

The MEP Codex

The Gamer's Guide to the MEP Light System

Issue #1

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Blitzfehl Campaign

History of the Konigreich / Peritium War: Part 1

"To add to the border dispute, the raids, and the murders of our citizens in Tyrantview, Koenigreich's arrogance and meddling has caused the deaths of over twenty million of our citizens. They have caused an outbreak of civil unrest of which the likes have never been seen on Cyberia.

They have forced us to kill our own brethren, destroy our own cities, and have nearly collapsed our economy. As we pick up the tattered remnants of our decaying empire, look to the west my people. Look and see who has done this to you. Look at your fathers, your mothers, your children who lay lifeless, scourged by this damnable virus set upon us by the tyrants of the west, an obvious bid for global dominance.

This we must stop, for the sake of the Empire, for the sake of Cyberia. Not one of us who stand here today stand free from the torment unleashed by our villainous enemy. Not one of us, worker or Emperor have not suffered. How much longer do you desire to suffer? The Empire will not stand idly by as these mongrels send the remnants of our society smashing down upon us, the society that we have built together, as a people, with our own labors. This attack will not go unpunished. I can hear the demon's beckon call to the west taunting and laughing in vain of our anguish. Come brothers, let us quell the laughing!"

- General Hyperwing X, Supreme Commander of the Peritium Aero-Combat Force

Calendar Note

Battles often refer to dates. The Cyberian year is set up for 10 40-day months. Notations, such as the beginning of Defense of Tyrantview (8:18:58), is read as the eighth month, eighteenth day, in the year fifty-eight.

The War

Twenty-five years ago, the city of Tyrantview bordered the Koenigreich Imperium on the Peritium side. Settlers went there in search of energy and found a wealth of ore. The Peritium economy bustled. The Koenigreich Imperium tried to cash in on this, suspecting that part of the ore mined was on their side of the border. As diplomatic negotiations failed, they attempted to persuade the city's officials to annex themselves to the Imperium.

When their attempts fell short, Koenigreich dispatched centurions and saboteurs to the area and ran light raids against the city, claiming that parts of the mineral reserves mined belonged to the Imperium as justification. The empire retaliated by sending in guardsmen and centurions to quell the raids. Shortly thereafter, the Ion Storm, which spawned Malleum Ex Mentus occurred. With tension running high, and the Peritium generals itching for action, when the review panel pointed the finger at Koenigsreich, everything fell into place and the powder keg exploded. The Empire gave the green light for full-scale war. Using the recent events as propaganda to rally the people, the military got unexpected results. Overnight, they turned a whole society of once peaceful, intelligent beings into raging warmongers that would rest only when the enemy had toppled. What erupted was a bitter war that is still being fought today.

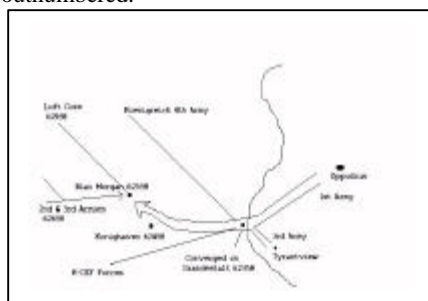
The Early Years

The focus of the first year of the war was the most likely place, Tyrantview. The first campaign, dubbed Blitzfehl, took place as soon as the Emperor declared war. Lasting only three weeks (7:23:58-8:15:58) and ultimately resulting in failure for the fired up Peritium Empire, the Blitzfehl set up the defense of Tyrantview, a historical battle.

A vast army from the Empire swept across the land before Koenigreich could respond. Meeting the Emperor's 1st and 3rd armies, near the town of Grandestalt, the Koenigreich 4th army and a detachment from the Koenigreich Centurion Elite Forces (K-CEF) saw the fury of their enemy as they were routed time and time again until the 2nd and 3rd armies reinforced them.

The Peritium main force had left behind, in its wake, the utterly destroyed towns of Grandestalt, Konighaven, and Blau Morgan. Staled on the countryside, they, for the first time, felt the force of the Koenigreich Luft Core, who's bombers cut gaping swaths through their lines as they attempted to dig in and hold their ground.

Tattered and unorganized, the Peritium main force was met by remnants of the 4th and the K-CEF from their weak north. Positioning to defend, they shifted too many resources to the north and were unexpectedly hit head on by the lingering 2nd and 3rd armies from the west. Before they knew it, they were on the defensive in their own territory fighting to protect Tyrantview and were critically outnumbered.



While Koenigreich suffered more losses, the campaign was considered a failure, as the Peritium military did not achieve their objective of obtaining territory. Due to the incredible losses at the hands of the Koenigreich Luft

Core, the battle ushered in a new era for the Peritium Aero-Core, a division that the high command had previously not taken seriously.

Blitzfehler Campaign - Loses

	Koenigreich	Peritium
Military		
Dead	437,000	396,000
Wounded	315,000	418,000
Captured	28,000	112,000
Civilian		
Dead	281,000	N/A
Wounded	408,000	N/A
Total Loses	1,469,000	926,000

The Defense of Tyrantview

After the Blitzfehler was declared over, confrontation seemed to come to a standstill, as the powers shifted their pieces on the board setting up for the next move.

Three days later, on the morning of 8:18:58, the mining town of Tyrantview woke to the sounds of battle as reinforcements arrived to assist the stalled and waiting Koenigreich forces. Nearly every able citizen was armed, as weapons became available. The entire SDF forces of the city also dug in, often fighting close quarters with the Koenigreich invaders. No reinforcements were dispatched, as the reconnaissance noted heavy enemy movement from the north. The force available at Tyrantview was all Peritium had. Once the fighting commenced, it remained a constant blare for 73 days.

Two weeks in, the Koenigreich Luft Core (KLC) sent in a wing of fifty fighter-bombers to help bring the battle to a swift conclusion. The Peritium Aero-Core (PA-C) responded by sending a detachment, half the size of the enemy's to counter them. The PA-C lost every plane within thirty minutes of arrival, only downing three enemy fighters-bombers.

By the fourth week, the Peritium forces had suffered heavy casualties and had lost half the city to the enemy.

The Shade For Soul Axis™

Breeding grounds of the Taint, the Shade is the area between the shadows, where the most foul of licentiousness resides. It is here where one loses the quest for Ascension. It is here where one loses his soul.

Alive... aware... evil... the shade is the transfiguration of evil spilled from the mortal realm into Limbo, of deeds of the spirits, of the innate evil that lurks within all. It hides, between the murky, faded shadows of Limbo, building on the taint that others seethe as they lose sight of their quest.

When the taint begins to consume a soul, the Shade comes, stretching its formless figure from the depths of shadows devouring those who have lost the quest. The shade looms over the character as a heavy shadow. 1d6 spirits previously captured by the Shade will attack the character, attempting to bring him down to zero points. If they succeed, the character is captured by the shade and becomes its servant, seeking to capture other souls of the licentious. If the character manages to defeat the Shade's minions, the Shade recedes, cowering back into the shadows, until the next point of taint is scored. Then comes the test again, until finally, the soul will fail and be devoured.

The Gnugutl

A hideous demon, the Gnugutl feeds primarily on the souls of the innocent that have been trapped in Limbo. Usually those of children, the Gnugutl appears as an incredibly tall, slender bronze-green figure. Its limbs are long, lanky, and flail about in a friendly, almost playful manner. Its head spherical, the Gnugutl's face is reminiscent of an anime character; friendly eyes that turn to an inverted half-oval when it blinks, thin lips that smile a wide, flat smile that stretches across its face.

Gnugutls do not speak, instead they use body language for simple communication. They are playful, quickly earning the trust of the innocent in a kind and loving manner. Friendly scratches with its finger under the chin, licks on the face with a long, impossibly wide tongue, smiles and warm gestures... then it strikes.

Retaining its friendly features, its mouth becomes a gaping maw, filled with long razor sharp teeth. Its fingers become sharp blades. It gnashes and flails its arms about, usually attempting to grasp its victim in its powerful jaws while ripping it to shreds with its clawed fingers. All the time, retaining an eerie friendliness about it. When the attack is over, it becomes friendly again, not seeking to harm others around it. It becomes playful again, as though nothing happened. It will continue to play with others, then leave, full of its feast. Any who seek to harm it after or during an attack will be attacked by it as well.

Gnugutl Demon: Level-6, Points- 17 Essences- Anger (N), Chaos (N), Charity (P), Ignorance (N), Innocence (NL), Kinship (NL), Savagery (N).

Vampires of Placidhaven

Vampires have stalked the lands of Placidhaven for ages, but it wasn't until the coming of Kohrah that their numbers soared. Most vampires in Placidhaven hail from the northern foothills of the Dragon's Spine. There Kohrah established a kingdom, literally consuming the human population overnight, sparing only those who would be siphoning stock.

The Sons of Kohrah are by far the most powerful sect of vampires in the lands. Most leave the protection of Kohrah's domain, seeking food or to expand the sect's holdings. A few have even attempted to establish their own kingdoms, most of which have been slain by locals, hunters, or members of Kohrah's elite. The most successful is the Brotherhood of Cassius, who have consumed the town of Kragmere and the surrounding countryside near the Doomcrest Region. Cassius is one of Kohrah's first victims. He was detrimental in Kohrah's rise to power and still remains loyal to his sovereign. Because of this, he has been granted immunity for the time being, and is often used as a pawn against Kohrah's enemies.

The third most powerful vampire sect is a small group known as the Erstgeentzwenien, all of who claim the lineage of Gangermein Volkerschalt, the oldest living vampire in Placidhaven. For fear of being hunted to extinction, the sect has become nomadic and has no lands to speak of, save Volkerschalt Castle hidden deep within the Kree Mountains. They prefer to travel the land in small groups feeding on the weak and manipulating the powerful.

Erstgeentzwenien openly denounces the sovereignty of Kohrah, as well as the Brotherhood of Cassius, and are currently engaged in a bitter war with the sects. Erstgeentzwenien is small in numbers but has by far the most dangerous combatants, all of whom are cautious but furious, having utilized the savagery that most of their vampire cousins succumb to in combat. In a most recent battle, five of the sect's elite raided Kragmere, killing fifty of Cassius' minions and managed to escape with three surviving.

Erstgeentzwenien are dangerous and well disciplined. Fresh members are selected carefully. All potential members must be well trained in the combat arts, as well as very intelligent. Erstgeentzwenien never recruits the unwilling, as the possibility of betrayal lingers in those who are forced to become vampires. All members of Erstgeentzwenien are completely loyal to Volkerschalt, and once Erstgeentzwenien, a member is never allowed to sever his ties with the sect.

The three above sect compose nearly 85% of all the vampires in Placidhaven. Most PC vampires played in Placidhaven™ will be from one of these three sects, although there are over one hundred other sects spread across Placidhaven, ranging from eight to two hundred in size.

The vampire sects are ruled by their master vampires, Kohrah, Cassius, Volkerschalt respectively. Their structures, however, are reasonably similar. The master rules all, his lieutenants command their own sects, which they rule within the master's restraints, each performing as they see fit or as the master commands. The masters, each straining with his own, often allow the sect lieutenants free reign, with the exceptions of covenant rules (maximum number of vampires in the sect, honor codes, secret rituals, etc.). However, when the master gives orders, all lieutenants obey them immediately and rarely without recourse.

Sons of Kohrah

The Humans: Those worthy of my legionary...my slaves. The plump...my siphoning stock. The tainted... damned. Eventually, as

our logistics are mastered, the human race, and all other sects will be unified under the banner of one, the master Kohrah.

Sect Member Templates created using Legion of the Damned supplement.

Sect Member Template

Required Talents: none

Vampire Powers: Ability to Turn, Hypnotic Gaze, Bat Form, Telepathy, Superhuman Strength.

Weaknesses: Silver, Holy Water / Crosses / Garlic, Wood / Fire.

Numbers: 14,000

Sub-Sects: 319

Av. # per Sub-Sect: 42; Kohrah's personal sect has over 800.

Brotherhood of Cassius

The Humans: Foolish to think they can challenge the fury and savagery of the Brotherhood and our allied cousins. All shall surely feel the power of our wrath in the end. Of more than this, it is useless to speak.

Sect Member Template

Required Talents: one Weapon Training, Intelligence.

Vampire Powers: Ability to Turn, Latent Psychic, Wolf Form, Earthmeld, Superhuman Reflexes, Shadow Blink.

Weaknesses: Silver, Holy Water / Crosses / Garlic, Wood / Fire, Hideous Appearance.

Numbers: 3,000

Sub-Sects: 97

Av. # per Sub-Sect: 28; Cassius' personal sect has over 300.

Erstgeentzwenien

The Humans: cattle, nothing more, however, in very threatening numbers. Take only from their pride when we MUST feed, otherwise steer clear of their civilizations whenever possible, for they will eventually spell out doom. The least they know of us, or our presence, the more likely our sect's survival when that day arrives.

"Our way is of the wise and temperate, this is how we shall concede victory."

Sect Member Template

*Must be of third level before accepted.

Required Talents: Weapon Training: Sword, Tracking, Intelligence, Intuition.

Vampire Powers: Hypnotic Gaze, Mist Form, Telepathy, Superhuman Strength, Superhuman Reflexes, Manipulate Shadows, Immortal, Regenerate, Resist Savagery, Shadow Blink.

Weaknesses: Holy Water / Crosses / Garlic, Wood / Fire, Running Water, Earthbed, Magic.

Numbers: 500

Sub-Sects: 36

Av. # per Sub-Sect: 12; Volkerschalt's personal sect is composed of 63 vampires, AKA Konigshorde.

Recent Events

Kohrah scouts on the northern tip of his empire have rumored an alliance between several scattered sects. Scout units that have moved into the area, attempting to ascertain the seriousness of such rumors, have not returned.

According to Kohrah, it is probable that they may make a bid for power. Risking a great vampire war, he has decided dispatch a total of thirty sub-sects to the north to annihilate the threat. The next issue will focus on this move.

A skirmish of annihilation between five Erstgeentzwenien and Cassius' western domain has erupted into a demonic bloodbath. Cassius' western domain is sparsely populated. There are a total of nine sub-sects that dominate the area.

Septem et Gerenebreum: the largest sub-sect in the region. Composed of 73 members. The leader of the sect is a fifth level vampire named Masebrak.

Gerenebreum holds the ruling seat of the west. All other sub-sects prefer to look to Masebrak for leadership during the skirmish, with the exception of Masebrak's rival, Lasette, a fourth level vampire, the ruler of the Jules Deneau sub-sect, the second largest sect in the region, numbered with 48 members.

If it were not for loyalty to Cassius, these two sub-sect would have went to war long ago. There have been a number of small skirmishes between the two, totaling in 10 members perishing at the hand of revenge strikes. With the Erstgeentzwenien threat to the region, it is unknown as to whether or not Lasette may attempt to use the situation to place his sub-sect on the ruling seat of the west.

The other sects are ruled by second and third level vampires with the following members; 32, 27, 22, 19, 16, and 12. The total number of Cassius' minions in the nine western sub-sects total 249.

Next Issue of the MEP Codex The Vampire Wars: A Bid for Power

DemonGrin Alliance- A psychic vampire, known only as The Praetor, has managed to combine the powers of eighteen vampire sects to from the Demongrin Alliance.

Gapho's Wanderlust- Doomsday cult seeking the Gapho Bloodstone.

New Templates

Dreamcaster

A vision... There are those who have dreamed about a being they call DReY'M. They say that this entity put them through some sort of severe "test" within their dream, and when they succeeded, it gave them the power to project the persona they developed during that dream-test into the physical world. No one knows just what this DReY'M's motives are, not even the Dreamcasters. Whenever Dreamcasters have asked about their purpose on subsequent dreams where they encounter their benefactor, DReY'M merely smiles, and tells them to think about how their powers affect everyone they encounter, and then fades away.

The only other thing that DReY'M has mentioned, is to beware the minions of MAER. Many Dreamcasters believe that this MAER entity also creates Dreamcasters, but evil counterparts to their own liking.

Since Dreamcasters' powers come more-or-less from their minds, their physical form is unimportant. In fact, a large majority of

the people who are Dreamcasters are physically below average. It isn't unheard of for a Dreamcaster to be a paraplegic, over 65 years of age, or even as young as 8 years old. When they project their Dreamcaster from their dream, it is always a being in its physical prime.

The powers manifested by the Dreamcasters depend on what they dreamed during DReY'M's test. They can be a combination of powers, magic, or psionics. They have a tendency to have dramatic expressions that accompany the use of their powers (i.e. those that can fly tend to leave a trail of sparkling stars behind them when they do so. Even Psionic powers seem to have a physical manifestation -- a person using Telepathy may have rings of energy radiate from their head, or a translucent manifestation of some sort of totem animal overlap their head, and their target's head). Players are encouraged to devise some sort of physical manifestation for each of their powers.

It isn't the character's physical body that transforms, but rather their consciousness is transferred to a new form that manifests in the real world anywhere within 50 ft. of their sleeping body. To use their Dreamcaster, the character MUST be asleep. Fortunately, they have also gained the ability to drop asleep at a moment's notice. It takes a base time of 5 rounds to fall asleep, -1 round per level.

While asleep, you have no perception of your mundane body. It is totally helpless. Medical personnel will most likely believe that you are in a coma. However, if your sleeping form takes damage equal to or exceeding ½ your points, your Dreamcaster persona will know and feel compelled to return to your body (physically or by dispersing and waking up). If your sleeping form is moved, the Dreamcaster will be unable to find it physically, however, your consciousness can always return unerringly to your sleeping form when the Dreamcaster dissipates. The Dreamcaster persona may appear however it chooses.

Psiducer

The Psiducer is a psychic who uses her (or his) abilities for pleasure and power. The Psiducer seeks pleasurable experiences through manipulation of others, as well as, wealth and power. The Psiducer is always looks high class. The mind is great but the body looks the best. The Psiducer dresses quite elegantly, favoring silk clothing above all others (some sages claim that silk helps channel psionic power). The Psiducer is concerned with her own needs, which mainly revolves around the pleasures of the mind and body and most Psiducers will pursue this avenue to the end. As part of the Psiducer's vanity, she strives for large quantities of material wealth and will use her powers of seduction to get it. Having money brings power, which keeps the Psiducer's lifestyle pleasing.

Required Psychic Powers: Influence Thoughts (found in this issue), Dominate, Suggestion.

Suggested Powers: Insert Memory, Mind Wipe, Alter Features, Alter Aura, Read Aura, Alter Memory, Danger Sense.

New Spells

Forgery (1) With this spell, the mage is able to perfectly duplicate the any style of handwriting of which he has a sizable sample. The forgery is good enough to fool even the closest scrutiny, although it does radiate faint magic.

The mage merely casts the spell, and begins writing. His handwriting will perfectly match that of the sample, for the length of the spell's duration. Those watching the mage write will believe that the handwriting on the page is actually that of the mage, unless of course they witness the casting of the spell, which may make them rather suspicious.

Seduction (2) The mage may affect one individual of the opposite sexual orientation to become infatuated with the mage and willingly subject to all of his or her commands. That the victim has been seduced (magically or otherwise) will be readily apparent to those who make a successful perception check.

While under the enchantment, the victim will take as gospel everything the mage says, and will strive to protect and defend the mage at all times. If the spell is broken by another magic or by the will of the enchanter, however, the victim will remember everything and know that magic was involved.

Energy Beam (3) Fires a beam composed of magical light; scores +1 point per level of the mage.

Flu (3) This spell will cause the victim to get the flu, which will last $1d6 +$ the level of the wizard in days. Flu is very contagious: anyone within 3 feet of the victim will also get the flu. With subsequent victims, the flu is no longer contagious, however.

The flu reduces actions by one and -3 points for the duration of the spell. The flu will start $1d4$ hours after the victim has failed to make a successful roll.

Hesitate (1) This spell slows down the victim's reaction time, subtracting one from the initiative roll of each round the spell is in effect.

Insolence (2) This spell causes its victim to sound and appear crude, insulting and arrogant, in all that is said or done, to all observers. The victim, however, will not be aware that anything is amiss. While the general meaning of whatever is said will be the same, the illusion causes observers to see and hear a twisted version in which the speaker is insolent.

Additionally, such speech might not be tolerated at all in some situations (for example, automatic dismissal from a king's court, or perhaps even worse). Even if the target makes a successful roll, the spell will not be noticed.

If an observer has reason to believe that something is amiss, he gains $+1d$ bonus to a perception roll as an attempt to disbelieve. A successful roll indicates that magic is being used to alter the victim's actions.

Murder Weapon (2) Author: Geoffrey Edward Fagan The caster of this spell can check one weapon per round to determine if it was used to kill a specific corpse, of whom he has a blood sample.

Power Word, Attention (2)

Author: David E. Brooks Jr. This is an ancient spell of unknown origins that has been in common use for untold centuries. As the name implies, the utterance of *power word, attention* will get the attention of all regardless of any languages they may speak. It is the caster's responsibility to make use of the temporary situation, for the creatures affected by this spell will resume their normal activities within a single round. Repeated use of this spell in a short time span is poorly received in many (if not all) locales.

Revulsion (2) Author: Mario R. Borelli Successful casting of *revulsion* leaves the recipient disgusted to the point of nausea at any prospect of engaging in activities of any kind, no matter how minor, giving -1 turn per round. Lasts for $1d6$ rounds.

Dragon's Claws (1) The caster's hands become scaly and slightly enlarged with claws (like a dragon's). These claws score $+1$ point with a clawing attack. Because the claws and hands are so awkward, the caster may not use any weapons, or talents that require using his hands until the spell is either canceled or runs out.

Transparency (2) This spell makes any material transparent. Affects an area of 1 foot cubed per level of the caster. The strength and nature of the material is unchanged, it just becomes transparent. This spell does not work on living things.

Multi-Missile (2) This spell fires 1 bolt per every 2 levels of the caster, each scoring 2 points. The bolts can be fired at the same or at separate targets.

Know Direction (1) Becomes a living compass for a brief instant and can tell which way is north.

New Psychic Powers

Temprokinesis (4)

Temprokinesis is the ability to alter the temperature in the psionic's area. The range can be limited to an area no smaller than a single room (at least $15' \times 10'$). *NOTE: If the room is LESS THAN the above dimensions the power takes effect to these dimensions, even through walls!* There is no limit as to how hot or cold the psionicist can make the temperature go, however, he can only change the temperature up to 5 degrees per round. At the end of the power, the temperature changes back to normal at a rate of 5 degrees per round.

Fury Bolt (1) This power is a very general charge of psychic energy forced into a focused blast of invisible energy. The power is called Fury Blast because most people only seem to access this ability while angry and it usually is uncontrolled. Only a successful roll from an angry psychic will allow it to be used. May use it ONLY when the character is in dire situations and/or is antagonized to the point of shouting and pointing. Scores one point per level of the psychic.

Warmind (3) This power empties the user's mind of all thoughts save of those of the situation at hand, making him immune to distraction during combat. He has perfect focus and clarity of thought, and is thus able to react faster gaining $+1$ to initiative and $+1$ turn per round.

Induce Insanity (2) The victim is temporarily victimized (for the duration of the power) by the effects of insanity, caused by the mental manipulations of the psychic. The referee is to pick something specifically related to the situation. This is especially appropriate in instances of phobias.

False Stimulus (3) The psychic makes the target think that he is receiving sensory stimulus that he isn't. He thinks he is seeing, tasting, touching, smelling and / or hearing something that he isn't. While the properties can be changed somewhat, they do have limits. Nothing can be made to disappear (a person cannot become invisible or an explosion made not to be heard) and everything must remain within its general intensity.

For instance, a man could be made to look like an elf, but not a mouse, an explosion could be made to sound like a car with a bad muffler but not like an insect buzzing. More than one sense can be effected simultaneously per level of the psychic.

Influence Thoughts (3) Can subtly influence the thoughts of others, causing simple thoughts to enter their heads. This creates a "daydreaming" effect, which makes the victim pay very little attention to his surroundings. He is very relaxed and laid back. Anyone trying to sneak by him or pick his pockets may do so on a successful roll.

Sonickinesis (7) This psionic power allows the user to manipulate and control various aspects of sound.

Manipulate Sound Effects: Alters sound to that which the user wants. For example, the user could change a man's words to sound like a horn honking or a gun firing or could turn a sonic boom into the sound of a pin dropping. NOTE: cannot create a sonic boom using this aspect of the power, see below. Nor does this power allow the user to get rid of sound all together, the minimum decibel level is 10 while the maximum is 125.

Impervious to Sound: All sonic attacks and effects, including those of magical music or sonic boom effects are rendered useless against the person.

Sense Sound Waves: Is capable of detecting sound waves that are below the users normal threshold of hearing, such as dog whistles. This power can also be used to follow sound waves in the direction of their origin. Unfortunately, this can be confusing if attempted in an area where there is a great amount of echoing.

Sonic Wave Attack: This creates a wave of solid sound, which strikes the target like an invisible fist. The sonic wave is emitted as a scream from the user and is then amplified, thus only creatures with some form of spoken communications can use this aspect of the power. Scores +1 point per level of the psychic.

Under the Jester's Hat

A Case of Mistaken Identity

While chasing an ogre (the last of a band we had killed) into a cave we saw a shadowy shape we assumed was the ogre. After we hit it with a cone of frost we found out it was a baby gold dragon. Momma was not happy, what ensued was a running chase in which all but two characters perished in the flames. What happened to those two, well the swordsman (mine) fell to the ground trying to play dead (the dm's exact words were "big momma steps on yah trailing your impaled corpse like an embarrassing piece of toilet paper") The thief ducked into a convenient crevice (remember the ogre).

This incident remains in the lore of my group to this day. The party was adventuring in a large, creepy castle. They noticed what looked like an old man carrying a lantern coming straight for them. The brave paladin spoke up and ordered the figure to stop. When the creature didn't comply, the paladin hacked it to pieces. What was the creature? An old man with a lantern who was also a little deaf.

Our party was sent by the king to find retrieve his captain from the battlefield. Half way there we ran into him and escorted him home. That evening the king was killed - the captain we escorted through the guarded castle was a doppelganger. Needless to say we weren't paid for our services.

The players correctly identified their targets, but they never guessed that enemies could actually be smart.

The party, made up of fifth level characters, were hired by the local lord to clear out a kobold-infested cave system. Rather predictably, jeers of derision and cries of "They're only kobolds" came from the players' mouths. So in a way, they were right, but these kobolds were not your run of the mill "attack the players and fight to the death" type of critter. The caves themselves were a massacre, combining the best of pit traps, ranged weapons, tunnels too small for the players, and a variety of hit-and-run tactics from the kobolds themselves. The players, who used to be so fond of flaming oil, quickly discovered that giving was better than receiving, especially when doused in combustibles in a tunnel to narrow to roll around in. And then there were the times when a lone kobold could just be seen running around a corner, prompting a general charge into the inevitable ambush. Time and again, the players refused to see the threat that critters with a mere half hit die posed to them. After four expeditions, and the loss of 7 NPCs and three PCs, they decided never to say "ONLY

kobolds"again.

The moral of this tale: just because you know what type of monster you're up against, doesn't mean that they'll behave sensibly. This "low level threat" proved to be the bloodiest adventure the players ever had.

While during a tournament game GMed by a British fellow, we strolled into a large cave with a fountain in the center. The party nervously looked around, and the GM announced that the fountain had a "leak" in it. To his surprise, no one reacted. No one except the thief's player who declared that he was sticking his finger in the "leak".

The GM was dumbfounded and shaking his head he said, "Ok, it casts a 20th level fire ball at you." "WHAT??!?!", the players yelled. The thief was the loudest of those yelling.

"Yes, this "leak" is 20th level, so he can throw 20d6 fire balls," the GM explained. "A 20th level 'leak'?" the players asked, "What's that?" "A 'leak', a 'leak', you know, an undead wizard..." the GM explained. The player's suddenly realized what the GM was talking about - the fountain had liche not a leak in it. "Liche?! Ah, a liche!" the players yelled and quickly went into action. Talk about your language barriers! :)

"Kill first, ask questions later." This motto had taken me and my bloodthirsty comrades far in our hunt for undead creatures. Until... An anonymous tip led us to the "lair" of an extremely vicious vampire. Actually, it was a modest house in a densely populated urban area. After pounding a stake through the body of the sleeping "vampire", the blankets were pulled back to reveal the daughter of a local Baron's Captain of the Guard (a well-known, though quite unlucky lass- and definitely not a vampire). Following some creative sneaking (which involved the deaths of 5 or 6 other towns folk) we had smuggled the body to a temple where we had to give everything we owned to a sly cleric for a resurrection fee and vow of silence. After a few more judicious murders we returned to the sight of our original slaying (with a live, though bloody, young girl in a sack) to find the Captain of the Guard awake and waiting with friends. This was our retirement party. We have changed mottoes since then.

We were given the task of kidnapping a person, and bring him into a house. Blindfolded. The man offering the job to us looked a bit nervous, but what the heck, it paid good money.

During the kidnapping, we hosed down the people that were guarding him, using blitz maneuvers. We blindfolded him and were on our way (we had stocked up on grenades and military grade ammo before getting this far).

When we got to the place we were to get him, we went into a room with no lights turned on. We push the man inside, then turn on the lights. To our surprise 10+ people yelled SURPRISE! It was the kidnapped's birthday...

One of my friend's first RPG experiences was the following: he finds himself with a beautiful woman, and sees that half her face is peeling off, and she's been trying to kill him all night with poisoned drinks, and (only-just!) missed back-stabs. Eventually, he sees the half-peeling face, the poisoned knife she's wielding, and the ungodly Charm of Fiery Destruction around her neck. DM: She stabs at you with her knife! My friend: She's bad, right?

In one long-standing campaign, the players had gotten on the wrong side of a particularly powerful wizard. This wizard (named Syn) had the ability to cast morph self, and used it to good advantage.

His usual mode of attack was to find the party while they were in a public setting, a feast, an inn, on the street; then he would change into an innocent form such as a child, halfling, dog, etc. Once in close, he

would cancel the morph spell, and launch fireballs at the party, or steal the wizard's spellbook, or slay a friend the PC's had just left in the inn. Syn cared little for the lives of innocents, interested only in causing fear and hatred in the hearts of his enemies. Needless to say, the party was soon walking on eggshells. They showed an amazing amount of respect for even the most humble NPC; even attacking innocents, in the mistaken belief that it was their nemesis.

The Mages' Mistakes

10 spells that should not be.

Acid Trip

Detect Lightning Bolts (area: 5')

Explosive Familiar (it's *your* familiar)

Fiscal Projection

Fist of Flesh

Fleshskin (range: self)

Invisible Illusion

Know Own Alignment

Locate Self (tells you where you are, relative to your location)

Mildly Surprising Grasp

Traps

Taken in whole or part from various volumes of the Netbook of Traps

Bones, Everywhere Bones!

As the PC's walk down a hall, have walls spring up on all sides. Now have two panels in the ceiling open and bones drop out in massive numbers. Have some of the bones become skeletons. I find 20 in all works well to wear them down.

The Mysterious Footprints

The PC's come to an iron door that opens easily. Behind the door is an armory with many weapons hanging from racks all over the walls except for one spot directly opposite them. In the thick dust on the floor, a trail of footprints can be seen to lead to the bare patch on the wall... but not away from it. The players will obviously suspect a hidden door, but they couldn't be more wrong... If they step up to the wall, all the weapons in the room animate and attack them. They are rusty and easy to break. Luckily, the animated weapons fall to the ground once the PC's leave the room.

Magic Amulet

The PC's find a rune-carved amulet which on closer inspection (detect magic, etc.) is revealed to have magic powers. The power of the amulet is this: when the person wearing the amulet is in danger, the amulet heats up and glows. Unfortunately, after three rounds its second power is revealed; it blows up!

Top Plots

Taken in part or whole from the Netbook of Plots

The Mage's Lair

The PC's find a map to an abandoned underground lair - including some description of the resident of the lair. They recognize the resident and know that he is long dead (perhaps a high level Mage). The map details the caverns to a great extent (perhaps leaving out some key rooms). The map also neglects to mention the many traps set throughout the lair - or perhaps mentions one or two giving the PC's a false sense of security.

They are still around from the mage's days. Perhaps rodents, snakes, spiders as well. For the main villain, the MU is not dead, only very old and quite insane and sits quietly on his throne waiting to die (thus not such a formidable opponent). The mage's secret, he was a well-known realmwalker that unbecame. He still holds a very important

Haunted Steel item. However, since his unbecoming, he has forgotten that it is hidden somewhere within the lair. Although so memoir has been left telling that the item exists here, perhaps he'll use the PC's to help him find it only to turn on them when they do.

The Broken Idol

Strange ship docks at a village, word is sent to the villagers to pick up the captain, the mayor's half-brother and wandering-merchant who has been gone for many years. He is sick, very cold, and is clutching something in his hands. His hands cannot be pried apart without breaking his fingers, something the mayor would be very upset about.

Mayor puts his brother under guard in his house to be cared for appointing a PC to watch him. A rivalry would be a good thing to encourage here, because it makes the rest of the plot possible.

Word comes that someone has been killed in the village. PC's are sent to investigate. Discover several brutal murders. Chase the murderer around, path leads to the mayor's house.

While the PC's are out of the room, the rival searches through uncle traveler's clothes and finds something, half of a golden idol, and takes it to his room. Then he comes back, pretending nothing has happened. In the meantime, the murderer has snuck into the weary traveler's room, put out the lights, and is killing him. As the rival walks in and lights a candle to see what's going on. The murderer is a doppelganger that was looking for an idol that the traveler took.

The PC's come in about the same time that the rival is being ripped up by the murderer and join the battle. What happens after this is up to you, but the PC's will probably discover the half idol, should interrogate the rival, may want to find where the idol came from, may want to return it, and may have to deal with more attempts to recover the idol. The idol is a powerful magical item perhaps an ingredient in a world-shattering magical ritual.

The Alchemist

An alchemist hires the party to recover a shipment of supplies that was hijacked en route. If he doesn't get them back, he faces bankruptcy.

ASK GRANT

Reprinted from The Realmwalker's Codex and referring to the original Realwalkers RPG, now defunct, yet the idea behind the content remains intact.

This section exists so you, the gamer, can ask Grant Graves, Realwalkers' creator, any questions you might have about the game.

2 questions from slash62@hotmail.com

1. What happens when an alien character, (a green skinned demon with horns and pointy teeth,) goes to modern earth? I am thinking that the veil will cover that fact up and only some people will see this "alien." But I'm not sure.

Good question. This is usually left to the RM's discretion, however, in my games, I'd usually allow him to be seen. This adds so much more to the game's options than no one being able to see him. If he can be seen, he would probably be mistaken for just what you pointed him out to be... a demon. How people would react to him is also very diverse. Some may fear him, others hunt him. Whatever the case, it can only add to gameplay.

2. Will NPC's ignore futuristic devices carried by PC's if they are out in plain sight, but not being used? (I'm talking stranger than the explanation on page 42... I'm thinking Bionics and borgs)

Usually most bionics, such as an arm can be mistaken for ornamental piece mail armor. Full conversion borgs would usually be mistaken for ornamental suits of armor. Most pieces of technology can be explained away, however, there are a couple of things to remember, which will be mentioned in the following discussion.

The Sage's Portal

This issue's topic: The Veil and Items

The veil's primary purpose is to act as a barrier of protection, protecting the Unaware from the actions of the Aware. So what happens if a PC jerks out his trusty laptop? Well that depends on who is watching.

The primary concern is the number of people watching. Answering this requires us to look at the structure of reality. According to the Main Book, reality is dictated by peoples' ideas, thoughts, and beliefs. To change this requires more than just a few to witness the event. If you'll take note from the Paradox section, if no more than 20 people see the event, no roll is required, as there are not enough people present to put a strain on reality's structure.

There really is no need to make a roll for any less than 50 people witnessing, however, since some RMs prefer to be more strict... If an NPC or three see the laptop, it may mess with them, however, no paradox will occur. If you'll also note elsewhere in the Concept section, if the NPC later attempts to explain what he has seen to anyone, they will curse him a madman or a charlatan.

Distance plays another key factor. Those who are standing far away, probably won't even notice it. Those that are nearer, could easily mistaken it for a thin box from behind. From the front, if off, a thin box with a silky lining. If on in a magic active world, a wizard's device and may not cause many problems. In a non-magical world, it WILL cause problems.

Something else that should be considered, is the method in which the item is presented, not speaking in so much as explaining the item, but rather the method of the presenter's movement when presenting it. If he is natural with his movement, those from afar who paying very little to no attention will never think to look. On the other hand, slinging a backpack on the ground jerking it out and slamming it on a table will probably draw more attention; not just from sound, but also sudden movement. Note that subtle movement will also draw attention.

Lastly, interest is another primary factor and also one of the greatest allies of the Veil. It is fair to say that a good percentage of the people that would risk seeing the laptop are in the market or tavern conducting business as usual. Either they have their minds on something else or they are droning around in the same routine they've mimicked everyday for the past ten years. While some seem to think that this might draw their attention to it, when was the last time you were in the middle of a business deal, about to either make money or spend it, and just happened to look across the street and noticed that they changed the letters on the MacDonald's sign? Also, on your way to work, following the flow of traffic how often do you seriously look at the route you take to work? Especially if it's the 15,000th time you've taken that route? Will you notice if the guy on 14th street turned the flamingo in his yard the other way? More than likely not, even if you don't have better things to do with your life. Why? Your brain doesn't bother to bring it to your attention.

So really, most items can be protected by the veil, ignored by nature, or explained away. In this case, only one specific combination causes trouble, a large group of interested people in a magicless, techless setting; a rare combo in RPGs.

Phaedrus' Corner

Welcome to Phaedrus' Corner, a little known corner of the Womb, the headquarters of the Order of the Fifth World. Here Phaedrus sits in contemplation of the best way to end The War without disrupting the fabric of the Universe. If you're not familiar with Phaedrus, check out the recently released Realmwalkers supplement, The Fifth World.

Here, weekly will be posted a riddle for your enjoyment. I'll try not to make them too obvious, and try to use riddles that aren't found on every RPG page on the net. Or at least riddles whose answers aren't found on every RPG page on the net. And in line with that last statement, here is a riddle that I actually found in the popular Net Book of Riddles, compiled by Mark Manning, but that was unanswered in the copy that I downloaded. I like it, and I hope you will too. The answer to today's riddle will be posted with next week's riddle.

Sturdy, strong stable, still
Some live in me some live on
And some find me to live upon.
I rarely leave my native land.
Until my death I always stand.
Sturdy Strong Stable Still
Often shaken, but not at will.
High and low I may be found
both above and under ground.

MEP Radio

MEP will be hosting a streaming broadcast radio station, MEP Radio. It will focus on the music that inspired many of MEP's works. The designated soundtracks, those tracks that heavily influenced particular pieces, will also be a large part of MEP Radio. Finally, works that just help set the mood for a game in a setting or genre. For Example, the Designated Soundtrack (DS) for TekHL is detailed below. The next issue will list the tracks of each soundtrack.

DS TekHL: Sounds of HL

Incubus	Pardon Me	3:44	Metal
Pain Fetish	Dark Victory	6:14	Techno Goth
Das Ich	Egodram	2:47	Ambient Goth
Tool	Aenima	6:40	Ambient
Orgy	Stitches	3:18	Ambient Electro.
Marilyn Manson	Beautiful People	3:36	Industrial Gothic
Choke on Candy	Face in the Wall	3:19	Mope Rock
Sweet Ohm	Loudness	2:58	Electronica

Next Issue...

- More on the Vampire Wars in Placidhaven
- The next installment of Gimlet's Gambit
- Arislyn's Top 100 things I'd do if I ever became an evil overlord
- MEP Radio Layout
- The Black Exile
- Templates for Magebane
- Vehicles
- More from Phaedrus
- Whatever we dream up between now and then...