

LOST RUNNER

THE 4th LAYER



24 HOUR RPG

BY GREG "SHINOBIOW" SCHUSTER

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

Every Ghost Runner begins his journey as something, sometimes they come from academia, sometimes from the police force, and sometimes they are just normal people who have reached the 9th layer.

WHAT IS GHOST RUNNER?

Ghost Runner is a roleplaying game produced by Greg “Shionbicow” Schuster. The game was originally created on the 25th of February, 2011 for the 24 Hour RPG Contest. The challenge for this contest was to mash-up two popular films and create a roleplaying game from them. This particular game is a byproduct of two fantastic features – Ghostbusters and Blade Runner.

GAME PREMISE

Ghost Runners is a game set in the not so distant future, at the end of the 21st century. The year is 2099. After WWII ended in a coalition of Asian nations, led by China and Japan, the world has been forever changed. Massive government sponsored corporations rule the world. Technology has advanced in leaps and bounds. The wait for the flying car has finally come to an end, but information control is more potent than ever. However, the world isn’t exactly the highly advanced future that everyone was hoping for when the new millenia rolled around about 100 years ago. The Information Control Act of 2045 ended the war and put a choke hold on the internet. Access to information, by the people at least, is highly restricted. However, large corporations have achieved unimaginable technological gains.

The most important achievement of the 21st century ultimately brought a massive change in the world. Scientists at a research institute in Tokyo proved the existence of the human soul. Through their research, not only were they able to prove that souls exist, but that they were able to develop the technology to bring souls back from death. Although the physical body was not something that could be resurrected or cured of disease, the soul, unchanging and infallible, could be pulled back from wherever it had moved onto and placed into a new vessel: a new

brand of cyber-bioware, developed specifically for the purpose of housing a human soul and allowing that soul to act as though it had never moved on at all. These vessels became known as SHELS. – Soul Housing Ectoplasmic Lawson Seals.

The advent of this technology was startling and widespread. It wreaked havoc on world religions, ultimately leading to the unquestionable existence of a “god” somewhere out there in the universe. Atheism met with an almost insurmountable obstacle.

Although this technology had an immense impact on the world, because of the information control protocols established by the world government controlled in Beijing, not many people are privy to the existence of SHELS or about the proof of the human soul, the afterlife, and all the things, other than human souls, that make the afterlife their home.

WHAT IS A “GHOST RUNNER”

Ghost Runners are people in the world that are employed with the task of dealing with the not-so-pleasant side effects that bringing a soul back from the afterlife entails. Some souls are not capable of making the return to this world – those souls that had moved onto paradise, or heaven, rebel at the physical torture that returning to the world brings them. Other souls, despicable ones, brought back from eternal torment, are wonderfully glad to be back on earth, but they are rarely amicable and are more often than not, bent on causing as much destruction and havoc as they can. In addition to the many human souls that are brought back from beyond, other things occasionally make their way into the world, these “beings” are rarely out to help humankind. Demons, phantoms, evil gods, and mystical beings drawn to the world are all the targets of Ghost Runners.

There are not many Ghost Runners in the world. Not many people are privy to the secret that Souls exist and can be returned to earth from heaven, hell, or somewhere in between. Some individuals are recruited because of their reputation and provided the “opportunity” to serve the MegaCorps in their pursuit of keeping a lid on their secret activities. Other individuals witness spirits, or SHELLS which have gone rogue and are then scouted rather than erased.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO PLAY GHOST RUNNER

Ghost Runner does not require a lot to play. First of all, you’re going to need a good imagination. You will want to bring that in spades. Ghost Runner is a game best played with a group of friends. One player assumes the role of the GM, or Game Master. Everyone else assumes the role of a Ghost Runner. Ideally, Ghost Runner is played with 3 or 4 players and a GM.

Ghost Runner uses the DOOM 8 System. This system uses 8 sided dice; you will want to bring several 8 sided dice, but you will never need to roll more than 8 dice at one time, so don’t worry if you don’t have a lot of d8’s. In order to play you are also going to need some scratch paper, some pocket change, and some pens or pencils. Go crazy. No need for only #2 lead here.

WHAT IS YOUR FATE?

In addition to the DOOM 8 system which is used for most of the game’s combat and non-roleplay mechanics found in this document, this game also works in conjunction with the FATE system made popular in games such as Spirit of the Century and the Dresden Files RPG. You can find more information about these two popular RPG’s online. Specifically, this game makes use of the Aspects element of the FATE system. So, if you’ve got any experience with the FATE system, you most likely have some knowledge about how this game works.

BETTING INSPIRATION

There are a lot of place that you can look to for some inspiration for a game of Ghost Runner. For one thing, you might want to check out the films Ghost Busters and Blade Runner for which this game was based. But, these aren’t the only place to look if you’re trying to get a bit of a roleplaying spark.

There are a lot of other great roleplaying games out there which depict the not so distant future. Shadowrun, a game which has been prolific in the Cyberpunk genre for years is a great place to look for some inspiration for a game of Ghost Runner.

Anime is also a great place to find inspiration for a game. Ghost in the Shell presents a very interesting look at the future which has become a rather different place than the world we know.

Although not nearly as well known as the previously mentioned Ghost in the Shell, you might also want to check out the series Bubblegum Crisis 2040, a series which depicts some very powerful women, geared out in robot fighting armor, who go out and fight against robots that have gone out of control.

One thing you should keep in mind when playing Ghost Runner is that you are not playing a Cyberpunk game. Ghost Runner is much more about the crossover of the intelligent undead with cybernetic machines than it is about advanced navigation of any “net”.

SECTION 2 - THE SETTING

As much as I love eating all these wonderful flavors of cup ramen, sometimes, after a long day of hunting ghosts, I would really like to eat a steak once in a while.



THE WORLD OF 2099

It is the year 2099, the world has changed a lot in the last 100 years, almost as much as the world changed during the 20th century. Though the 21st century featured several major wars, WWII had the biggest impact on the world and its culture. Now, the world is dominated by Asian cultures. One government rules the world, but it is too busy counting its money and controlling the flow of information around the world to get into the nitty-gritty daily life problems like crime and the people. Massive corporations rule the world, these conglomerates dominate the world economy. They are also responsible for the mass production of SHELS as well as the cleanup that is required when a SHEL goes rogue. These conglomerates may be forces of great evil in the

world, but they are also the employer of every Ghost Runner on earth. Better get used to their being around, because they aren't going anywhere.

THE LAST 100 YEARS

The year 1999 was a year of caution as the world wondered whether or not the "millennium bug" might bring down all of the world's computer software and thus bring the world to a climactic end, but was also a year of hope; the year 2000 was just around the corner and everyone wondered what new and amazing future the next millennia might bring. When the year 2000 rang in across the globe, there was no climactic apocalypse. Nothing horrible happened, but also, not much else did either. Nothing had really changed, other than the date.

The early 2000's was a telling period. The world began to see the rise of China as it liberated its economy and began to capitalize, setting aside some of its hard lined communist dogma. China's rise was paralleled by the drastic plummet in other world economies caused by the second great depression experienced around the years 2008-2010. This depression only continued through 2012-2015. Many currencies, which were once strong, saw a huge decrease in strength. The US dollar dropped to rates never before recorded in world history. The power structure of the world was changing at an unprecedented rate.

The years 2020-2030 were a period of increasing global tension. The United States, bent on securing what little power they had left, mounted an all-out assault on the Middle East in a quest to claim the large supplies of oil that were there. Although the United States proclaimed victory in this war, in the year 2035, the war did not achieve the economic stimulus that it had once gotten from entering into WWII. Conversely, the US suffered even greater because of the large economic strain put on the economy because of the increase in power to their war engine.

2040 was the year that changed everything. China, in a remarkable move, set aside its differences with once long enemy Japan. They formed a coalition of Asian Nations with South Korea and mounted an assault on both Europe and the US. The Japanese, having developed an astoundingly powerful and advanced missile defense system, was able to completely remove the possibility of any war fought based on Nuclear capabilities. This system, once put into action, meant that WWII would be fought totally without any form of long range nuclear attack system. The war was brutal and destructive. The EU, which had long been under the protection of the US, was largely helpless against this Asian Coalition. The US, occupied with fighting their first war on home soil, was completely incapable of aiding the EU. The war ended in one year. The Asian Coalition claimed victory.

Under the rule of Tokyo and Beijing, the world saw an entirely new shift in culture. The massive population of China spilled over into the US and into Europe as part of a new land reclamation act. Billions of people poured into countries which were once completely closed off to them. The once mobile peoples of China found new jobs in other

countries, all of which fell under the rule of the Asian Coalition.

Although this new government came into power suddenly and forcefully, they were able to bring about massive economic changes worldwide. Worldwide adaptation of Communist-Capitalism at first caused a huge rupture in corporate structures and ownership, but over the next 20-30 years, most major corporation were combined into several huge state-owned conglomerates. These massive corporations reported to the government in Tokyo and Beijing, but they were able to act mostly independent. They quickly began to turn the economy around and developed a new-found massive world economy.

One of the most important changes the world saw was in the Information Control Act put forth by the Beijing World government. This act put in place massive control measures on the internet meant to prevent the creation of revolutionary movements which might rise up to bring down the new world government. The Information Control Act prevented any technological increases through the use of the internet over the next 50 years.

Over the second half of the 21st Century, the world rose up, to some extent, from the general poverty that was experienced due to the war. Near the end of the century, massive reconstruction succeeded in the creation of massive new cities worldwide. Metropolis Cities like Tokyo, Shanghai, and New York sprung up all over the world. These massive new cities became the dominant place for life on earth.

100 years after man first set foot on the moon, man set foot on Mars. Technological advancement in rocketry and space exploration led to the colonization of the red planet. Using robotic technology created by the massive Mitsutori conglomerate, using only a few human overseers, mars became a massive new colony, but few were attracted to live there, settling rather for the somewhat cramped life in the Mega Cities of Tokyo, New York, Shanghai, and London.

THE PERMANENCE PROJECT

The Permanence Project was begun in 2079 through a research think tank centered in Tokyo. Funding for this project was originally allocated to find a method for perfecting cryogenic freezing, and thus create the possibility of maintaining life for long periods of

time, at least long enough to find cures to whatever diseases of the body an individual might suffer from. However, this project quickly changed its course when an unknown scientist was apparently “possessed” of a brilliant new idea. His idea, rather than attempt to maintain the human body, and cure death, was to instead isolate the human soul from the body, and thus entrap the essence of a human into some new mechanical body. This idea was initially met with intense scrutiny and disapproval, but in secret, over the course of only a year, the project achieved success. No bells rang and no news declared this success to the world, but in a lab in Tokyo, a scientist was able to detect a human soul.

This radical research quickly gained incredible amounts of funding. Nearly a trillion yen was fueled into this research. After another year, researchers were able to actually isolate the human soul and summon one into the world from beyond. A year later, the first SHELS were constructed using advanced bionic and cybernetic technology developed through Mitsutori; scientists were capable of souling one of these SHELS with a soul brought back from the afterlife. The first SHELS were unstable, but several revelations were achieved. The first of these was that identity was actually instilled in the Soul itself. A Soul brought back from the afterlife carried with it all of its memories.

The next step in this research was to actually find and identify a specific soul in the afterlife. This technology, which was heavily steeped in Soul Identity Verification systems, or SIV for short, proved to be successful as well.

Through the Permanence Project, scientists were able via the use of SHELS, and SIV technology to essentially put an end to death – at least for those who could afford it. This technology was put to use to bring back individuals important to the world conglomerates which controlled the economy and the government which held the power. The first use of this technology, in secret, was the creation of a massive labor force of SHELS, using the souls of individuals long past. The first of these SHELS were put to use on the Mars Colony, but later on, many of them were put into working places on Earth under the guise of reasonably advanced AI.

THE 9TH LAYER VIRUS

In the year 2090, the world was overcome by a powerful event; the 9th Layer Virus. A Hacker, known simply as Dante, sent a message to the entire world. This message proclaimed “The Truth” behind the Permanence Project. This message appeared for a single day on every TV screen and on every computer monitor worldwide. In addition to “The Truth”, the message also declared that man had finally reached the 9th Layer of Hell. We, as a species, had committed the ultimately betrayal against god and would be damned for all eternity because of it. He also made the bold statement that humanity would not reach the 22nd century. Armageddon was going coming and it was coming soon.

Although The 9th Layer Virus was quickly stopped by the world government, it was not however quelled. The hacker, Dante, was never apprehended or identified. His message quickly spread like wildfire. Dante was declared a prophet by most powerful religions. Although most people worldwide didn’t put much faith in his statement, small groups of “believers” sought out proof that his “prophecy” was true.

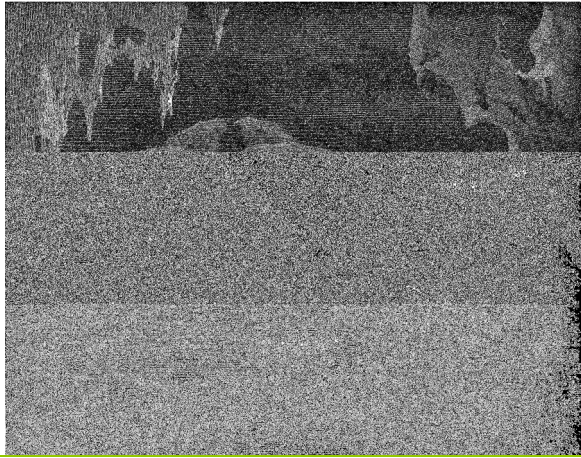
THE STATE OF THE WORLD IN 2099

Now, in 2099, the world is not much better off or different than it was in 1999. The world is still very hopeful about what the future might bring. The invention of the flying car, just a few years before, brought about just big enough of a change for the world’s populace that they were able to overlook the fact that not many other big changes had actually come to impact of change their lives.

Although the players in the world have changed, the world is not much different politically, or economically either. Poverty is rampant, but wealth is also prevails as well. Censorship, more than anything, is much, much stricter, but the media, aside from the internet, is still very powerful now. Everybody still loves watching TV and still loves watching movies, though the vast majority of them are presented in glorious 3D now.

Culturally speaking however, the world has become dominated by China and Japan. The world has adopted Japanese and Mandarin as new official world languages, in addition to English. Most

business is conducted in Japanese, but Mandarin is the world's most spoken language in 2099.



THE 9TH LAYER

Dante's prophecy, more than anything else, has been used to define people in the world into three specific groups: those people who have seen the 9th Layer, those who believe in the 9th Layer, but haven't seen it, and everyone else.

The 9th Layer, or the greatest betrayal, has become a term used to define the previously undefined and unproven supernatural. Prior to the 9th Layer Virus, people were fascinated by ghost stories and with tales of Heaven and Hell, but after the Virus spread Keeton's message across the world, the 9th Layer became a force which drove people to seek out and explore forces of the afterlife.

Although the Permanence Project provided a scientific explanation and proof of the afterlife and the human soul, it did not provide the only method for beings from other planes to come to earth. Extra-planar entities have been doing this for hundreds upon thousands of years. Ghosts, specters, phantoms, demons and even angels, had found routes to manifest in the world since nearly the dawn of man. The Permanence Project simply created a scientific means of doing it quickly and easily. Other routes, whether through faith, or through dark arts, have always been in the world.

Once the 9th Layer Virus spread, the believers began seeking out "The Truth". This search for validation of the prophecy often resulted in people finding out these alternate paths towards contacting beings from other planes. In some ways, the 9th Layer Virus

become a self-fulfilling prophecy; because of it, more and more people sought out the 9th Layer and found it, thus proving further the existence of the human soul and further cementing the end of man.

THE PLANES

Ghost Runners typically accept that there are four planes of existence.

The first plane, that of the world, Earth, is where people live and work every day. It is the world we know.

The second plane, the plane of Heaven or "Paradiso", is a realm of eternal bliss and happiness. Paradiso is inhabited by Angels and is the place where all worthy, good souls, go after they pass from the world.

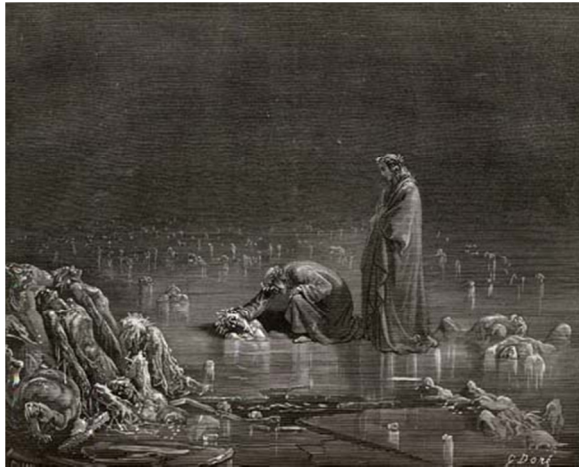
The third plane, the plane of hell, or "Inferno", is where all wicked souls are damned into eternal torment. Inferno is packed with wicked people, condemned to suffer for their wrong-doings. Demons and Devils also inhabit Inferno. They are the jailers who live only to inflict pain on those souls which are imprisoned.

The fourth plane, the plane of waiting, or "Purgatorio", is a place where souls, who have lived neither an evil, nor a holy life, are placed forever. Though they do not suffer eternal torment, they are also not allowed the joys of paradise. Purgatorio is also the realm where souls wait to be judged. When a soul passes from the world, there is a span of time where they wait in Purgatorio before receiving their judgment. Souls which have been condemned to Purgatorio are largely void of feeling – many souls pulled back from Purgatorio and installed into a SHELS are actually capable of serving a purpose; some of these souls still are capable of living in the world like they normally would. Souls which have sat in Purgatorio for too long though lose the vast majority of their identity. They are essentially blank souls which can be dedicated to serving a purpose on Earth; these souls are rarely the target of Ghost Runners. They are the reason for all the profit that the Congloms pull in.

RELIGION AND THE 9TH LAYER

As part of the information control act, many of the world's religions suffered huge problems with freedom of speech. However, they remain strong.

Unfortunately, the answers of “The Truth” provide very little concrete evidence which would go to prove any particular side as being “right”. All “The Truth” can offer is support to religion. There is something out there, but what that something is, is still very left up to debate. Most religions are even more active now in trying to prove that their dogma is in the right.



FORCES OF THE 9TH LAYER

There are many different entities from beyond that come to the world and show humans the 9th Layer. Some of these forces are described below.

Ghosts – Spirits of the dead called back from beyond the grave; Ghosts are by far the most prevalent type of being pulled back from beyond. Ghosts are the souls of humans which take a semi-physical form and manifest in the world. A soul which has been installed into a SHELS becomes a ghost, but that ghost is trapped in a concrete physical vessel. Once that Vessel is destroyed, the Ghost manifests its true, physical form. The physical form that a Ghost takes is usually indicated by the experience that it had in the afterlife. Many Ghosts are simply wispy translucent human shaped figures- these are the good ones. Other ghosts appear like demons or as slimy, horribly grotesque, disgusting filth. Ghosts must be banished in order to permanently be sent back to the afterlife. Banishment can be achieved through several means, some scientific, some spiritual.

Angels – By far the rarest entity to visit earth; Angels are beings from Paradiso which come to the world specifically to help mankind. They are powerful, but are more often totally disinterested in the world as a whole, thus making them very rare. However,

occasionally, one may take particular interest in a specific individual and visit that person to give aid in times of need. Many Ghost Runners have claimed to have been saved by an Angel when on the verge of death.

Demons, Devils, and Evil Gods – These are the multitude forces of darkness that come to the world to wreak havoc; The many forces of Inferno are always eager to find a tear in the planes and reach their claws into the world. These forces take various forms, but they are all very powerful. Although these forces are not nearly as prevalent in the world as **Ghosts**, which often simply haunt the world, refusing to move on to the true afterlife, they are still much greater in number than the Angels.

TECHNOLOGY

It is worth noting that Technology has gone through a few major jumps since 2000, though it is not nearly as advanced as we thought it might be. Some of the important changes in Technology are outlined below.

TRANSPORTATION

Of all the areas which experienced prolific changes, Transportation is definitely one of the biggest. New, Ultra-High Speed Trains can carry individuals across continents in a matter of hours. Also, mega-freighters, almost 10 times larger than the largest cruise ships in the year 2000 dominate the oceans. Many of these massive ships have been developed for transporting people and act almost like large cities on the Ocean. Airborne travel is very expensive, but due to advancements in travel out of the earth's atmosphere, these newly retrofitted jumbo jets are capable of traveling to the opposite side of the world in just an hour or two.

But, by far the advancement that most people have been in a fever pitch about is the flying car. Not many people are rich enough to own one of them, but most Conglom employees, government officials, and Ghost Runners, have the power and influence needed to pick one of these up. V-TALS, as they are called, are somewhat difficult to actually drive and thus require special licenses to “pilot”.



Image by Chad Davis from Green Bay, Minneapolis, USA
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Beyond V-TALS, most normal automobiles now run on electricity. The use of gas has been strictly controlled and now cars which still use petroleum for fuel are seen as artifacts from a different age. Using a “historic property” license, an individual is allowed to own, drive, and fuel one of these cars, but such licenses require a good deal of pull to get a hold of. That being said, many Ghost Runners prefer them as they signify an era in which humanity didn’t have to deal with all the other-worldly problems it does now.

ROBOTICS

Robotics is a field that has seen some fairly important advances. SHELS, among all else, are representative of this shift, but they are not the only area where Robotics has seen advances. Many single purpose robots have been installed in service industries. You can pick up a hamburger from a robotic waitress, or you can buy a house cleaning robot which will tidy up your home. Most robots are pretty expensive, making them available to mostly the middle class and above, but most Ghost Runners have enough currency to have one or two around.

GHOST RUNNERS

Although Ghost Runners are a small minority in the world, they are an influential force. They keep the world safe from all the nasties that would inflict harm on mankind. If you have a problem, who are you going to call? Well, you will probably call the most prominent Conglom security force in the area, but they will in turn contact the nearest group of Ghost Runners who happen to be under contract.

WHO ARE GHOST RUNNERS?

Ghost Runners come from many different walks of life. They have diverse backgrounds and can come from virtually any global culture or people. However, all Ghost Runners have one thing in common: they have all reached the 9th Layer. Each Ghost Runner falls into the category of people who knows “The Truth.” They have all witnessed spirits, ghosts, or demons in the world first hand.

Some Ghost Runners, as described earlier, are recruited. Many Ghost Runners occupy positions in society which deem them as being worthy to take on the role set out for them by the government and the Congloms. Most Congloms employ private police forces, which are top notch. These police forces have to deal with all the day-to-day problems in the major cities around the world. Individuals who happen to witness the 9th Layer on the job, are usually told “The Truth” by a higher-up within the Conglom and then are asked to take on the role of a Ghost Runner. Very few recruits every turn down the possibility of becoming a Ghost Runner; first of all, refusal would almost always result in termination, and second of all, the Ghost Runner lives a slightly better life, in terms of wealth and influence than other members of the population. Ghost Runners act independently, and thus don’t have any immediate superior to report to. They are also well compensated contract employees for the major Congloms and are paid very well for their services. These benefits are a big step up from corporate security, but the dangers that come from the job may in fact make them underpaid.

Other Ghost Runners do it because they have witnessed the 9th Layer and have realized for themselves that they have a responsibility to the public good. They decide that someone needs to be the champion of the people. They live very normal lives and have very normal human desires. These type of Ghost Runners are also brought under Conglom control over time, at which point they essentially end up in the same position as every other Ghost Runner.

SECTION 3 – RULES

The world runs on rules. “Thou shalt not kill.” That is a very good one. Someone should make “don’t bring back the dead,” a rule, but if they did, the Congloms would lose far too much business. – Keeton

Ghost Runner uses two important systems for dealing with Character and actions in the game. Firstly, Ghost Runner uses the DOOM 8 System, which is a rules lite game system using 8 sided die for all actions in the game. Secondly, the game uses the FATE system for FATE Points, and Aspects. For full rules regarding the FATE System, consult the Spirit of the Century SRD which you can find at <http://www.faterpg.com/resources/>

THE DOOM 8 SYSTEM

This game uses the DOOM 8 System, which is a rules lite system used to manage character actions in the game.

ATTRIBUTES

Each character, NPC, or creature in the game is defined by 8 different attributes which you can see below.

	Physical		Mental	
Attack	Strength	Dexterity	Intelligence	Interaction
Defense	Fortitude	Agility	Willpower	Perception

Attributes are broken down into Physical/Mental as well as Attack/Defense. Attributes are rated on a scale between one and eight. You can never have an attribute that exceeds eight.

What each of the attributes does, is explained below:

Strength – used to describe how strong your character is physically. This attribute is used when making attacks in melee with or can be used for climbing, jumping, carrying things, etc.

Dexterity – used to describe how good your character is with his hands. This attribute is most

often used when trying to shoot with a firearm or trying to perform small actions such as making repairs on a computer.

Fortitude – Used to describe how tough your character is. This attribute is used for physical defense as well as for depicting how well you character can withstand physical damage.

Agility – A representation of your character’s reflexes and speed. Also used for physical defense.

Intelligence – used to show how smart you are. This stat is used when making attacks with scientific weapons or with magic.

Interaction – a social skill. If you want to make a social attack, you make it with the Interaction skill.

Willpower – your main defense against mental onslaught. Willpower is used to show how well you can hold up against mental assault. It is used in calculating your Mental Defense.

Perception – how well do you see, hear, or detect illusions. This stat is also used to add to your mental defense.

THE BASIC MECHANIC

Whenever a character tries to do anything in the game, he or she uses an attribute which is most appropriate to the situation and rolls a number of d8’s equal to the score in the attribute as well as an additional number of d8’s granted by through traits, which will be explained soon. You then add any extra bonuses and compare the total result of all the dice against a target number. If the total result on all the dice exceeds the target number, you succeed on your action.

DEFENSES

Each character has two separate defenses – one physical and one mental. These two defenses represent the types damage and the types of attacks that your character can suffer.

Each character begins the game with a base defense equal to 8 + the two defense attributes applicable. For example, a character with a 5 Fortitude and a 5

Agility would have a starting Physical defense of 18. He is very hard to hit with physical attacks.

Starting with so many points in only those two defense attributes means that he or she is probably fairly weak in terms of mental defenses. It is important to have some degree of balance in terms of your character's attributes.

ATTACKS

There is no concrete rule for which attribute you are going to use in which situation. Use your best judgment. Use one of the four Attack attributes whenever you are making an attack. Most situations should be fairly obvious.

Whenever a character makes an attack, he or she deals rolls a number of d8 equal to his attribute, plus any dice that he or she gains from his or her own traits, plus the traits of the weapon that he or she is using to make the attack. If the sum of all of these dice is greater than the target number of the Defense you are trying to hit, then you attack connects and deals damage.

Damage is mainly associated by the weapon that you are using to make the attack with.

Attacks target either Physical or Mental Defense and always deal the same type of damage as they target.

COMBO ATTACKS

Whenever you make an attack, you may choose to declare your intention to make a combo attack at the beginning of the Attack action. Instead of rolling all the dice that you have in your dice pool, you may set any number of those dice aside.

If on the attack roll, your result is enough to hit the opponent, you may then make a follow-up attack, using any number of dice you have kept in reserve. In addition, you also add in an extra number of dice equal to the total number of dice that resulted in a score of 8 on the initial dice roll. For example, has 8 dice to roll in his dice pool. He rolls 4 of them and keeps 4 in reserve. He rolls for dice, and gets the following results; 8,8,6,2. This result is enough to hit. He adds in the two die that resulted in 8 and makes a secondary attack.

You may repeat a combo attack on the second attack as well. In the previous example, if the player then puts 3 of his dice into reserve and rolls again, if he or she hits, then this sparks another attack.

DEALING DAMAGE WITH COMBO ATTACKS

Combo attacks deal damage in a very specific way. The first attack deals damage to the most outer layer, as normal, but any subsequent attack deals damage to more inner layers based on the number of attacks made. For example, a secondary attack would deal damage to the most outer layer -1. A tertiary attack would deal damage to the most outer layer -2 and so on. Combo attacks become a quicker means of finishing off enemies quickly as they deal damage closer to the 8th layer.

HEALTH

Each character has two separate health tracks, as shown below. Whenever a character is dealt damage, check off a box on the appropriate health track. When all boxes on a particular layer are filled, the character, NPC, or creatures suffers the penalty associated on the right hand side of the chart.

	Physical Health Track	Mental Health Track	Penalties
Layer 1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-1 To Associated Defense
Layer 2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-1 To Associated Attack
Layer 3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-2 To Associated Defense
Layer 4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-2 to Associated Attack
Layer 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Movement Speed Reduced
Layer 6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cannot Perform Attack Actions
Layer 7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cannot Perform Simple Actions
Layer 8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Death

Character can never have more than 64 damage boxes on either track, whether mental or physical. But, most characters do not begin play with this many damage boxes available. At the beginning of the game, each player begins with a total of 20 boxes open on either side as indicated below.

- **Layer 1** – 4
- **Layer 2** – 4
- **Layer 3** – 3
- **Layer 4** – 3
- **Layer 5** – 2
- **Layer 6** – 2
- **Layer 7** – 1
- **Layer 8** – 1

If a character has no open boxes on his 8th layer, he or she dies. This works regardless of whether or not he or she has been dealt enough damage to fill up all of his or her boxes on the layers above.

TRAITS

Traits are all of the skills, specializations, and powers that a character may have which distinguish one individual from another.

TRAIT GUIDELINES

There is no long list of traits for you to choose from, instead, you make your own traits and describe what they do based on some basic guidelines described below.

Breadth – Traits range between general, average, and specific. The more specific the trait, the less it costs to obtain.

Associated Attribute – Every Trait has to have an attribute associated with it. You can't have a trait that is higher than the attribute that it is associated with.

Level – All traits have levels. Whenever you make an action to which the trait applies, you get a number of dice, in addition to your attribute dice, equal to the level the trait. Traits can never be greater than level 8.

Effect – some traits have an additional effect which is associated with them. Most Player Traits do not have any associated effects, but external traits often do. The most common effect that is gained through

an external trait is damage. All weapons have some type of damage effect associated with the trait.

POSTIVIE OR NEGATIVE TRAITS

Traits are always ON. You always get the bonus, or penalty, provided by a trait. You can have negative traits. Negative Traits add to your character's story and create interesting points for the GM to exploit. See character creation for more information on why you would want to take a negative trait mechanically speaking.

EXAMPLES OF TRAITS

Selecting traits is a very simple process. You should make traits very simple and the benefits conferred, or penalties suffered, very obvious. A good trait might be "Small Arms Training". This trait would be an average breadth trait, granting a bonus to the character whenever he or she tries to make an action using small arms such as handguns or sub machine guns. "Uncouth" might be a very specific negative trait which means that they suffer a penalty to interaction under social circumstances when trying to be polite. Don't get too complicated with these. Keep it simple.

EXTERNAL TRAITS

There are many other ways to get traits which you don't have because they are part of your character. External Traits are most often granted because of items that one possesses. Most items are very specific in terms of their breadth, but also have a level associated with them.

For example, a 44 Magnum, would have a Specific breadth, have an associated attribute of Dexterity, might have a level between 1 and 3, and also has a damage component equal to 4 (meaning that you deal 4 damage with the weapon).

Some Items may give you a bonus to physical or mental defense, rather than provide a damage bonus.

FATE POINTS

Each character begins the game with a number of FATE points equal to the number of Aspects that he or she has (8 in this game's case). Characters may, at any point, spend a fate point to gain a bonus,

invoke an aspect, tag an aspect, or make a declaration

GAIN A BONUS

A fate point can be spent to add 2 to any roll of the dice, or improve any effort (such as an attack or defense) by 2. In practice, this is the least potent way to use a fate point – you’re usually much better off using one of the other applications, below.

INVOKE AN ASPECT

Aspects (see below) are those things that really describe a character and his place in the story. When you have an aspect that’s applicable to a situation, it can be invoked to grant a bonus. After you have rolled the dice, you may pick one of your aspects and describe how it applies to this situation. If the GM agrees that it’s appropriate, you may spend a fate point and do one of the following:

1. Reroll all the dice, using the new result, or
2. Add 4 to the final die roll (after any rerolls have been done).
3. Roll one additional die.

You may do this multiple times for a single situation as long as you have multiple aspects that are applicable. You cannot use the same aspect more than once on the same skill use, though you may use the same aspect on several different rolls throughout a scene, at the cost of one fate point per use.

TAG AN ASPECT

Scenes, other characters, locations, and other things of dramatic importance can have aspects.

Sometimes they’re obvious, and sometimes they’re less so. Players can spend a fate point to invoke an aspect which is not on their own character sheet, if they know what the aspect is. This is referred to as tagging an aspect, and is covered in greater detail in the Aspects section later on in this chapter.

As a rule of thumb, tagging someone or something else’s aspects requires a little more justification than invoking one of your own aspects. For scene aspects, it should be some way to really bring in the visual or theme that the aspect suggests.

MAKE A DECLARATION

You may simply lay down a fate point and declare something. If the GM accepts it, it will be true. This gives the player the ability to do small things in a story that would usually be something only the GM could do. Usually, these things can’t be used to drastically change the plot or win a scene. Declaring

“The SHELS collapses and the Ghost vanishes” is not only likely to be rejected by the GM, it wouldn’t even be that much fun to begin with. What this can be very useful for is convenient coincidences. Does your character need a lighter (but doesn’t smoke)? Spend a fate point and you’ve got one! Is there an interesting scene happening over there that your character might miss? Spend a fate point to declare you arrive at a dramatically appropriate moment! Your GM has veto power over this use, but it has one dirty little secret. If you use it to do something to make the game cooler for everyone, the GM will usually grant far more leeway than she will for something boring or, worse, selfish. As a general rule, you’ll get a lot more leniency from the GM if you make a declaration that is in keeping with one or more of your aspects. For example, the GM will usually balk at letting a character spend a fate point to have a weapon after he’s been searched. However, if you can point to your “Faster than a speeding phantom” aspect, or describe how your “Overwhelming Stench” aspect kept the guard’s attention on inappropriate areas, the GM is likely to give you more leeway. In a way, this is much like invoking an aspect, but without a die roll.

REFRESHING FATE POINTS

Players usually regain fate points between sessions when a **refresh** occurs. If the GM left things at a cliffhanger, she is entitled to say that no refresh has occurred between sessions. By the same token, if the GM feels that a substantial (i.e., dramatically appropriate) amount of downtime and rest occurs in play, the GM may allow a refresh to occur mid-session.

The amount of fate points a player gets at a refresh is called his **refresh rate** and it is usually equal to the number of aspects the player has. When a refresh occurs, players bring their number of fate points **up to** their refresh rate. If they have more, their total does not change.

EARNING NEW FATE POINTS

Players earn fate points when their aspects create problems for them. When this occurs, it’s said that the aspect **compels** the character. When the player ends up in a situation where his compelled aspect suggests a problematic course of action, the GM should offer the player a choice: He can *spend* a fate point to ignore the aspect, or he can act in accordance with the aspect and *earn* a fate point. Sometimes, the GM may also simply award a fate

point to a player without explanation, indicating that an aspect is going to complicate an upcoming situation. Players can refuse that point and spend one of their own to avoid the complication, but it's not a good idea, as that probably means the GM will use things that *aren't* tied to you.

This isn't just the GM's show; players can trigger compels as well either by explicitly indicating that an aspect may be complicating things, or by playing to their aspects from the get-go and reminding the GM after the fact that they already behaved as if compelled. The GM isn't always obligated to agree that a compel is appropriate, but it's important that players participate here. See the Aspects section below for more detailed treatment of compels.

ASPECTS

Characters have a set of attributes called **aspects**. Aspects cover a wide range of elements and should collectively paint a decent picture of *who* the character is, what he's *connected* to, and what's *important* to him. (By contrast, skills could be said to paint a similar picture of what the character can *do*.) Aspects can be relationships, beliefs, catchphrases, descriptors, items or pretty much anything else that paints a picture of the character.

Scenes also have aspects. Aspects in this context serve as a compact way to describe the relevant details of an environment, and can be used by the characters present in the scene. See Encountering Other Aspects later on in this section.

In terms of game rules, aspects are the main avenue by which a player gains or spends **fate points**, a kind of currency that can be spent for bonuses or earned when aspects cause problems for the player.

PICKING CHARACTER ASPECTS

More than anything else, aspects are a player's most explicit way of telling the GM, "This is the stuff I want to see in the game". If the player picks an aspect like "Death Defying", then he should be able to fully expect that the GM will put him in death-defying situations. GMs should want players to use their aspects; players should pick the ones they want to use, and GMs should encourage them to choose

aspects that will be both interesting and useful. Once a player decides on an idea for an aspect, he needs to figure out what aspect name best describes what he intends; there are usually many possible names for a desired aspect, which can make this choice somewhat difficult. However, most of the time, an aspect is going to be a **phrase**, a **person** or a **prop**.

A **phrase** can be anything from a descriptive phrase ("Strong As An Cyborg") to a simple descriptor ("Beefy"), or even a literal quote ("Keeton Told Me Not To!"). Phrase aspects come into play based on how well the situation matches them; a colorful phrase adds a lot of flavor and innately suggests several different ways to use it. As opposed to Traits, which have generally a clear purpose, Aspects are often double-edged and open to interpretation.

A **person** can be anyone important to the character. A friend, an enemy, a family member, a sidekick, a mentor – as long as someone matters to the character, he makes an appropriate aspect. A person aspect is most easily used when that person is in the scene with the character, but the aspect can come up in other ways, depending upon the person's history and relationship with the character. For example, if a character has his mentor as an aspect, that aspect might be useful for things his mentor would have instructed him on. **Props** are things, places or even ideas – anything external to the character that isn't a person. A prop can be useful if it's something the character has with him, or if it's the crux of a conflict, but it may also imply things about the character, or even be useful in its absence (if only I had my "Ecto-Plasmic Accelerator"!)." These three categories of aspects aren't hard and fast. An aspect like "Keeton needs some slime!" has elements of both a phrase and a person, and that's just fine. We've just provided these categories to help provide a way to think about how to frame aspects.

WHY WOULD I WANT A BAD ASPECT?

You may have noticed that a number of the aspects throughout this book are "bad" aspects – they indicate a downside for a character, either in their directly negative connotations, or in their two-edged nature. Aspects like Drunkard, Sucker, Stubborn, and Honest all suggest situations where the character will have to behave a certain way – making an ass of himself at an important social function, falling for a

line of bull, failing to back down when it's important to do so, or speaking truth when truth is the path to greatest harm. So why put such aspects on your sheet if they're only going to make trouble for you? Simple: you want that kind of trouble. On a basic, game-rules footing, "bad" aspects are a direct line to getting you more fate points – and fate points are the electricity that powers some of the more potent *positive* uses of your aspects. We'll get more into how aspects can generate and use fate points later on in this chapter.

Outside of just the rules, a "bad" aspect adds interest and story to a character, much the same way that negative Traits do, in a way that purely positive aspects cannot. This sort of interest means time in the limelight. If someone's trying to take advantage of the fact your character's a Sucker, that's an important point in the story, and the camera's going to focus on it. "Bad" aspects also immediately suggest story to your GM; they tell her how to hook your character in. From the perspective of playing the game to get involved and have fun, there's nothing but good in this sort of "bad". Clever players will also find positive ways to use "bad" aspects. The Drunkard might get looked over more easily by prying eyes as "just a drunk"; someone who's Stubborn will be more determined to achieve his goals. This brings us the "secret" truth about aspects: the ones that are most useful are the ones that are the most *interesting*. And *interesting* comes most strongly from aspects that are *neither* purely good nor purely bad. As a rule of thumb, when picking an aspect, think of three situations where you can see the aspect coming into play. If you've got one reasonably positive situation and one reasonably negative situation out of that set, you're golden! If they're all of one type, you may want to reconsider how you've worded your aspect – try to put a little of what's missing in there. Ultimately, though, one aspect that's "all good" or "all bad" isn't that much of a problem, so long as you have a good mix throughout your whole set.

STORY VS. SITUATION

Here's a point to follow on the previous ones: more often than not, aspects tend to divide into another set of two camps – **story** and **situation** – and it's a good idea to make sure you have aspects of each type.

Story aspects suggest one or more sources for stories involving the character, by bringing in an external element from the world at large. People and prop aspects are almost exclusively story aspects. Phrase aspects *might* be story aspects, but if they are, it's usually because they mix in some elements of the other two Ps. You can most easily identify a story aspect by asking yourself if the aspect, independent of the character, is something other characters might interact with, affect, and change. Strange cults, lost artifacts, enemies, hidden lairs, foreign lands, spouses, and more, all fit into this category.

Situation aspects suggest the *kind* of situations a character might be in much more than they suggest the *origin* of those situations. Phrase aspects fall strongly into this camp, and they operate as a statement to the GM of the style of stories the player wants his character to be in. Phrase aspects like "Nick of Time", "Stubborn as a Mule", and "Last Man Standing" all suggest vivid situations – ones which should rightly repeat themselves over the course of playing the character – but don't really suggest the *context* of those situations.

We're taking a few moments to focus on the split between story and situation aspects, because it's an easy one to miss if you're not looking for it. You can very easily fall into the trap of creating a character who only has situation aspects. On the surface, situation aspects may be more attractive, since they usually apply in a multitude of circumstances; certainly, you'll want to have at least a few situation aspects in your repertoire. But if situation aspects are *all* that your character offers to the game, you run a real risk of being difficult to hook into the bigger storyline. This is why you should be certain to include a few story aspects on your character. Fundamentally, story aspects offer easy hooks to your GM to pull you into her story. You want this, since you came to the party to play the game. But it's more than just that. By providing story aspects, you've provided some things which exist separately from your character. At the core of it, this means you've helped to build the game world. You've got ownership and stakes in the bigger picture. The GM will be grateful to you for it, and that kind of gratitude pays out in the form of a more satisfying game.

GETTING ON THE SAME PAGE

You may have noticed that, so far, we're using a lot of ink to talk about how your aspects communicate things about your character to the GM. We mean it. Out of all the things in the game, aspects are probably the clearest message you can send to the GM about what you want from the game, short of walking right up to the GM and saying so. Also, in all likelihood, the GM is going to have copies of your character sheets when you're not around, so the aspects you've picked are going to represent you in absentia. Once you've picked all the aspects for your character, take a step back and look at them as a whole, and ask yourself if they make the kind of representation you'd want them to. If they don't, change them!

By themselves, aspects can't say it *all*, of course, and it's important to remember that. Short of making each aspect a paragraph or essay, you're dealing with a few short, catchy phrases and names here. You want them reasonably short, because you want to be able to talk about them casually without running out of breath. But the brevity of an aspect's name means some things are left unspoken. Take the time with the GM to speak these unspoken things when you can. Both the player and the GM should look at an aspect not as the end of an idea, but the start of one. You're both going to bring your own ideas of what the aspect means to the table and, at least to some extent, you're both right. Usually this works out fine – the combined perspectives make the whole greater than the sum – but sometimes the GM and the player will have a radically different idea of what the aspect entails. Be clear with one another, and figure out how to iron out any differences – ideally, *before* the fate points start flying.

That said, after you've gotten one or more sessions of play under your belt, you might feel like you've picked one or more aspects that don't "feel right". We're sympathetic to that, and your GM should be, too. If an aspect doesn't seem to be working out well for you, you should feel free to ask your GM if you can change it.

USING ASPECTS

The process of using an aspect begins by declaring that one is relevant. Either the player or the GM may make this declaration. Then, determine if the

aspect's relevance is working for or against the character who has the aspect. As a *general* rule of thumb, if it's *for*, the owner spends a fate point. If it's *against*, the owner gains a fate point unless he pays to avoid it. This is the guiding principle that all specific uses of aspects – invoking, tagging, compelling – start from. Each type of aspect use has specific rules governing how it functions, but if you ever find yourself confused about from there.

INVOKING ASPECTS

An aspect can be used to give you a bonus, when that aspect applies to the situation you are in. Doing this requires **spending a fate point** (see below), and is called **invoking the aspect**. In this context, the aspect makes the character better at whatever it is he's doing, because the aspect in some way applies to the situation. Invoking an aspect can be used to either:

- 1 Pick up all the dice you rolled and re-roll them, or
- 2 Leave the dice alone and add 4 to the result.
- 3 Roll one additional d8.

It is possible to use more than one aspect on a single roll, but you cannot use the *same* aspect more than once on the same roll or action; even if you've re-rolled the dice, that's still the "same roll". Re-rolls are riskier than just taking the +2 bonus – you can always end up worsening things or not making much improvement – but when a lot of • dice hit the table, a reroll can be a much cheaper way to recover. The GM is the final arbiter of when an aspect is or is not appropriate (see "Getting On the Same Page"). Usually this means the player must invoke an aspect that is appropriate to the situation at hand. If the player wants to invoke an inappropriate seeming aspect, he should be given a chance to describe how the action is appropriate to the aspect. The GM's priority here is not to strictly limit the use of aspects but rather, to encourage their appropriate use by encouraging players to make decisions that keep their aspects interesting.

INVOKING FOR EFFECT

A player can also **invoke an aspect for effect**, using it for a related benefit that is not related to a die roll or skill use at all. This costs a fate point like any other invocation does. For example, a player could invoke a Secret Organization aspect to declare that the group has a chapter in town.

This is subject to the same sort of restrictions as spending fate points for minor declarations but is more potent due to the focus of the aspect. To be explicit, when an aspect is part of a declaration, it can make the less plausible more plausible, thus allowing the player to “get away with” more. The scope of the minor declaration can be ... well, less minor, and the GM is encouraged to keep this in mind.

For example, if the GM is inclined to hem and haw over whether or not the character can spend a fate point to declare that he arrives at the exactly right moment, invoking the character’s Perfect Timing or Grand Entrance aspect for that same effect should remove any of the GM’s doubts. That said, this is not a method for the players to get away with anything; as always, aspect invocation is only allowed when the GM approves.

ENCOUNTERING OTHER ASPECTS

The aspects on your character are not the only aspects that you can potentially use. Your fellow players’s characters have aspects, of course, as do some NPCs; sometimes even the **scene itself** may have aspects, like Dark or Cluttered. To invoke an aspect other than your own, your character needs to directly interact with the object, location, or person that has the aspect you want to invoke, in a way appropriate to the action in progress. This means that if a scene has an aspect of Cargo (since it’s on a freighter), not only does that mean characters can be described as hiding behind or inside cargo containers, but they can also invoke the Cargo Aspect when they do.

TAGGING

Tagging refers to the act of invoking an aspect that isn’t your own; this includes scene aspects and aspects on other characters. In most respects this functions the same way as with an aspect on your own character’s sheet – spend the fate point, and get either a +4bonus or a re-roll.

Taggable aspects are sometimes introduced into play as the result of your character’s action. Whenever an aspect is introduced into play like this, it’s because the character has made some sort of effort to bring it to the fore – he’s rolled well on whatever skill check brought the aspect onto the map. Because this is the case, he’s earned the right to tag

the aspect in question once, without spending a fate point. In this way he’s able to turn his previous success into a momentary advantage without it hitting his fate point budget. A free tag is subject to one key limitation: it must occur **immediately** after the aspect’s been brought into play. Some minor delay isn’t encouraged, but is acceptable. This usually means that the free tag must be taken within the **same** scene that the aspect was introduced. The player who introduced the aspect has the option to pass his free tag to another character if he so wishes. This can allow for some great setup maneuvers in a fight; one person maneuvers to place an aspect on a target, then passes the free tag to an ally, who attacks, using the advantage. This can only be done, however, if it is reasonable that the advantage could be “passed off”. A sniper who uses a maneuver to aim his rifle at a target, putting an “In My Sights” aspect on it, can’t pass the advantage to someone else –the aspect placed is specific to him. But if one pugilist used a maneuver to put an “Off Balance” aspect on a foe, he could reasonably pass the advantage to his buddy who moves in for the knockout blow. When the character does spend a fate point to tag another character’s aspect, it might mean that the character getting tagged is due a reward. If the character tagging is getting a benefit out of it that is to the tagged character’s *detriment*, then the fate point spent on the tag goes to the tagged character at the end of the exchange (*i.e.*, he can’t use it until the next one).

GUESSING ASPECTS

Tags usually happen when the tagger has a clear idea of what aspect is there to be tagged. But this is not always the case; sometimes, the player’s making a *guess*. Guesses are allowed, but are subject to some special rules. If the guess hits reasonably close to the mark conceptually, even if it doesn’t exactly match the aspect’s name, the GM should exercise some flexibility and allow it. For example, someone might guess that a scene has a Darkness aspect on it and ask if they can tag it for their Stealth roll. Even though the scene had the aspect “Shadowed Corners” instead, this is reasonably close to the mark; the GM should reveal that the aspect is Shadowed Corners, and allow the tag. If the guess just plain misses the mark, and the fact that the mark was missed doesn’t constitute a significant, potentially secret, piece of information, the player should get the chance to reconsider and take back his fate point. Using the same example, if the player was asking if the scene had a Darkness aspect, and

the GM instead believes the scene is too well lit for that, she would simply tell the player it's a no-go. While the fact that the scene is well lit is certainly important, it's something the player could discover with a simple question and answer about the details of the scene, so it doesn't really rate as a secret; he shouldn't be charged a fate point for that. If the guess misses the mark, but missing the mark tells the player something significant and potentially secret, the fate point is still spent. This sort of circumstance almost never comes up with scene aspects, but can come up when guessing at aspects on another character. For example, if a character is looking to tag someone's "Guilty Conscience" to help him intimidate that target, and it turns out that the target doesn't have that aspect for him to tag, the fate point stays spent, because it is significant and secret that the target does *not* have an aspect that's even in the ballpark of "Guilty Conscience". In the worst case scenario, a character's guess misses the mark because he's been duped. This will most often happen as the result of a Interaction action, although it might arise from other circumstances. In such a case, the deceiver has the option to return the fate point to the tagger, or to leave it spent. If he leaves it spent, the tagger just learned he was duped. The deceiver does not get this spent fate point for himself – it's simply gone. If he returns it to the tagger, things may actually be a bit worse for the tagger: the deceiver gets to place a temporary aspect on him (and the first tag's for free, as above), representing how the deceiver managed to snooker the target. Regardless, guesses can't, and shouldn't, be made willy-nilly – there must always be a justification for making the guess. If the guess seems unjustified – if the player is "shotgunning" guesses to randomly try to figure out another character's aspects – the GM is completely justified in shutting that player down cold.

COMPELLING ASPECTS

An aspect can also allow a player to gain more fate points, by bringing complications and troubling circumstances into his character's life. When this occurs, it's referred to as **compelling the aspect**. The GM performs compels; when she compels someone's aspect, she's indicating that the character is in a position where the aspect could create a problem. However, players can cause the GM to compel another character's aspects, via tagging, with a similar rationale and results (see "Tagging for

Effect", above). The target whose aspect is compelled usually has the choice of **spending a fate point** and ignoring the aspect, or taking the consequences and limitations on his choices and **receiving a fate point**. When the target accepts the fate point, the aspect is officially **compelled**. There are a couple of ways an aspect can complicate a character's life. An aspect may limit actions and choice. If a character is given a situation where he would normally have a number of choices, and limiting those choices to act in accordance with his aspect is going to make more trouble for the character, that's grounds to compel the aspect. It's important to note that an aspect may dictate the *type* of action, but it usually shouldn't dictate the *precise* action, which is always the player's decision. In this way, the compel highlights the difficulty of the choices at hand by placing limits on those choices.

An aspect may also *complicate* a situation, rather than directly limiting a character's choices. If everything would be going along normally, and the aspect makes things more difficult or introduces an unexpected twist, that's also grounds for a compel. In some cases, complications may suggest that certain consequences are mandated, such as failing at a particular action – perhaps the character would succeed at a defense roll against a Deceit action, but his Gullible aspect is compelled, forcing a failure if accepted.

Sometimes the aspect may add a complication "offscreen", such as when the GM decides to use a character's personal nemesis as the villain for a session. In such a case the GM should remember to give the character a fate point. This is *technically* a compel – it does complicate things – but more practically it's more of a "thank you" to the player for giving the GM a hook to build the adventure around, and is done without offering the player the option to buy out of it.

NEGOTIATING A COMPEL

In play, both the GM and players can initiate compels. When the GM initiates a compel, the process is very simple. The GM remarks that the aspect might be appropriate here, and offers the player a fate point and the player either accepts it and takes appropriate action or accepts appropriate consequence, or he pays one of his fate points to the GM and chooses not to accept the consequences of the compel.

In a perfect world, the GM is always aware of all aspects and always knows when they should be compelled and rewarded. In practice, the GM is keeping track of a *lot* of stuff, and may not realize that a player has an aspect that is appropriate to the situation. When that happens, the player should feel free to capture the GM's attention and point to the appropriate aspect, and hold up a fate point, indicating that he thinks it's time for a compel. The GM will then do one of two things.

1. She may hold up a fate point of her own, as if she were compelling the aspect, offering the player a choice to pay or be paid.
2. She may defer, offering a brief explanation. The GM may defer for any reason – but doing so too often is potential grounds for gathering up a posse and driving the GM out of town covered in tar and feathers.

When a player calls attention to one of his character's aspects, it may be as formal as "I think my Greedy aspect applies here" or it may be more conversational, like "Boy, this is tough. I mean, I am pretty * Greedy * " (brandishes a fate point). There's no one way to do it, and groups are encouraged to fall into whatever pattern is most comfortable for them.

"ACCIDENTAL" COMPELS

Sometimes characters simply play to their aspects without thinking to compel them. When that happens, the GM should make a note of it (sometimes with the player reminding her) and, if possible, award the player with a fate point retroactively. If it's too late for that, the GM should make a note to give that player one extra fate point next session.

It's important that the GM keep in mind what sorts of things would normally constitute a compel. Compels happen in order to make certain choices or situations more difficult or more dramatic for the compelled character. Certainly, staying in character and playing in a way that's appropriate to a character's aspects should be praised; but it should be rewarded only when the player's aspect consistent play has actively made his character's choices more difficult.

CONFLICTING OR CONTRADICTIONARY ASPECTS

Occasionally a character's aspects will be in head to head conflict with one another. This should not be

seen as a problem — rather, it's an opportunity for high drama! When two aspects are in conflict with one another, they are both subject to a compel. If the player can't see a way to act in accordance with both aspects, he must buy off at least one of them. In a number of cases, this can lead to a "zero sum", where one compel is accepted, gaining a fate point, and the other is refused, spending that fate point. If the player can see clear to acting in accordance with both – fantastic! He's just gotten himself two fate points (and a world of trouble). The GM needn't always press the issue in this fashion. Nothing says she has to compel both aspects. But occasionally it's more interesting if she does.

ESCALATION

Rarely, in moments of high tension or drama, the GM can choose to **escalate** a compel. This is an *optional rule*, and really should only be used when the character getting compelled is having a *defining moment* in his or her story. Escalation can occur only when a player has bought out of a compel. To escalate, the GM slides forward a second fate point, and prompts the player with something like, "Are you sure...?" If the player accepts, he'll get two fate points instead of one; if he refuses, it's going to cost him two fate points instead of one. In the rarest of cases, facing a second refusal, the GM may escalate a final time, making the reward and cost to buy out three fate points. If the player is willing to spend three to refuse this truly monstrous compulsion, the book is closed. If a player's willing to step it up, he can prompt the GM to start an escalation as well. When sliding forward his first fate point to buy off a compel, the player should say something like, "I won't go along for one fate point..." Most GMs will look at the situation at that point and decide whether or not it's a moment of high drama; if it isn't, they'll take the proffered point, but if it is, the escalation's on!

Whatever the case, escalation should be done sparingly; it's best as a spice, and can be overwhelming as a main dish.

ASPECT EXAMPLES

Consult the SotC SRD for lists of potential examples for Aspects.

ENCOUNTERS, ROUNDS, TURNS, AND ACTIONS

Typically, whenever there is some type of hostile enemy who comes up against the players, the group enters into an encounter. Encounters are broken down into rounds and turns.

THE ROUND

The first round of an encounter begins by all characters rolling to see who acts first. Each player rolls a number of d8 equal to his or her Agility Attribute + Perception attribute and add in any traits that may be associated. Characters get to take their turns in order from the person who rolled the highest down to the person who rolled the lowest. The round is over after everyone has had their turn.

TURNS

On each round, a player gets to make at least one turn, perhaps more (see extra turns below). A character or monster gets to make several different actions on his or her turn. The standard turn takes about 5-8 seconds. Keep that in mind when you are taking actions. If an action could not possibly be performed in that amount of time, you may have to take several turns to do it. The total number of actions you can make on a turn is determined by Action Points. Every character has 6 total action points (but may get additional action points through traits, see below). Enemies may have more or less action points to use toward performing actions.

Free Actions – Cost 0

Free actions can be made for free. You can do any number of these per round; mostly they are used to talk. Just keep in mind the amount of time that a standard turn would take when blabbering on.

Fast Actions – Cost 1

A character can perform a number of fast actions, such as picking up something, putting it away, or reloading a weapon. These actions are typically very cheap.

Movement Actions – Cost 2

Although this game does not use any defined form of movement, characters may use a movement action

to get into a position which would be more viable to their strategy.

Slow Action – Cost 3

Slow Actions are things like casting spells to banish ghosts, shoot with a gun, or make a simple attack. Virtually anything that isn't defined above would be considered a slow action.

GAINING EXTRA ACTIONS

For every point of agility greater than 6 that a character has, he or she gets an extra Action Point. Characters can also get extra action points through External traits granted to them through items. A powerful item might decrease the Action Point cost to use attack or move, depending on the effects that item's traits offer.

GETTING EXTRA TURNS

If a character has an agility score of 8 and also has traits through items which would grant him or her bonus points to agility, he or she may get an extra full turn. However, if a character elects to take an extra turn, he or she can never have more than 6 Action Points on that turn.

Extra Turns are taken at the end of the standard round. Extra Turns are made in the same order as the order progressed in the order. For example, if two characters or creatures in an encounter both have an extra turn, the person who acted the fastest the first time around, gets to act first when they start to take Extra Turns.

RULE OF 4

Generally, any time you would gain a static bonus or damage result equal to 4, you may instead roll 1d8 and gamble on the result. You can see this rule at work in Aspects. Whenever you invoke an aspect, you may gain a +4 static bonus, or you may roll one additional d8. Also, in the previous example of the 44 Magnum, you may roll 1d8 instead of dealing 4 damage – do you feel lucky?

RULE OF 8D8

You may never roll more than 8d8 at one time. Whenever you roll 8d8 and would roll more dice beyond that, you instead add 5 instead of rolling more dice.

SECTION 4 – CHARACTER CREATION

Every Ghost Runner needs a few essentials, a sense of humor, a sense of sanity, and a sense of kicking ass and taking names. I find that the 44 Magnum and some Anti-Ectoplasm Rounds go a long way towards the lattermost category. – Keeton

In this section you will find all the information you need to make a Ghost Runner. This section provides the rules for starting a character, and also contains some example traits, aspects, and equipment, with ideas for equipment effects as well.

GETTING STARTED

Creating a Ghost Runner is a simple process. You begin the game with 8 Attribute Points, which you can distribute freely among your 8 attributes. You are also given 40 Points which you can use to “buy” traits and equipment. You also start the game with 8 Aspects; you never get new aspects, but you may have a chance to change out an Aspect at some point in the game if your GM agrees.

GUIDELINES

During Character Creation, you may spend your starting points to buy Attributes, Traits, and Equipment based on the following guidelines.

- Attributes Cost 8 Points regardless of the level.
- Traits cost varying amount based on the generality of the Trait: General Traits cost 4 Points, Average Traits cost 2 Points and Specific Traits cost 1 point. You have to pay this cost again to level the trait up. A level 2 General Trait would cost 8 points.
- Equipment: Equipment can be purchased for a number of points equal to the level of the item.

You may not increase any attribute past level 5 during character creation. You may also never have a Trait passed level 5 during character creation. This same rule applies for Equipment. You may not buy any Equipment beyond level 5 during Character creation.

EXAMPLE CHARACTER CREATION

NPC – Keeton, the Cynical Vet

Keeton begins with 8 Attribute points. He puts 2 points into Dexterity, Agility, and Perception. He then puts 1 point into Willpower and Interaction.

Using his 40 Points, he puts an additional 1 point into Dexterity and Agility, and adds a point into Intelligence.

Keeton spends 8 points to buy a L.2 Trait called Firearms Expert. This will give him a +2d8 to his dice pool for any action with any type of firearms which uses Dexterity as an associated attribute.

Keeton then spends another 4 points to buy a L.1 General Trait called Scientific Warfare. This will give him +1d8 whenever he wants to make an attack with a scientific weapon which uses Intelligence as a

Keeton then spends 2 points to buy a L.2 44 Magnum. This weapon adds 2d8 to his die pool when using it and deals 4 damage.

Keeton spends 1 point to buy L.1 Anti-Ectoplasm Ammo. This ammo adds 1d8 to his die pool and has the effect that it can deal damage to any enemy that has the Aspect “Ectoplasm means you can’t hit me.”

Keeton gains 3 points by taking a L.3 specific trait called “Straight Talker”. He suffers a -3 penalty to his die pool on any attempt to talk around a topic.

Keeton then spends 4 points to buy a L.4 “Anti-possession helmet.” This piece of armor grants him a +4 bonus to mental defense.

Keeton then thinks about his aspects....

TRAITS, ASPECTS, AND EQUIPMENT

This is a roleplaying game – a game of the mind. This game doesn't use miniatures, it doesn't use battle mats, it doesn't use much. All you have going into it is you, your stories, and your creativity. Make use of the last one as much as you can.

USING YOUR IMAGINATION

Everybody has an imagination. Have you used yours lately? This game is one that requires an imagination. Some people might find that intimidating, but you should feel it fun and liberating. Take advantage of the fact that you are not tied down by any strict lists, tables, or splat books full of game elements that you need to take into account when playing the game or building your character. All you really need is what is in your head. But, you can follow some of these guidelines and it will serve you a lot better when making your character and playing the game.

ATTRIBUTES AS A BENCHMARK

One of the few game elements which is actually explained here in detail are character attributes. These 8 attributes should cover just about any circumstance that comes up in the game. Use these Attributes as a benchmark for imagining traits, equipment and aspects for your character.

You can see the way attributes do different things for your character; they play an important part in deciding your initiative, your defenses, and your attacks. Use this to your advantage and think up new combinations for gear and for traits.

Maybe you want to design a trait which offers you a bonus to your initiative. Think about how specific that would be and then go from there. Any powerful effect in the game which you can get a lot of the time should cost more points to get. An element that makes you go faster in the round, but doesn't do anything else, might be an average breadth trait. The same applies to items. If you are making an item that does the same thing it might not cost as much, since you only get the benefit if you have the item.

NO POWERGAMING

Ghost Runners is not a game for power gamers. In order to play this game, each player needs to take a good deal of responsibility. You are playing this game to be creative, use your imagination, and have some fun. Don't try and break the system. The GM ultimately has the power to overrule anything you create, so don't try and game it. It is much more fun for everyone involved if you play the game nice and fair.

POWER GUIDELINES

The following provide some good guidelines for power in this game.

Any trait which can be used 100% of the time should be considered both powerful and general. It should cost quite a bit to purchase. Don't overdo it.

Damage, for weapons is one of the most difficult things to manage. Try to use the below values as a general guidelines of power.

>8 Damage – this is very powerful. Any item which deals this much damage is potentially game defining. 8 shots from a weapon of this size will kill anything in the game. For most characters, 2-3 shots is enough to take you down.

5-8 Damage – This is fairly powerful and weapons of this power should be limited.

4 Damage – Four is the magic number in this game. You get to roll 1d8 whenever you roll anything greater than 4, think about that. 4 alone isn't so powerful, but the d8 gamble can pay off.

3 Damage – Pretty Solid. 3 Damage is pretty much the sweat spot for weapons in this game. A 3 Damage weapon should not cost too much; any ghost runner should be able to have at least one 3 Damage weapon.

2 Damage – Ok. 2 Damage weapons are probably a good go to for weapons that are tied to an attribute that you are not strong in.

1 Damage – The Backup. 1 Damage weapons are things that you don't use on a daily basis. Maybe you'll pick one of these up if something goes wrong.

MORE THAN JUST STATS

Before you actually start to buy attributes, traits, equipment, etc. you want to give some good thought to your party and your character. Creating a good character for Ghost Runner is pretty much born when you start to right your bio. Think about how you came into contact with the 9th Layer. Were you recruited by one of the Congloms? Were you a black magic enthusiast who sought out the occult only to ultimately find it? Were you just a bookworm, an academic, who spent too much time in the lab, and when you went out for Chinese food you saw a ghost possessing the robot behind the counter? There are a lot of options you can think about for building your character. Start at the beginning and go from there. Think about who you were before you saw the 9th Layer. Think about who you became after you were converted.

COLLECTIVE STORY TELLING

Ghost Runner is a game driven by the players. It is mainly about their stories. But, you aren't alone at the table, there are a whole lot of other stories being told here. They aren't all just yours. Aspects are a great place where you can invest a little bit of someone else's story into your character. You might want to try and add in at least one aspect relating to each of the other characters at the table. Between 2-3 of your Aspects should have some crossover between the other players in the game.

Crossover Aspects are areas where you are putting someone else into your story. You may not have power over what other characters do with their Aspects, but you have the power over yours. You have the power to say that at X point in time, you met MR. Y and you became allies of some kind.

Although it is really easy to take narrative control with your Aspects and other people's stories during character creation, you shouldn't go overboard with this respect. They have their own story that they want to tell. Don't over extend yourself. Be nice and get the other player's permission.

PRETTY LITTLE THINGS

There are a lot of things that you don't really need to "buy" during character creation. The basic rule of thumb is that only things that have a statistical benefit to your character and the dice you roll needs to be purchases using buy points.

A Ghost Runner is a pretty nice job. For the most part, people who work with the Congloms are very well taken care of. You probably have access to a fancy auto of some kind, maybe it's even a V-TAL. Your residence is also covered. You should feel free to go crazy and describe all the cool stuff that you have at your place. Every Ghost Runner needs a nice spot to lay there head, so feel free to pimp out your crib, so to speak.

EXCEPTION – ORIGIN STORIES

Although most Ghost Runners start the game already having been contacted by the Congloms, maybe in your game you want to start playing before you have achieved all the riches that are garnered by being a member of the middle class.

If this is the case, you are most likely not going to be privy to all the cool toys that most runners possess. Finding gear is going to be much harder, and your place of residence might be nothing more than a capsule hotel in a New York sky-rise. If you're going to go this route with your story, be careful. You want all the people in the group to be on the same page. If one person is totally tooled out with cool stuff and one player isn't, envy might enter into the game and that is never a good way to have a fun time.



Author Phillip Ritz from New York, NY, USA

Every Ghost Runner Should give a good thought to his or her stronghold; abandoned firehouses work great. Every Ghost Runner can pretty much have his pick of real estate. That is just one of the perks of the job. -Keeton

SECTION 5 - ADVICE FOR THE GM

I have seen some seriously nasty stuff in my day, but I gotta say, having a guardian angel watching over you sure makes it a whole lot easier to take in. Then again, she's not going to be meeting me back at the firehouse at the end of the day... - Keeton

Players, you need read no further. This section is exclusively for the GM. It will give some tips about running the game as well as a few sample creatures.

RUNNING GHOST RUNNER

Ghost Runner is a game about telling stories. More than anything else, always keep that in mind. Your job, as the GM, is not to tell your own story, but to tell you're the story you want to tell, while telling the stories of all the characters belonging to all of your players in the game.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Always remember the Golden Rule of gaming when playing Ghost Runner, "Keep it Fun!" If you're not having fun playing this game, you're doing it wrong, or the writers did it wrong making the game.

WAYS TO MAKE THIS GAME FUN

REWARD YOUR PLAYERS

One way to make the game fun for your players is to reward them. Though money in this game is largely unimportant, the points which they used to create their character are. Feel free to give out additional buy points later in the game, which they can then use to purchase more traits, attributes, or equipment. Use the same rules for character creation when doing something along these lines. Don't overdo it. One basic encounter might be worth 1 Buy Point, but if it's really easy, then don't give it away. You don't want your players to have complete instant gratification. They should have to earn those character defining Buy Points for themselves.

MOVING RIGHT ALONG

There are a lot of ways that you can keep this game fun and make it interesting for the players. Above all

else, keep the game moving. Combat should never take a long time. This game should be fairly fast paced. Keep things moving along. Ideally, if you spend about 20 minutes on one encounter, then you are doing a pretty good job of keeping the game moving right along.

KEEP THE STORY INTERESTING.

This tip might take a long time and a lot of preparation, but it really shouldn't have to. With about an hour of note taking and idea crunching, you should be able to generate enough story ideas to keep the game moving all session long. Using well known tropes and stories and spinning them in a bit of twisted way is a great way to make stories quickly and easily. If all else fails, search around the internet for some great ideas about running an RPG campaign (chances are, if you are reading this, you probably don't need any advice in this respect).

Challenge Your Players

In order to make the game fun, you want to challenge your players. This can be a hard line to walk for a lot of GM's especially when dealing with a new game system. You want encounters to be challenging, but not so much so that your players get killed in every fight. Here you will find some guidelines outlining the game's math which might help you with the this.

MATH

A character at the beginning of the game could realistically roll 15d8 if they have maxed out one of their attributes and have also bought traits and weapons that all go along with it. Don't let them game you. They shouldn't be doing that. If they roll all those dice at once, they are definitely going to be getting past whatever you throw at them.

At the beginning of the game, a character will probably be rolling about 6-8d8 for attacks at this level. But, they probably won't want to. Because of

combo attacks, they are more likely to put some of those dice into reserve.

Keep in mind that the average roll of a d8 is 4.5. If you roll 4d8, the average result is going to be 18. At first level, it is unlikely that any of your players is going to have a defense of greater than 16, but they could potentially have a defense of 18. When determining the number of dice you are going to roll for attacks using ghosts and monsters, try to keep a single attack at around 3-5d8 when just starting up. That will get you right in the sweet spot.

PLAY TO YOUR CHARACTER'S WEAKNESSES

Every character is going to have weaknesses. Aspects are double edged. Take advantage of that fact and use it in your favor. It is always more entertaining to use a player's aspect against him and give him a FATE point, rather than simply beating him or her down with a massive hammer attached to a Ghost inside a robot. Target their weaknesses and play that up.

CHANGING HORSES MID-STREAM

Ultimately, the opponents that your players are going to go up against are your responsibility to create. Experiment with them. You can make them whatever you want. One of the ways you can do that is to have your enemies change in the middle of a fight. This works particularly well in Ghost Runner.

Every Typical Ghost that your Ghost Runners are going to go up against is probably inside a SHELS. Your players might first have to track down that SHELS and then beat it into submission with guns, sticks, etc. But, If the SHELS takes enough physical damage, the Ghost inside is likely to be exposed. Once the Ghost pops out, feel free to use the Traits and Aspects of the Ghost to its advantage.

One Aspect, which you might want to use for your enemies is "You can't hit me." This aspect can be used to keep a player from dealing any type of physical damage to a Ghost without the proper equipment.

On the flip side, the "Mindless" Aspect might mean that any attack that targets the Mind Defense is simply useless because the ghost in question has no mind to be targeted.

EXAMPLE CHARACTERS AND ENEMIES

KEETON THE CYNICAL VET

Bio – Keeton descends from a long line of proud Irish. His grandfather fought in WWII against the Chinese. Because of his lineage, he still holds a bit of grudge, because he knows about how the world once was.

Keeton is a paragon Ghost Runner. He has been doing it for a long, long time. He was recruited by an American Conglom to act as their contract for hire. He is efficient and effective at his Job.

At age 35, Keeton is a particularly notorious ladies man, but he is rarely successful because he often comes on a bit too strong. Even though he has been exposed to the 9th Layer for almost 10 years now, he still thinks all of it is a bit hard to believe. He is also not really a believer either. He doesn't hold much faith in Dante's prophecy of doom, but he does realize how bad mankind is right now.

ATTRIBUTES

Strength	2	Intelligence	3
Dexterity	5	Interaction	3
Fortitude	2	Willpower	4
Agility	3	Perception	3

Physical Health – 20

Mental Health - 20

TRAITS

- Firearms Expert L.3 +3 Bonus with All Firearms
- Scientific Warfare L.3 +3 Bonus with Science Weapons
- Smooth Talker L.1 +1 Bonus when trying to use Interaction to talk with people.
- Tough Mind L.2 +2 Bonus to Mental Defense.

ASPECTS

- "Gotta love the old 44!"
- "Too bad not more goes on in the bedroom."
- Notoriously Bad with Women
- Amateur Playboy

- “I’ll show you my defense against the dark arts... *reloads*”
- “I can’t stand Orange Chicken.”
- Friends in High Places
- “Do I always have to get covered in slime?!”

EQUIPMENT

- L.2 44 Magnum (Dexterity) 4 Damage [Physical]
- L.2 Ectoplasmic Accelerator (Intelligence) 3 Damage [Physical]
- L.3 the Holy Bible (Intelligence) 4 Damage [Mental]
- L.1 Anti-Slime Rounds (Dexterity) Used with guns to void “You can’t hit me” Aspect.

ROUGE SHELS

SHELS, which stands for Soul Housing Ectoplasmic Lawson Seals, were invented by Doctor Friedrich Lawson. He invented this advanced form of robot through meticulous research into Bionics and Cybernetics, two fields of research which active, remain largely underdeveloped. By combining these two technologies, sometimes even using human cadavers in the process, he was able to create a vessel to house Ghosts – The inside of the SHELS uses Ectoplasm, a gooey green slime, essence from other planes, as a seal which bonds with a Ghost and contains it within the metal and flesh confines vessel. If the SHELS is broken or enough of its Ectoplasmic blood is allowed to run out, the Ghost quickly becomes released into the world and proceeds to wreak even more havoc than it had hitherto been able to.

Most Ghosts when inside of a SHELS, do not realize that through destruction of their vessel that they will be released. They actually feel some type of pain attached while attached to the Vessel – feedback sent to them through their Ectoplasmic bonds. They will attempt to maintain their vessel at almost all costs – for one it prevents them from taking physical harm and secondly because while inside the SHELS, they are physically anchored to the world and cannot return to the afterlife.

ATTRIBUTES

Strength	5	Intelligence	2
Dexterity	2	Interaction	1
Fortitude	4	Willpower	4
Agility	2	Perception	2

Physical Health 30
Mental Health N/A

TRAITS

- Tough Cookie L.3 +3 Bonus to Physical Defense
- Beatdown L.2 +2 Bonus when attacking in melee
- Form Shift – When dealt enough Physical damage to destroy the SHELS, a Rouge Ghost appears.

ASPECTS

- “Mindless”
- “I’ll hit anything that moves.”
- “Must Preserve the Shell”
- “Can’t stand anti-ectoplasm bullets.”

EQUIPMENT

- L.3 Power Fists of Fury (Strength) 5 Damage [Physical]

ROUGE GHOST

Rogue Ghosts appear in the world most often because their SHELS vessel has been destroyed. However, many Rogue Ghosts just simply refuse to move on out of Purgatorio because they cling to something that they left in the world. A Rouge Ghost most often appears to be a wispy figure of their former self, but they have been driven almost mindless because of their years being trapped in Purgatorio, or, within the confines of their cybernetic SHELS prison. However, many Rogue Ghosts still hold onto some vestige of their former identity and that can often be used as a weakness for Ghost Runners.

ATTRIBUTES

Strength	1	Intelligence	2
Dexterity	1	Interaction	2
Fortitude	1	Willpower	4
Agility	4	Perception	3

Physical Health N/A
Mental Health 20

TRAITS

- Disturbed Mind L.3 +3 Bonus to Mental Defense
- Slime! L.2 +2 Bonus when making attacks with Intelligence using slime attack.

- Weak against anti-ghost weapons – When dealt Physical damage by an anti-ghost weapon the Rogue Ghost takes mental damage instead.
- Moves Through Walls and Can Fly

ASPECTS

- “Shadow of my past – Long Lost Love”
- “Do you like slime?”
- “I’ll fly away!”
- “Can’t stand anti-ectoplasm bullets.”

EQUIPMENT

- L.3 Slime Attack (Intelligence) 3 Damage [Mental]

DEMON HOUND OF INFERNIO

Of all the demons in Infernio, none are more prevalent on earth than the Demon Hounds. These horrifying beasts are usually called to the world through dark magic. They cannot, and do not, appear in the world through the possession. Instead, the travel to the world through portals or rituals, usually conjured by unknowing nerds who find themselves a real, honest to god, tome of darkness.

Demon Hounds are two headed beasts about the same size as Tigers. They have two heads and enjoy chomping on just about anything that they can get their teeth around. Although the would be considered mindless by many of the overlords of Infernio, including the great evil one himself, they are actually quite smart, at least on the same level as humans.

Demon Hounds are often come to the world leading up to encounters with dark gods of the abyss. Before the truly evil things in Infernio can enter the world, they have to send their hunting hounds ahead of them.

ATTRIBUTES

Strength	5	Intelligence	3
Dexterity	3	Interaction	1
Fortitude	5	Willpower	2
Agility	4	Perception	5

Physical Health 35
Mental Health 35

TRAITS

- Viscous Teeth L.3 +3 Bonus when attacking in Melee with teeth.
- Two Heads Make for More Fun Make an extra attack on each round.
- Hardcore +3 Bonus to both Physical and Mental Defense
- Fast, can move very quickly.

ASPECTS

- “Dogs love bones, especially big ones.”
- “Are you the keymaster?”
- “I’m going to bite your face off.”

EQUIPMENT

- L.2 Wicked canines (Strength) 3 Damage [Physical]

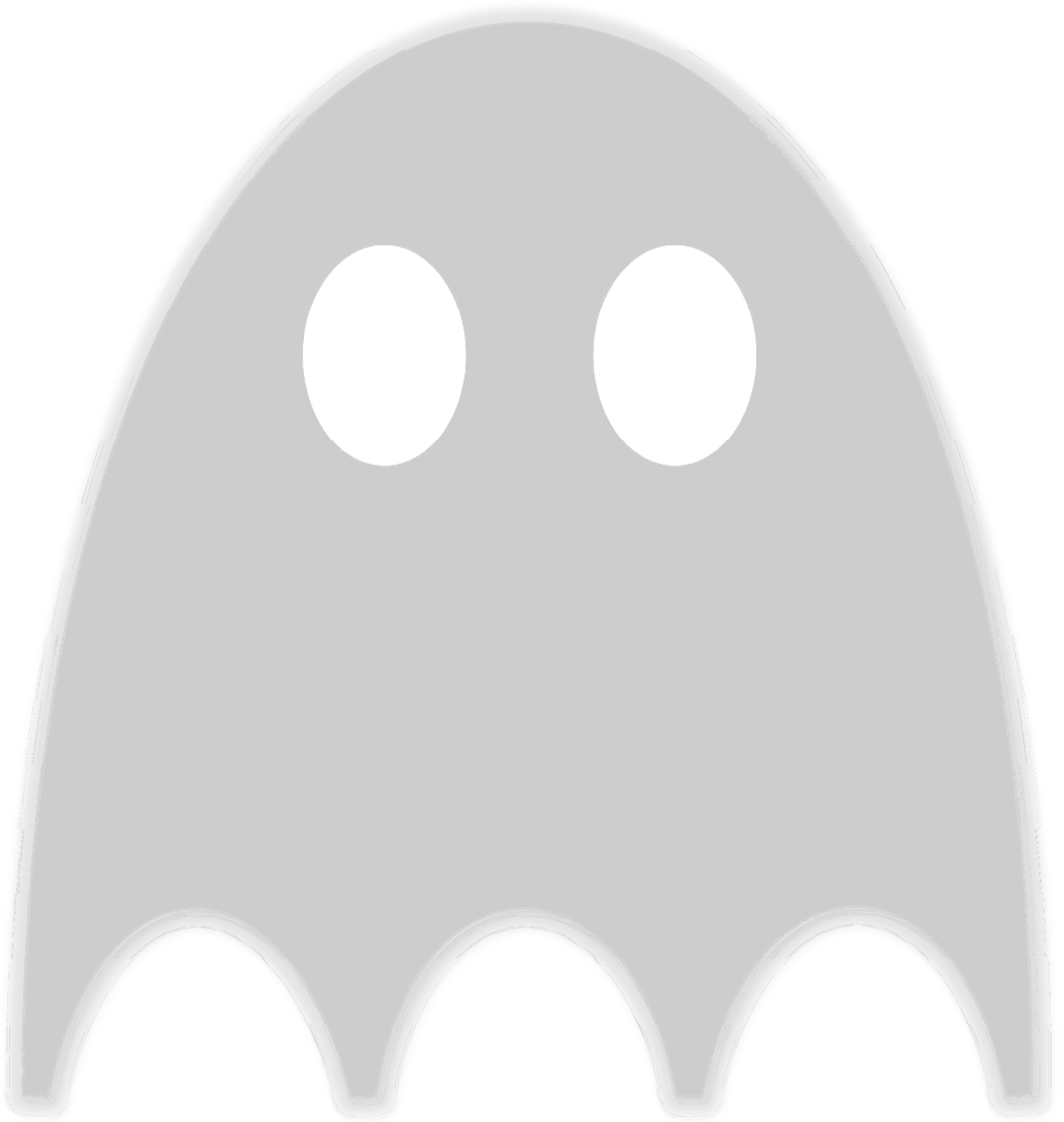
THE BIG BAD EVIL GUY

In Ghost Runner, the ultimate villain in an adventure is most likely not going to be an enemy that the characters can fight, at least in the beginning of the encounter. When creating a BBEG that you will use at the end of a series of an encounters and storyline, try to force the characters to do lots of research about said villain leading up to the fight. This search for weaknesses is something akin to hunting for Aspects. You want the characters to find out what Aspects that BBEG has before the fight through roleplay and story related activities. Then, when they finally confront the maniacal evil ghost which has crawled out of Infernio, they will be able to hit it hard with all of its weaknesses, whatever those weaknesses might be. It doesn’t have to be anything extraordinary-think simple, or perhaps funny. Maybe use something in that BBEG’s history as a clue; it has always had a sweet tooth for killing puppies for example, or maybe it really like marshmallows. Whatever you think would make for a good climactic roleplay heavy ending should be fine.

However, the final battle would not be a final battle without a cool fight, so try to make an encounter for your players that they get to fight out after they have figured out all of the BBEG’s weaknesses. In a way, figuring out its Aspects is simply the key to weakening it down to their human level. Play off of that and you’ll surely be able to create some great campaign ending villains for your game.

APPENDIX

You thought there was going to be something here didn't you? Use your imagination... see the ghost. You're seeing it now right?? Right?? - Keeton



Aspects				

Traits				
Trait Name	Attribute	Level	Breadth	Effect

Equipment				
Item Name	Attribute	Level	Breadth	Effect

Bio				