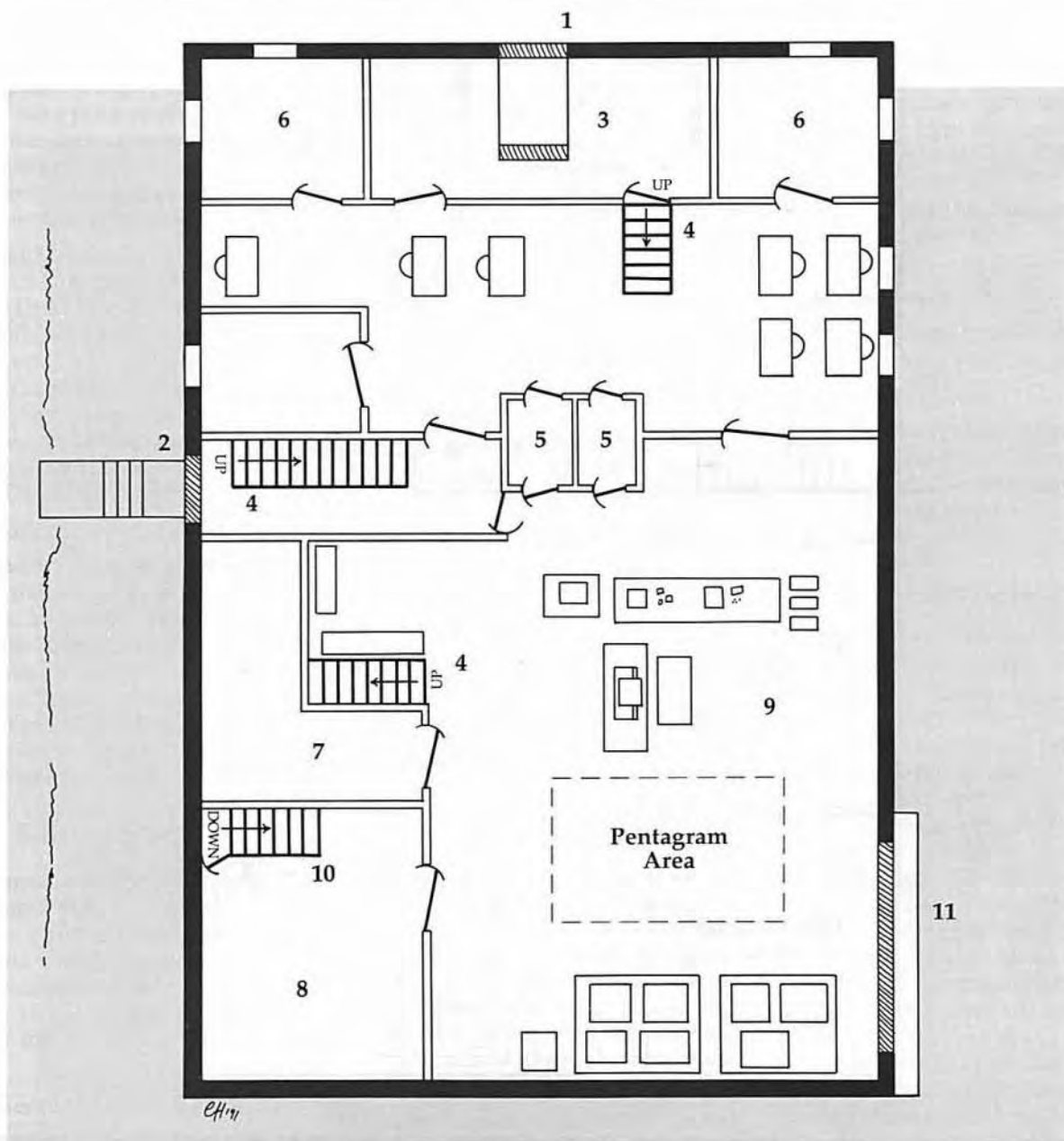
6. **Offices.** Each of the offices is for a middle-level or low-level executive. The offices are spartan, with a desk, chair, and filing cabinet. There are no records of any interest in these offices.

7. **Warehouse records room.** Here are where the plant's official records are kept. It shows a weekly shipment of 200 M16s to the U.S. army over the





**Central Valley Gate: Map 8**  
**Seisaku, Inc. Arms Factory — Ground Floor**



METERS  
 0 1 2

**Key**

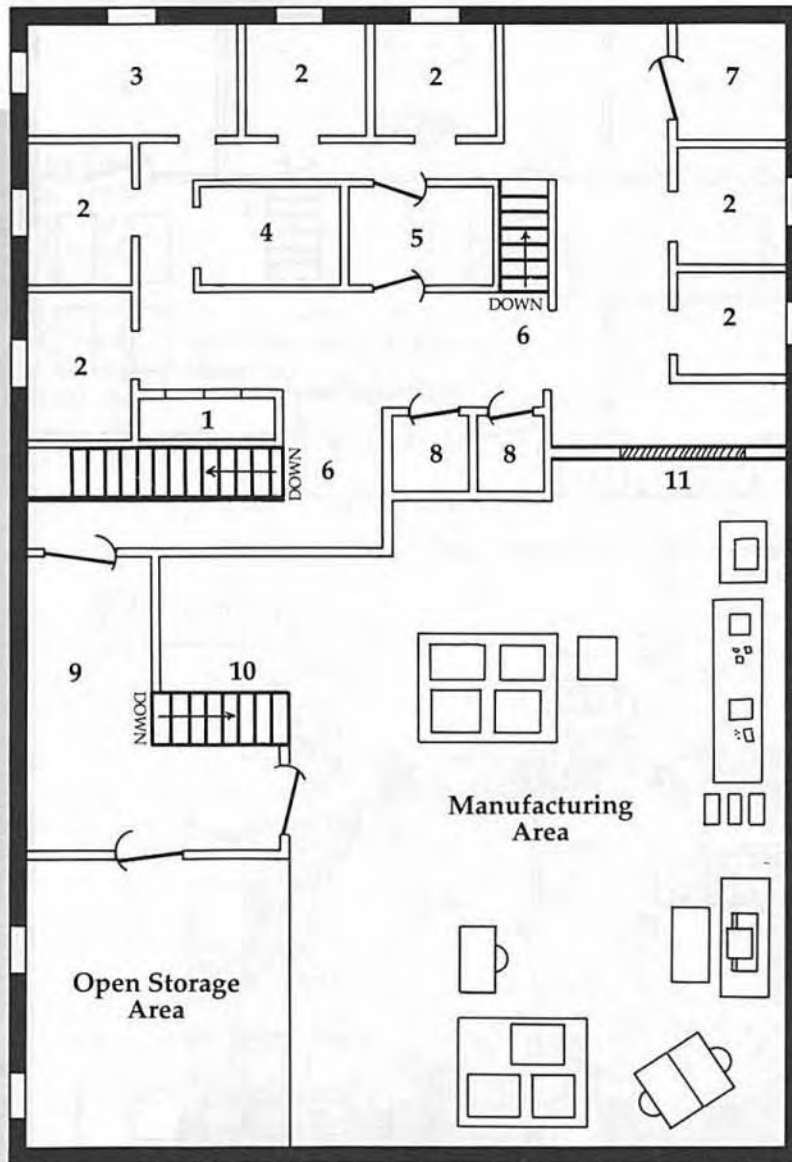
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|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| 1. Main entrance     | 5. Restrooms | 8. Weapons storage   |
| 2. Employee entrance | 6. Office    | 9. Factory/warehouse |
| 3. Reception         | 7. Warehouse | 10. Stairs           |
| 4. Stairs            | records room | 11. Loading bays     |







**Central Valley Gate: Map 9**  
**Seisaku, Inc. Arms Factory — Upper Floor**



METERS  
 0 1 2

**Key**

- |                   |                    |                 |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Storage closet | 5. Conference room | 9. Break area   |
| 2. Office         | 6. Stairs          | 10. Stairs      |
| 3. Blake's office | 7. Explosives lab  | 11. Barred door |
| 4. Computer room  | 8. Restrooms       |                 |



course of the past three months, as well as two small shipments of 100 M16s to "customers in Los Angeles."

While not stated in the records, these shipments were ultimately fated for the Nile Empire, but one was intercepted by Ra's Swordsman (see Act Four for more information).

**8. Weapons storage.** Finished M16s are stored here prior to shipping. Because of the lack of raw materials, manufacturing has been shut down for two weeks — this area is currently vacant. This area is two stories.

**9. Manufacturing.** This area is where the M16s are tooled and assembled. There are several rows of molds, drills, and assemblers, as well as a large open space in the center of the floor. The area is spotless because the factory has been effectively shut down. The area is two stories.

For more information on this area, refer to "The Night Shift."

#### 10. Stairs.

**11. Loading bay.** A sliding door opens to the dock, to allow tractor trailers and large vehicles to be loaded with goods. The door can easily be opened from the inside; anyone trying to break in from the outside, must make a *lock picking* total of 18 or a *lifting* total of 14 to lift the door enough for characters to crawl under.

### Second Floor

**1. Storage closet.** Inside this area is a deactivated Nagara Security 44TS Robot; it is activated if someone fails to penetrate Blake's computer, which is wired to an activation transmitter. If the Storm Knights open the door to this closet the robot is automatically activated.

#### Nagara Security 44TS Robot

##### DEXTERITY 8

Fire combat 13, heavy weapons 12, jumping 10, running 10, unarmed combat 12

##### STRENGTH 14

##### TOUGHNESS 15

##### PERCEPTION 7

Find 13, trick (12)

##### MIND 7

Test (20)

##### CHARISMA 5

Taunt (20)

#### SPIRIT 0

Intimidation (22)

**Possibilities:** none

**Equipment:** Armor (armor value TOU +7/22), pincers (damage value STR +5/19), belt fed machine gun (damage value 25)

**2. Offices.** Each of the offices is for a middle level or low level executive. The offices are spartan, with a desk, chair, and filing cabinet. There are no records of any interest in these offices.

**3. Blake's office.** The only place where complete information on Seisaku's plans is available is in Blake's office (second floor, area three). Blake's office has a very complex lock (to break through requires a *lock picking* total of 16 or higher; the wooden door has a *Toughness* of 12).

The office is lavishly decorated with paintings, weapons, and other artifacts hanging on the walls. In each corner is what appears to be a full suit of samurai armor. Anyone who makes an *artist* total of 8 will know that the paintings are cheap replicas. The office has a large desk and chair, a phone, and a cabinet full of computer disks. On top of the desk is a small computer of unfamiliar make. Unless one or more Storm Knights have been in Nippon Tech before, they will not recognize it as a Nippon computer.

If the Storm Knights try to use Blake's computer, cut to "Seisaku's Secret."

**4. Computer room.** Seisaku's business records are stored on magnetic tape drives in this room. There are nine computers — three for everyday business, and six that are used to monitor the manufacturing equipment. The information in Blake's computer cannot be accessed through these computers.

**5. Conference room.** This room has a large table and eight very comfortable chairs. It is used for important business meetings.

#### 6. Stairs.

**7. Explosives lab.** If the Knights check out the secret lab (second floor, area seven), they will discover that the door is locked, requiring a *lock picking* total of 16 to open (if brute force is used, the door has a *Toughness* of 20) — however, blowing open the door isn't advisable

because the explosion will trigger the explosives in the lab, causing a damage value of 26 to everyone in the lab and damage value 25 to everyone in that corner of the building.

The lab has three simple work benches, with boxes of the explosive's components piled high. A shelf runs around the walls, holding several clear plastic containers with the dry compounds that form the explosive. In the northern corner are a dozen foil wrapped packets of the explosive weighing about four ounces (they are not labeled; they can be triggered by heat or timer).

#### 8. Restrooms.

**9. Break area.** A table, some chairs, and a couple of vending machines.

#### 10. Stairs.

**11. Barred door.** This door can be opened so that goods from the manufacturing area can be brought up to the second floor with a forklift.

## The Tour

If the Storm Knights haven't come into conflict with Blake, he will give them a tour of the factory, all the while explaining the hardship that the shut-down has caused to the people of the town. He explains that he needs the Storm Knights to protect the factory from damage so that once the "crisis" is over, the plant can start back up again. Because the factory has been shut down, only Blake, a few secretaries and the executives will be present.

He will explain away the explosives lab as a simple work area, where aspects of the guns are examined to insure quality.

If the Storm Knights use *true sight* or a similar form of divination on the people in the factory, the person will seem to disappear — in their place is an opaque grey form, outlined with a black aura. Have the Storm Knights make a *Perseverance* check; if successful, add +1 to their *Perseverance*.

## The Night Shift

This scene occurs if the Storm Knights enter the factory at night. Upon entering the manufacturing area (first







floor, area nine), they will be stunned by the bright lights (highly unusual since the factory is shut down).

Then, they will see two dead townspeople right in front of them, shot to death (by the Tharkoldu saboteurs). Stranger still is the fact that in the open area of the factory there are at a dozen townspeople, standing quietly, motionlessly, completely ignoring their downed neighbors. If they approach, they will see that the people are entranced, much like zombies, with blank stares. The people don't even seem to notice them.

The people are gathered around a sunken portion of the floor. Shimmering inches above the floor is a pentagram of blue swirling energies. The people are slowly walking toward the pentagram.

If the Storm Knights use *true sight* or a similar form of divination on the people in the factory, the people will seem to disappear — in their place is an opaque grey form, outlined with a black aura. Have the Storm Knights make a *Perseverance* check; if successful, add +1 to their *Perseverance*.

The Storm Knights will be able to enter and leave the room without interference as long as they don't interfere with the workers.

This is part of an elaborate occult ritual by Dagarathov. By summoning these people for five consecutive nights, he can feed off their energy and use it when he attempts to return to Orrorsh and take control of the Glade of the Queen.

## Seisaku's Secret

Operating the computer requires a *scholar (computer)* total of 10 or higher. Retrieving information from the computer is a four-step process. The operator must do these things in order:

- A. Beat the computer's security program.
- B. Find the System Deletion Program.
- C. Disengage the System Deletion Program to keep the needed data from being erased during the search. This will also place a lock of sorts over all the data — nothing else can be ac-

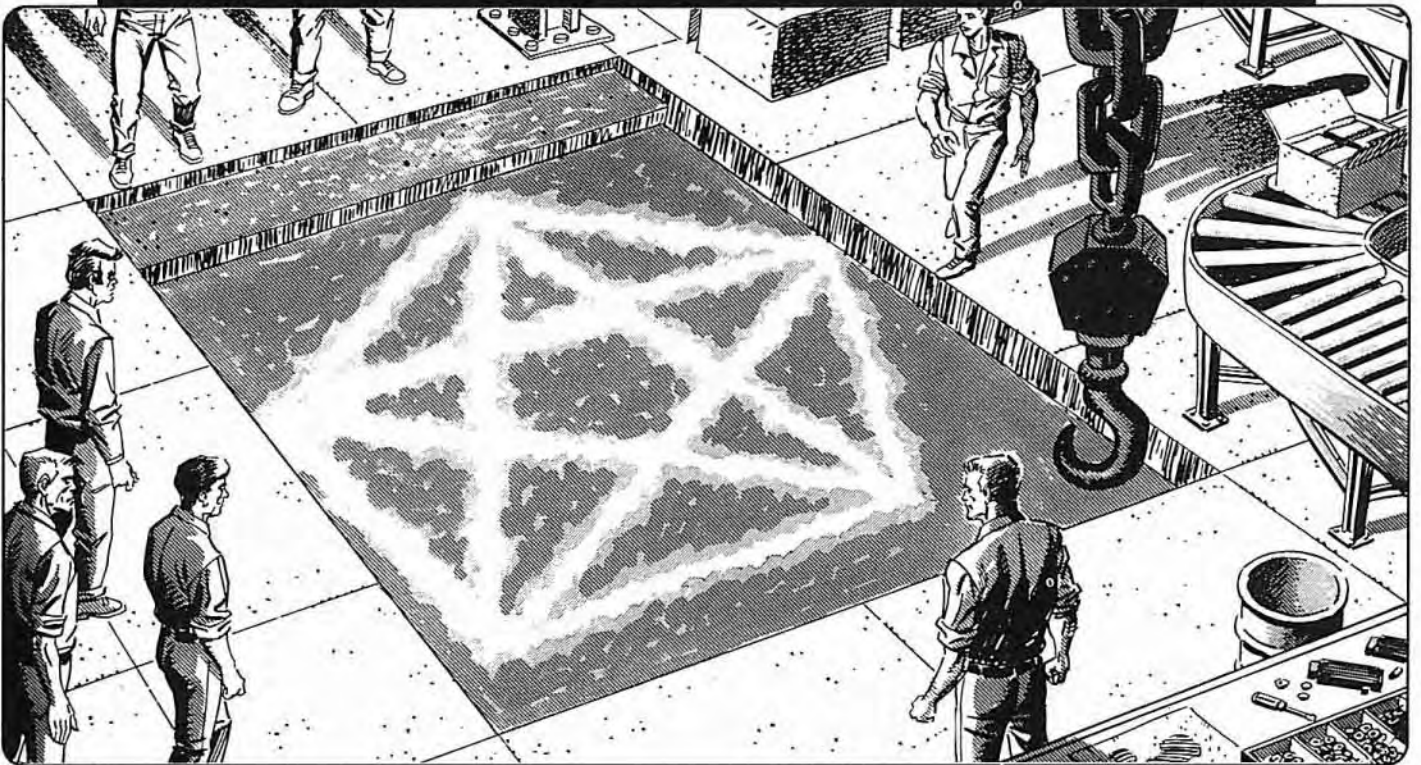
cessed until the program is stopped.

D. Find and retrieve the necessary data.

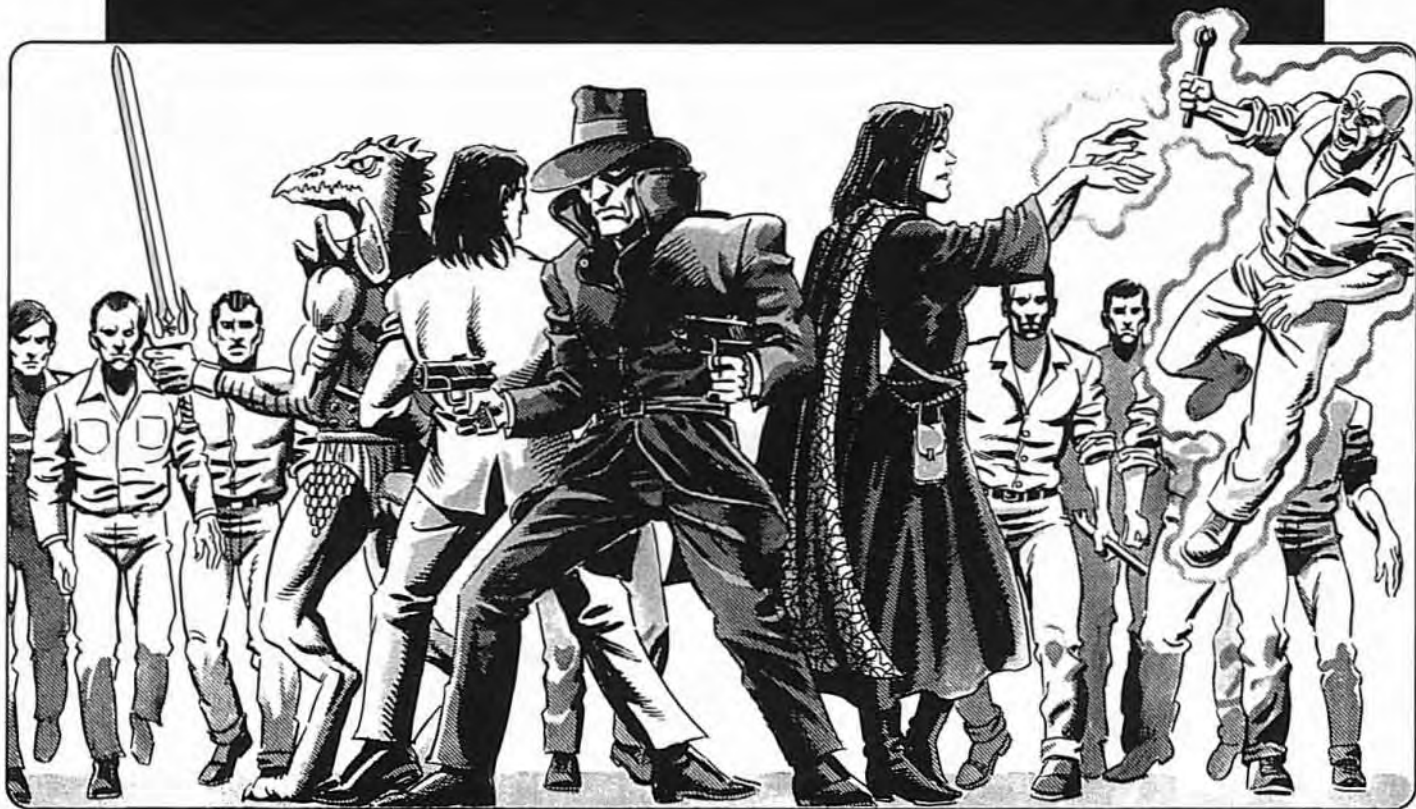
Step A requires a *scholar (computer)* total of 12; if the roll is unsuccessful, a loud whirring sound will be heard across the hall (in room one), followed by a crash of splintering wood. Emerging through the now wrecked doors of the storage closet is a Nagara Security 44TS Robot, with programming to stop those who are tinkering with Blake's computer. Step B requires a *scholar (computer)* total of 10. Step C requires a total of 14. Step D requires a total of 8.

## Operation False Crusade

Within Blake's computer files is information that the Storm Knights will certainly find useful. Under the direction of "his superiors," Blake has been ordered to construct the explosive, which will be shipped to several locations around the world. Used as part of a campaign of terrorism secretly called "Operation False Crusade," the







explosives will be detonated in many churches and temples in the belief that investigators will conclude that the Cyberpapacy was responsible for the attacks (after all, the explosive is native to the Cyberpapacy). This plan will effectively rally anti-Cyberpapacy sentiment, helping to concentrate efforts on Jean Malraux and ignoring 3327, while also insuring a steady market for weapons and other tools of war. The first attacks will be made in two months' time.

The list of targets is shown below:

**US:** Miami, New Orleans, Houston, Phoenix, San Diego

**Germany:** Berlin, Bonn, Munich

**USSR:** Moscow, Kiev, Leningrad

**Israel:** Jerusalem

**Nile Empire:** Cairo, Alexandria, Thebes

**Saudi Arabia:** Mecca

**India:** New Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta.

**China:** Beijing

**Nippon Tech:** Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka

How the Storm Knights handle the news is entirely up to them. Simply taking it to the authorities is the forthright thing to do, but it runs into several problems, chief of which is the fact that they might not be believed. Then, too, the intrigue pervasive in everything that Kanawa touches virtually guarantees that some of the authorities will be traitors in his pay, and the Storm Knights have no way of knowing whom to trust. Going over the authorities' heads to the public and media is an alternative, but many radio and TV stations are now Kanawa-owned.

The slower, but more exciting tactic, is to keep the information as the group's own secret, sharing it only with other bands of Storm Knights. A whole campaign could be spent simply in sabotaging Kanawa's attacks.

## Aftermath

If he is allowed to participate in the fight, and survives, Harris' status will once again become the subject of controversy. Many of the townspeople will wonder about whether or not he can be trusted, although they will listen to the Storm Knights if they have any suggestions.

If anyone tries to arrest him and his men after this fight, they will do their best to escape into the wilderness.

## Act Awards

The heroes should receive three Possibilities for the act if they stopped the destruction of the factory. If they learned the nature of the Orrorsh threat from McCreedy, increase the award by one Possibility.





## Act Four

# Redside, Revenge and Resolution

### The Major Beat

In the concluding act of this adventure, the Storm Knights will be contacted by Sally Rogers, a young woman in love with one of the lesser gang leaders. If the Storm Knights can orchestrate a rescue of her lover, they will gain valuable information regarding the upcoming assault on Redside. In the climactic final scene, the combined forces of the edeinos Teraks Kest tribe, the bikers and the Tharkold techno-demons themselves attack Redside, with only the Storm Knights and the Victorians to save the small town from total destruction.

### SCENE ONE: The Deserter

#### The Situation

**Standard.** The next day, after the Storm Knights have snatched some well-earned sleep, several Victorian sentries will come in, bringing with them a young woman in biker garb who staggered up to them out of the early morning darkness, asking for help. Brigadier Cunningham questioned her briefly, then sent her under escort to the Storm Knights, who he realizes are better suited than he is to handle this sort of thing.

#### The Action

The Victorian soldiers must rouse the Storm Knights, despite the fatigue from the battles of the day before. They introduce the Knights to Sally Rogers, the girlfriend of one of the

young men in the biker gang, who is a recent convert and one of Hog's newest recruits. She will bring with her information that Hog has made some sort of a deal with the edeinos, and is very well received in their midst. In exchange for this information, she wants the Knights to help her rescue her boyfriend, Tony Burke, and will cry, beg, plead, and threaten to get them to do it.

Sally explains that once she and Tony were very close, but when Hog looked him up to try recruiting him for the gang, he left her for a plant, of all things. According to Sally, Hog invited Tony along with him on a trip to show him "incentive" for joining up. Long suspicious of Hog, Sally snuck along behind them, luckily managing to stick with them even through the storm front. A "scale" and a thin, black haired man met them shortly after they entered the Living Land, and seemed to act as a guide.

From here on the story gets weird. The gotak, the man and Hog took Tony to a small grove of man-sized plants, with vinelike stems and one large blossom on top. Tony's three companions invited him to take a closer look at one, then backed off. When Tony approached one of the plants, he seemed to go wild with pleasure.

"Hog, the man and the scale walked off, talking about a 'plan for Fresno.' When they were gone, I walked up to Tony and asked him what he thought he was doing. He didn't even notice me. I tugged on his arm to get him to notice me, and he turned just long enough to shove me back. There must have been a dozen or so others around, but after seeing what that one had done to Tony, I didn't go anywhere near them."

Eventually, Hog and the gotak came





back, and Sally hid in the jungle again when she heard them coming. The gotak performed some kind of ceremony, and Tony collapsed into a stupor as he was dragged away. After about ten minutes, Tony seemed to come to, but was real weak. He started to go back to the plant, but his companions restrained him. Then Hog told him that if he would join the gang for awhile, when the campaign was over, he could be with the plant for all time. After that, Tony said he'd do anything for them, as long as he could go back to the plant.

Then they went back to Core Earth. Sally lost their trail this time, but made it out of the storm front. The first thing she'd heard upon getting back to her old haunts, Tony had summoned all his friends to join with Hog and his gang.

Sally's story will provide valuable information for the Storm Knights — not only are the plants around the village used for defense, but a nearby grove of pleasure plants is used to enslave non-Jakatts. She can lead the party to this grove, so they can destroy it and keep Hog and the edeinos from

enslaving more Core Earthers with it. She thinks killing the plant is the only way to keep Tony away from it (she's right). As an added bonus, Sally will point out that the reason Hog contacted Tony in the first place is because he has his own gang of bikers.

As a gang leader in his own right, he is one of Hog's confidants, and if freed of the plant's seductive influence, he will surely join the heroes and provide them with inside information on Hog's plans and the gang in general. This should be enough to get the Knights to go along with her, and even Sam will raise no objections.

#### Sally Rogers

**DEXTERITY** 8

Swimming 9

**STRENGTH** 7

**TOUGHNESS** 8

**PERCEPTION** 8

Land vehicles 10, tracking 9

**MIND** 9

**CHARISMA** 9

**SPIRIT** 6

Possibilities: none

Equipment: Knife (damage value

STR+2/18), leather jacket (armor value TOU +3/22)

**Description:** A tall, slender blonde in her early 20s, Sally has no real faults, except for a wild streak in her nature and a slight bit of ego concerning her looks. No girl ever took a man from her; to lose her boyfriend to a plant infuriates her. She hates Hog's gang for doing this to her, and will be a loyal ally if the Knights help her get Tony back.

If the Storm Knights decide to rescue Tony, cut to Scene Two, "Busting Out the Biker Boyfriend"; otherwise continue on to "The Pleasure Plant Grove."

## The Pleasure Plant Grove

If the Knights decide to destroy the pleasure plant grove, Sally will lead them there, but only if they promise to help rescue Tony. Because of the hunting of the tromblen pack, there will be no random jungle encounters (see Act



Two, Scene Three). Sam and possibly some Victorians may come along if the party is too weak to do the job. Sally will come along as guide, of course, and is more than capable of taking care of herself in a fight.

When the Knights get to the grove, they will not have time to do much more than get a brief look at the plants before trouble starts. After Hog and Tony returned to Core Earth, the gotak became worried about the grove's security and promptly prayed to Lanala to summon a group of ten voskats to stand by and guard it; they have buried themselves in the soil and will attack any non-Jakatt who approaches the grove. Voskats are one meter tall and a meter and a half long insects, with a red shell. They have three legs on each side of their body. Voskats fight with such a berserker frenzy that they will not retreat from a battle no matter what the odds.

#### Voskats

**DEXTERITY** 11

Stealth 13

**STRENGTH** 10

**TOUGHNESS** 10

**PERCEPTION** 7

Tracking 8, trick 9

**MIND** 5

Test (7), willpower 6

**CHARISMA** 4

Taunt (9)

**SPIRIT** 4

**Possibilities:** none

**Natural Tools:** Mandibles (damage value STR +2/12), shell (armor value TOU +3/13)

## Flag

If a *hero setback* card appears now, the sounds of combat will be heard by a roving band of hunters from the edeinos tribe. The hunters number two for each Storm Knight, plus an optant.

When the battle with the edeinos starts, the optant will first try to hinder any Knights still fighting the voskats (the edeinos will arrive 12 turns after combat begins), using *sensory explosion* or *intensify emotions*. As his warriors dive in to the attack with what appears to be suicidal frenzy, he will stand off a short distance from the melee, creating and hurling *simple* and *blossom spears*

from nearby hrockt shoots. If cornered, he will fight to the death with his club, also using a miracle to increase his strength and/or toughness.

If he can, he will flee into the jungle and the Deep Mist as soon as he realizes that defeat is certain. Letting the optant escape would be a serious error on the Storm Knights' part. Not only will he be able to eventually create a new grove of Pleasure Plants, thus repairing the damage this expedition was meant to create, but he will try to redeem himself immediately by taking drastic revenge on the party.

## SCENE TWO: Busting Out the Biker Boyfriend

### The Situation

**Standard.** The bikers' camp is a few minutes drive away from Redside, hidden in the barren wilderness. Hog is away at the moment, leading another small gang to the encampment in preparation for the upcoming attack. Sally, of course, knows just where the camp is, and will show the Knights where they can pull over right before anyone in camp can hear their car(s). It seems unlikely that anyone would hear them, anyway; the sounds of many motorcycles can be heard in the distance.

The setting is the same, whether the rescue comes by night or day. There are 150 bikers here, all raucously shouting and partying. The leaders of this horde are in the center of the camp, and it is there the Storm Knights must follow Sally in order to find and rescue Tony Burke.

Although no actual sentries are out, there are various couples wandering off into the darkness (have each Storm Knight make a *find* or *Perception* total of 9 every three rounds not to stumble upon a couple, and a *stealth* or *Dexterity* total of 7 for the bikers not to notice the Storm Knights).

With *stealth* and *surprise* on their side, the Knights ought to be able to conduct a successful enough "biker hunt" to gain full motorcycle gang regalia for every member of the party.

If the characters are sneaking into the encampment, have them make a *stealth* or *Dexterity* total of 12 every five rounds not to run into random drunken bikers.

## Flag

If the Knights don't think of jumping stray bikers and stealing their outfits, there is only one option that seems available to them: a sudden charge into camp, all guns blazing, in a snatch-and-grab raid to pick up the captives (only Tony will be easily found).

## The Rescue

This scenario assumes the Knights are sneaking into the camp disguised as bikers. Nonhuman characters, such as dwarves, elves and edeinos may even be disguised (this is not as silly as it sounds, considering the "altered state of mind" that most of the bikers are in) — each biker's *Perception*, *Charisma* and *Mind* is effectively reduced to 4. Each biker must make an *evidence analysis* or *Perception* total of 6 (higher if the *disguise* skill is used) to notice that "something's wrong with that guy." If the biker challenges the disguised Storm Knight, a Storm Knight with a *persuasion* or *Charm* success level of *neutral* or better will be able to convince the biker that the fellow that looks like a lizard is just a biker with a big nose. Sally, of course, is known as Tony's girlfriend, and a biker only needs a *Perception* total of 6 or higher to recognize her.

With any luck at all, they will get to Tony's tent without too much trouble. Getting inside the tent, however, will be another matter altogether. The Brute Brothers, a trio of hulking mountains of flesh and blood, are warning everyone away from Tony's tent. It seems that Tony got sick or something awhile ago (it was when the Pleasure Plant that bewitched him was destroyed); now only his nurse will be allowed to see him. The "nurse" is really their younger sister Cindy, who has had a thing for Tony ever since he blew into camp. She does have some medical knowledge, practiced mainly on people who run afoul of her three







older brothers, but her main reason for being in the tent is to try to seduce Tony when he snaps out of whatever is ailing him. All three brothers look about as bright as a lump of coal, but they are loyal. Cindy told them to keep everyone out of the tent, especially Sally, so everyone else is just going to have to stay outside.

Build-up is everything for this scene. As the Storm Knights approach the tent, they should see the Brutes standing there, surrounded by a pile of crumpled beer cans. The Brutes are demolishing a few cases of beer, and will continue to do so through any initial negotiations. Their guzzling is almost poetry in motion. A Brute will smoothly pluck a can out of a case, pop the top, chug-a-lug it down all at once, hold out the empty can in one hand, and then crunch — all within one round!

If a fight erupts, the fracas does attract attention, but no one else will interfere. Fights like these are breaking out in the camp all the time, and everyone will take it in the spirit of good, clean fun. At most, the other bikers will taunt the Knights if they seem to be losing, but will cheer them on if they win. Bets will

be placed on the struggle, and some bettors give the Knights a share of the winnings when the last Brute goes down and out (assuming it was a "fair" three-on-three fight).

#### The Brute Brothers

##### DEXTERITY 10

Fire combat 12, melee weapons 12, unarmed combat 13

##### STRENGTH 13

Lifting 14

##### TOUGHNESS 13

##### PERCEPTION 6

Land vehicles 8

##### MIND 6

##### CHARISMA 6

Taunt 11

##### SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 13

Possibilities: none

Equipment: Knife (damage STR +3/17), leather jacket (armor value TOU +3/20)

Description: Although they are not actually triplets (one-year age difference between each of them), the Brute Brothers look remarkably alike, with black hair cut into Mohawk style, thick moustaches, and heavy beards. All are over six feet tall, and their bulging

muscles can be noticed even through their leather jackets. They are rough, tough, and love a good brawl, especially if it involved consuming cheap beer before, during and after.

Once the Brute Brothers are defeated, Sally will dash into the tent — the Knights should enter just in time to see Sally flatten with one punch an attractive young brunette clad in the standard leather jacket (Cindy Brute).

Tony is awake, but only partially aware of his surroundings. The mental shock of losing his beloved plant has left him in a daze. He will slowly come around to the sound of Sally's familiar voice. After fifteen minutes, he will be totally awake and alert, and upon realizing what has happened to him, he will gladly side with the Storm Knights against Hog's gang. He will also take his gang with him, using them as reinforcements for the barricades manned by the men of Redside (see the battle in the final Act). The Knights may now leave camp immediately, while Tony and Sally will follow after casually strolling through the camp and gathering up his friends.

After they have left the area of the camp, Tony will relate to the Storm Knights that the attack on Redside is set for later that day (or if the rescue takes place in the evening or at night, tomorrow).

#### Tony Burke

##### DEXTERITY 12

Fire combat 13, melee weapons 13

##### STRENGTH 10

##### TOUGHNESS 9

##### PERCEPTION 11

Land vehicles 12

##### MIND 9

##### CHARISMA 12

Charm 13, persuasion 14, taunt 14

##### SPIRIT 10

Possibilities: none

Equipment: Knife (damage value STR +3/17), leather jacket (armor value TOU +3/20)

Description: A handsome, athletic young man with coal-black hair, Tony Burke is a basically good fellow who lacks judgement and direction — he'll always choose the path of least effort. Like Sally, he will be a loyal ally of the Knights in the final battle, as will his twelve buddies (standard biker stats).



## Interlude

The edeinos village, late afternoon. Three edeinos are sitting, quietly observing a fire. From out of the mist emerge three thin humans with black hair, pushing the edeinos aside, and stepping through the fire. Muttering "Simple-minded fools," they menacingly walk up to the optant and the leader screams, "Your people are as useless as the damned monkeys. Your fools failed in their efforts to enter the factory. Must we do everything ourselves? I should skin you and eat your raw flesh in front of the entire tribe."

There is no visible reaction from the optant. However, the forms of the humans shimmer and flicker, slowly changing, growing taller, broadening. In seconds, the veil of the spell is gone, and the "men" are revealed for their true form, that of Tharkoldu technodemons. Hissing, the leader screams, "I will lead this tribe now. Take him." The other two demons grab the optant, as the leader storms to his tent ...

## Interlude

With the Storm Knights' word of the coming attack, the battle preparations for Redside go into full swing. More barricades are erected around the town's perimeter, as the Victorians attempt to teach the townspeople rudimentary military strategy. Cunningham, Marlin and the Storm Knights convene for the strategy session.

Marlin says, "We know the bikers will be going for the factory. You Storm Knights defend the factory, or if necessary, help defend the barricades leading to the factory. The cavalymen will be hidden in reserve to deal with pressing problems, and if we can lure the bikers toward City Hall, the cavalry will be most useful."

Cunningham looks at the Knights and the mayor, nods, smiles, and says, "A good plan we have here. These bikers will be put down in minutes."

## Cut To ...

Scene Three, "The Bikers Attack."

## SCENE THREE: The Bikers Attack

### The Situation

**Dramatic.** As the Storm Knights take up positions at the Seisaku plant, the roar of motorcycle engines will be heard, rising in intensity as a huge cloud of dust comes into view. The biker gang, some 200 strong, is approaching from the west (coming into town near the shopping center and the stores). They are all roughneck thugs, looking for trouble and eager to take advantage of the chaos caused by the war.

### The Action

The biker force represents the full manpower Hog has at his disposal. If the Storm Knights somehow eliminated a large number of bikers in the rescue of Tony, reduce the number accordingly.

#### Hog (real name Deke Schlachter)

##### DEXTERITY 10

Fire combat 15, lock picking 12, melee weapons 13, unarmed combat 13

##### STRENGTH 11

Lifting 12

##### TOUGHNESS 10

##### PERCEPTION 9

Land vehicles 11, trick 13

##### MIND 8

Test 11

##### CHARISMA 9

Taunt 15

##### SPIRIT 11

Intimidation 14, reality 17

##### Possibilities: 16

**Equipment:** Ingram MAC 10 (damage value 18, range 3-15/25/50, ammo 10), chain (damage value STR +5/19), knife (damage value STR +3/17), leather jacket (armor value TOU +3/20), motorcycle (tech 22, speed 160kmh/100mph (value 13), passengers 2, TOU 10)

**Description:** A large, muscular man in his mid-twenties, Hog has dirty blond hair and considerable stubble

on his face. He is crafty and cautious, taking care that none of his followers know of his connections with the Tharkoldu.

#### Bikers (200)

##### DEXTERITY 8

Fire combat 9, melee weapons 10

##### STRENGTH 9

##### TOUGHNESS 10

##### PERCEPTION 7

Land vehicles 9, trick 8

##### MIND 6

##### CHARISMA 6

Taunt 8

##### SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 11

**Possibility Potential:** some (60)

**Equipment:** Ingram MAC 10 (damage value 18, range 3-15/25/50, ammo 10), chain (damage value STR +5/19), knife (damage value STR +3/17), leather jacket (armor value TOU +3/20), motorcycle (tech 22, speed 160kmh/100mph (value 13), passengers 2, TOU 10)

If the heroes are watching Hog through binoculars, they will see the look of surprise on his face as he sees the Victorians lined up for battle. This raid won't be as much fun as the others were! Still, he has his duty and he signals the attack.

The canny Cunningham also has a little surprise for the bikers. To the

### Running the Battle

This battle should be run in a manner very similar to the battle in Act Two, Scene One. The action the Storm Knights see should be indicative of their activities—if they are doing a good job defending the town, it will seem that the battle is going well; if, conversely, things are going poorly, describe how the Victorians and townspeople are slowly being cut down by the bikers.

When the edeinos make their appearance, the same techniques are useful in conveying the story, even though the Storm Knights will certainly have their hands full with the lakten-mounted edeinos warriors.





south of Redside is a small forest, providing sufficient cover for the cavalry. Once the gang has been completely committed to battle, and is staggering from its losses, the Lancers will charge out and take them from the rear, crushing the main body of Hog's force in a vise between infantry-held barricade and cavalry charge.

When the bikers roar in to the attack, they will discover an interesting difference between the design philosophies of 19th- and 20th Century personal firearms. In the 19th Century, long range was a primary consideration; in modern times, rate of fire is all-important. What this means from a practical standpoint is that, while the bikers' Ingrams can fire much faster than the Lee-Hollings rifles of the Victorians, their range is so short that few bikers will live long enough to use them accurately.

Remember, too, that the Victorian infantry and other defenders will be under cover. The Armstrong cannon will further jack the odds in the defenders' favor, and the charge of the Lancers will clinch the victory in the

main battle.

Once he sees that the battle is under way, Hog will break off from the main fight with twelve of his closest buddies. His goal will be to take his twelve men onto the side road and make a direct attack against the arms factory, which will hopefully be more-or-less synchronized with the coming airborne assault.

## Flag

If the Knights did not kill the Brute Brothers back at the bikers' camp, the among the ranks of the attackers, they will see three huge forms, one of whom will shout "It's those guys! Let's get 'em!" The brothers will also bring along a dozen other bikers as reinforcements.

## The Second Stage

In the midst of battle, the Storm Knights will see, above the clouds of gunpowder smoke produced by the main battle, a wholly unexpected force coming to renew the attack on the

town. At ground level, all of the remaining edeinos from the Teraks Kest tribe are charging into town from the north (near the school), while above them, seven huge lakten are flying straight toward the plant.

Six of them are being ridden by edeinos; the seventh rider is a bare-chested man with an Egyptian head-dress, brandishing a gleaming khopesh (an ancient Egyptian sword which looks something like a partially-straightened out question mark). The sword's gleam is not merely reflected sunlight; it is glowing of its own accord. This unusual force is heading straight for the plant — the Storm Knights may decide to battle them from ground level, but they also have the option of heading to the factory's roof to meet this menace.

The seventh attacker is Ra's Swordsman, an evil Nile character who is currently Mobius' informal ambassador to the Living Land. He is the only survivor of the team that traced a shipment of guns back to Redside (all of his companions were slain in a battle with Nippon security agents defending the



shipment of weapons).

Ra's Swordsman has the *super attribute* of increased *Strength*. He gained this by entering the mystic flame of a hidden temple of Ra in the Land of the Dead. Because a fire gave him his strength, he has the fatal flaw of suffering a wound whenever he gets hit with something cool enough to quench fire (of course he also loses his enhanced *Strength*). He regains his power when freed of his condition for a full minute (six rounds). Water is the obvious means of triggering this flaw, but the chemicals inside a fire extinguisher will do just as well.

The Swordsman's weapon is a gizmo built like an old-time khopesh, but with a lethal addition. In addition to its usual damage, the sword will cause an electric shock of damage value 16 to anyone who touches it (if touching uninsulated metal, such as with some metal armors or riding a motorcycle, increase the damage value to 18). The khopesh's pommel is a glowing blue stone the size of a small apple, with streaks of red shot all through it: the chunk of eternium used to power it.

### Edeinos Lakten Riders

#### DEXTERITY 11

Beast riding 14, dodge 14, missile weapons 13, unarmed combat 13

#### STRENGTH 11

#### TOUGHNESS 12

#### PERCEPTION 9

Language 10, tracking 10, trick 10

#### MIND 9

Test 11, willpower 10

#### CHARISMA 8

Taunt 9

#### SPIRIT 8

Faith (Keta Kalles) 9, intimidation 10

**Possibility Potential:** some (55)

**Natural Tools:** Claws (damage value STR +3/14), teeth (damage value STR +2/13), tail (damage value STR)

**Equipment:** 5 hrokt spears (damage value STR + 3/19), sack

**Note:** The edeinos warriors are currently affected by the following miracles: *Heightened Dexterity* (adds +2 to all *Dexterity*-based actions)

### Ra's Swordsman

#### DEXTERITY 12

Beast riding 13, dodge 16, fire com-

bat 13, long jumping 14, melee weapons 16, running 14, unarmed combat 14

#### STRENGTH 13

Climbing 14, lifting 16

#### TOUGHNESS 12

#### PERCEPTION 10

Evidence analysis 12, find 13, first aid 13, language (English) 12, land vehicles 12, trick 14

#### MIND 13

Medicine 14, science 14, survival 15, test 14, weird science 15, willpower 14

#### CHARISMA 6

Taunt 11

#### SPIRIT 11

Intimidation 14, reality 15

**Possibilities:** 12

**Equipment:** .45 Colt (damage value 16, range 3-10/15/40, ammo 7), electro-khopesh (damage value STR +6/22, electrical shock damage value 16, Tech 27, TOU 21)

**Special Power:** *Super attribute* — Increased Strength (16)

**Inclination:** Evil

**Goals:** To destroy this plant for daring to send arms to the pharaoh's foes, and as quickly as possible, so he can go home. To get out of the presence of that buffoon Baruk Kaah as soon as possible.

**Description:** A lithe but powerful black-haired man, with dark skin, Ra's Swordsman is extremely confident of his ability to handle people, with a confidence born of superior fighting ability. This confidence prevents the Swordsman from being as subtle as he should be.

### Lakten

#### DEXTERITY 12

Dodge 14, flight 14, maneuver, unarmed combat 13

#### STRENGTH 9

#### TOUGHNESS 12

#### PERCEPTION 7

#### MIND 6

#### CHARISMA 4

Taunt (11)

#### SPIRIT 4

Intimidation (6)

**Possibilities:** none

**Natural Tools:** Beak (damage value STR +5/14), talons (damage value STR +6/15), wings (speed value 12)

## The Tharkoldu Appear

During the chaos of the battle, the three Tharkoldu techno-demons fly into the middle of the town, headed straight for the factory. Their very appearance will be enough to panic the townspeople and Victorians, although they will continue to fight on.

It is preferable for the Tharkoldu to march right by the Storm Knights and into the factory. Between Ra's Swordsman and the edeinos, it's also very possible.

### Techno-Demon

#### DEXTERITY 12

Dodge 16, energy weapons 16, fire combat 14, flight 17 (20), melee weapons 14 (17 defense), missile weapons 14, stealth 13, unarmed combat 17 (20)

#### STRENGTH 16

Lifting 18

#### TOUGHNESS 16 (21)

#### PERCEPTION 10

Alteration magic 15, divination magic 15, find 14 (17), first aid 11, land vehicles 12, tracking 14, trick 12

#### MIND 13

Apportation magic 16, conjuration magic 16, test 17, willpower 17

#### CHARISMA 9

Persuasion 11, taunt 13

#### SPIRIT 13

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 18, intimidation 18

**Possibilities:** 12

**Arcane Knowledges:** folk +3, entity +3, inanimate forces +2, living forces +2

**Spells:** *Astral self*, *awaken*, *captive send*, *corpse keep*, *monkey form*, *pop*, *slave send*, *telepathy*

**Natural Tools:** bite (damage value STR +2/18), talons (non-cybered limb damage value STR +3/19), wing strike (unarmed combat to hit, damage value 23), wings (flight speed 10)

**Equipment:** Nanocord, wind-sniffer (+3 *find/Perception*), balance-wires (+3 *acrobatics* and other agility-based actions), interdermal plate (*armor value* TOU +5/21), cyber-enhanced talons (damage value STR +5/21), cyberwings (+3 to push for *flight*, +3 to lift-





ing while flying), life cyber, 3-slot chipholder, Res-14/Alph lasers (damage value 25). Cyber value 16.

After the Tharkoldu have been inside the factory for a few minutes (they generated high enough *Mind* totals to survive the occult ward), the Storm Knights should enter to see them in the machinery area making final adjustments on a large, round explosive device. Obviously they intend to use it to destroy the factory.

If the Storm Knights engage them in combat, allow about three rounds before the Tharkoldu stop, look at each

other, and say, "Do you smell it... that scent. Something is here." Then, three huge tentacles come bursting through the floor, grabbing the Tharkoldu. If the Storm Knights are in the area, have them make a *dodge* total of 14 or take damage value 14 from flying concrete as the floor is ripped apart.

The Tharkoldu are crushed by the tentacles (damage value 25) and slammed to the ground (damage value 16). At this point, have the Storm Knights generate one last *Perseverance* total; if successful, increase their total by +3.

Roll to generate damage values to determine how badly the Tharkold techno-demons are injured. If they survive, Dagarathov may attempt to take over their minds, or they may temporarily ally with the Storm Knights to defeat the creature (and then kill the Storm Knights at their convenience). If the Tharkoldu are seriously injured, they will simply cut the timer on the explosive to one minute and attempt to leave the factory. The explosive does damage value 27, and has a blast radius of 50 meters (enough to take out the whole factory).



## The Creature Emerges

Dagarathov has finally decided to take action against those who threaten his new lair. The creature pulls itself up out of the hole in the floor, with one simple objective: to kill everyone in the factory, and then return to the gate and Orrorsh.

### Dagarathov

#### DEXTERITY 13

Dodge 14, maneuver 14, unarmed combat 16

#### STRENGTH 22

Lifting 24

#### TOUGHNESS 21

#### PERCEPTION 10

Alteration magic 12, find 12, tracking 10, trick (16)

#### MIND 9

Conjuration magic 16, test 14

#### CHARISMA 6

Taunt (18)

#### SPIRIT 8

Faith (Orrorsh) 13, intimidation 18, reality 14

Possibilities: 2 per Storm Knight

Natural Tools: Tentacles (damage value STR +3/25)

Spells: *Forget*, *suggestion*, *summoning*

Arcane Knowledges: entity +2, folk +2

Powers: Control, Elemental Alteration (mist)

Corruption Value: 15

Fear Rating: 2

Perseverance DN: 15

Weakness: Runes blessed by a priest and wielded by one of the faithful, *severe weakness* to sunlight

True Death: Ritual of Flame



## Control

Dagarathov's power is a three-point power. It has a value of *Mind*+20, and an effective range of 8 (40 meters). This power allows the horror to take complete control of anyone within its range by beating the victim's *Mind*. The power allows the creature to control more than one person at a time, but the power roll must be then made using the Many-on-One power of people being controlled. If the power roll is failed, everyone under the beast's control may make another *Mind* roll to escape the horror's control. The power may only be used on an individual once per day.

## Forget

**Axiom Level:** 11  
**Skill:** alteration/folk 14

**Backlash:** 12  
**Difficulty:** 14  
**Effect Value:** 23  
**Bonus Number to:** effect

**Range:** 8 (40 meters)  
**Duration:**  
**Cast Time:** 18 (one hour)  
**Manipulation:** none

This *focused* spell, causes the victim to forget whatever they witnessed for a time period equal to the spell's effect value (10 hours). When the spell is cast, compare the effect value to the target's *Mind*; if the result points exceed the victim's *Mind*, they will forget what has transpired.

## Suggestion

**Axiom Level:** 11  
**Skill:** alteration/folk 14

**Backlash:** 13  
**Difficulty:** 12  
**Effect Value:** 20  
**Bonus Number to:** duration

**Range:** 8 (40 meters)  
**Duration:** 18 (one hour)  
**Cast Time:** 18 (one hour)  
**Manipulation:** none

This *focused* spell may be cast on a particular individual only once per week. Dagarathov has constructed it

so that only he may cast it. When cast, compare the effect value to the victim's *Mind*; if the result points equal or exceed the victim's *Mind*, the caster may plant a post-hypnotic suggestion consisting of up to ten words, to be implemented when a "triggering action" occurs. When the action occurs, the victim will mindlessly follow the suggestion for the spell's duration (this was used on Blake—"When someone talks of strange things at factory kill them.")

## Summoning

**Axiom Level:** 13  
**Skill:** conjuration/entity 19

**Backlash:** 14  
**Difficulty:** 16  
**Effect Value:** 28  
**Bonus Number to:** effect

**Range:** 5 (10 meters)  
**Duration:** 5 (10 seconds)  
**Cast Time:** 12 (four minutes)  
**Manipulation:** none





This spell opens up a gateway between wherever Dagarathov is and the home dimension of the aarkcinos. If successful, it pulls one of the creatures through: compare the effect value to the target's largest physical attribute; if the result points exceed its *Toughness*, the creature has been pulled through. Dagarathov has designed the spell so that only it may use it.

### The Lair

Dagarathov's lair lies directly below the Seisaku arms factory, close enough to allow him to control workers while they are within the plant, but removed from the prying eyes of outsiders. The cave leading into the various areas is

circular, about three meters in diameter, carved directly into the rock.

The Storm Knights may enter the lair under several different circumstances: during a preliminary investigation of the plant (probably sometime during Act Three), or after Dagarathov has attacked the techno-demons and Storm Knights in Act Four.

**2. Pile of Bones** This room has the stench of death, as the aarkcinos have brought several victims to this chamber. There are several distinct skeletons, including a young child (once Donnie Shears), a man and a woman. These disappearances were linked to the edeinos and biker raids, so no one even suspected that they might have been killed and brought here.

**3. Aarkcinos Lair** The Aarkcinos that Dagarathov has summoned are in hibernation in this chamber. He can summon the smaller creatures (encountered at McCreedy's house) from hibernation, activating them in two minutes. The larger creature in the prologue is an Aarkcino Prince, and needs five minutes to awaken and act after hibernation.

### Aarkcino Prince

#### DEXTERITY 14

Dodge 16, flight 17, maneuver 15, unarmed combat 17

#### STRENGTH 15

#### TOUGHNESS 16

#### PERCEPTION 10

Find 12, tracking 13, trick (17)

#### MIND 8

Test 12

#### CHARISMA 5

Taunt (14)

#### SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 19

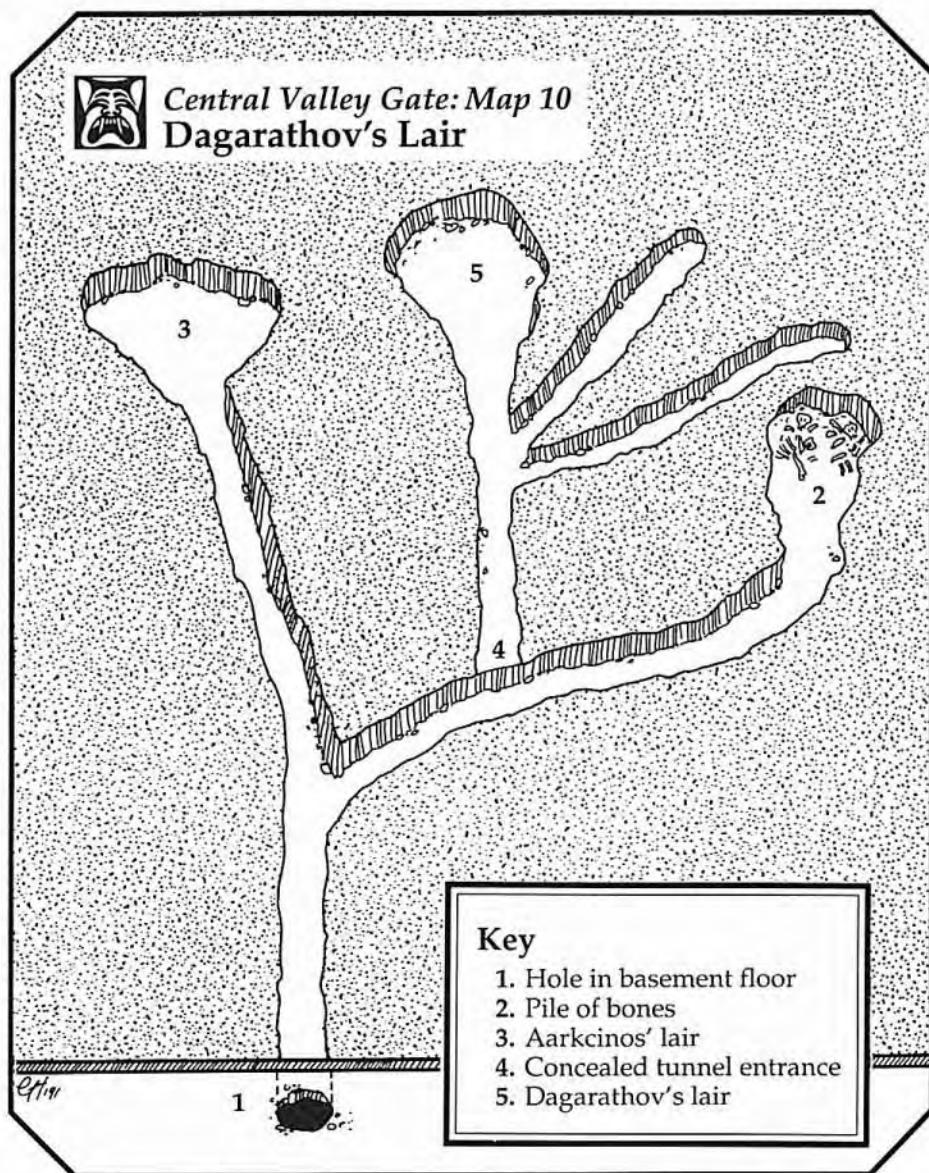
Possibilities: 4

**Natural Tools:** Talons (damage value STR +4/19), armored hide (armor value TOU +5/21), wings (speed value 15), acidic blood (damage value 14 — anyone within one meter of a creature that takes a wound is splattered with the blood)

**Special Abilities:** Illusion (Aarkcino Princes can generate an illusion at a range of 50 meters. The base disbelief value is 14, but non-princes may not add to the disbelief value)

**Description:** Aarkcino Princes stand nearly eight feet tall, and strongly resemble demons, with huge wings, incredibly sharp talons on the ends of their appendages and an evil appearance. They are a deep red in color, with glowing orange eyes.

**4. Concealed Tunnel Entrance** This concealed entrance to Dagarathov's lair appears to simply be more of the same rough-hewn rock of the tunnel. Have each Storm Knight make a *Perception* check against a difficulty of 14; anyone who succeeds notices a slight crack in the wall, indicating the outline of the entrance. The sliding rock requires a *Strength* total of 14 to open if going into the lair (a total of 10 will suffice when leaving the lair).





**5. Dagarathov's Lair** This lair is simple rough-hewn rock, in a chamber about eight meters across. There is nothing of interest in the lair, although the scent of Dagarathov, a foul sulfuric odor, permeates the entire chamber.

## Conclusion

With the bikers crushed, the Tharkoldu stopped, the terror of Orrorsh cast out and the edeinos properly humbled, there is no longer any need for the Victorians to stay in California.

With the comradeship that has just been forged in battle, this adventure means that the Storm Knights now have strong links with friendly forces in Orrorsh. Brigadier Cunningham will assure everyone that a strong Victorian garrison will be maintained at the gate in Orrorsh until it collapses of its own accord (i.e. — the spell's duration ends), in a few days.

The citizens of Redside will continue to operate the plant. Since this plant sells weapons to Storm Knights as well as military forces, this place would be an excellent spot for meeting new characters during shopping trips.

As mentioned in Act Three, the Storm Knights have many interesting options for using the information gleaned from the Kanawa computer files. Going public can mean public humiliation if things go wrong, as well as possible hostile action by corrupt government officials. Either way, the Storm Knights can be assured a long, eventful series of adventures in the future.

Finally, the Knights have the opportunity to frustrate Operation False Crusade. They don't have to get more involved in this than simply warning authorities around the world (the computer maps also show the safe houses where the explosives and agents are waiting already), and Sam could do that much on his own. If they want to, however, the Knights could get per-

sonally involved in one or more places — this operation is several months away, after all. Knights with a sardonic sense of humor may even, after warning the remaining temples in Nippon Tech, send an anonymous message to 3327, telling him they've uncovered a nefarious plot to blow up temples in his own realm, and they just knew he'd be thrilled to know they've foiled it. An interesting question is whether or not to inform Jean Malraux of what 3327 had planned for him. Handing out such information might be a useful bargaining tool later on, for securing the release of captured colleagues. It might also persuade Malraux to pull the same stunt on 3327 that that High Lord had planned for him.

## Act Awards

The Knights should receive six Possibilities for defeating the bikers and optants. They should receive another two Possibilities if they stop Opera-





tion False Crusade, and three more if they were able to use the True Death of Dagarathov. They should receive another 4-6 (depending on their play) for the adventure as a whole.

## Interlude

The Storm Knights didn't know how to take the meeting with Delphi Council Representative Anderson. He refused to answer any questions about Operation False Crusade, but smiled, and said, "Thank you for your efforts. We have top agents working on this. We couldn't have done it without you."

"But who is working on this? How can we help stop this?" one of the Storm Knights asks.

"Not to worry. We have experts working on this ..."

Cut to a bridge over a river in downtown Houston. Anderson is holding in his hands a binder labeled, "Report on False Crusade." Carelessly, he flings

it over the bridge, it hits the water, and slowly sinks, never to be seen again ...

## Stacks

This section covers suggestions for several subplots which come from the Drama Deck in the *Torg Rulebook*:

**The Martyr Card:** This card could be used at many different times in the course of this adventure, provided the Storm Knight's death is heroic and worthwhile.

**The Nemesis Card:** There are several possibilities here. Harris and his friends are a good possibility, particularly if they escape Redside and are forced to wander Core Earth as exiles due to their failure to protect Kanawa's secrets. The Brute Brothers are another good prospect, with their vendetta coming to a head in the biker assault on Redside. Of course, the techno-demons or Dagarathov make fine continuing villains.

**The Romance Card:** For male Storm Knights, Janet and Sally are possible prospects, though in Sally's case, it will be a hopeless cause, since she is so in love with Tony. If the Storm Knights do stop by at Redside from time to time to buy weapons and ammunition and meet with fellow heroes, then Janet can be kept in the campaign as a recurring character. For female Knights, Harris will deliberately try to seduce a female Knight, as part of his cover. Tony provides the same problems for females that Sally does for males. Sam is another likely prospect. In addition, there is also the possibility of a quick encounter with one of the townspeople (which can be easily inserted during Act Two or Three).

**The Personal Stake Card:** If this card is played around Act One, it will develop that the Storm Knight in question, if a Core Earther, has friends and/or relatives living in Redside. This makes a good combination with the *Martyr Card*, as it provides more motivation for the Storm Knight's heroic sacrifice.





## CHECK LIST

May 1992 will mark the second anniversary of the release of *TORG: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars* and what a difference two years can make. Almost thirty *TORG* titles have already been released with another dozen and a half planned for 1992, including three short story compilations.

*TORG* is also available in French and will soon appear in German, with negotiations near completion for Spanish and Japanese versions.

"The Possibility Wars rage on..."

With a little prompting from our public, we thought that it was high time for us to do a *TORG* title inventory, including the titles you can expect to see in the first part of 1992.



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# CENTRAL VALLEY GATE

by Gregory W. Detwiler and Bill Smith

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An Adventure for



Roleplaying the Possibility Wars™

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Fantasy/Games

*Central Valley Gate* is an adventure for use with *Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars*. You need the boxed game to play. This adventure is for veteran characters. While the material in this supplement is set in *Torg's* Earth of the Near Now, many of the situations and adventure ideas can be incorporated into other game systems.

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