

Field Guide to Monsters

**Volume 2:
The M-Force Update**



What is QAGS?

QAGS (pronounced "kwags") is the Quick-Ass Game System, sold separately. QAGS emphasizes fun and ease of play over math. All stats and mechanics in this book refer to QAGS, but can be easily converted to other systems.

What is M-Force?

M-Force is the 21st century's premier monster-hunting organization. The complete *M-Force* roleplaying game will be released in May 2002. Though that book will greatly expand on the material contained within, you do not need *M-Force* to use this book.

What is a Monster?

A monster is any non-human creature that presents a clear threat to humans. M-Force defines monsters according to the Official Monsters List created by the federal government. The OML specifies the monsters which are an immediate danger to all humans and authorizes the destruction of any creatures on the list.

How Do I Use This Book?

This sourcebook can be used by GMs and players alike. A GM can read through the entries and select monsters to use in her game, or even base a campaign around the information given here. Once the GM has removed the monsters' Numbers (see the middle of the book for more details), players can use the *Field Guide* to research monsters. The entries give solid information about various monsters' habits and weaknesses, but still leave many questions unanswered. GMs should, of course, feel free to deviate from the *Field Guide's* descriptions as they see fit. For more information about using monsters in RPGs, check out *Spooky: The Definitive Guide to Horror Gaming*, also available from Hex Games.

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From the Desk of G. Carlton Saunders

Dear Friends,

In these dangerous times, you never know when you might encounter a monster. Some, like the Slug, are small and subtle and can go undetected for years. Others, like the Grain Giant, pose an immediate and obvious threat. Whatever their *modus operandi*, though, monsters present a very real danger to us all. That's why a book such as this *Field Guide* is a valuable addition to any household. If you are a civilian and you see signs of one of the monsters listed within, contact your local M-Force office immediately. If you are an M-Force agent, this book just might prove to be a valuable asset the next time you're tracking down a monstrous threat.

Though this book is useful, please realize that it is by no means exhaustive-the M-Force labs alone have catalogued more than 3000 distinct types of monsters, and there are surely many more we do not yet know about. This book only gives a sampling of what you might encounter, thirteen creatures that have proven themselves dangerous in a variety of times and places. This book is intended as a companion to the *Field Guide to Monsters Volume One*, a selective reprinting of the papers of eminent Victorian monsterologist Dr. Phillip Points. Though Points recorded his findings over one hundred years ago, most of his findings are in line with modern scholarship. Only three entries in this book-the vampire, the werewolf, and the Slug (known by Points as *Vermis imitor*)-update Dr. Points' findings, taking into account more recent studies.

Monsters are listed alphabetically, under the names most commonly used by field agents. Some of these names, such as Electric Linguine and slumbear, are quite colorful, but do not underestimate these creatures; they are extraordinarily dangerous. Following are brief descriptions of the creature's physical aspects, average lifespan, known haunts and habitats, and ecology and lifestyle. These features will give you an idea of how the creature functions in the world. Finally we present the data most valuable to monster hunters-methods of detection, vulnerabilities, and other notes our field agents have collected.

I'd like to thank the M-Forcers who risked their lives researching these entries, particularly the late Mr. Jeremy Bozak of Collinsville, Illinois, for his invaluable research into the Crescent Valley Horror's ecology. Also I'd like to thank Mr. Gary Bedell for the excellent illustrations that bring these creatures so chillingly to life. I have every hope that this book will be a boon to monster-hunters everywhere. Good luck out there!

Sincerely,
G. Carlton Saunders
M-Force Director
Caledonia, Massachusetts

ASWANG



DESCRIPTION: An aswang appears as a beautiful Filipina woman by day, but at night the creature exercises her unique ability to separate the top half of her body from the lower half. When separated, the top half unfurls batlike wings to move independently.

LIFESPAN: An aswang is mortal, but has a lifespan much longer than a human's.

HAUNTS & HABITATS: Aswang dwell wherever humans congregate, posing as normal women. One can often find an aswang in a hospital or other medical facility, where she will most likely have the reputation of being an extremely helpful and hard-working person. In reality, the aswang is there to feed on the weak and sick. Though the aswang is native to the Philippines, the Spanish colonials who came to the Philippines in the 18th and 19th centuries unwittingly brought some aswang back to Europe by marrying women whom they perceived to be beautiful natives. Now aswang have spread all over the world, and seem especially common in Spain and the American Southwest.

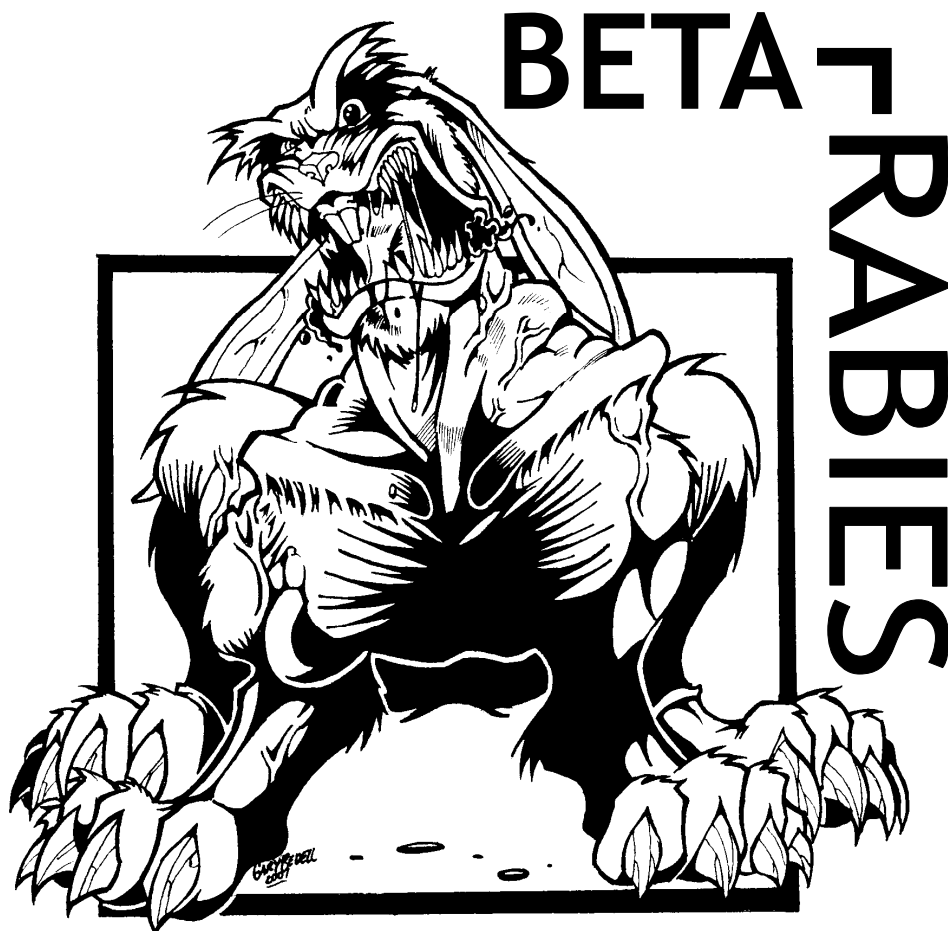
ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: The aswang's upper half seeks out nourishment at night while the lower half is usually hidden in a closet or in a bed. The aswang feeds on all bodily fluids, but one of its favorite meals is the phlegm of asthmatics or tuberculars, and if the victim is a woman, the aswang particularly craves the victim's womb. Once she finds an appropriate victim, the aswang alights on the roof as the victim sleeps. There she uses her long, needle-like tongue, insinuating it between the roof shingles to reach the sleeping victim below. The tongue penetrates one of the victim's bodily orifices, and the aswang feeds. Once satisfied, she returns home to rejoin her lower body before the coming dawn. Sometimes the aswang will take a lover or marry so as to have a permanent source of food. The aswang can feed more freely on her sleeping

spouse, but is generally careful not to kill the man. Often the aswang will begin to appear pregnant as its body grows distended from all of the blood and other nourishment. Aswang cannot bear children, but they have been known to breast-feed infants. These children are inevitably instilled with a lifelong craving for blood.

According to recent research, the female human form commonly referred to as the aswang is merely a host body for a vampiric, black-feathered chick that lives in the host's stomach. It is unclear how much direct control the chick exerts over the host, or how intelligent the chick is. All that is known is the method by which new aswang are created. When an aswang becomes too old to find food for herself, the chick begins to chirp, signaling the time to find a replacement. The aswang must find another young woman, and must trick her into staying the night with her in her home. Usually the aswang pretends to be ill, and asks that someone keep watch over her in the night. When the two women are alone, the aswang vomits forth the black chick, which then surprises the young woman and jumps into her throat when she screams in fear. Once the chick is lodged in the new host's stomach, the old aswang dies. The newly made aswang immediately flies out to feed for the first time.

DETECTION: An aswang is extremely hard to detect by day. The only tell-tale physical sign is the long, skinny tongue. At night, if someone suspects a woman is an aswang, he or she can sneak into the aswang's home and look for the separated lower half. This body trunk is virtually helpless and must be hidden somewhere, often in a closet, under a tree in the backyard, or in the bed. A common aswang trick is to arrange her bed so as to simulate an entire body wrapped in the covers.

VULNERABILITIES: Filipino legend attributes the aswang with vulnerabilities to crucifixes, the presence of garlic, mirrors by doorways and windows, and holy water. However, a team of M-Force sociological research fellows determined that these beliefs are based on the aswang being confused with European vampire legends. Unlike the vampire, the aswang is active during the day, though it cannot split in half and feed while the sun is out. The human part of the aswang is vulnerable to most normal means of attack. Unlike the Slug, however, the creature inside does not destroy its host, and so it is theoretically possible to remove the black chick and save the human. According to folklore this can be done by capturing the aswang during the day and strapping her to some sort of swing so she can be spun around and forced to vomit the chick forth. Another recommended method is to lash the aswang upside down to a tree and fumigate her with any foul-smelling gas, again forcing her to vomit the chick, which should immediately be burned. Though some swear by these techniques, no M-Force agent has had the opportunity to test them in the field, and so they should be used with caution.



DESCRIPTION: β -rabies is a highly aggressive viral cancer of the nervous and glandular systems that infects mammals. Despite the name, it has little to do with conventional rabies, but does share some similarities with feline leukemia.

LIFESPAN: The lifespan of a β -rabid animal can vary from a few weeks to several months, depending on the animal, its general health and diet, and how aggressively the disease attacks.

HAUNTS & HABITATS: A β -rabid animal's habitat is generally the same as it was before it contracted the disease. The heightened aggression that accompanies the disease will cause it to expand its territory, possibly ranging far afield from its normal environment.

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: The infection vectors for β -rabies are poorly understood at best, and at present there is no known cure or vaccine. No cases

have ever been encountered in human beings, and cases of animal-to-animal transfer are uncommon (but not unknown). A β -rabid animal will behave almost normally during the early stage of infection. Its appetite and food consumption will increase markedly. It will exhibit sporadic bouts of restlessness and solitary behavior, but these often go unnoticed, or are mistaken for stress or diet disorders.

In actuality, these are caused by an accelerating disorder of the animal's glandular systems. The extra food consumption fuels a rapid, cancerous growth of muscle mass. Other glands, notably the adrenal, begin to increase output and distend. The early stage generally lasts three to four weeks, or less if the animal is well fed.

As the infection proceeds into the second stage, the bouts of solitary behavior will give way to attacks of highly aggressive behavior. During these aggressive attacks, the animal's adrenal glands operate at a wildly increased rate and the animal's mouth fills with a characteristic red froth unique to β -rabid animals. It will stalk and attack almost anything it comes across, and due to its hyperactive adrenal system, it stands a good chance of bringing down even the most unlikely prey.

After the attack passes, the animal will appear to return to normal while actually entering the third stage of the disease. This stage is characterized by sudden, wild seizures followed by exhaustion and a return to routine behavior. As with the early stage, the better fed the animal is (and at this point it will be feeding constantly), the less time the stage lasts. As the third stage progresses, the length and intensity of the attacks and seizures increase, until the disease reaches terminal stage.

There is no mistaking a β -rabid animal at this point. The skin on its face is stretched taut in a perpetual snarl, and blood-red froth fairly drips from its mouth. Its limbs are knotted with unmistakable tumorous muscle and bone growth. Internally, the animal's adrenal glands have swollen to nearly double their normal size. The distention of organs and runaway tumor growth wrack the animal with pain.

In response to all this, the animal's glandular system is in overdrive. It is hyper-aggressive and almost utterly immune to shock. It is only a matter of weeks until it dies, but it can cause enormous havoc in the time it has left. M-Force agent Eric Nesbit documented a case of a Chihuahua in terminal stage killing and gutting a pit bull. When something larger like a bear or, god forbid, a Cape buffalo comes down with β -rabies, the death toll is often quite high.

DETECTION: Signs of a β -rabid animal on the loose can include cattle mutilations, missing livestock, and reports of unusually aggressive animal attacks. Given the cyclic nature of the second and third stages, it can be hard to pin down a pattern. β -rabies can be detected in the second or third stages by blood or tissue tests performed by any competent medical

laboratory. Terminal stage β -rabies can be distinguished with the naked eye, preferably through a telescopic rifle scope.

VULNERABILITIES: Mercifully, the disease is rare, hard to transmit, and ultimately fatal to the infected animal. These factors help to limit both the long-term damage an infected animal can inflict and the potential spread of the disease. Still, M-Force agents encountering a case of β -rabies should take reasonable steps to ensure that it does not spread, and notify the CDC and local health services as well. The elimination of a β -rabid animal, while not easy, is a straightforward matter, for the animal is still flesh and blood. Conventional weapons can wound and kill it; traps can snare it. Poisons are hit or miss, depending on how far out-of-whack the animal's biochemistry is. Agents should keep in mind the animal's increased resistance to pain and shock when choosing response options. A good rule of thumb is to arm as if hunting something roughly three times the animal's size.

Notes: Some reports from overseas, notably from the Russian Federation, indicate the possible existence of a stable version of the disease, one that does not kill the infected animal. Stories of military helicopters dispatched to wipe out packs of "gamma-rabid" Siberian wolves cannot be completely discounted. This has led to speculation that the disease is a former Soviet germ warfare project gone awry. That a beast with such killing power and a normal life span might exist keeps a number of souls in the U.S. government up quite late at night, worrying.

CHUD' BETH



DESCRIPTION: Chud'beth range in size from six to nine feet tall. The chud'beth is a humanoid creature, with short legs and long, stocky arms. Instead of hands it has four twelve-inch claws at the end of each arm, protrusions that remind one of a mole. The face is more reminiscent of an armadillo, only with huge, faintly glowing, pupil-less eyes. Its mouth is small and full of jagged teeth. The creature's body is covered with a dense natural body armor. This armor, like the face, is reminiscent of the armadillo, though its bespeckled bluish coloration is not.

LIFESPAN: 120 to 200 years

HAUNTS & HABITATS: Chud'beth live deep under the ground in a vast, ever-expanding network of catacombs. These catacombs come close to the surface in Evansville, Louisiana, and several other places.

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: A fully grown chud'beth spends most of its life digging to expand the network of catacombs. The creatures seldom encounter each other in the catacombs, but occasionally two of opposite sexes

will meet and reproduce. The female lays her egg and moves on, and the new chud'beth hatches a year later. Every six years a chud'beth enters into hibernation, during which time it curls up into a ball and sleeps for approximately eight months. Upon awakening, it sets out to find food. Though the chud'beth normally sustains itself on other creatures living underground, the creature has been known to dig through to the surface world in search of food. Once there it uses its keen sense of smell to track warm-blooded creatures. It kills any such creature it finds with its massive claws, then devours the remains. The chud'beth is a voracious eater, and may consume numerous livestock and/or humans before its hunger is sated.

DETECTION: Chud'beth tunnels can be detected using seismic sensors. Audio sensors are effective for tracking the creatures themselves. The chud'beth is instantly recognizable by its two distinctive noises: a periodic high-pitched barking sound which it makes when agitated and a much quieter but continual low, rumbling, grinding sound emitted from somewhere inside its throat. It is from this second sound that the creature's name is taken.

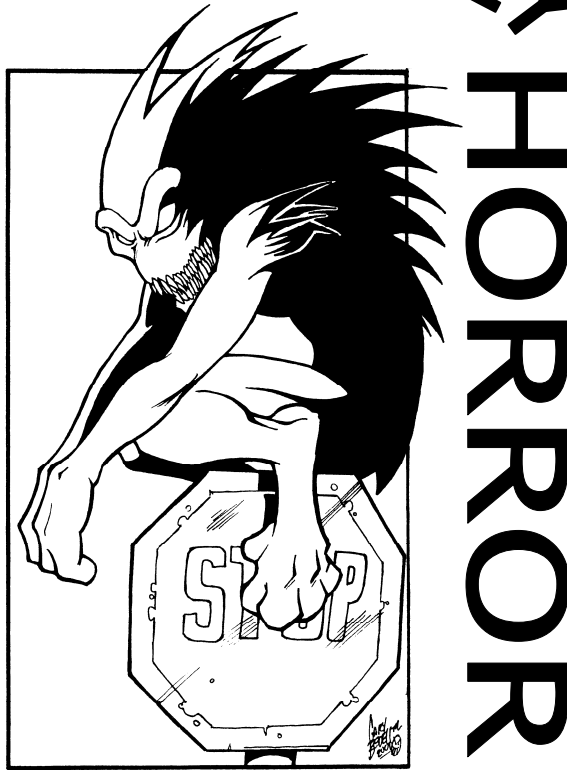
VULNERABILITIES: Though the chud'beth's body armor renders it nearly impervious to harm by conventional means, it is vulnerable on the inside. Poison has been known to work, though large quantities may be necessary. In addition, chud'beth dislike bright lights, and can easily be confused by high-pitched sounds. Neither of these will kill the chud'beth, but they are useful distractions.

CRESCENT VALLEY

DESCRIPTION: A Crescent Valley Horror first appears in a small form, generally about one foot tall, though it can grow to a much larger size. It has a humanoid appearance and is covered with soft fur. The face sports sharp teeth and glowing eyes. The Horror maintains this same shape as it grows. The largest reported Horror grew to eighty feet tall before being destroyed. Larger sizes may be possible.

LIFESPAN: Unknown

HAUNTS & HABITATS: Any inhabited area, particularly near children



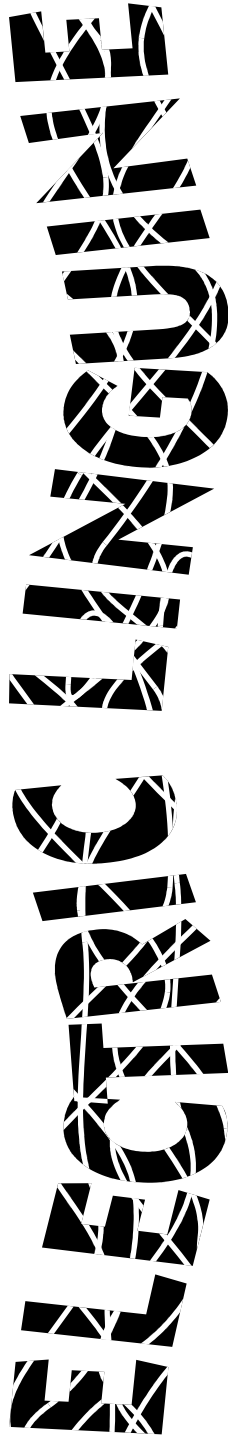
ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: In the early stages of its life cycle, a Crescent Valley Horror looks harmless enough; in the past, both children and adults have adopted them as pets. Once near children, the Horror begins to feed. As strange as it sounds, the Crescent Valley Horror appears to actually feed off the emotional states of childlike joy and innocence. The creature can apparently accomplish this feeding by gazing at its target. The Horror can feed on joy and innocence in adults, but seems to draw more nourishment from children. As the Horror feeds, it grows increasingly larger, and the surrounding community grows wearier and more banal. The Horror can grow to great size within a few days. At this point it feeds directly on human beings, scooping them into its mouth. It also creates massive property damage as it makes its way through the city, searching out more children.

DETECTION: Initial reports about Crescent Valley Horrors may come from children with unusually accurate descriptions of “imaginary friends.”

Warning signs are loss of imagination, joy, and wonder in the community. After continued exposure to a Crescent Valley Horror, a town's children will be quiet, sullen, and passive.

VULNERABILITIES: A Crescent Valley Horror can be destroyed with fire-power or explosives, but this can be very difficult, particularly when the creature has reached giant size. Isolating the creature from any children or luring it into a particularly dull environment can starve it, causing it to shrink back to a more manageable size.

Notes: The Crescent Valley Horror is named after Crescent Valley, Wyoming, the city where the creature first appeared. Since that first appearance in 1985, Horrors have appeared in at least fifteen other communities around the world.



DESCRIPTION: Electric Linguine is an extraterrestrial life-form composed of numerous short strands, each about 8" long. Each strand looks like a piece of linguine with an orange tint. As the strands reproduce, they create large piles.

LIFESPAN: Unknown

HAUNTS & HABITATS: This creature's original habitat is unknown, though it was not the planet Earth. Electric Linguine is drawn to electromagnetic energy and will always move toward any major source. It can survive in any climate.

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: Each strand of Electric Linguine feeds on energy. It will absorb energy from any source, including living beings. When a strand has absorbed sufficient energy, it reproduces by asexual budding. New strands bud in about twenty hours and then break off. These new strands immediately begin feeding as well. The organism's growth rate is exponential, absorbing energy more efficiently as it grows larger, quickly creating a pile of strands. If left unchecked Electric Linguine will overrun entire cities. If threatened, the Linguine will generate an electrical charge to stun or damage its attacker. The size of this charge varies with the size of the creature—a few strands in a flowerpot will produce a painful shock, but an infestation the size of a city block will generate discharges the size of lightning bolts. Linguine is not intelligent in any way and can only respond to simple stimuli.

DETECTION: Since Electric Linguine absorbs most bands of light, it is difficult to detect with many sensors. Linguine is visually very obvious, however, appearing as a roiling mass of strands.

VULNERABILITIES: Linguine strands are vulnerable to most physical attacks, though they are tough and fireproof. Almost any form of electromagnetic radiation will be a snack for the Linguine and may generate further budding.

Notes: Electric Linguine first came to Earth along with the monster Galaxikhan in 1958. M-Force prevented a mass outbreak, but some strands escaped. There have been 27 instances of Linguine outbreaks in the years since, all over the world. Currently the only known specimen on Earth is locked away in a secure facility and heavily guarded.



GRAIN GIANT

DESCRIPTION: The Grain Giant is a sentient collection of grains held together by a powerful electromagnetic field. The Grain Giant can form virtually any shape from its grains, though most have been anthropomorphic. The size of the Grain Giant depends on the sheer number of grains it absorbs. The largest known Grain Giant reached a height of 135 feet.

LIFESPAN: The Grain Giant seems to absorb the energy from individual grains. This makes the lifespan of the Grain Giant dependent on its ability to absorb new grains. An initial silo of grain (without any new grains added to it) should be able to survive for about 36 hours before exhausting its energy and disintegrating.

HAUNTS & HABITATS: Grain Giants have so far appeared only in the American Midwest. Infections could appear anywhere that a large amount of grain is stored.

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: A Grain Giant can develop when a bioengineered form of wheat called DR-174 invades a wheat field. DR-174 (created by Agamemnon Industries in 1987) was intended to be a radiation-resistant form of grain that could feed people in the aftermath of a nuclear war. An unintended result of the experiments was that the grain had a weak electrochemical charge almost comparable to a neuron. DR-174 will easily crossbreed with other wheat strains, resulting in whole fields of infected grain, all of which are charged. While unharvested, DR-174 poses no real threat, but once stored in silos and grain elevators it reaches a critical mass. The closely compacted grains begin to function much like a brain, with simple linkages occurring that form the grain equivalent of a neural net. The grain then becomes a thinking thing capable of movement by manipulating the individual grains through its neuro-electric field. The newly-formed Grain Giant will break free of its containment and begin moving off in search of more grain to add to its mass, stripping field after field. While only DR-174 wheat grains will actually be able to join in the neural net, the creature can draw sustenance and mass from normal grain. This grain is kept inside an outer shell formed of the DR-174. Several M-Force teams have observed creatures using this interior grain supply as a weapon. The Grain Giant will funnel the mundane wheat through small openings in the outer shell at high speeds, creating a powerful spray that M-Force Ace Maria Gonzalez dubbed the "wheat beam." Grain Giants do not intentionally seek out humans and destroy them, but their incredible power and indiscriminate search for more grain makes them a significant threat to human life.

Most Grain Giants are mindless brutes. In 1993, however, the world witnessed a frightening phenomenon called the "Grain Brain." It was a particularly bad year for DR-174 infestations, which resulted in fifteen separate and nearly simultaneous Grain Giant occurrences. Three of these creatures intersected with each other to create a mega-Grain Giant which, exhibiting intelligence, began seeking out others of its kind and absorbing them. This mega-Giant managed to absorb 12 of the 15 separate Grain Giants. The increasing intelligence brought on by its huge number of DR-174 particles resulted in a sapient being that eventually communicated with humans and attempted to take control of the world for its own benefit. Only through the valiant efforts of Topeka M-Force agents was the Grain Brain defeated.

DETECTION: DR-174 can only be identified through genetic testing or by the use of a process that can detect the electrical charge of the grain, processes few farmers are willing to pay for. Grain Giants themselves are instantly detectable once they burst from their silos. It is very difficult

not to notice a 40-foot-tall construct of walking grain. The possibility of another Grain Brain seems unlikely, but M-Force Agents are warned to be particularly cautious of extremely large Grain Giants that might develop the intelligence needed to precipitate another Brain.

VULNERABILITIES: The Grain Giant can only be defeated by disrupting the electrical field that creates its consciousness and enables its movement. This can be accomplished by widely separating the grains (explosives or extreme wind have both been used successfully to achieve this) or by destroying the coherence of the field using another powerful electrical field. The Grain Brain was destroyed by the electromagnetic pulse created by a tactical-yield nuclear explosive.

THE NUMBERS

The *Field Guide to Monsters Volume 2* represents a new type of sourcebook designed with removable game stats. This page contains all the Numbers and game information for each creature in the book. Simply pull out this page for your own reference and you can hand the players the rest of the book during the game. They will have access to all of M-Force's current knowledge on the creature, but won't have the Numbers or the secret information listed here.

Aswang

Body: 15 (Upper) Brain: 13 Nerve: 16 Yum Yums: 2 HP: 16 (Upper)
12 (Lower) 11 (Lower)

Job: Evil Parasite (17) Gimmick: Fly (15)

Weakness: Nausea (15)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : Salma Hayek

Tag Line: "Am I not beautiful?"

Notes: If the PCs attempt to provoke nausea in the Aswang (through spinning her, exposing her to foul smells, etc.) she must roll against her Weakness. If the Weakness succeeds, she vomits up the black chick and is no longer an aswang.

Beta-Rabid Bunny

Body: 9 Brain: 2 Nerve: 17

Yum Yums: 2 HP: 12

Job: Bunny (13) Gimmick: Beta-Rabid (16)

Weakness: Beta-Rabid (16)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : Thumper

Tag Line: Vicious Bunny Noises

Note: A beta-rabid animal loses a health point every 24 hours until it dies. Beta-rabies is only transmitted through ingestion of the diseased animal's flesh. To figure out the Numbers for a beta-rabid animal, simply take the animal's base Numbers and modify them accordingly:

Multiply Body by 3

Divide Brain by 2

Change Nerve to 17

Multiply the original Body by 4 to determine HP

Chud'beth

Body: 15 Brain: 6 Nerve: 16 Yum Yums: 2 HP: 32

Job: Tunnel Digger (16) Gimmick: Protective Body Armor (18)

Weakness: Light and Sound (18)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : Antonio Rodriguez

Tag Line: "chud'beth"

Crescent Valley Horror

Body: 8 *Brain:* 8 *Nerve:* 10 *Yum Yums:* Variable *HP:* Variable

Job: Emotion Leech (12) *Gimmick:* Gets Bigger (18)

Weakness: Gluttony (18)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : CGI

Tag Line: "Let's play!"

NOTES: The creatures M-Force knows as Crescent Valley Horrors are normally benign microscopic imps who regulate humanity's excess emotions. Not all of these creatures feed on childlike joy. Others specialize in draining despair, passion, etc. Periodically one of these imps will become a glutton and absorb too much emotion, at which point it grows to a visible size, and keeps on absorbing and growing until it becomes a serious menace. The creatures cannot expand indefinitely; after reaching a size around 120', it will burst, creating mass devastation and releasing a torrent of emotions.

Each time the Crescent Valley Horror successfully uses its Job against a PC, it drains one Yum Yum.

Electric Linguine

Body: 1/strand *Brain:* 2 *Nerve:* n/a

Yum Yums: n/a *HP:* 1/strand

Job: Extraterrestrial Menace (12)

Gimmick: Electric Zap (1/10 strands)

Weakness: Easily Cut (13)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : Pasta

Tag Line: Yeah, right.

NOTES: Here's a tip for advanced GMs who want to simulate the horror of Electric Linguine: Make some pasta and throw it at your players.

Grain Giant

Body: 20 *Brain:* 10 *Nerve:*

15 *Yum Yums:* 4 *HP:* 60

Job: Giant (18)

Gimmick: Wheat Beam (15)

Weakness: Electrical Fields (15)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : CGI

Tag Line:

"AAAAARRRGGGHHHHH!!!"

Hecklestimp

Body: 4/16 *Brain:* 5/5 *Nerve:* 4/16

Yum Yums: 0/2 *HP:* 4/40

Job: Flesh-Devouring Critter (16)

Gimmick: Look Harmless (15)

Weakness: Poor Survival Instincts (15)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : Lagoon Boy

Tag Line: "Momma?" (In Hecklestimp)

NOTES: Hecklestimps always travel in groups. The Numbers given above reflect first an individual Hecklestimp's Numbers, then those for a slaughter of ten. Hecklestimps attack in tightly coordinated groups, so a slaughter may be treated as a single opponent in combat.

Phoenix

Body: 12 *Brain:* 7 *Nerve:* 15 *Yum Yums:* 3 *HP:* 12

Job: Bird (18)

Gimmick: Creates tremendous heat when mating (18)

Weakness: Thunderbird Magic (18)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : CGI

Tag Line: "Awwwkkkkk"

NOTES: The Phoenix is in some way existing backwards in time, but can respond to stimuli in the present. The arch-enemy of the Phoenix is the Thunderbird.

River Monster

Body: 17 *Brain:* 9 *Nerve:* 16 *Yum Yums:* 6 *HP:* 20

Job: River Guardian (15)

Gimmick: Regeneration (17)

Weakness: Must Stay Near River (17)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : Ray Wise

Tag Line: "Awwwkkkkk"

NOTES: Numbers given here represent the Whiskey River Monster. Other river monsters vary in size and ability (for instance, "Old Muddy" is significantly larger). The River Monster's Gimmick allows it to regenerate 5 HP per hour spent submerged in the river.

Slug

Body: 2 *Brain:* 17 *Nerve:* 18 *Yum Yums:* 2 *HP:* 4

Job: Body Snatcher (16) *Gimmick:* Poisonous Bite (15)

Weakness: Salt (15)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : CGI

Tag Line: "Do not resist us."

Notes: When the slug inhabits a human, it takes on the Body Number of the host. The slug makes a Job Check to access it's hosts memories, Jobs, and Gimmicks. It may also make a Job Check to avoid being affected by the hosts Weaknesses.

When a person is bitten by the slug, he must make a Body check, resisted by the slug's Gimmick. If the slug wins, the victim falls asleep for a number of minutes equal to the difference of the rolls.

Slumbear

Body: 18 *Brain:* 7 *Nerve:* 14 *Yum Yums:* 3 *HP:* 20

Job: Murderous Bear (16)

Gimmick: Induce Sleep (15)

Turn Immaterial (16)

Weakness: Single-Minded (15)

Must Return to Kingdom of Nightmares (16)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : Gentle Ben

Tag Line: "Roarrrrr!"

NOTES: A successful Nerve check must be made to avoid falling asleep before any action is taken against a Slumbear. When a Slumbear is reduced to 5 HP, it will generally turn immaterial and return to the Kingdom of Nightmares.

Vampire

Body: 20 *Brain:* 12 *Nerve:* 9 *Yum Yums:* 3 *HP:* 20

Job: Variable

Gimmick: Vampire (20)

Weakness: Vampire (20)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : Gary Oldman

Tag Line: "Be with me forever"

NOTES: The Vampire Gimmick includes a wide range of powers, the exact details of which are up to the GM. A general list of abilities and vulnerabilities is given in the main text.

Werewolf

Body: 15 *Brain:* 8 *Nerve:* 18 *Yum Yums:* 3 *HP:* 15

Job: Wolf (17)

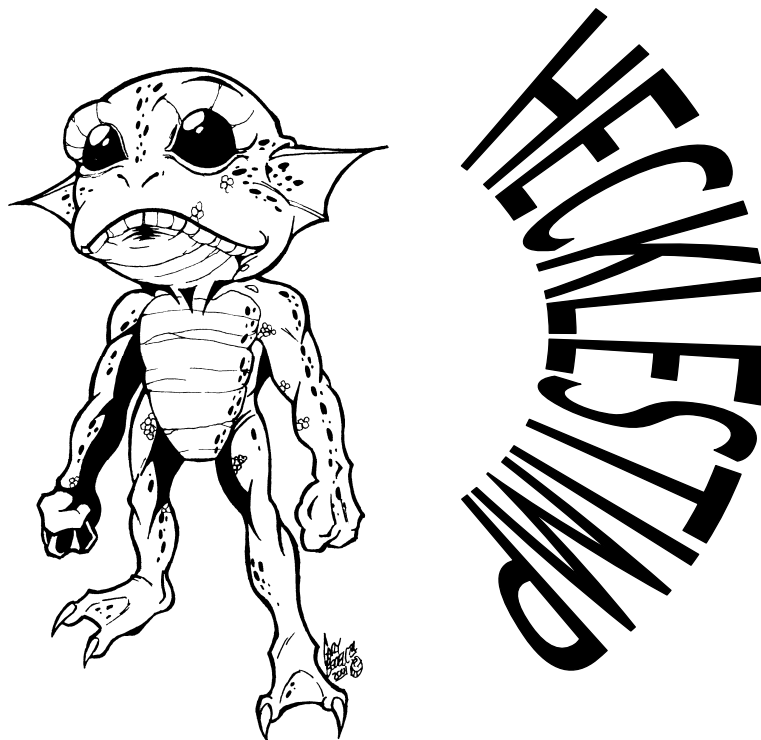
Gimmick: Resist Damage (20)

Weakness: Silver (20)

Who Would Play It in the Movie? : Jack Nicholson

Tag Line: "Leave this town at once, for your own safety."

NOTES: In human form, the werewolf may have the attributes of any normal character. This entry provides baseline Numbers for the wolf form. All damage done to a werewolf is reduced by ½. A werewolf will die instantly if hit with a silver weapon.



DESCRIPTION: The hecklestimp is an "almost cute" humanoid creature that is, on average, around two feet tall. It has amphibian-like skin and large eyes.

LIFESPAN: 2-3 years

HAUNTS & HABITATS: The hecklestimp lives in caves, sewers, and other dank areas.

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: Hecklestimps hatch from eggs laid in groups (known as "slaughters"). The slaughter of hecklestimps immediately begins looking for a "mother" figure. They seem to instinctively know that other hecklestimps are not viable mothers, but almost any other large sentient humanoid they encounter is suspected of being a mother and is treated as such. Once the hecklestimps have found a viable mother, the slaughter surrounds the creature and attempts to rub against it. Within minutes of being surrounded by the slaughter, the creature will be at-

tacked and torn apart, and its blood drained, unless it can free itself from the slaughter quickly. A dying hecklestimp will emit a piercing death-shriek that will summon any other hecklestimps in the area (and there are always many more).

Upon reaching two or three years of age, a hecklestimp begins puberty, growing larger and spouting tufts of thick hair on its back. The first members of the slaughter to exhibit these signs are invariably attacked and eviscerated by the rest of the group, eventually leading to the slaughter for which the group is named. No mature hecklestimp has ever been reported. Regardless, the continued presence of new eggs seems to indicate that mature hecklestimps must exist.

DETECTION: Hecklestimps are generally easy to detect, as they remain in large groups. They sound almost like a group of small children when moving. The creatures will scatter from bright light, so the use of lowlight or thermal sights is recommended.

VULNERABILITIES: Hecklestimps are charmed by music, meaning they will sit still and listen so long as sweet music is playing (poor singing will rarely work, however). They are also severely frightened of fire, and will avoid bright light if they can. Hecklestimps can be killed by any conventional means, though their speed and small size makes them difficult targets.

PHOENIX



DESCRIPTION: The phoenix is a beautiful bird with red or gold feathers (males are red, females gold). Other than its unique coloring, there is nothing to distinguish a phoenix from an eagle. Only during mating does the phoenix exhibit its startling difference. A mating phoenix pair bursts into flame as they fly through the air. A larger bird form appears in the flames, eventually resolving into a single red-and-gold-plumed phoenix as the fire burns away. This creature will eventually shed one of its colors.

LIFESPAN: A phoenix is said to live for five hundred years.

HAUNTS & HABITATS: The phoenix is found in arid environments, mostly deserts.

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: Throughout most of its lifespan, the bird appears to be a normal avian. It is the few days around its mating which make it so mysterious. First, there is the strange practice of two birds mating and only ever producing one offspring. This practice seems anti-survival, and it is no wonder that the creatures are so rare. There also seems to be no explanation for the creature's pyrophoria. Living creatures just don't burst into flame without good reason.

The phoenix would be considered a mere oddity if not for the horrible effects of its three-day mating inferno. The town of al-Afar, Iran was burned completely to the ground by a phoenix mating. In 1974 M-Force narrowly averted disaster when it managed to drive a mating pair into the ocean just short of Los Angeles. The heat that radiated from the mating pair would have caused untold devastation if the birds had reached the city. The heat from mating phoenixes has been measured at over 2100 degrees Celsius directly adjacent to the birds. At that temperature most metals will melt, and even at some distance most flammable material will ignite. The phoenix has been known to cause massive firestorms when it approaches heavy vegetation or forest. Many myths and legends speak of deserts resulting from a flaming creature that destroyed the plants and animals. It is likely that the phoenix gave rise to the legends of the salamander, a creature which sets anything it touches on fire. Luckily, phoenix matings are incredibly rare; only three have ever been verified by M-Force.

DETECTION: The phoenix can be identified by its unique plumage, which is almost artificial in its bright hues. No one has studied a phoenix closely during this stage, so little else is known of it. During mating, the phoenix pair can be spotted from miles away by the massive heat-and-light signature that the birds put out. There is no doubt when a mating approaches.

VULNERABILITIES: In its normal state, the phoenix is just as vulnerable as any other bird. During mating, the phoenix is frighteningly invulnerable. The incredible temperatures released by the creature eliminate the possibility of using most ordinary materials to threaten it. The pair that threatened Los Angeles were driven into the ocean by a mystical Thunderbird staff borrowed from the Winnebago tribe. The resulting vaporization of seawater created a giant steam cloud that killed thousands of fish. The best way to stop a pair of phoenixes is to find them prior to mating.

Notes: Researchers at the Quinn Library have proposed the interesting theory that phoenixes live backwards in time. Their belief is that the mating ritual may actually be a form of mitosis seen in reverse. The flames would then be explained as the by-product of the massive amounts of energy necessary to create two complete copies of the bird. This concept could also explain the disproved legend that there is only one phoenix. It might be that all phoenixes are descended from one being in the future. Unfortunately, no one has found any proof substantiating this idea.

RIVER



MONSTER

DESCRIPTION: The river monster looks like a mishmash of several aquatic animals. It is humanoid in appearance, with large, froggish legs. Its short, stubby arms end in alligator-like claws. The monster's head looks very much like that of a fish, only with slitted eyes and a hinged mouth full of sharp teeth. It has a long, tapered tail from which a number of horny barbs protrude. The coloration and size of a given river monster seems to be in some way related to the river it inhabits.

LIFESPAN: River monsters have been known to live for at least 150 years, and may be immortal.

HAUNTS & HABITATS: Each creature frequents a specific river, maintaining a number of underwater lairs.

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: Most of our information on river monster ecology comes from Dr. Paul Fuller's study of the Whiskey River Monster. Fuller writes, "Locating 'Whiskey' was tough. His territory seems to consist of the

entire river. In several areas where we found signs of the monster, we also found what appeared to be dens littered with bone and other refuse in caves, brush piles and similar areas along the river. Once we located 'Whiskey' and started following him, we confirmed that some of the dens we'd found earlier were normal stops for him."*

The river monster is a nocturnal creature. It is carnivorous, though it seems able to sustain itself on relatively little food. Fuller's observations of the Whiskey River Monster note that the creature feasted upon a deer, cow, or other large mammal every 8-14 days, eating only a few fish or frogs a day in the intervening period. Many river monsters take on traits of their home river. For instance, the Whiskey River Monster has a broken bottle on his tail and "Old Muddy" (the monster living in the Mississippi River) is a brownish color. All recorded attacks by river monsters have been on people who were abusing the river. Taken together, these facts lend veracity to Fuller's claims that the creatures are some sort of embodiments or protective spirits of their home rivers. All river monster sightings have been within a mile of the river in question.

DETECTION: The river monster is very difficult to locate. Because the creature apparently travels from place to place by walking along the river bottom, tracks are rarely found. However, since the river monster follows a regular migration pattern, the patient agent can locate a river monster by finding one of its "dens" and lying in wait. River monsters seem to take an interest in major activity on their rivers. Sightings often correspond with the construction of dams and bridges, sunken boats, and even searches for drowning victims. In cases of construction, a few of these creatures have actively sabotaged dams or attacked workers.

VULNERABILITIES: A river monster can be harmed with standard weapons, but no such encounter has ever resulted in the creature's death. When seriously wounded, the monster retreats into the water to recuperate. If Fuller's "guardian theory" is true, it is most likely impossible to destroy a river monster while the river still flows. Research suggests that these creatures only attack humans when they are upset by human activity, usually because someone is polluting, damming, or otherwise interfering with the natural state of the river. Therefore the best course of action may be to determine what is upsetting the monster and putting a stop to it. If this is not possible, the next best solution is to cause enough damage to the creature to send it underwater. A river monster seems to grow weaker as it gets farther from its' home body of water, which means it may be possible to contain (or perhaps even kill) such a creature by transporting it away from its home territory. However, this theory has not been tested, and agents are advised to proceed with extreme caution when attempting this method.

*Detailed in *Chasin' Whiskey: On The Trail of the Tennessee River Monster*



DESCRIPTION: Depending on the stage of its life cycle, the Slug can look like an everyday garden slug, a miniature slug with wings, or a human being. There have been rumors of Slugs that grew to giant size, but no hard proof.

LIFESPAN: Seven years

HAUNTS & HABITATS: Wet, dark places; human beings

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: A Slug begins its life in a winged larval stage. This tiny Slug flies until it finds an appropriate spot of dank, dark ground, where it can shed its wings and begin to grow. At this point the Slug grows dozens of sharp teeth. It then seeks out a human being to serve as a host body. It bites the person, puts him to sleep, crawls inside, then nests in his stomach. Over the next six months, the Slug grows. Eventually it consumes all the human's internal organs and replaces them with its own. The Slug absorbs the human's memories, and continues living as the human. The Slug at this point cannot exist outside the human body; the skin and bones have been absorbed into its own anatomy.

Once the habitation is complete, the Slug seeks out others of its kind, following the scent of their pheromones. Slugs will work in concert to further their goals. The creatures have some form of social organization, but little is known about it. The exact goals of the slugs are also unknown.

Periodically, two slugs will mate. Within six months, one of the Slugs grows a spore sac in its stomach. Eventually the spore sac ruptures, the Slug dies, and dozens of new larval Slugs are released into the world.

DETECTION: Again this depends on the stage of its life cycle. When larval, Slugs may be detected by their wings. When Slugs, they have larger teeth

than average, and unusual coloration. Detecting Slugs is most important, though, when they have inhabited human bodies. It is important to differentiate between two stages: the stage at which the Slug is still a parasite living inside the human, and the stage at which the human's brain has been devoured and the Slug is the totality of the organism. A person with a Slug inside is a victim. Symptoms include fatigue, depression, memory loss, and blue-tinted secretions from the genitals. Such people need immediate medical attention. When a Slug has entirely taken control of a person, however, the resulting entity is officially a kill-on-sight organism. Warning signs include drastic personality shifts, lack of empathy, and jerky, uncoordinated movements. A Slug can be found out through an x-ray or blood test. In the final stages, a Slug can be recognized by the spore sac growing in its stomach. This causes the individual to appear pregnant, even if the individual is male.

VULNERABILITIES: Once detected, a Slug is vulnerable to most attacks. On their own, they can be killed just like regular slugs—salt has proven effective at this stage. A Slug infesting a human body will be harder to kill than an average human—they are slightly stronger and more resistant to damage—but will still be vulnerable to any standard attack.

Notes: No other species has plagued M-Force like the Slugs. Unlike many monsters we deal with, Slugs are fully intelligent and capable of planning counter-offensives. In the 1960s the Slugs developed an elaborate network throughout the United States, replacing people from all walks of life. Ultimately M-Force destroyed that network, at great cost to the organization. For a time Slugs were presumed extinct, until a live Slug turned up in New York City in 2000. The full implications of this are not yet known, but all agents need to be constantly on the lookout for Slug activity. When hunting these creatures, it is of utmost importance that field agents are 100% sure that they are killing a Slug and not a human being.



DESCRIPTION: A slumbear looks like a bear, only larger and somehow more frightening. Since it cannot be photographed or filmed, only verbal accounts of the slumbear exist.

LIFESPAN: Unknown

HAUNTS & HABITATS: Unknown

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: Little is known about the life of the slumbear. It appears only to prey on specific victims who suffer from bad dreams. After several nights, the slumbear will appear, generally walking through the wall. A

slumbear moves very slowly and most anyone could outrun it, if not for its most potent weapon—as it approaches, everyone near feels drowsy. Once face-to-face with a slumbear, it takes a tremendous force of will to keep from falling asleep. Once its victim is asleep, the slumbear shreds and devours it. Afterward, the slumbear disappears, generally to reappear a few nights later in the dreams of someone else in the same geographical region. It is unknown how many slumbears exist, or how they choose their victims.

DETECTION: The nightmares are the best indicator that a slumbear is going to attack. The nightmares are unusually vivid, and always involve the dreamer's violent death at the claws of a slumbear.

VULNERABILITIES: Slumbears can shift between an intangible and a physical state. In order to attack, the slumbear must be physical. Conventional weapons will hurt the slumbear when it is solid, as long as the person with the weapons can stay awake to use them.

Notes: Sources in the occult community claim that the slumbears normally live in the Kingdom of Nightmares and periodically wander into the waking world. This seems unlikely, since dreams are nonsensical images that our subconscious minds generate and nothing more. Still, researchers have not yet formed a working alternative hypothesis to explain the slumbear.

DESCRIPTION: Vampires are animated human corpses and can therefore look like any type of human. A vampire generally looks the same as before it died, only with sharper teeth. When hungry, the vampire is pale and thin. After feeding it grows bloated and dark.

LIFESPAN: Immortal

HAUNTS & HABITATS: The vampire is a solitary creature, though it must seek out living humans on which to feed. During the day the vampire is an inert, though well-preserved, corpse. It remains motionless in its grave or other resting place. At night it leaves the grave to roam where it sees fit. Though the vampire cannot abandon its resting place, current intelligence indicates that the creature can move this resting place.

ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: Vampires are created by other vampires. If someone has had his blood drained by a vampire over the course of several nights and subsequently dies, then he may return as a vampire. Not all people who die this way become vampires; the exact determining factor is unknown. Once the corpse becomes a vampire, it returns to activity every night, leaving its grave by becoming intangible. This control of its form, along with superhuman strength, speed, and stamina, make the vampire a formidable hunter. The vampire does not, however, have to feed every night. Research indicates that vampires require fresh human blood, in large quantities, at least once a month. Vampires may, of course, desire more than this. Vampires have been known to seduce their victims, forming strong bonds of companionship, before draining their blood. These efforts can be assisted by the vampire's mental abilities. They are able to entrance their victims, altering their memories when necessary.

DETECTION: If examined during the day, a vampire will appear to be a corpse. The corpse will be remarkably well-preserved, however, no matter how long it has been interred. At night vampires appear to be living humans, though medical testing can quickly reveal their nature. For instance, vampires have no heartbeat, and are cold-blooded. Vampires cast shadows and have reflections, but these images are often skewed in some way. During day and night, vampires are associated with rats, flies, and bats, and these may congregate near them.



VAMPIRE

VULNERABILITIES: A vampire's greatest weakness is the sun. While exposure to the sun will not cause the creature to combust, as in many films, it will render the vampire immobile. Immersion in water will have the same effect. Whenever possible, it is best to perform vampire hunting during the day. At night, guns and knives will have little effect. Holy items from various religious traditions, silver, and garlic can be used to seriously injure vampires but will not destroy them. A wooden stake driven into the heart will immobilize a vampire and return it to its corpse state. Cutting off the head will also immobilize the body, but the head will still be animated and, most likely, angry. To properly dispose of a vampire, the head should be severed from the body. The head and body should then be burned separately, and the ashes scattered separately over running water.

Notes: Vampires are truly supernatural creatures-that is to say, they make no sense according to the modern laws of science. Tests on vampires have not given any insight into the physiological mechanisms that allow what are basically corpses to get up and move, much less turn intangible. The distorted shadows and reflections that vampires cast also seem to violate the laws of optics, and their abhorrence of artifacts from different (and contradictory) religious traditions makes it difficult to fit the vampire into any belief system. This is not to say that vampires can't exist, just that science has not yet expanded to the point where we can understand vampirism. If you are ever forced to confront a vampire, keep in mind that it has near total control of both its physical and mental presence. The vampiric abilities listed above should not be seen as exhaustive; no ability should be ruled out, regardless of physics. Also when confronting a vampire keep in mind that, gothic romances to the contrary, vampires are universally hostile toward human beings.

DESCRIPTION: The werewolf appears either as a normal human or as a wolf of exceptional size.

LIFESPAN: As human

HAUNTS & HABITATS: Though the werewolf may live anywhere other humans do, those who are aware of their condition tend to settle in rural areas where their monthly depredations can more easily be carried out without drawing attention. More importantly from a hunter's perspective, self-aware werewolves tend to cluster together in groups, because of their pack instinct and in the interest of mutual protection and concealment.



WEREWOLF


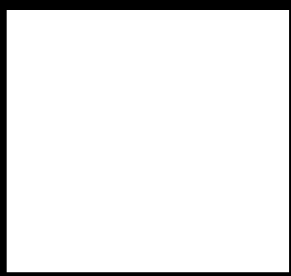
ECOLOGY/LIFESTYLE: The werewolf condition is hereditary, so these creatures tend to form extended families of their own kind. Like normal wolves, they are pack animals. Even in human form, they tend to live in close proximity to each other, under the leadership of a pack alpha. Human-form werewolves are intelligent enough to disguise this arrangement, and will generally appear to lead normal human lives under all but the closest scrutiny. The werewolf assumes its lupine form for the entire period of the full moon each month. During this period, the group lives and hunts as a wolf pack, alternately hunting and consuming prey almost constantly, as every member is ravenously hungry. Though of merely animal intelligence, werewolves in wolf form are highly cunning animals and work together expertly.


DETECTION: A rash of animal attacks on humans or livestock is the usual initial sign of werewolf presence. Outside the full moon period, werewolves in human form might be recognized by their social patterns and certain physical traits common to the bloodline (such as extreme hairiness, eyebrows grown together, or an index and middle finger of the same length). Of course, a werewolf pack rarely has qualms about killing to protect its secret, so investigators must be cautious when making such observations.

VULNERABILITIES: A werewolf in human form is as vulnerable to harm as any other human (but see the note below). In wolf form, a werewolf is highly resilient, requiring considerable conventional firepower to take down. However, if a werewolf in either form has its skin pierced with pure silver, it falls instantly and painlessly dead.

Notes: The werewolf presents an unusual ethical dilemma to the monster hunter, as it is essentially a human being burdened with a supernatural curse. Even the packs that are aware of their condition and actively conceal it are not necessarily evil or dangerous apart from their monthly hunt. However, a werewolf in wolf form is an unreasoning beast with a particular hunger for human flesh. For that reason, the Bureau of Monster Affairs has placed lupine-form werewolves on the OML, authorizing their elimination on sight, while specifically denying that the same applies to werewolves in human form. Because the transformation is regular and predictable, there is little reason why a human-form werewolf or pack cannot be dealt with by nonlethal means.

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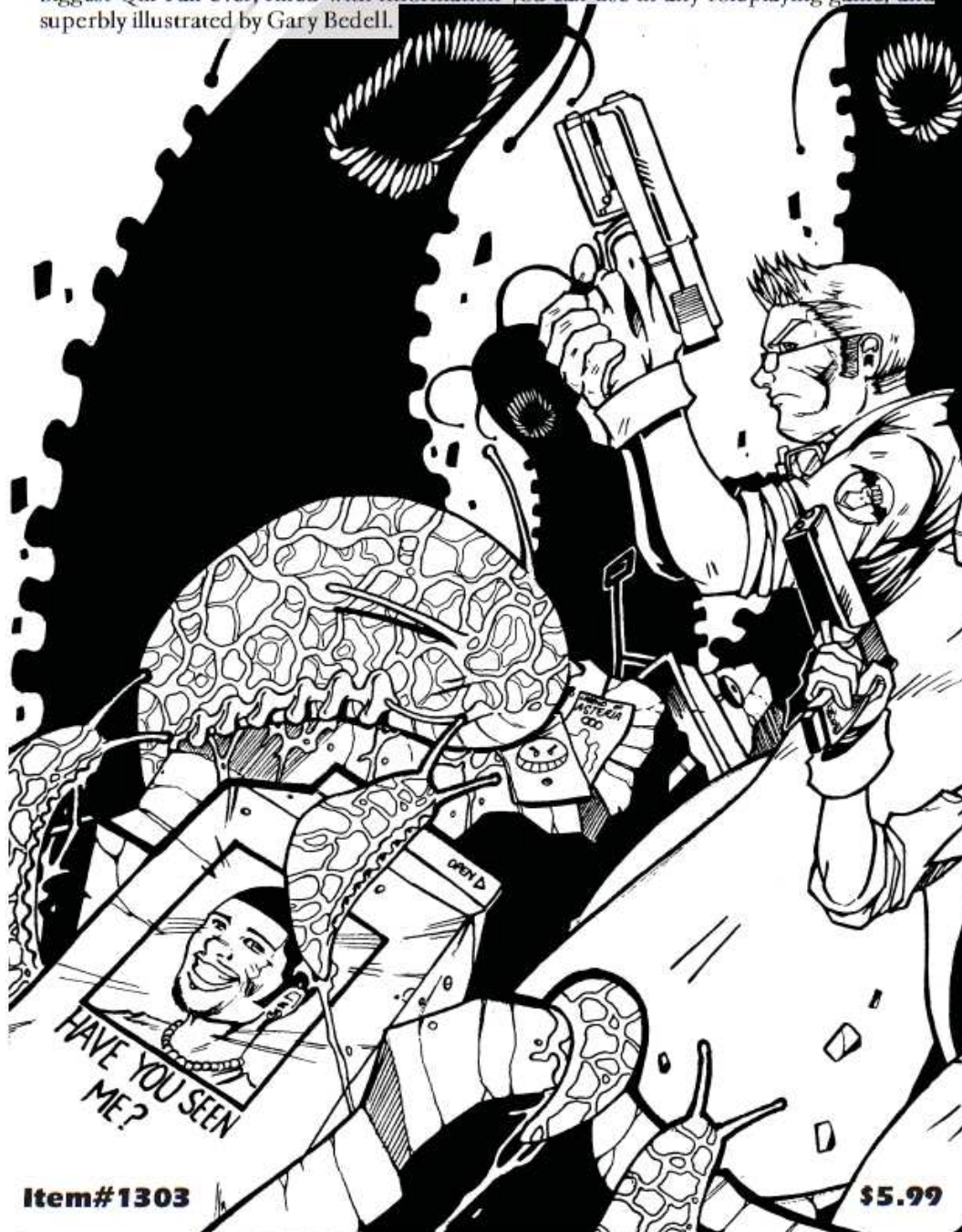
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