

Screaming Silence The Roleplaying Game

A Reflex Roleplaying System

by

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When Sunlit morn bids welcome
To star threaded night,
And the marrow of Society
Cascades away in atoms of dust,
Then will our mute voices raise
To the tune of such sober immorality.
Then, in that night, will all our
Silence Scream.

-Creed of the
Screaming Silence

The Business 1.1: The Moonlight Club.

The parking garage sat slumbering in the faint glow of exposed light bulbs. Its vast expanse of concrete fading off in all directions. The somber, purposeless, silence only broken by the soft click of high heels.

The beautiful woman's walk was casual but directed. The rhythmic sound of her heels on concrete, filled the dark emptiness with its only sound. Cold parking places, waiting for their morning occupants, were unknowingly trampled under foot. As she moved, no sign of fear or purpose could be seen upon her face.

The footsteps stopped as she reached the door of the elevator. She unthinkingly shifted her briefcase from one hand to the other, and pushed the up button. The elevator grumbled to life, and rolled down its shaft towards the parking garage. The woman tapped her fingers impatiently on the handle of the briefcase. Waiting.

As the door of the elevator opened, the woman moved into one long motion of action. She stepping quickly into the elevator, placed the briefcase on its floor, removed a small powered drill from her handbag, and turned to work on the elevator's control panel. In only five seconds, she had the panel free from the wall. Her nimble fingers went to work on the wiring beneath. A few wires pulled here, and attached there, and she was done.

From the front of the briefcase a small panel opened. The woman pulled a length of wire free from the compartment, attached one end to the handle of the briefcase, and the other to the back of the control panel. She stepped back, took a deep breath, and pushed two buttons on the control panel. The elevator started its slow climb.

The first button brought her to the lobby. She stepped out of the elevator, and started walking casually towards the main doors. The elevator closed its doors, and once again started to climb. The lobby was almost empty. A security guard taking to an older couple. As the beautiful woman passed, she smiled suggestively at the guard. He tipped his hat and returned her smile.

She exited the lobby via the revolving door, and into the bustling street beyond. She looked both ways, then trotted across the busy street. As she stepped up onto the far sidewalk, she paused to dig into her purse. She emerged with her compact, clicked it open, and looked at herself in its mirror. Somewhere inside the building the elevator had reached its top floor destination; swinging its doors open, slowly.

In her mirror, the beautiful woman could see the towering floors of the skyscraper. She applied a little power to her cheeks as the top floor of the skyscraper erupted in a

fireball. All eyes turned towards the explosion, but the beautiful woman simply closed her compact and continued on down the sidewalk. As she rounded the corner, the sound of sirens could be heard faintly in the distance.

* * *

Baxter Blaine told the cabby the address of the Moonlight Club and climbed into the back of the cab. He straightened his tie and suit, and caught a glance of himself in the drivers rear view mirror. Not bad, he thought, for just getting of a two hour train ride. The cab weaved its way through the streets of downtown Boston, passing the remains of the People's Oil Building.

“Christ!” Baxter said, feigning surprise as he looked up out of the cab window. “What happened there?”

“God damn bomb blew up the top floor.” The cabby replied in a thick Bostonian accent.

“Wow, really? Who put it there?” Baxter asked, already knowing the answer.

“Those Screaming Silence maniacs, who else? Christ, those guys must be insane! Why the hell would anyone want to blow up an office building?!”

“Why indeed.” Baxter replied, and smiled.

* * *

The cab pulled up in front of the Moonlight Club. Baxter climbed out and paid the cabby well. He stepped up onto the sidewalk and walked through the Club's front doors. As always, Alfonzo was there to greet him.

“Good evening Mr. Blaine. It is a pleasure to see you again. Your usual table in the bar?”

“Err, yes Alfonzo, that will be fine.” Alfonzo lead Baxter across the restaurant floor, to the bar in the back room. Baxter pulled himself up to the bar and ordered a rum and coke. Paddy, the barman, smiled at Baxter as he poured the drink. Paddy took Baxter's money and handed Baxter his drink.

“Jeez Paddy, the drinks are sure getting expensive around here.” Baxter joked as he looked at the 60 cents change returned from his five dollars.

“Oh now Baxy, its a special night don’t you know. Everything’s going to be a little more expensive.” Baxter never knew if Paddy was putting on his Irish accent on. Baxter seriously doubted that Paddy was actually from Ireland.

“What’s so special about tonight?” Baxter asked, sipping at his drink.

“Why, your lass is performing. That’s always something special.”

“Really?” Was all that Baxter could think to say. Baxter stared into his drink and rubbed his eyes. God, a floor show sure as hell wasn’t enough reason for Joe Jo to make Baxter cross half of New England to be here tonight. Baxter knew that something big must be going down. Only one way to find out, Baxter thought. He gulped down the rest of his drink and climb off his stool. “Hay Paddy.” He said as he pointed to the side door.

“Right you are Baxy.” Paddy said, and pushed a button under the bar. Baxter opened the door, and closed it behind him. He trotted down the dimly light stairs in to Moonlight Club’s wine cellar. He slipped past the dusty bottles of French wine, and through the opening in the far wall. From dimly light cobwebs, he stepped into glittering gold. He trotted down the lushly decorated grand staircase of the Moonlight Club, and onto its main floor.

The Moonlight Club’s main floor was a feast for the eyes. Gold sparkled from the light of chandeliers wity hung from beautifully engraved ceilings. The style was Oriental, but the effect was nothing less than a fall back to the days before the Silent Revolution. For Baxter, the Moonlight was a small spark of life in a otherwise dead world.

“Good evening Mr. Blaine.” Martino said as Baxter stepped down from the last step of the staircase. “Your usual table tonight?”

“Yes please Martino, if at all possible.”

“This way.” Martino emerged from behind his podium and lead Baxter down off the balcony. They walked to a table in the center of the main floor. Martino picked the ‘reserved’ sign up off the table, and pulled Baxter chair out for him. Baxter sat down and order champagne and two glasses.

“Very good sir.” Martino said, and started off towards the bar.

The Moonlight Club was packed. Up by the stage the local mobsters were smoking cigars and laughing loudly. Four tables over, Baxter could see the Malpho

Prefect of the New England Province sipping wine with a girl half his age. At their usual spot at the back of the floor, Baxter could see Joe Jo and Michael, talking heatedly.

The champagne came just as the house lights began to dim. Baxter tasted the wine and turned his attention to the stage. A six piece band came out of the wings and took their places at their instruments. They played an upbeat tune for a minute or two before the singer emerged onto the stage. She moved to the microphone and picked up the vocals.

*It was half past the witching hour
and I was down by the pier,
There was this guy with a death ray monocle
who was checking out my gear.
I said: you must be joking
I said: you must be wrong.
Now, sit back there honey
And listen to my song.*

*We may be down trodden,
but were far from down and out.
We may be down trodden,
but our silence still can shout.
We may be down trodden,
but it don't seem that way to me.
We may be down trodden,
but I think our hearts our free.*

*So we got the guns and ammo
and cruised on down the strip.
Just waiting for those tech boys
to make a stupid slip.
And we're fighting for our freedom
We are fighting for what's right.
You better keep your head down,
when your day becomes our night.*

*For we may be down trodden,
but were far from down and out.
We may be down trodden,
but our silence still can shout.
We may be down trodden,
but it don't seem that way to me.
We may be down trodden,*

but I think our hearts our free.

*But in the end its all just dressing,
Another way to keep us down.
We don't need your revolution
Don't want you in our town.
I don't know this guy named Malpho
Don't want his snake bite oil
We work hard to make our living
And your crap just sets our blood to boil!*

The audience erupted in applause. The musicians took their bows, and exited the stage. The singer came down stage forward and walked over to Baxter's table. She was wearing a red dress that hugged tightly to her curves. She smiled at Baxter as she approached his table.

"So tell me something..." Baxter said as the singer stopped at his table.

"What's that?"

"Where do you hide your gun in that outfit?" Baxter smiled and pulled the champagne bottle out of its ice.

"Wouldn't you like to know." Mi Lin said as she sat down. Baxter poured her a glass of champagne, and she sipped at it.

"Not a bad performance." Baxter said after a moments silence.

"Thank you, but you've seen me do it before."

"I was referring to the People's Oil Building. Very high profile."

"Thank you. I'm glad you liked it." Lin smiled seductively as she sipped at her champagne. Baxter reached into his jacket pocket and removed his cigarette case. He offered one to Lin then took one himself. He light it and looked around the room.

"So, do you know what Joe Jo is up to? He made me come in all the way from Providence to be here tonight."

"No, I have no idea. But whatever it is, it must be big. Joe Jo has called in everyone on this one."

“Well, it will be nice to get a little action.” Baxter smiled at Lin. It had been over a month since they has seen each other. It felt good to see her again...

“Baxter. Lin.” It was Michael.

“What?” They said in unison.

“Joe Jo wants to see you. Now.” Michael turned on his heels and walked back across the main floor.

“Come on, lets not keep the boss waiting.” Baxter said, climbing out of his chair, and grabbing the bottle.

* * *

At Joe Jo’s table, Michael and Martin were there, as always. Martin sat quietly with his mahogany rifle case in his lap, and Michael seemed to be angry about something. As Baxter and Lin came to the table, Simon was just sitting down.

“Hello there folks, its nice to see all of you this evening.” Joe Jo seemed distracted by something. “I won’t beat around the bush: Simon, Baxter, Lin, I’m sending you out.”

“Great. I’m sick of God damn baby sitting missions. A little real action might do me good.” Simon had always been Gung Ho, but Baxter tended to agree with him. Things had been a little slow lately.

“Keep it in your pants Simon. This one might be tougher than you think. Michael here has received information for one of our brothers down in Texas. Seems their group hit the controlled media stronghold down there in Houston. It seems that they got themselves half a dozen books from before the Revolution.”

“Controlled media?” Lin seemed impressed. “Man, our boys down in Texas are getting ballsy. What’s this got to do with us?”

“It seems that one of the books made it all the way to Connecticut. The Malphos are putting it on a trunk full of soldiers and shipping it up here to Boston. From there their flying out to Greenland, or some God awful place. I want you three and Michael to get me that book. Not matter what it costs.”

“Right. Do we-” Before Baxter could finish his sentence, Michael pulled a map from his jacket pocket.

“Its all here.” Michael said, handing the map to Baxter. “We’ll take two cars. Bax and Lin in one, me and Simon in the other. Normal intercept procedure. Check?”

“Check.” They all said in unison.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

So Comrade, you want your piece of the Know. You want to scratch away the decades of ignorance and injured conformity that encases us all. Yeah, you want a chance to grab some Know that no one else around you knows. You want a bit of the tech, the stuff that the Technocracy keeps all to itself.

Yeah the Techs. You say you don't know the Technocracy? Well that's pretty common around here, isn't it? Don't worry, you'll find out sooner or latter. Everyone will.

Yeah I'm with the Silence. You say you wanna join? No son, there isn't any membership or dues; and we don't have any stinking newsletter either. You want to join kid? You really want to join? Well its easy, all you got to do is want it bad enough. But let me tell ya, you got to want it bad. And I mean real bad.

Want what, you say?

Christ kid, there's only one thing in this world worth having. And if you don't know that, you don't Know anything at all.

Welcome Comrade! Welcome to **Screaming Silence The Roleplaying Game**. Welcome to the 22nd Century, and a world unlike any you have encountered before. You maybe a novice to the world of Roleplaying Games, or an old Dungeon Dog, fresh from your last campaign. Whatever your background, prepare yourself for an adventure unlike any that you have taken before. Prepare yourself for a world full of treachery and deceit, ignorance and conformity, weakness and oppression. Will you be able to brake free from the bonds of society, to fight for justice and truth? Will you be able to unite a world that has been split in two? Will you join with the Screaming Silence and raise arms up against the system? Prepare yourself Comrade, for this will be fight far tougher than any you have fought before.

What is a Roleplaying Game?

Roleplaying Games are a rather new addition to the world of fiction, with the oldest game being little more than twenty years old. Modern Roleplaying Games are derived from many different sources, but mainly originate with the miniature war games that have been played for many years. Players of these war games wished to approach the game from a more personal level. Creating single characters instead of whole armies. This desire has blossomed into the whole world of fiction and gaming known as Roleplaying Games. The Screaming Silence is a game of this type, and builds heavily on the games that have come before it. If you are new to the world of Roleplaying Games. you are entering into an exciting universe of ever changing products and possibilities.

I will make no attempt to explain the concept of Roleplaying Games here. It is assumed that you are either an experienced Roleplayer, or in a group with a few experianced Roleplayers around you. If you are unfamiliar to Roleplaying Games, watching other people play is by far the easiest way to learn. What you need to learn

from a rule book is the specific Setting and Mechanics that the particular game you will be playing will use. There are many different Setting and sets of Mechanics on the market, and from game to game you will often have to learn a new set of rules.. Before we take a look at what is included in this book, a brief description of the different categories:

Setting

Roleplaying Games derive almost exclusively from science fiction, and its many sub genres. From here, Roleplaying Game settings fall loosely into two categories: Genre games, and tie-in games. Genre games work within a standard action adventure genre, be it space opera, fighting fantasy, cyberpunk, horror, etc. Some of the new games on the market have begun to work in a cross genre format. Tie-in games are designed to supplement a more major product already on the market (movies, books, video games).

Mechanics

Roleplaying Mechanics have evolved tremendously over the last few decades. Originally, every games came with its own set of mechanics, design specifically for that product. Over the years the industry has tended towards the use of a universal systems of mechanics. Every Roleplaying `House` has a system, and all their games use it, or something like it. This House system method of mechanics has greatly reduced the time it takes to a player to learn a game (if you know how to play one company's games, you can play them all), and increased the possibilities for cross setting adventures. The Reflex System is a Mechanics system in this House vain. If you can play one game that uses the Reflex System, you can pick up another very quickly.

Roleplaying Mechanics can be categorized by the method that the system uses to determine success in an action:

Ability Based: Success is determined by rolling against a character's ability

Achievement Based: Success is determined by rolling against a level determined by the GM.

Chart Based: Success is determined by a chart.

and the way that the system rolls dice:

Single: Only one die is rolled per action.

Serial: Dice are rolled and added together before evaluation.

Parallel: Dice are rolled and evaluated individually.

The Reflex System is a Parallel Achievement Based system. (Multiple dice are rolled individually against level determined by the GM). This probably means absolutely nothing to you, but mention it casually to your friends at a party. They'll be impressed, really.

The Screaming Silence

You may have been told that knowledge is power, but how much of this do you actually believe? In our world, information is given away for almost nothing. Just spend a few hours on the Internet and see for yourself. But in the world of the Screaming Silence, knowledge is more than power, it's more than gold or fame. In the world of the Screaming Silence, knowledge is only thing worth fighting for.

Society has been split in two. Into those that know, and those who know not. Mainstream society, held under the weight of an oppressive (if benign) world Communist government, has become the Know-nots. The technology of the Malphoists (The World Communist Government) has never advanced beyond the level of the 1950's; and as result, neither has its society. The Malphoist discouragement of individuality and creative thought is only partly to blame, however. Mainstream society has been suffering for 200 years from the abduction of all its most creative members by those that have become the Knows: The old Capitalist Corporations. These Corporations, also known as the Technocracy, have withdrawn from mainstream society, into almost complete scientific research. Their technology has sky rocketed faster than anyone could perceive. This bipolar society is connected only by a slim common need for natural resources; and an international terrorist organization known as the Screaming Silence, that is fighting against both of them.

The Screaming Silence are members of Mainstream Society, the Know-nots, who have learned of the existence of the Knows. They wish to take some of the knowledge that the Technocracy keeps for itself, and topple their oppressive Communist government. This is the world that the player characters have been born into, and its a world that rests upon their shoulders. Can the players dislodge the World Government before it collapses totally in on itself? And can they stop the Technocracy for taking control? Only the players of the Screaming Silence can decide.

The Reflex Roleplaying System

Dice

A large percentage of the dice rolling in the Reflex System will be done with the ten sided die. Multiple ten sided dice in fact. Its a good idea to make sure that you have a lot of these before you began a game. Everyone will need at least 5 each, and no more than ten will every be rolled at one time, ever. You will also need at least one of each other size (4, 6, 8, 12, 20) for various tasks during game play. The following notation will be use to describe dice usage through out this book: “1d6” Where the first number indicates the number of dice to roll, and the last number indicates the type of dice to role. i.e. 3d8 would mean, roll three 8 sided dice. Often you will be told to roll a 1d100. This does not mean go out and buy a 100 sided die! This means role two ten sided dice, take one of them to be the tens, and one of them to be the units. 00 is read a 100. i.e. I roll a red and a blue die. The blue eill be the ten’s and the red will be the units. I get a 6 on the blue, and a 3 on the red. Therefore I have rolled a 63.

Pips and Dice Equivalents

There are two major scales in the Reflex System: Pips and Dice Equivalents. Pips are never used in games play, only in character creation and advancement. Dice Equivalents are mostly used in game play, and have a direct relation to pips as shown on the chart below:

| <u>Pips</u> | <u>Dice Equivalent</u> |
|-------------|------------------------|
| 0 to 9 | 0d |
| 10 to 29 | 1d |
| 30 to 59 | 2d |
| 60 to 99 | 3d |
| 100 to 149 | 4d |
| 150 up | 5d |

You will be converting from Pips to Dice Equivalents often during game play, so make sure you are familiar with this chart.

The Dice Pool

Dice pools are very important to the Reflex System. If you have to make a roll during game play, the first thing you are going to have to do is collect your dice pool. Your dice pool is the number of ten sided dice you will be able to roll to determine if you succeed in your action. The GM will tell you what Attribute and skill the action uses. Every action will test one of your nine attributes, and most probably one of your skills. Look on your character sheet, and see how many Dice Equivalents your have in that particular attribute, and that particular skill. i.e. Say Baxter Blaine wishes to throw a football. This would be a Dexterity - Throw roll (Dexterity is the Attribute, Throw is the

skill). Baxter has 2 dice in Dexterity, and 1 dice in Throw. Therefore he has a dice pool of 3 dice.

One dice in a Dice Pool should be marked apart from the others. This is the Fortune Dice. This will be described in full detail later in this text.

When you Roll your Dice Pool the GM will tell you what difficulty (diff.) you are rolling against. This is often, but not always, 6. To Roll your Dice Pool: Roll the dice, and determine which dice roll the diff. or better. For each dice that does so, you score one success. Count up your total number of success, and tell the GM. That's how well you have done.

Chapter 2 - Character Creation

Like all Roleplaying Games, all players must have a Character. Character creation in the Reflex system is very similar to that of many other Roleplaying Games.

Take a look at the Character sheet that comes with this game. You can see that it is divided into two main sections: Attributes and Skills.

Although the values in these two sections are determined in different manners, they are record in very much the same fashion. On both sides of each skill and attribute there is a blank. The blank of the left is used for recording the Pip Value of that Skill or Attribute. As you know, this is on a scale from 0 to 150, and relates the incremental value of the skill or attribute. This is the value that will be changed through the gaining of experience and the advancement of the character.

The blank on the right is used to record the Dice Equivalent of the Skill or Attribute. This is on a scale from 1 dice to 5 dice (written 1d to 5d), and is used to determine dice pools. Before you start a game, make sure you have converted all of your pip scores to Dice Equivalents.

Determining Attributes

There are nine attributes in the Reflex System (Well Being, Strength, Agility, Perception, Endurance, Dexterity, Wits, Willpower, & IQ.), divided into three categories (Physical, Mental, & Averaged.) Only in two of these categories are pip values actually rolled (Physical & Mental), in the third (Averaged) the value for an attribute is calculated as an average of attributes in the other two areas. (Strength averaged with Willpower equals Endurance, etc.)

| <u>Physical</u> | <u>Averaged</u> | <u>Mental</u> |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Well Being | Perception | Wits |
| Strength | Endurance | Willpower |
| Agility | Dexterity | IQ |

For all the attributes in the Physical and Mental categories, average together two sets of 1d100's (roll 2d100 add them, and divide the total by two). A pocket calculator comes in very handy for this, and will save you a lot of frustration (What's 173 divided by 2?). Round all values up.

To determine the pip value for all of the attributes in the Averaged category. Average the attribute to its left with the one to its right: i.e. Perception averaged with Well Being and Wits; Endurance averaged with Strength and Willpower; and Dexterity with Agility and IQ. Again, round all values up.

At the end, you should have nine attributes. Six that you rolled, and three that you averaged.

We'll follow the creation of the character of Baxter Blaine for an example of the Character Creation system. We must start with some concept of the character we wish to create, I decide I wish to make Baxter some kind of explosives expert working for the Screaming Silence.

To start I roll up his attributes. For Well Being I rolled 70 and 51 which averages (rounded up) to 61. For Wits I rolled a 94 and a 82 which averages to 88. With these two terms I determine his Perception to be 75 ($61+88/2=75$). I roll a 45 and a 21 for Strength, which gives me a 33. I roll a 84 and a 42 for Willpower, which gives me 63. That makes Endurance 48 ($33+63/2=48$). I get a 61 for his agility, a 27 for his IQ (dough!), which would make his Dexterity 44. All round, Baxter seems to be a pretty good characters (lots of stats above 30!). Lets see how he pans out...

Next we must determine the Dice value for each of the attributes

Baxter has 61 pips in Well Being which gives him 3 dice. He has 33 pips in Strength which gives him 2 dice there. His 61 in Agility gives his 3d there, and also his 74 in Perception gives him 3d there. 48 in Endurance equals 2d, and 44 in Dexterity equals the same. 88 in Wits gives 3d there, and 63 in Willpower gives 3d also. Finally his 27 in IQ gives his 1d.

To sum up, Baxter seems to a very healthy individual (Well Being 3d) probably and athlete. He is alert and imaginative (Per and Wits 3d), strong, fit, and steel willed (Str & End 2d, Willpower 3d). He is quick and nimble (3d Agil, 2d Dex), but not immensely bright (1d IQ). All round, he is just the type that the Screaming Silence is looking for.

Now that you've determined your attributes, you probably want to know what they all mean: All together, attributes represent the innate abilities of your character. How strong is he? How bright is he? How tough? Before skills are even enter into the game, attributes should give you a good idea of your character's strengths and weaknesses.

The below breakdown of the attributes should give you a good idea to each of their individual meanings.

Physical

Well Being

Well Being is very easily confused with the Attribute of Endurance. It may become difficult to determine where to use one, and where to use the other. Keep in mind that Well Being is the measure of the character's health. Endurance is the measure of the character's ability to continue under adverse conditions.

You will use Well Being to determine how much damage your character can absorb, or if he is fit enough to get over a bad illness.

Apart from being a simple measure of a character's health, though, Well Being is also the general measure of the character's build and weight. Characters with low Well Being will probably be short or pudgy. Characters with a high Well Being, tall and lean. There are no hard and fast rules about this, however. You can still make your character as you see fit, regardless of his Well Being.

- 1d - Character is either runtish or overweight. A common cold lays you up for days.
- 2d - Character is of normal build and weight, though is probably of the couch potato type. Fine for long walks or short runs, but is definitely not the athletic type.
- 3d - The athletic type. College athletics to lower professional level. A good athlete, but nothing remarkable. Though with a little practice...
- 4d - Professional athlete. A physical powerhouse. All you need is the opportunity to become one of the greats.
- 5d - Adonis. Lesser mortals cower in your presence.

Strength

A simple enough attribute. The measure of the physical power of your body. Want to bend steel, or punch through walls? This is the attribute for you.

- 1d - Physically inconsequential. Hopefully your either a child or an invalid. You can lift your backpack, that's about it.
- 2d - Normal, day to day strength. You can get the tops of jars and move furniture around.

- 3d - You've either pumped iron, or worked in a job with a lot of lifting. You're the kind of person people like to have on their side in a fight.
- 4d - Professional body builder or muscle man. You can do some cool tricks, like bending bars or tearing up phone books. People don't mess with you unless they really have to.
- 5d - You are of Herculean proportions.

Agility

The ability to control your movements and actions. Your over all balance and stability on your feet. Walking a tight rope? Doing a handstand? This will be the attribute you will use.

- 1d - You're rather clumsy. You have a habit of tripping at the most inopportune times
- 2d - You were a terror on the Jungle Gym as a child, but you can't do a hand stand to save your life (not that you've ever had the urge to).
- 3d - You can do some impressive acrobatics, and can do some great slam-dunks with a basketball.
- 4d - You could compete in the Olympics or walk a tight rope. Combined with Martial Arts, you make a deadly combination.
- 5d - You make Jackie Chan and Bruce Lee look like amateurs.

Mental

Wits

The measure of your overall mental health and sharpness. This is a nebulous attribute that deals with everything from imagination to humor. People with high Wits make good stand up comedians, and poets. A low Wits score could imply a psychosis, or simply just a boring mentality.

- 1d - You have a personality perfect for the military. As long as someone else is telling you what to do, your fine.

- 2d - You generally a nice person, though you can get irritable.
- 3d - You a pleasant and interesting person, probably an artist of some sort. You witty enough to write sitcoms in your sleep, and your always mulling some great idea over in your head. One day you might write it all down...
- 4d - You make a good living off your imagination. Comedies, tragedies, poems, novels; you've done them all. In an argument, you can turn your opponent to jelly in under five minutes.
- 5d - You are either Shakespeare, or his prodigy.

Willpower

The measure of your mental strength. This is an attribute that only comes into play under adverse circumstances, when pressure is put onto a character. The attribute becomes of great importance in Reflex Games that involve the supernatural.

- 1d - You can't handle pressure. The smallest about of stress makes you fall apart.
- 2d - You can deal with pretty much anything that hits you in daily life. Though anything outside of your paradigm sends you for a loop.
- 3d - You cool as a cucumber. Men with knives don't even phase you. The supernatural though, is a little beyond you tolerance.
- 4d - You have an iron will. If a nuclear war comes, I want you to be the person with his finger on the button.
- 5d - You've looked into the gapping mouth of hell, and you weren't impressed. All in a days work for you.

IQ

The ability to use your mind quickly and efficiently. Mathematics and science come easily to characters with high IQ. This is what most people think of when they think of intelligence.

- 1d - You confused by the simplest things. Balancing your checkbook takes you a day.

- 2d - Average moxy. You made it through high school algebra, but switched to an easier major in college because you couldn't hack the math.
- 3d - You can wrap your head around Quantum Electrodynamics without any trouble, though you still have to stop and do addition on your fingers.
- 4d - Intellectual powerhouse. You think chaos theory is a way to spend a fun evening.
- 5d - You build a working model of the human body when you were 6, and graduated college when you were 10. You are constantly amazed at how stupid the rest of the world is.

Averaged

Perception

One's physical and mental health determine how receptive one is to the environment around them. Perception is the measure on your ability to pick out important details from the mass of useless information that bombards us everyday.

- 1d - You miss some of the simplest things. You didn't know there was anything wrong with your marriage until your wife packed her bags and moved to her mothers.
- 2d - You spot most stuff of importance. You can play poker with you buddies, and know when they are bluffing.
- 3d - You would make a good police detective. You can usually tell if someone is lying to you, and you clean up at Easter egg hunts.
- 4d - Your senses are keenly tuned. You very seldom miss anything.
- 5d - "Elementary my dear Watson."

Endurance

Being the combination of your physical and mental strength, Endurance is not as much the measure of your physical fitness, but more the measure of your perseverance. How far can you run, or how long can you go without food? It comes in to game play mainly with respect to operating with injuries.

- 1d - You have no endurance. You faint at the sight of your own blood.

- 2d - Your fine for normal exercise, but any kind of extended run leaves you flat. You shrug of most minor wounds.
- 3d - On a good day, you can run a marathon.
- 4d - Tough as nails.
- 5d - The Terminator.

Dexterity

This attribute measures you ability to do fine manual tasks. It is the average of you Agility (physical adeptness) and your IQ (mental adeptness). It requires a combination of both to be good with your hands.

- 1d - Butter fingers. You've never been able to catch a baseball.
- 2d - Your a good tpepest, and get along fine in sports. Your kid still wips your butt when playing Nintendo, though.
- 3d - Your a video game master.
- 4d - You one rewired a TV in under ten minutes. You can flip a coin and always get it to land heads up.
- 5d - Your either a knife thrower or a steno typist. You roll 7 or 11 every time at craps.

Determining Skills

Unlike attributes, skills are chosen, not rolled. This is where the majority of the player's input into the character's profile will come. Skill levels are chosen by the allocation of pips by the player through the skills on the list. Dice Equivalents are then determined before game play according to the number of pips allocated to a particular skill.

The number of skills that a player has to allocate is directly related to the age of the character. Before you do anything else, determine how old your character is going to be. Roll 2d10 and add the result to 16.

I roll 2d10 for Baxter, and get 8. That makes Baxter 24 years old.

Every player has a base 100 pips to allocate through his character's skills. These 100 pips can be allocated into any skills that the player wishes, in any amounts that he wishes. Do this before going any farther. This represents the character's education up to this point, and his hobbies through the rest of his life.

Note: Throughout character creation, no more than 100 pips total can be assigned to a particular skill.

Looking over the skill list, I decide to allocate 30 pips into Ride Motorcycle (Baxter likes bikes), 30 pips into Mechanics, 10 pips into Leadership, 10 pips into Hand to Hand, 10 pips into Drive, and 10 pips into Swim. That looks like a good start.

For every year that the character has lived beyond 16, the player must determine how the character spent that year. There are three choices:

Academics The Military/Screaming Silence Blue Collar

One the player determines what category the character will be studying for his first year, he must make the required entry roll. If he makes that, he allocates the 30 pips for that year through the skill list for that category. If he fails, he must choose another category, and roll that entry roll (Note: Blue Collar has no entry roll, so if all else fails, a character can go there). Once the player has allocated the 30 pips, the character moves on to his next year. The player can decide to have his character stay in the category he is in, or move to another category. If the player decides to move his character to a different category, then the player must make the required entry roll. If he fails this roll, the character must spend another year in the category that he is presently in. He may try again next year, of course. This process goes on until the character runs out of years lived.

Keep track of how many years your characters spends in each category, that information will come in useful later.

The General Category is handled differently than the other categories. This category is accessible to a character no matter what category he is in for that year. A character may choose skills out of the General Category at anytime during the skill determination phase.

Skill Categories

| Academic | Military/ Screaming Silence | Blue Collar | General |
|-------------------|--|----------------------|------------------|
| Entry Roll: IQ(7) | Entry Roll: End(5) | Entry Roll: None. | |
| Acting | Dodge/Dive | Carpentry | Bureaucracy |
| Biology | Explosives | Electronics | Climb |
| Chemistry | First Aid | Finance | Deception |
| Economics | Hand to Hand | Gambling | Drive |
| Etiquette* | Heavy Weapons | Hvy. Mach. | Gymnastics |
| History* | Melee | Intimidation | Linguistics* |
| Law | Pilot | Lockpick | Observation |
| Leadership | Pistol | Mechanics | Photography |
| Mathematics | Rifle | Smithy | Play Instrument* |
| Medicine | Stealth | Streetwise | Ride Motorcycle |
| Philosophy | Track | | Running |
| Physics | | | Sail |
| Research | | | Survival* |
| Social Science | | | Swim |
| Writing | | | Throw |

Academics

Mandatory schooling ends at 16 for Malphoist teenagers. At that point, they are expected to either continue their education, join up with the armed services, or join the blue collar work force. Since the last armed conflict was over 70 years ago, most Malphoist youths go on to higher education. The first two years of this (usually 16-18) are spent in Upper School, a combination community college - trade school setting. Here the school system determines if a youth has what it takes to survive a university setting, or if his time would be better spent learning a trade. Those that show potential are moved into college prep courses, those that do not, learn the necessary skills for a trade. After two years, those that remain the academic system move on to a university.

Universities in the Malphoist world embody everything that is bad about our own University system, while exemplifying none of its good aspects. In the World of the Screaming Silence, Universities are places that one goes to study in the shadow of the greater mind. They are not places of free thinking, or research, or discussion. All that one

learns, one learns from books, little new thinking is ever done there. The Malpoist Universities are a stagnant institution within a stagnant society, and they work hard to mold their students in their own image. To much time spent in the Academic Category may have a detrimental effect on one's character.

Military/Screaming Silence

If a 16 year old youth decides that the world of Academia isn't for them, they have the choice to sign on with the armed forces. If you believes the Armed Forces of our world to be a obese, out of date, bureaucratic institution, you hasn't seen anything until you've seen the People's Malpoist Army.

The last real armed conflict that the People's Malpoist Army had to deal with was over 70 years ago. The Army has become more of a giant, bureaucratic, police force, than any kind of institution of warriors. They so far out gun, and out number, any prospective foe, that any real study of strategy and tactics has gone out of the window a century ago. The prospective Generals at West Point are still fighting the Second World War. No great revision in the Military has happened since then.

The life of the enlisted man in the People's Malpoist Army is very similar to that of any enlisted man, in any army, with a heavy dose of propoganda added in for good measure. Like Academics, the Military is an institution that tries to make its members smaller versions of itself. To much time spent in the army may have a detrimental effect on your character.

The Armed forces is not the only method for obtaining military experience in the Malpoist world. Membership in the Screaming Silence is also an option. A player may have his character join the Screaming Silence before the beginning of play, and gain access to all of the skills of the Military Category. The fact that the Screaming Silence is not the Military, only comes into play during the end of the skill determination section, when a player counts up how many years his character has spent in each category. For this purpose, the Military and the Screaming Silence are separate categories.

Blue Collar

Like our world, not everyone in the Malpoist system is cut out for Academia, or the Military. In fact, like our world, the majority of people do not go on the Universities, or into Military service; they try to make a living the best way that they can, with the skills that they have at hand. These are the Blue Collar workers of the Malpoist world.

Of all of the classes in the world, the average Joe has come out best because of the Malpoist Revolution. The systems finds Joe his job, makes sure he keeps it, and makes sure he is fairly paid. In a world of a uniform Middle Classes, living a comfortable life is easy to do. Blue or White collar, the lifestyle is pretty much the same.

The major advantage to the Blue Collar worker is the freedom of thought. Of course, the general public is bombarded with large amounts of propaganda; but if you are able to avoid the Military or the Universities, you are step closer to thinking what you actually want to think. The Screaming Silence draws a large portion of its membership from Blue Collar workers because of this reason.

Well, we have already determined Baxter Blaine's Attributes and Age, and allocated his first 100 pips. Let's move on now to determining his skills. I think Baxter is the type to spend a large majority of his life in the Academic Category. For his first few years I'll send him there. I roll for his entry into Academics: 1 dice vs. 7. I roll and get an 8. Just, but good enough. For the first year I'll spend the 30 pips in Chemistry (I think that will be his major at University). The next year, I spend 10 pips in Medicine, 10 pips in Physics, and 10 pips in Writing. For the third year, I spend 10 pips in Photography, 10 pips in Throw, and 10 pips in Law. For the fourth and fifth year, I put another 30 pips in Chemistry, and 30 pips in Ride Motorcycle. That gives Baxter 5 years in the Academic Category. I think, at this time, he will get mixed up with the Screaming Silence, and quit college. I will move him over to the Military/Screaming Silence Category. This will require a roll of 5 with Baxter's Endurance dice pool (2 dice). I roll the dice and get an 8 and a 7. Two success. Baxter makes the move. He'll spend his first year in the Silence studying Explosive, and I'll put all of his 30 pips in that skill. The next year, I spend 10 pips in Pistol, 10 pips in Rifle, and 10 pips in Dodge/Dive. For his 8th and final year, I'll put all 30 pips in Explosives. That gives Baxter a grand total of 60 pips in Chemistry, Explosives, and Ride Motorcycle; 30 pips in Mechanics; and 10 pips in Law, Leadership, Medicine, Physics, Writing, Dodge, Hand to Hand, Pistol, Rifle, Drive, Photography, Swim, and Throw.

Once you have finished allocating all of pips to your character, there is one more thing you must do before leaving the leaving the Skill determination part of character creation: Determine how many total years your character spent in each of the categories (Military and Screaming Silence counting as two separate categories for this purpose.) and refer to the chart below:

| Category | Roll by Year | Result |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Academia | Will(2+years) | Drive to Pacifist |
| Military | Will(3+years) | Method to Conformist |
| Screaming Silence | Will(3+years) | Motive to Selfish |

i.e. If your character had spent 4 years in the Academic Category, then he would have to roll against his willpower against 6 or have his Drive automatically set to Pacifist. See below for a full description of Method/Motive/Drive.

Baxter Blaine has spent 5 years in Academia, and 3 years with the Screaming Silence. This means he must make a Will(7) roll or have his Drive automatically set to Pacifist, and a Will(6) or have his Motive automatically set to Selfish. On the first roll, Baxter rolls a 1, a 4, and a 3. Nope, his Drive is Pacifist. On the second roll, Baxter gets a 5, a 2, and a 7. Yep, I don't have to set Baxter's Motive to Selfish. Of course, I may, in the future, decide that this best describes Baxter, but for now I have the choice.

Remember to determine the Dice Equivalents for all of your skills before you begin play.

Sub Skills

You may have noticed that some of the skills on the skill list have a * by them. This implies that the particular skill can be sub skilled. This is a purely optional part of the Reflex System, and you can use, or ignore, it as you see fit.

With a skill that is “Sub Skillable”, pips that are allocated to the skill can be reallocated into specializations under that skill. For every ten pips that are allocated into a sub skill, the difficulty of making a roll involving that sub skill is reduced by one.

i.e. Say I have 30 pips in Linguistics. This means I have 2 dice to roll if I want to try and understand any language. But suppose that I wish to specialize in French and Spanish, I can reallocate the 30 pips I put into Linguistics through the languages. Say 20 pips in French, and 10 pips in Spanish (These are the pips I allocated to Linguistics, not a new 30 pips). For every 10 pips allocated to a specific language, the difficulty goes down by 1. I still only have 2 dice to roll whenever I wish to understand these languages, but since I put 20 pips into French, the difficulty in understanding a french speaker would be two less (one less for a Spanish speaker).

Exceptional And Detrimental Abilities

Where Attributes represent your character's raw abilities, and skills represent his learned talents, Exceptional And Detrimental Abilities represent what is remarkable about your character. These are the abilities that mark your character apart from the masses, and defines him as a hero (or a villain). To make this section work for your character, you will have to have a strong idea of your characters abilities. Why is he special? Why is this character worth playing? Once you have an idea, look over the Exceptional And Detrimental Abilities list. Find out which abilities fit your character best. Follow these rolls to but your character's Exceptional and Detrimental Abilities together:

1. Choose your Exceptional Abilities and allocate pips to them, in whole numbers of dice. (10 pips, 30 pips, 60 pips.)
2. Allocate no more than 60 pips (3 dice) through your exceptional abilities (though you don't need to allocate any pips at all if you don't want to.)
3. For every dice of pips in Exceptional Abilities, you must take a dice of pips in Detrimental Abilities.

A sample list of Abilities is given bellow:

Exceptional Abilities

Acute Hearing
Acute Smell
Acute Taste
Acute Touch
Acute Vision
Ambidexterity
Good Looks
Double Jointed
Empathy
Fearlessness
Technical Aptitude
Night Vision
Photographic Memory
Sixth Sense
Wealth

Detrimental Abilities

Hearing Impairment
Olfactory Impairment
Taste Impairment
Tactal Impairment
Vision Impairment
Enemy
Greed
Addiction
Allergies
Color Blind
Cowardice
Night Blind
Obese
Phobia
Unattractive App.
Injury

By now, I have a pretty good idea of Baxter's character. I look over the list and find what Exceptional and Detrimental Abilities best fit Baxter. I decide that will only take 1 dice of each, since Baxter's character seems pretty strong as is. I decide that Baxter will take 10 pips (1 dice) in Fearlessness. He's not a brilliant guy, so he probably not afraid of very much. To balance that out, I decide to take 10 pips in Phobia. He may not be afraid of very much, but I figure he's deathly scared of spiders.

If none of the Abilities on the list fit your character, feel free to make up your own. Make sure the GM approves, and don't get carried away (no shooting death rays from your hands kind of stuff).

How are Exceptional and Detrimental Abilities used? That's simple: In any dice roll to which an ability applies, the dice value of the ability is added (for exceptional) or subtracted (for detrimental) to the total dice pool. More on dice pools later...

Determining Hero Points

These are points used by players to have their characters do exceptional things. They will be fully explained below in the Rule Section. For now, all you need to know is that all characters get 1d3 (1d6/2 rounded up) points.

I roll for Baxter, and he gets 2 Hero Points. Good, there going to come in handy.

Determining Method/Motive/Drive

Your character's Method, Motive, and Drive are not hard and fast characteristics that define your character's personality. Just because your Drive is Pacifist doesn't mean you can never pick up a gun. These characteristics are more and implication of how your character approaches problems and situations. When confronted with an obstacle, does your character charge right at it, or try to find a way around it? If he had to decide between saving himself, and saving another, what would he do? They are here to help the player roleplaying his character, and to help the GM determine when she should award a character Hero Points. Don't worry to much about them, if you find them confusing.

Remember, if you failed any of your rolls coming out of the Skill Determination Section, one or more of these characteristics may have already been chosen for you.

Method (Conformist/Rebel)

Method is an indicator of how well your character deals with authority and rules. If your character learns that a law is immoral, will he keep following it? A Conformist is most likely to follow the official line of action, given a situation that is controlled by a set of rules. A Rebel, if given a choice, will more likely follow his own initiative.

i.e. Its two in the morning, a Conformist and a Rebel come to a red light on an empty street. There isn't another car for miles.

The Conformist will wait for the light to turn before going.

The Rebel, seeing that there are no cars, will run the red light.

Motive (Charitable/Selfish)

Motive is an indicator of what your character values most. Who would your character rather talk about at a party? The other person, or himself. A Charitable character values others, and the world, more than himself. A Selfish character finds himself far more interesting.

i.e. A Charitable, and a Selfish character get into a near car accident.

The Charitable character looks at the situation, and sees that he was at fault.

The Selfish character screams and yells at the other guy, no matter who was at fault.

Drive (Pacifist/Militant)

Drive is an indicator of how your character approaches a problem. If a lever is stuck, does he keep pulling it until it comes unstuck? Or does he figure out why its stuck? A Pacifist will try and avoid direct conflict if he can, and will stop and try to figure out a better way. A Militant will jump in with both feet and get the job done.

i.e. A man comes up to a Pacifist and a Militant, yelling at the top of his lungs. He is so irate that the Pacifist and Militant can't figure out what he's saying.

The Pacifist will try and calm the man down, and find out what's wrong.

The Militant will punch the guys lights out. End of story.

The above examples may be a little extreme in their implication, but they should give you a good idea of what it means to be a Rebel/Selfish/Pacifist.

Coming out of the Skill Determination Section, I fail one of my rolls for Baxter, and forced his Drive to be Pacifist. Looks like Baxter has spent too much time with his head in a book. For Method and Motive, I get to choose though. I think for Method I'll make Baxter a Rebel. He was never much for doing what he was told. For Motive I'll make Baxter Charitable. Hell, he is trying to save the world.

Determining Name, Height, Weight, & Hit Chart.

These are the final touches to your character. Finish these, and your character is ready to play.

Name is, of course, your character's name.

Height and Weight are yours to choose. You may want to take into account your character's Physical Attributes when determining them. (Can a guy with 4 dice in Strength be 150 lbs?) The World of the Screaming Silence still uses English Measurements (feet, pounds, inches).

The hit chart, on the back of the character sheet, will be fully explained later in Rule section. For now, all you have to do is put the number of dice you have in Well Being in each of the hit boxes.

I think Baxter is of Average height and weight: 5'10", 180 lbs. We already know his name. That looks like about it for Baxter. He's ready to enter the fight. Here's Baxter's complete Character Sheet:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Name: Baxter Blaine | Method: Rebel |
| Height: 5'10" | Weight: 180 lbs |
| Age: 24 | Motive: Charitable |
| Hero Points: 2 | Drive: Pacifist |

Attributes

61 Well Being, 75 Perception, 88 Wits, 33 Strength, 48 Endurance, 63 Willpower, 61 Agility, 44 Dexterity, 27 IQ.

Skills

60 Chemistry, 60 Explosives, 60 Ride Motorcycle; 30 Mechanics; 10 Law, 10 Leadership, 10 Medicine, 10 Physics, 10 Writing, 10 Dodge, 10 Hand to Hand, 10 Pistol, 10 Rifle, 10 Drive, 10 Photography, 10 Swim, 10 Throw.

Time Spent:

Academics: 5, Silence: 3

Exception & Detrimental Abilities

Fearlessness 1d , Phobia- Spiders 1d

Character Templates.

Depending on how quickly you want to get roleplaying, the above system maybe far more detail than you really would like to put into your character. For those of you who just want to get “up and going”, the below character templates may come in useful.

Each of the character templates has been built with the above system. You will still have to roll for your attributes, and choose your name, sex, and build; but most of the work in choosing skills and Exceptional Abilities has been done for you. As you can see, each template has a certain number of remaining pips. Theses pips are here to be allocated through the skills, allowing you to customize the template to some extent. Feel free to use these templates, or ignore them as you see fit. They are a purely option part of character creation.

College Activist

Quote: “Save the whales! Take a leaflet. Save the whales! Take a leaflet.”

Description: Ever since you moved to the city to go to school, you’ve joined every movement you’ve come across. You want to change the world, and you don’t care how you do it. If you knew about the Screaming Silence and the Technocracy, you’d join in a minute. Your ready for the fray, now all you need is something to fight for.

Age: 21

Method/Motive/Drive: Rebel/Charitable/Pacifist

Skills: Etiquette 10, History 30, Law 10, Leadership 30, Philosophy 30, Social Science 30, Writing 10, Bureaucracy 10, Drive 10, Play Instrument 10,

Pips Remaining: 70

Time Spent: A: 5 M: 0 B: 0 S: 0

Excp. Abilities: Public Speech 1d

Det. Abilities: Hot Headed 1d.

Starting Equipment: Stack of leaflets, picket sign.

Beatnik

Quote: “Like, chill man, while this groove cat lays his hep beat...”

Description: A few years of college taught you that society had little to offer you. You got caught up in underground jazz and poetry circuit during the last few years of college, and you quickly dropped out to follow the circuit full time. Ever since, you’ve spent your nights in illegal nightclubs, listening to the poets and musicians, once and awhile getting up on stage yourself. This lifestyle has often brought you into contact with the agents of the Screaming Silence, and all though you don’t give a damn about politics, you feel for their cause.

Age: 24

Method/Motive/Drive: Rebel/Selfish/Pacifist

Skills: Acting 30, Philosophy 10, Writing 60, Bureaucracy 10, Deception 10, Drive 30, Play Inst 30, Ride Cycle 10, Gambling 10, Streetwise 30,

Pips Remaining: 110

Time Spent: A: 5 M: 0 B: 3 S: 0

Excp. Abilities: None

Det. Abilities: None

Starting Equipment: Bongos, Car.

Mobster

Quote: “You better produce the mulla, see, or I’ll have Knuckles here tear you a new set of ears.”

Description: The Malphoist regime has been good to organized crime: Government officials literally falling over each other to be paid off, a profitable black market system, and more and more things becoming illegal everyday. You never had much schooling. At a young age you started running numbers for the local bookie. You quickly graduated to running your own gambling schemes, and then later, to the local mob. Your an up and

coming star amongst the thugs of the town, and you've got big plans. Now, if you can only have to stay alive long enough to see any of them through...

Age: 25

Method/Motive/Drive: Conformist/Selfish/Militant

Skills: Dodge/Dive 30, Hand to Hand 30, Melee 30, Pistol 30, Rifle 30, Gambling 30, Intimidation 30, Streetwise 30, Bureaucracy 10, Deception 30, Drive 30,

Pips Remaining: 60

Time Spent: A: 0 M: 0 B: 9 S: 0

Excp. Abilities: Connections: Mob 1d

Det. Abilities: Criminal Record 1d

Starting Equipment: Tommy Gun, sedan, good suit, knuckle dusters.

Teeny Bopper

Quote: "Hey dadeo, what's your beef?"

Description: Teenagers in the Malphoist world have lived pretty much the same way since the 1950's: Guys wear letterman's jackets and cherry out their cars, girls wear poodle dresses and have sleep-over parties. You have lived most of your short life fitting into this mold. Your life is simple and idealistic. You live for friends and the next sock hop. The dealings of the world seem very far away.

Age: 17

Method/Motive/Drive: Conformist/Selfish/Pacifist

Skills: Drive 30, Bureaucracy 10.

Pips Remaining: 90

Time Spent: A: 1 M: 0 B: S: 0

Excp. Abilities: None

Det. Abilities: None

Starting Equipment: Cherry car. Letterman's jacket.

Middle Management Bureaucrat

Quote: "Have you filled out form GTR103243? No? I'm sorry, I can't do anything without GTR103243, signed in triplicate."

Description: You are nobody. You fill a chair, at a small desk, in a small office, in a small building, in a small city, in a small corner of the People's World Government. Nobody really understands what you do, or how you do it; but when your not around, nothing sees to work right. You are the glue that holds the Malphoist system together. You may be nobody, but you keep Malphoism from collapsing around our heads.

Age: 30

Method/Motive/Drive: Conformist/Charitable/Pacifist

Skills: Bureaucracy 100, Law 60, Economics 60, Social Science 30, Etiquette 60, Research 60.

Pips Remaining: 50

Time Spent: A: 6 M: 0 B: 8 S: 0

Excp. Abilities: Bureaucratic Fast Talk 1d

Det. Abilities: No Personality 1d

Starting Equipment: Bad suit, suitcase, papers.

Technocrat Abductee

Quote: "No, no, really! There was this bright light, then these guys with guns came running in! Hey, this is serious, stop giggling!"

Description: You've always liked gadgets. You playing with anything even remotely technical. You once took a TV apart and put it back together again. That was fun. You had always thought that you might have made something of yourself if you'd made it into college, but you failed the Latin portion of the entrance exam, and have been working in a dead end job ever since. Then one night there was this strange sound outside your window, and this bright light flooded your room. Some guys with guns kicked in your back door, and came charging up your stairs. You jumped out of your window, ran into

the nearby woods, and hid from the men until morning came. You weren't really sure what they wanted, but you really didn't want to find out.

Ever since, you've kept one eye over your shoulder. You expect the bright light to shine down from the sky again at anytime, and whisk you away. No one believes you, they all think that your crazy, but you know that your sane. Whoever, or whatever, it was that came after you is going to come back, the only question is when...

Age: 27

Method/Motive/Drive: Conformist/Charitable/Pacifist

Skills: Electronics 100, Mechanics 100, Bureaucracy 30, Drive 10, Physics 30, Chemistry 30, Smithy 30, Lockpick 10,

Pips Remaining: 90

Time Spent: A: 2 M: 0 B: 9 S: 0

Excp. Abilities: Technical Aptitude 1d

Det. Abilities: Hunted: Technocracy 1d

Starting Equipment: Tool kit.

Screaming Silence Terrorist

Quote: "Dying? No, that doesn't bother me. All that matters is how many tech boys I take down with me when I go."

Description: You've been with the Screaming Silence for 3 years. In those circles, that make you an old hand. You're a ruthless and efficient terrorist, with many missions under your belt. You fear weakness, and ridicule it in others. You have no time rookies, or bleeding hearts.

You understand the Screaming Silence's mission well, and carry it out with merciless efficiency. Fear, you know, is the Screaming Silence best weapon, and you wield it better than any sword.

Age: 26

Method/Motive/Drive: Rebel/Selfish/Militant

Skills: Dodge/Dive 30, Explosives 30, Hand to Hand 30, Melee 10, Pistol 60, Rifle 60, Stealth 10, Intimidation 30, Streetwise 10, Climb 10, Drive 30, Ride Cycle 10, Swim 10, Throw 10.

Pips Remaining: 60

Time Spent: A: 2 M: 2 B: 4 S: 3

Excp. Abilities: Sixth Sense 1d

Det. Abilities: Injury 1d

Starting Equipment: Motorcycle leathers, hood, .45 auto, Screaming Silence pin, car.

Black Marketeer

Quote: “You want what? A Sherman tank?! I don’t know... Four, Five days. Could even be a week...”

Description: Though the law calls you a criminal, you’ve never considered yourself one. Your clientele is made up more of house wives and accountants, than mobsters and terrorists. So you get people things they need. What’s wrong with that? Okay, so you add a little onto the price for your trouble. Why is that such a crime? You’re not going to do it out of the kindness in your heart, after all.

Being a Black Marketeer is a dangerous business. A life sentence in the Gulags, or worse, will be your penalty if your caught. But until then, your going to be making money hand over fist, and loving every minute of it.

Age: 24

Method/Motive/Drive: Rebel/Selfish/Pacifist

Skills: Finance 60, Intimidation 10, Lockpick 10, Streetwise 100, Bureaucracy 30, Deception 60, Drive 10,

Pips Remaining: 60

Time Spent: A: 0 M: 0 B: 8 S: 0

Excp. Abilities: Wealth 1d

Det. Abilities: Greed 1d

Starting Equipment: Wad of cash, note book.

Underground Jazz Musician

Quote: “You know what’s wrong with the Malphoists man? No soul. There ain’t nothing wrong with this world that can’t be fixed by a 4-4 beat!”

Description: You were born into the wrong time. All you’ve ever wanted to do is play your horn (or guitar, or drums, or sing), and wouldn’t you know you live in the only time in history when the law won’t allow it. Not that that has ever stopped you. You just have to be quiet about it, that’s all. Keep you head below ground. Fortunately, you’ve gotten into the underground jazz circuit, and you tour the local speakeasies playing your music. The circuit’s been good to you. You’ve played with some of the best musician alive. Of course, you have to deal with the mob to do it, but every job has its down side, right? You don’t care about any revolutions, all you want to do is play, and hear the crowd’s applause.

Age: 23

Method/Motive/Drive: Rebel/Charitable/Pacifist

Skills: Play Instrument 100, Steetwise 30, Bureaucracy 10, Drive 30,

Pips Remaining: 140

Time Spent: A: 0 M: 0 B: 7 S: 0

Excp. Abilities: Musical Ability 1d

Det. Abilities: Criminal Record 1d

Starting Equipment: Instrument.

Career Military

Quote: “What are you looking at punk?! What is there about me that you find so immensely interesting?! Don’t salute me, I work for a living!”

Description: It seems like you’ve always been a soldier. Your father was a soldier, he treated you like a soldier, and as soon as you were old enough, you became one. You quickly climbed to the highest NCO rank, but you never wanted to become an officer.

The military life has been good to you, taken care of you, nurtured you; but sometimes you wonder if you've become all that you can be...

Age: 30

Method/Motive/Drive: Rebel/Charitable/Militant

Skills: Dodge/Dive 30, Fist Aid 10, Hand to Hand 60, Hvy. Weapons 10, Melee 10, Pilot 10, Pistol 30, Rifle 60, Stealth 10, Track 10, Intimidation 30, Bureaucracy 10, Climb 10, Drive 10, Running 10, Survival 30, Swim 10, Throw 10.

Pips Remaining: 160

Time Spent: A: 0 M: 14 B: 0 S: 0

Excp. Abilities: Connections - Military 1d

Det. Abilities: Military Mentality 1d

Starting Equipment: Uniform, sidearm, M-1 carbine.

Chapter 3 - Skills and Abilities

Character Creation has offered up a tremendous number of new terms and categories for you to consume. If your confused to the exact meaning of Empathy, or Survival, don't worry, because your probably not alone. Hopefully this chapter will clear up any confusion you may have over the exact meaning of any of the Attributes, Skills, or Abilities.

Skills.

Skills are the measure of what your character knows and can do. No one is born with any skills, and they all must be learned in one fashion or another. Skills are far more mutable than Attributes, and characters will advance them far faster. Some are obviously more useful than others, but all could easily come into play.

Academics

Skill in the Academic Category are mainly skills that are learned through the educational institutes of the world. Though the skills in this category may find there way into game play now and then, they will not be mainstay of a Roleplayer's diet. Think of the Academic Category as rounding out your character. After all, isn't that what your mother said about college?

Acting

Simply, the ability to take on the persona of another person, be it real or fictitious. This skill may be useful in game play if the character wishes to impersonate a NPC, or the like.

- 1d - Your acting ability is marginal. You were a big hit as Pinocchio during your grade school play.
- 2d - You are a respectable actor. You could make a living in Hollywood if you see fit.
- 3d - You are an actor of quality and value. Your Hamlet bring audiences to tears.
- 4d - You are held as one of the great actors of your generation.

5d - Your abilities are so advanced that people never know if your real or playing a role. You could convince a blind woman that you are in fact her own son.

Biology

The scientific study of life. In the Malphoist world, where all scientific disciplines have been reduced to dogma, Biology skill is little more than the memorization of Species and Phylum.

1d - Passing Understanding (high school education) of the mechanics of life. You wouldn't be able to tell the difference between donkey and a mule if your life depended on it.

2d - Proficient knowledge in the mechanics of life. You can tell different breeds of dogs apart, and the like.

3d - You an expert in the field. You could teach the subject if you wished.

4d - Master. In the world of the Screaming Silence, you either work for the Technocracy, or soon will.

5d - You are known as the greatest mind Biology has ever seen. Your name is used like a evocation to God in the field of Biology.

Chemistry

The study of the compounds, reactions, and states of matter. Just like the other sciences, the Malphoists have reduced this a dogma.

1d - General Knowledge of Acids and Bases. You know not to store the ammonia next to the bleach.

2d - Solid understanding of Chemistry. You actually know what aqueous means.

3d - Expert in the field. Hydrogen, Helium, Argon...

4d - Chemistry is your life blood. You have the periodic table tatoood on your chest.

5d - You are the Chemistry god. You skills are so advanced that you can actually use a pipette with out getting air bubbles in it.

Etiquette*

Etiquette is the knowledge of the customs and social morays of a particular group. While most prevalent with the upper crust, Etiquette is sub-skillable to any social group. (Err... Are you supposed to use the bowie knife or your hands to eat soup with the Hell's Angels?)

- 1d - You can get by at any social function, as long as they don't have to many forks.
- 2d - You skills are complete enough to get you through almost any social function.
- 3d - Mr. or Mrs. Manners. You know what finger your supposed to use to pick parsley out of your teeth if its a Thursday during a blue moon.
- 4d - Not only are you a master of manners in your own society, you are can get by in all most any social situation.
- 5d - Your manners are so good that no matter where you go people think that your a native.

Economics

The study of capital, and its dynamics. In the Malphoist world, this discipline exists only to prove how right the communist system is.

- 1d - Basic understanding of Supply and Demand.
- 2d - Your competent enough to hold you end up in an argument about national policy.
- 3d - A deep understanding of the dynamics of capital. If there was a stock market in the Malphoist world, you'd make a killing.
- 4d - Your understanding of economics goes beyond the simple realm of money and employment. You have a complete understanding of the currents and eddies of a economic system.
- 5d - Your understanding of the financial word is complete. You dream in ticker tape, and eat socio-political systems for breakfast.

History*

All the facts and figures about the great people that occupied the world before us. In the Malphoist world, history is very much a relative subject. The government makes up the history to justify the present. This skill represents real history, not the Malpho propaganda stuff. This skill is sub-skillable to a specific region or era.

- 1d - You know enough about real history to know that you can't believe anything you were taught in school.
- 2d - Familiarity with the general facts and figures of history. You know who fought the Hundred Years War, but you really can't say why.
- 3d - A understanding of the motives behind the facts of history. You can take the lessons of history, and apply them to the present.
- 4d - Encyclopedic knowledge. Not only do you know what Napoleon did at Waterloo and why, you also know what he had for breakfast that day.
- 5d - Your knowledge is so complete that people often wonder if you were actually there. You know historical figures better than you know your own family.

Law

Understanding of the law, and the ability to get a case across in a courtroom situation. Malphoist law is strange and incomprehensible thing, with more precedence and customs than the average person can comprehend. Lawyers are always in demand in the Malphoist world.

- 1d - You're either student of the law, or a career criminal. You know when to speak, and when not to speak, in the courtroom, but that's about it.
- 2d - Rookie lawyer. You've got all the facts and figures up in your head, you just have to make them come out in court.
- 3d - You are a skilled and knowledgeable lawyer. You always make sure you have the case sown up before you ever step into the courtroom.
- 4d - You've never lost a case. You have a jury in the palm of your hand after your opening statement. If lawyers got paid in the Malphoist system, you'd be a rich man.

- 5d - You create the legal equivalent of miracles on a daily basis. No matter how guilty your client, you almost always get them off.

Leadership

The charismatic ability to lead others. Important to politicians and military Generals.

- 1d - You can lead kindergartners to the zoo.
- 2d - First Lieutenant leading his platoon. Will they take that hill when you yell charge?
- 3d - Your fit for the White House, or High Command.
- 4d - Your leadership ability as strong enough to empower your followers even when good sense will not. Men will die on your word.
- 5d - “Gentlemen of England now a bed shell think themselves accursed!”

Mathematics

Understanding of the postulates and mechanics of mathematics. Also the ability to apply abstract principles to real world problems.

- 1d - Algebra and other basic mathematics,
- 2d - Calculus and vector analysis.
- 3d - You have all the tools that modern mathematics can give you. Now if you can only cut down on your number of postulates.
- 4d - You have an intuitive understanding of the mechanics of mathematics. You can do integrals in your head.
- 5d - You think in binary. Computers are obsolete pieces of junk compared to your processing power.

Medicine

Understanding of the processes of the human body, and how to keep them in working order.

- 1d - Medical student. You can diagnose the flue, but that's about it.
- 2d - Family Doctor. You are skilled at diagnosis, but leave complicated treatment up to specialists.
- 3d - Surgeon or other specialist. You are skilled enough to be able to put people back together after they break.
- 4d - Master surgeon. You save people when other doctors have given up hope.
- 5d - You define the methods of treatment that other doctors follow.

Philosophy

Knowledge of the history, methods, and major streams of thought in mankind's search for the truth. Philosophy is very much a living subject in the Malphoist world, and a large portion of University students study it.

- 1d - Familiarity with the basic fields of thought, and their views on the world.
- 2d - Solid understanding of the history of philosophy.
- 3d - You are a philosopher in your own right, though no great insights are attributed to you.
- 4d - Highly respected philosopher. You have a following, and are probably some sort of "ism".
- 5d - Plato and Socrates have nothing on you. Though like those two, your skill can't make you a good living.

Physics

The study of energy, matter, and their interaction. As with the other sciences, this is a dead subject in the Malphoist world.

- 1d - You are familiar with Classical Mechanics, and can figure your car's energy as it rolls down the road.
- 2d - You have an understanding of Einstein's relativity and Quantum mechanics, though the implications of either escape you.

- 3d - You have an intuitive understanding of the implications of the new physics.
- 4d - Your theories encompass black holes and quarks. Your level of skill puts you in the ranks of the Technocracy.
- 5d - Physics Guru. The Grand Unification Theory is at your fingertips.

Research

The ability to find information through various systems. Research covers library work, personal interviews, sifting through archives, and the use of various other information systems. If you want to know a fact, and don't know where to find it. Research is your skill.

- 1d - You can find a book in the library; but if its not listed in the card catalog, your lost.
- 2d - You know various methods for finding information. You could breeze through a doctoral dissertation.
- 3d - You are a reporter, or of a similar occupation. Information is important to you, and you know how to keep your facts straight.
- 4d - No facts are beyond your grasp. Give you enough time, and you can come up with anything.
- 5d - You either have a network of spies, or ESP. You know everything that is known, or at least where to find it.

Social Science

Study of the interactions of human beings, and the societies that grow up around them. Psychology, Sociology, and a stout understanding of politics are all a part of Social Science. In the Malphoist world, Social Science (and Social Engineering) are an important part of the system.

- 1d - You understand and can effect the interactions of children.
- 2d - Your abilities are advanced enough to work with the interactions of grown adults. However, your attempts to change these interactions often fail.
- 3d - You often have a lasting effect on an adult population.

- 4d - You are able to create large scale Social Engineering projects.
- 5d - The puppet master. More people believe what you believe, over what they believe themselves.

Writing

The ability to compose prose and poetry. Since self expression is against the law in the Malphoist world, most Malphoist authors write non-fiction.

- 1d - You could write a pretty good pamphlet for the department of health, or a A+ research paper.
- 2d - Solid, but uninteresting author. You excel at non-fiction.
- 3d - Your writing ability is advanced enough that you can write a stunning drama or comedy. You ability comes and goes, however, with your mood.
- 4d - Everything you write is remarkable. Even if you try, you can't write crap. You will be remembered long after your death for your ability.
- 5d - You can bring even the worst cynic to tears with one of your monologues. You are hailed as the greatest author of your generation.

Military/Screaming Silence

Skills in this category are earned either through the People's Malphoist Army, or through extended service in the ranks of the Screaming Silence. Even though the two institutions have such opposite functions, the skills they give to their operatives are very similar. In that respect (and in that respect only) the military and the Screaming Silence are the same.

Dodge/Dive

Dodge/Dive is the ability to get out of the way of an attack. In game terms, if a player has won the initiative (see Chapter 4 - The Rules) he can make a Agility - Dodge/Dive roll to try and get out of the way of the shot/punch/kick/etc. The player must have won the initiative to do this. After all, its no good dodging the bullet after the guy has pulled the trigger.

- 1d - You can dodge a punch or a slow moving car.
- 2d - Your skill is advanced enough that you know that instant between aiming and firing in which you can dodge a gun. It doesn't work all the time though.
- 3d - Your lightning reflexes allow you the ability to leap out of the way of most attacks. If only you can win the initiative...
- 4d - "Huh, where did he go?"
- 5d - You are the wind.

Explosives

The ability to build and defuse bombs.

- 1d - "Cut the red wire- No! No, the blue. Yeah, the blue..."
- 2d - You have a solid understanding of explosives. You can create a bomb that will do most jobs, but defusing them is a different story.
- 3d - You are an expert and bomb construct and diffusion.
- 4d - You create bombs of such a clever nature that very few people can ever defuse them. Hell, most of the time they can't even find them.
- 5d - Mad Bomber. You can make a bomb out of a paper clip, and three feet of string. You want someone dead. There dead.

First Aid

The skill to keep an injured person alive until he can be attended to by a surgeon. Unlike Medicine, First Aid is not about fixing people up. First aid is the art of survival, not repair.

- 1d - Basic boy scout first aid.
- 2d - Trained field medic.
- 3d - Emergency Medical Technician.
- 4d - Emergency Room Doctor.

5d - Faith Healer.

Hand to Hand

The art of bare hand fighting. From Boxing to Martial Arts.

1d - Queensbury Rules boxer, or bar room brawler. You don't stand much chance against anyone with any real skill.

2d - Basic Martial Arts or similar training. You can kick the ass of most regular Joes.

3d - Expert in Martial Arts. Black belt or better.

4d - You fighting skill is legendary. Most of the time you'd rather use your hands than a weapon.

5d - Super Hero. You can kill a man with one finger.

Heavy Weapons

The use of weapons larger than a rifle. Bazookas, rocket launchers, anti-tank weapons, and even artillery pieces. Heavy Weapons covers all the weapons that are beyond the scope of this rule system, but the players may run into from time to time.

1d - You can find the trigger on a Bazooka, and know which end bits.

2d - You have been trained in the use of Heavy Weapons. "Hay, where did I leave my ear plugs?"

3d - You have extensive experience in the use of large caliber weapons. You could take an 88 apart and put it back together again.

4d - You are the top of your field. You are heavily into the design of large caliber weapons.

5d - If you have 5d in Heavy Weapons, you must be the guy who invented gun power.

Melee

The use of hand held weapons. Swords, axes, clubs, flails, daggers, etc. Also covers improvised weapons such as chairs, bottles, and whatever.

- 1d - Angry housewife. You can bean a guy pretty good with a frying pan.
- 2d - Knight. Get you into the fray, and you'll show them what you can do.
- 3d - Trained swordsman. Able to use more complex weapons, such as flails, effectively.
- 4d - Blade Master. You use your weapon like an extension of yourself.
- 5d - You talent is so advanced you seldom have to draw your weapon. Your reputation can kill your enemies on its own.

Pilot

The ability to operate various flying machines, from airplanes to helicopters. Also the ability to fly, read a map, watch the gauges, drink coffee, and chat up the stewardess all at the same time.

- 1d - Passing experience with aircraft. Taking off and flying are no problem. Landings though...
- 2d - Train pilot. Nothing fancy, but you can get there and back.
- 3d - Experienced fighter pilot. You can get into a dog fight, and come out alive.
- 4d - Stunt pilot. Suicide dive anyone?
- 5d - You can fly a soup box with wings.

Pistol

The ability to operate and fire a firearm of the hand held variety. A **very** useful skill in the world of the Screaming Silence.

- 1d - BANG! "Oh, did I do that?"
- 2d - Military trained.
- 3d - Marksman.

- 4d - You can shoot the center out of a quarter.
- 5d - You can shoot the center out of a quarter while a guy is flipping it.

Rifle

The ability to operate and fire a firearm of the long arm variety. Rifle covers any type of weapon that is fired from the shoulder (Rifles, machine-guns, etc.).

- 1d - GI fresh to the fight. Point the gun at the bad guys and fire.
- 2d - Experienced. Either you were in the army, or grew up shooting prairie dogs.
- 3d - Marksman.
- 4d - You can wax a guy at 300 yards.
- 5d - You can wax a guy at 300 yards, and make it so the bullet hole won't show.

Stealth

The ability to move or hide without being seen or heard. Useful for a terrorist.

- 1d - You can play a wicked game of hide and seek.
- 2d - You have no trouble shaking the People's Police in a dark ally.
- 3d - You can sneak up on people as long as their attention is detracted.
- 4d - You can sneak up on people even if their looking for you.
- 5d - You can vanish and appear as if by magic.

Track

The ability to follow a trail left by a person or persons. The surface that has been traveled over must be conducive to tracking (you can't track someone over asphalt), and the trail has to be relatively new.

- 1d - You can track a clumsy man across a dry beach.

- 2d - You can track a man across a dirt field.
- 3d - You can track a careful man across almost any conductive surface.
- 4d - You can track a careful man down a street if its a rainy day.
- 5d - You can track a careful man down a busy street.

Blue Collar

Skills in the category are not learned from any institution. One does not sit in a classroom, or take tests to graduate from the school of hard knocks. Skills in this category are learned through sweat and tears..

Skills in this category are rather mundane and practical, designed to provide their owners with a living. Even though, players may find skills in the category useful during game play. You never know what will come up on a mission.

Carpentry

The ability to make things from wood. Furniture, boats, houses, etc. The use of this skill will probably have to be over a large period of time. Like most crafts, things do not come quickly in Carpentry.

- 1d - Basic laborer. You can build floors and other basic structures.
- 2d - Craftsman. Simple furniture, etc.
- 3d - Master. Fine furniture, and large structures.
- 4d - Your skill extends to fine musical instruments, and other instruments of fine precession
- 5d - Wood is like clay in your hands. Everything you build is a sculpture.

Electronics

The understanding of basic electromagnetic theory, and the ability to construct implements that operate on the principle. Wiring, motors, lights, etc. Remember: The Malphoist world is one that never invented intergrated circuitry.

- 1d - Basic Wiring. You know the difference between AC and DC.

- 2d - Skilled electrician. You can wire a car, and trouble shoot the bugs.
- 3d - Strong understanding of electricity. You can build your own motors and generators if you needed to.
- 4d - Your skill reaches into the area of vacuum tubes and simple computers.
- 5d - You are on the verge of discovering solid state electronics.

Finance

The ability to run a business. Unlike Economics, this skill is the down and dirty knowledge of what one has to do to keep a business afloat. No communism or capitalism here, just the basic facts that a business man needs to know.

As one might guess, this skill is not in great demand in the Malphoist world. A player with a high Finance skill probably earned it in the underground, or through some other illegal method. Remember, crime is still a big business.

- 1d - You made a killing with your lemonade stand as a kid.
- 2d - You can run a small business if there isn't too much competition.
- 3d - You can run a company in a highly competitive field.
- 4d - You eat competition for breakfast.
- 5d - If you don't have a monopoly on the whole market in five years, something has gone terribly wrong.

Gambling

Knowledge of how to play and wager on games of chance. Just like in real life, gambling can be the quick road to riches, or the poor house.

- 1d - You understand the rules of most games, though you still loose your shirt in Vegas.
- 2d - You know enough about the nuances of gambling to at least break even.
- 3d - You know enough about wagering, cards, bluffing, and humanity to make money gambling.

- 4d - You clean up in Vegas. Your friends won't play cards with you anymore.
- 5d - You the only person to break the back in Monte Carlo. Casinos close their doors when they see you coming.

Heavy Machinery

Skill in the operation of heavy machinery. Cranes, bulldozers, etc. Also applies to the operation of heavy military equipment. Tanks and the like.

- 1d - Passing knowledge.
- 2d - Experienced.
- 3d - Well trained.
- 4d - Master
- 5d - You can parallel park a mobile howitzer in New York.

Intimidation

The ability to get your way through threats and other forms of less than social persuasion.

- 1d - When you say jump, your pets say how high.
- 2d - High School bully.
- 3d - Drill Sergeant.
- 4d - When you threaten, people wet themselves.
- 5d - One raised eyebrow for you can make a grown man cry.

Lockpick/Safecracking

The ability to pick locks and crack safes. A very useful skill from time to time.

- 1d - You can get into your father booze cabinet.
- 2d - Most front doors aren't a problem for you.

- 3d - You can crack most safes, and all door locks.
- 4d - You've cracked some of the most advanced safes in the world. It's usually just a matter of time.
- 5d - No door is closed to you.

Mechanics

Skill in the repair and maintenance of machines. Cars, stoves, trucks, engines, you name it. If its got gears or pulleys, you can fix it.

- 1d - Basic mechanics. Clean spark plugs, change tires.
- 2d - Experienced mechanic. Rebuild an engine.
- 3d - Highly skilled mechanic. Maintain a race car.
- 4d - Master mechanic. Maintain a battleship.
- 5d - You are world renound for your mechanical ability.

Smithy

The forging of metal. Blacksmith, Goldsmith, Silversmith, etc. are all covered by Smithy.

- 1d - Basic smithing. Horse shoes.
- 2d - Experienced. Blades and armor.
- 3d - Expert. fine jewelry.
- 4d - Master.
- 5d - Top of your field.

Streetwise

Familiarity with the streets. Where to find a certain piece of information. Who's toes you shouldn't step on. Useful for interacting with Black Marketeers.

- 1d - Passing familiarity. Can buy a stolen radio.

- 2d - Spent enough time on the streets to know the ropes. Can get in touch with the black market.
- 3d - The streets are your home. Most everything can be found at a price.
- 4d - You have some authority and respect. People like to do you favors.
- 5d - King Pin.

General

All the skills in this category are open to all characters no matter what category they might be in. These skills represent hobbies and pursuits that are open to players at anytime in their lives.

Bureaucracy

Anyone who has ever tried to get a driver's license at the DMV knows that bureaucracy is a skill. Cutting through red tape and layers of mediocre employees that encase any large agency is a skill held by very few. In the Malphoist world, Bureaucracy maybe one of the most important skills that a player can have.

- 1d - You have a passing understanding of the insanity that is bureaucracy. You know when a bureaucrat is going to help you, and when you should ask for their manager. Still, it takes you three hours to get your driver's license.
- 2d - You have earned your strips in the field. You know if a bureaucrat will help you at first sight. You know when to be tough, and when to be friendly. Driver's license in an hour, easy.
- 3d - Bureaucrats run screaming when they see you coming. You've never had to take a number in your life. Driver's license in 5 minutes.
- 4d - Your bureaucratic powers are so advanced, that you can actually get your driver's license by phone!
- 5d - To you, bureaucracy is just another concept for the little people. If a bureaucrat speaks back to you, the letter of apology comes straight from the President.

Climb

The ability to scale shear surfaces

- 1d - You can climb trees without any trouble.
- 2d - You can climb most surfaces.
- 3d - You can climb almost any surface..
- 4d - You haven't used a safty rope since you were 8.
- 5d - You can climb brick walls, in the rain.

Deception

The ability to convince someone of your honesty, regardless of your true feelings. In other words: The ability to lie through your teeth.

- 1d - You can convince your mother that you were not, in fact, out drinking last night.
- 2d - "No Officer, I had no idea I was speeding."
- 3d - You lie so well, no one can tell when your telling the truth.
- 4d - You lie so convincingly that people often believe you over the truth.
- 5d - What you say is gospel.

Drive

The ability to operate an automobile. The Malphoist world is car culture, so almost everyone within it can drive. If your character lacks this skill, people will look at him rather strangely.

- 1d - You drive well, but you can't stand rush hour.
- 2d - You can hold your own in rush hour traffic.
- 3d - Professional driver.

4d - Formula one driver at his height. You can drive circles around almost anyone.

5d - A car seems like an extension of your body.

Gymnastics

The ability to do flips, somersaults, walk on tight ropes, swing from bars, and other feats of physical prowess. This skill can some times be substituted for Dodge/Dive if the GM feels that the maneuver fits Gymnastics better.

1d - You excelled in Gym class. You can do a flip without braking your neck.

2d - Basic Gymnastics.

3d - You Gymnastics ability easy impresses people.

4d - Your abilities seem almost super human. Back flips into infinity.

5d - Your abilities are super human. You put the movies to shame.

Linguistics*

The ability to speak languages. Linguistics covers the general ability to pick up any language, but is sub-skillable to a specific language. The Malphoist world is almost totally dominated by English. It is the language that is taught in schools, and all government business is done in. Other languages are only spoken in private homes, by families trying to maintain their roots.

1d - You can get by in maybe one language, and can pick out a phrase or two in two or three others. Accents throw your for a loop.

2d - Skill in one language, or proficiency in two or three. You can get your point across in most languages with a lot of hand gestures and pointing.

3d - You probably have mastery of a language, and get by pretty well in a few others. You pick up other languages quickly if you have to use them.

4d - You can speak one or two languages as if you were a native. With a few days study, you can pick up almost any language.

- 5d - You learn new languages like most people drink water. Starting from a common root, you can become proficient in a language after one conversation.

Observation

The ability to pick out fine details amongst the wealth of useless information that consumes us. This is the learned portion of perception. The knowledge that a watch was made in Bristol instead of London, for example, instead of just spotting the watch.

- 1d - You occasionally spot things out of the normal, especially in your normal environment.
- 2d - You are perceptive. You spot unusual thing on a regular basis.
- 3d - You are constantly aware of your surroundings. Nothing changes without you being aware of it.
- 4d - Your skills is so advanced that people believe you to have ESP. With one glance you can take in all the details of a room.
- 5d - To say you have ESP would be a gross understatement.

Photography

The art of taking pictures. In game terms, it is more the mechanics of operating a camera and auxiliary equipment than the actual art of photography.

- 1d - You take pretty good vacation slides. Still get your thumb in there once and awhile though.
- 2d - Competent photographer.
- 3d - Expert. You take good pictures in adverse conditions.
- 4d - You can get quality shots even in the pick black of night.
- 5d - You once took a photograph at night, in the rain, hanging upside down from a helicopter.

Play Instrument*

The ability to play a musical instrument. Sub-skillable to a specific instrument.

- 1d - “Twinkle, Twinkle, little star...”
- 2d - Good enough rhythm in a rock band.
- 3d - Good enough for lead.
- 4d - Virtuoso performer.
- 5d - You impart a passion to a piece of music beyond the scope of its composer.

Ride Motorcycle

The ability to ride a motorbike.

- 1d - You can ride without falling off.
- 2d - Competent rider.
- 3d - Expert.
- 4d - You could race motorcycles for a living.
- 5d - You live on your hog.

Running

The ability to sprint for extended period of time. Useful if bad guys are chasing you.

- 1d - You can turn on the speed long enough to escape most people.
- 2d - Track star.
- 3d - Olympic quality.
- 4d - You run a four minute mile every day.
- 5d - You run fast enough to chase down deer.

Sail

Operation of a water vessel. This skill applies more to sail boats and yachts, speed boats would probably be covered by Drive.

- 1d - You know the difference between port and starboard.
- 2d - Competent sailor.
- 3d - Professional sailor.
- 4d - You could circumnavigate the globe.
- 5d - You live for the sea.

Survival*

The knowledge of survival techniques out in the wild. Sub-skillable to a specific climate (Forest, Desert, Arctic).

- 1d - You know not to put the latrine up wind of the base camp.
- 2d - You can survive for long periods of time given the right equipment (knife, matches, rifle, tent.)
- 3d - Experienced Woodsmen. You can get by for long periods with just your wits.
- 4d - Indian native. You'd rather be out in the wild than in any city.
- 5d - You are one with Gia.

Swim

The ability to move through water. Most everyone has at least one die in this.

- 1d - You can keep yourself afloat, and swim from one end of the pool to the other.
- 2d - Good swimmer.
- 3d - Marathon swimmer.
- 4d - You could swim the English Channel.

5d - Mermaid.

Throw

Throwing everything from a hand grenade to a football.

1d - You can play catch.

2d - High School Football Quarterback.

3d - You can actually get a boomerang to come back.

4d - NFL Quarterback at the top of his game.

5d - You can throw a pebble like a bullet.

Exceptional & Detrimental Abilities

Exceptional and Detrimental Abilities are the things that cut the player characters apart from the flock. They are the strengths (and weaknesses) that raise the characters out of the mundane, and into the exceptional. Exceptional and Detrimental abilities should not be chosen haphazardly. These abilities should reflect the personality of the character that a player is building; if they don't, even an exceptional ability can be detrimental.

Exceptional Abilities

Exceptional Abilities are the up swing of this whole affair. These are the abilities that will (hopefully) give your character an edge over his opponents. Choose your Exceptional Abilities well, and make sure that your character will use them; since for every Exceptional Ability you choose, you will have to take a Detrimental one.

Acute Hearing/Smell/Taste/Touch/Vision

The most basic type of Exceptional Ability is one that boosts one of the character's senses. Sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. These are always popular Exceptional Abilities, and are easy to apply to almost any character. Remember though: A character with an acute sense will be more easily stunned by a shock to that sense. i.e. A bright flash will effect a character with acute vision far more than a normal character.

- 1d - One dice advantage in an acute sense is equivalent to real world ability. With acute vision, you can read street signs before anyone else; with acute touch, you can tell the year of a coin with out looking; etc.
- 2d - Two dice advantage is equivalent to a party stopping ability. With acute taste, you can tell the difference between a Bolinger '53, and a Bolinger '54; with acute hearing, you can hear the neighbors two houses over; etc.
- 3d - Three dice advantage in an acute sense is other worldly. With acute vision, you can tell the nationality of a ship that's sailing on the horizon; with acute smell, you can tell two people apart just from their sent.

Ambidexterity

The ability to use both hand with equal adeptness. For most people, using there off hand puts any action with that hand at half dice pool (rounded up, as always). A character with Ambidexterity takes this penalty, but then adds their dice equivalent in Ambidexterity to the new dice pool. i.e. A character with five dice in his dice pool, and 1 die in Ambidexterity is using his off hand. His dice pool would be halved to three dice normal, but he gains his one die in Ambidexterity to bring him up to four dice. Ambidexterity can never modify the dice pool to a higher value than the beginning dice pool.

Good Looks

Good looks is always a plus; and to player characters, doubly so. A solid jaw, or a well placed beauty mark may get a character into places that guns and bombs never will. A character with the Good Looks Exceptional ability can add their Good Looks dice to any social roll made against a member of the opposite sex.

Double Jointed

The ability to bend one's joints at angles not specified in nature. Useful for many things, but mainly used to escape from ropes and handcuffs. A character with the Double Jointed Ability can add their dice equivalence to any escape attempt.

Empathy

A character's ability to sense other people's emotions. Useful for a lot of touchy feely stuff, but mainly used to sense if someone is lying. A Wits-Empathy roll can be made by any character with Empathy to detect a character's mood.

Fearlessness

Pig headed inability to acknowledge danger. While in real life this would be a Detrimental Ability. In the world of Roleplaying Games, this is a plus. The player character never knows the feeling of fear, and never hesitates at important moments. Of course, he'll probably walk into automatic gun fire unless someone tells him different. But hey, guts is guts.

Technical Aptitude

A character's affinity with machines. A character with Technical Aptitude can add his dice equivalence to any mechanical or electrical roll. Of course, in the world of the Screaming Silence, Technical Aptitude makes a player a prime candidate for the Technocracy.

Night Vision

The ability to see in the dark. Normal characters are at half dice pool for any action taken in the dark. Like Ambidexterity, a character with Night Vision takes this penalty, but then can add their dice equivalence in Night Vision back into the dice pool.

Photographic Memory

The ability to remember facts and figures. If a player has forgotten a fact, and want the character to try and remember, dice equivalencies in Photographic Memory can be added to the dice pool.

Sixth Sense

A character's intuition. Used at the GM's discretion.

Wealth

Money. The stuff that makes the world go 'round.

1d - Well off. (Lawyer or a Doctor.)

2d - Rich. (Millionaire.)

3d - Filthy Rich (Oil Tycoon or Bill Gates.)

Detrimental Abilities

Detrimental Abilities are the down side of abilities. For every Exceptional Ability a character takes, he must take a Detrimental one. All Detrimental Abilities are supposed to restrict a character in some way. So it is wise for a player to think long and hard about what it is his character is going to do. The wrong Detrimental Ability could cost your character his life.

Hearing/Smell/Taste/Touch/Vision Impairment

Just as an acute sense is a popular Exceptional Ability, a sensory impairment is a popular Detrimental one. After all, a Taste Impairment won't have a drastic effect on your character (or will it?).

- 1d - Slight impairment. Easily corrected with glasses, a hearing aid, or the like.
- 2d - More serious impairment. Able to operate in daily life, but the impairment may be a stumbling block during action. Total loss of lesser senses (taste, touch, smell).
- 3d - Almost total impairment of sense. Blind, or Deaf.

Enemy

A powerful individual or organization is out to get you. While this may not be a problem during normal gaming, the GM may bring up your enemy at the most inopportune times.

- 1d - Dangerous individual. Assassin, Mobster, or low end Military officer.
- 2d - Powerful individual or small organization. Military General, powerful politician, or the KKK.
- 3d - Large organization. The Technocracy..

Greed

You have an underlying weakness for money and power. Anytime the word profit is mentioned, you get weak in the knees. While most roleplayers have this disadvantage by default, a character with Greed will pursue his longings long after a player realizes that they are in danger. A GM should have no qualms against taking control of a player's character if they are not playing according to this Detrimental Ability.

Addiction

You are addicted to something: Drugs, booze, gambling, women. You pursue your addiction almost to the exclusion of everything else in your life. If your character comes into contact with the object of his desire, he must make a Willpower roll or fall into its clutches.

- 1d - Addiction to cigarettes or the like.
- 2d - Compulsive gambler, womanizer, or pot smoker.
- 3d - Cocaine addiction.

Allergies

You have chronic allergies, and they always seem to crop up at the most inconvenient times...

- 1d - Allergic to one thing: Cats, pollen, bee stings, etc.
- 2d - Allergic to most things.
- 3d - Allergic to almost everything but air.

Color Blind

Your color blind. This is only a one dice Detrimental Ability. Either your color blind, or your not.

Cowardliness

You are a sniveling little coward. Everything frightens you, even your own shadow.

Night Blind

You can't see well at night. Subtract your Night Blind dice from any rolls made at night.

Obese

You have a weight problem, and it has nothing to do with being big boned.

Phobia

You have a phobia of something: Snakes, spiders, open spaces, closed spaces, heights, etc.

- 1d - You can get over your phobia with a Willpower roll.
- 2d - The target of your fear will send you running in fear.
- 3d - When you encounter the target of your phobia, you collapse into a drooling ball.

Unattractive Appearance

Your looks are a detriment to you when dealing with people. Subtract your Unattractive Appearance dice from any social rolls involving the opposite sex.

Injury

You have an injury.

- 1d - Your injury does not affect your life. Missing finger, or the like.
- 2d - Your injury is a problem, but you can work around it. Lost leg.
- 3d - Major injury. Lost both legs.

Chapter 4 - The Rules

In every roleplaying game, no matter how peaceful, the players will eventually get themselves into some type of conflict. Be it a gun fight, or a car chase, or a very intense game of gin rummy. Conflict always comes into play, and because of this, every roleplaying game needs rules. Rules are a way to resolve these conflicts without resolving to shouting and name calling. Almost all roleplaying games use dice to add an aspect of randomness into system, and to impart to the player the feeling that the GM is not, in fact, out to get them.

The Screaming Silence is no different in these regards. Dice are rolled, and success is determined, according to a set of rules that both the players and the GM must abide to. Through this, some sort of objectivity in the game is maintained, and the game is made more fun for everyone. However, rules can sometimes slow play down to snail's pace, which can kill virtually all of the fun in a game. This can be elevated somewhat through a strong familiarity with the rules, but sometimes GM's and players just plain forget. A well run game will maintain a balance between objectivity, and playability. Remember, if everyone agrees, maybe you don't need to go to the rule book.

The Round

The basic time unit of the Screaming Silence is the round. The round is really not of any set time length, it simply represents the amount of time it takes to take one simple action. For a combat situation, where time is of the up most importance, a round can be as short as 3 to 4 seconds. In a research situation, where a character is trying to isolate a piece of information, a round could be as long as a month. The GM will determine the exact length of a round depending on the situation. All you need to remember is that in one round, one player can roll one dice pool (though he can split that dice pool, and take multiple actions).

Rolling the Dice

As described before, the Dice Pool is the cornerstone of the dice rolling system in the Screaming Silence. Before a player (or GM) rolls any dice, he must first determine how many dice to roll. Most actions will test a combination of an Attribute and a Skill. Adding the Dice Equivalents together for these two stats will give the player his dice pool. These dice are then rolled against a difficulty. A number somewhere between 1 and 10. This, as the name implies, represents the difficulty of the action. This difficulty is

determined by the GM, and told to the player before he rolls. The chart below gives a breakdown of the relative difficulties:

Difficulty

| | | |
|----|----|-------------------|
| 1 | -- | Automatic Success |
| 2 | -- | Idiot Proof |
| 3 | -- | Simple |
| 4 | -- | Easy |
| 5 | -- | Moderate |
| 6 | -- | Average |
| 7 | -- | Hard |
| 8 | -- | Tough |
| 9 | -- | Very Difficult |
| 10 | -- | Almost Impossible |

For every die in the Dice Pool that rolls the difficulty or higher, one success is scored. Count up the total number of successes, and refer to the chart below for a measure of how well you did:

Successes

| | | |
|---|----|------------|
| 1 | -- | Marginal |
| 2 | -- | Average |
| 3 | -- | Skillful |
| 4 | -- | Masterful |
| 5 | -- | Remarkable |

Okay, our buddy Baxter Blaine is back to demonstrate the dice rolling system for you. Lets say that Baxter is casually driving his old Chevy through town when he realizes that the blue Plymouth behind him has been following him for the last twelve blocks.

Baxter decides to take a sudden left turn from the right turn lane to loose his pursuer. The GM decides that it will require a Driving-Dexterity role versus 6 to make the turn (5 or 6 is a roll of average difficulty). Baxter's Dexterity is at 2 dice and his Driving skill is at 1 dice, that give Baxter a dice pool of 3 dice for this action. Baxter rolls and gets a 7, a 7, and a 4. That's two successes. Wonderful, Baxter screams through on coming traffic, and drives into a side road. The blue Plymouth slams on its brakes and does a U-turn, as Baxter steps on the gas.

This process is the basis for all dice rolling in the Screaming Silence, with one addition: One die in the Dice Pool is always marked apart from the other dice in the set (this is one of the original Dice Pool dice, not an extra one). This is the Fortune Die. For the purposes of successes, it is dealt with just as the other dice in the pool. It only comes into play when it rolls a 1 or a 10.

If a ten comes up on the Fortune Die, something good has happened to the player. Roll it again. If a *success* is then rolled (does not have to be a ten), add that success to your total number of successes, add one to the difficulty, and roll again. If this roll comes up a success, add another success, add another one to the difficulty, and roll again. Keep doing this until you roll a failure.

If a one comes up on the Fortune Die, something bad has happened to the player. Do the inverse of the above. Roll the die. If it is a failure (does not have to be a one), subtract one success from your total successes, subtract one from the difficulty, and roll again. etc. If your total number of success ever becomes negative, then something terrible has happened to the player. Exactly what this is up to the GM fevered imagination; but what ever it is, you can count on it not being good...

The driver of the blue Plymouth thought he was safe. It seemed that the guy he was tailing hadn't a clue in the world. At least that was what he thought. The old Chevy careened across four lanes of traffic and down a small side street of to the left. The driver had only moments to act. The GM decides that the Driver has to make an Observation-Wits roll versus 7 to react in time. The driver has 2 dice in observation but only one dice in Wits, giving him 3 dice in his dice pool. He marks one of his dice as his Fortune Die (The first one he rolls), and rolls. He gets a 1, a 6, and a 9. Normally that would be one success, but the one on his Fortune die means something bad has happened to him. He rolls his Fortune Die again and gets a 3. This means that he must subtract one from his total number of successes. Leaving him with zero. He subtracts one from his difficulty, lowering it to 6 (7-1), and rolls his Fortune Die again. This times he rolls a 6, a success, meaning he need not roll again. (The last success on the Fortune die is not added to the total number of success, it is just an indicator that the rolling is over.) The Driver is left with zero successes and therefore fails. He slams on his brakes and stops 100 yards from the side street.

Shifting down into first, the Driver brings the car around with a squeal of rubber. As he plows toward the side street, he gets ready to turn; but to his misfortune, a truck happens to be turning out at the same time. The GM decides that the Driver has to make a Driving-Dexterity roll, again versus 7, to get around the truck. This time the Driver is a little better off. He has 3d in driving and 2d in dexterity, giving him a dice pool of 5 dice. He marks his first die as his Fortune Die, and rolls. He rolls a 10, a 3, two 1's, and a 9. Normally that would be two successes, but he rolled a 10 on his Fortune Die. Things will swing even more into his favor. He rolls the Fortune Die again and get a 8. That's a

*success, and he adds it to his total. He raises his difficulty to 8, and rolls again. He gets an 8 again, great, one more success! He raises his difficulty to 9 and rolls a third time. This time he gets a 1, which means that he cannot roll again. It does **not** mean that he is to start rolling for negative successes. That only matters on the original roll.*

Looks like he made it around that truck without any problems (4 successes). Lets hope he's just as lucky when he tries to dodge that telephone pole...

There is one last characteristic of Dice Pools that must be mentioned: All dice in a Dice Pool do not have to be used toward the same action. Dice pools can be split into multiple actions. i.e. shooting twice in a round, catching a grenade and throwing it, patting your head and rubbing your stomach, etc. If the actions you wish to take are dissimilar, then you take the smallest dice pool of the bunch, and split that pool up between the actions. Only one Fortune Die is rolled, however, no matter how many actions are taken. The player may decide for with action successes are added or subtracted.

Okay, say that the driver above wanted to shoot at Baxter AND dodge the truck. He has 5d in his Driving-Dex dice pool, but only 4d in his Handgun-Dex pool. Therefore he would have to split up 4 dice between his two actions. 2d in both, or 1d in shooting and the other 3d in driving, whatever he thought was best..

Gaming Pips

Though this is not really a function of game mechanics, it is probably wise to mention it here, since a player must keep it in mind while rolling dice. On any Dice Roll that uses a skill, if a player rolls three successes on a single action, he gains a pip in that skill. i.e. on a Dex-Drive roll, if I rolled three success, I would gain a pip in Driving. This is on applicable to a single action. If a Dice Pool is split, then three successes must be rolled all in one action. The successes for the other action do not count.

When the Driver of the Blue Plymouth made his stunning swerve around the on coming truck, he scored 4 success. This would gain him a pip in his driving skill.

This experience must be taken at the time the three successes are rolled. If a player forgets to take his pip, but remembers later on in the game, he can not take the pip then.

Extended and Opposed Actions

An extended action is an action that takes many rolls over time. Such as fixing a car or pushing a rock up a hill. In extended actions the successes from many different rolls are added together in hopes of reaching a total set by the GM. As in the example of

fixing the car, maybe it requires 20 success to get the car running again. The repairman would roll Mechanics-IQ versus 6 for every round he is fixing the car, until he reaches a total of twenty. In the example of pushing the rock up a hill, maybe it requires 15 successes on strength rolls versus 4 to get it up there. When 15 successes is reached the rock is at the top of the hill.

In extended actions teams can work together on an action. Three people can make Mechanic-IQ rolls, each adding his successes to the total. They would reach the goal of 20 much quicker. The old adage: "Too many cooks spoil the broth" may come into play, but that's up to the GM to decide.

An opposed action is an action in which two people are doing an extended action against each other. An example would be arm wrestling, or tug of war. In this case success are tallied as in extended action, but one person's success are subtracted from the other person's. Whenever one person's success equals the target number plus the opponents success, they have won the action. Again, teams may work together.

Some opposed actions merely require one character to beat the other character's successes for that round. These are called one round opposed action, and do not require a success goal to be set.

It doesn't seem that Baxter is having a very good day at all. No sooner has he eluded the blue Plymouth, when his own car stalls and dies. He rolls to a stop only 250 yards from his pursuers. Baxter frantically pushes at the ignition button. Nothing. This happens all the time. The car is very old. Baxter knows that he has to get the car moving so he can do a rolling start.

Baxter is in luck, the road begins to decline after about a 100 yards, he only has to push the car there. However, the Gentlemen from the blue Plymouth are out of their car, looking at the dent the telephone pole has made in their radiator. It's only a matter of moments before they come after Baxter.

The GM decides that it will require 10 success to get the car to the edge of the hill. Baxter will be rolling his Strength versus 7 (Its a heavy car). Baxter's strength is 2 dice which is the total of his dice pool (no skill for pushing). He climbs out the car and starts pushing. First dice he rolls is his Fortune Die. The first roll is a 10 and a 7. Two successes, he rolls the Fortune dice again. A 6. Well, its a beginning... The next round he rolls a 9 and a 8. Two more! That's four so far. The third round he rolls a 4 and a 5. Drat, that's no help at all. He looks back over his shoulder and sees the two men walking towards his car. Fourth round two 7's! Six altogether. All most there... Seventh round, an eight and a two. Seven altogether. In his rear view mirror he sees one of the men reaching under his jacket. Eighth round, a 1 and a 5! Oh no, he rolls the Fortune Die again and gets a 3. He rolls again and gets a 8. For that roll, Baxter has a negative

number of successes! He slips to the floor and the car rolls away from him. Baxter has to make a quick decision. Should he keep pushing the car, even though the men are almost upon him (he only needs three more successes to reach the hill), or should he make a run for it to the warehouse at the side of the street? One of the men pulls a Colt Auto from under his jacket. Baxter decides to bolt for the warehouse.

Combat

In any Roleplaying Game, the area that requires the most detailed rules is always the Combat system. Even if combat take up a small part in the actual game, a complete combat system is still needed. This fact probably dates back to one of the origins of Roleplaying Games: in the game of War that boys play as children. You see, the main problem with playing War is in the fact that if a person gets shot, they have no real compulsion to die. Hence the argument: "Bang! Your Dead! No I'm not! Yes you are! You Missed! How could I, I'm standing right behind you! Well you hit my bullet proof vest, then! What vest? I thought we said no vests! But...(pause)...Bang! Your Dead!" and so on. The purpose of a combat system in a Roleplaying Game is to avoid this, and tell everybody, once and for all, who is actually dead.

Range Combat

Combat is divided into two main sections: Range and Hand to Hand. Range Combat, covered here, details the use of all sorts of weapons that are effective over a distance. From lasers to bows and arrows. All range weapons are dealt with in the same manner, though this section describes the system in terms of firearms. Other types of range weapons will be detailed as they are encountered.

Initiative

Range Combat is handled, for the most part, like any other action, but there are few extra steps added into the system. First of all, at the start of every combat round, everyone must declare what they are doing. (Those of you who are experienced Roleplayers know that many systems require you to do this, and- of course -none of us ever do. But in the Screaming Silence this declaration is of up most importance.) Once everyone has determined what action he or she is taking, all the players gather together their appropriate dice pool. Dice pools in Combat are calculated in the same way as any other roll (Attribute + Skill).

Once everyone knows what they are doing (and the GM knows what the NPC's are doing), initiative must be determined. In the Screaming Silence, initiative is determined by the bidding of one's dice pool. i.e. "I bid one dice to go first. I bid two dice. I see your two and raise you one (bid at three). Okay you get to go first." The dice that are bid are taken out of the bidder's dice pool and placed in the center of the table (or other

neutral place). All the dice bid are collected. Even if you didn't win the bid, the dice that you bid are still collected.. If no one bids any dice then the person with the largest dice pool has initiative, then the next largest, then the next largest, etc. If a character has been surprised that turn, they will be unable to bid for initiative.

It seems our good friend Baxter is in a little bit of trouble. One of the men from the blue Plymouth wants to put a .45 slug between his eyes, and Baxter has over 20 feet to run before he's at the warehouse. Lets see how he does.

The man with the pistol (a NPC, run by the GM) declares that he is trying to shoot Baxter. The man's Pistol skill is 2 dice and a Dexterity of 2 dice, giving his a dice pool of 4 dice. The difficulty of his shot will be 6.

Baxter declares that he is running for the warehouse as fast as he can. He has 3d in Agility and 0d in Running, giving him a grand total of 3 dice. The difficulty of his action will be 4 (20 ft, is about a diff. 4, I think).

Well, the gun man has a bigger dice pool than Baxter and will go first unless Baxter gets the initiative (and makes his roll). With this in mind, Baxter bids one dice for initiative, leaving him two. The gun man, mad about his car, really want to waste Baxter, so he bids two dice for initiative. Baxter has two dice left, and could out bid the gun man, but that would leave him with no dice to roll. It seems that our hero is destined to get shot. Or is he...

As you can see, the person with the biggest dice pool is at a major advantage. This is as it should be, implying that the person who is better at what he is doing can do it quicker. But there is a reprieve for those with terminally low dice pools: Difficulty levels can be exchanged for dice. In other words you can get more dice to bid with by making you action harder to do. This represents rushing though an action, shooting blindly or throwing a wild punch. You may go first, but you have a greater chance of failing. Which, in a case of life and death, maybe worth the risk. Difficulty levels can be exchanged for dice according to the chart below.

| <u>+ to Diff. Level</u> | <u>Total Dice Gained</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 | 1d |
| 3 | 2d |
| 4 | 3d |
| 5 | 4d |

Say you are at difficulty level 5 and need more dice. Rolling against a difficulty level of 7 would get you 1 dice. Difficulty level of 8 would get you 2 dice. Level 9 would get you 3 dice. Level 10, 4 dice.

Baxter may not have enough dice, but if difficulty is only at 4. He knocks it up to a difficulty of 7 and get two extra dice to bid with. He bids them both for the initiative.

The gun man, figuring that Baxter doesn't have a chance, lets him go first. Though he does raise his own difficulty up to 8, so he now has 3 dice to shoot Baxter with.

After initiative has been determine, dice are rolls as normal. The highest bidder going first, the second highest next, and so on (If two characters have bid the same, the one who bid first, goes first).

Dodging is a one turn opposed action, but only if the dodger gets the initiative. Baxter rolls his two dice (first is the Fortune Die) and get an 8, and a 4. One success, lets hope its enough. The gun man rolls his three dice and get a 7, a 6, and a 2. One success. Baxter's one success cancels with the gun man's success, meaning the shot missed. The bullet flies harmlessly by, inches from Baxter's head. Well Baxter made it to the warehouse. So far so good.

Hit Location and Damage.

If an attacker succeeds with his shot, hit location and damage must be determined. The number of successes the attacker scored on his attack roll will effect the out come of his shot.

First roll a 1d10 and refer to the chart below:

| <u>Roll</u> | <u>Area Hit</u> |
|-------------|-----------------|
| 0 | Head |
| 1-3 | Torso |
| 4-5 | Abdomen |
| 6 | Right Arm |
| 7 | Left Arm |
| 8 | Right Leg |
| 9 | Left Leg |

This will tell you where the shot has landed. Then compare the number of successes the attacker received with the chart below:

| <u>Success</u> | <u>Result</u> |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1 | - |
| 2 | Normal |

| | |
|---|--------|
| 3 | 1 Bump |
| 4 | 2 Bump |
| 5 | 3 Bump |

Normal means just that.

A 1 Bump result means that you can move the hits area one location. Legs can be bumped to abdomen; abdomen to torso or legs; arms to torso; torso to arms, abdomen, head; head to torso. Legs cannot be bumped to torso, or arms to legs, etc, on one bump.

A 2 Bump means you may bump the hit two areas.

A 3 Bump means you may bump the shot to anywhere.

Damage is determined by the caliber of the weapon in question (see chart below). Roll the indicated sized dice and add the number of successes you received on your hit. For each bump that you take, subtract that success from your damage total. Subtract this the amount of damage done to that hit location.

Note: If the range is within Point Blank Range (Point Blank is determined as your dice pool in yards) then damage is doubled.

Pistol/SMG Damage

| <u>Caliber</u> | <u>Damage</u> |
|----------------|---------------|
| .22 | 1d4 |
| .38-9 mm | 1d6 |
| .45-10 mm | 1d8 |

Rifle Damage

| <u>Caliber</u> | <u>Damage</u> |
|----------------|---------------|
| .223-7.72 mm | 1d8 |
| .50-10 mm | 1d10 |
| 12 gauge | 2d6 |

Though most explosive devices are beyond the scope of this rule system (if a bomb goes off, and your beside it, you dead), a few explosive devices will be tossed around by the players. Explosives have to damage stat and radius stat. i.e. a hand grenade has (4d6,2). This means that grenade does 4d6 damage within a a 2 yard radius. At every multiple of the radius, the hand grenade will do one dice less damage. i.e. 3d6 from 2 to 4 yards, 2d6 from 4 to 6 yards, and 1d6 from 6 to 8 yards. Beyond 8 yards the grenade would do no damage. Damage from explosives are assumed to be take just to the torso, although the injury is actually spread evenly over the body.

Of course, a character's best chance when being shot at or blown up is not to be where the gun is shooting, or the bomb is going off. With gunfire, this can only be achieved if the target wins the initiative and rolls an Agility-Dodge roll. Succeeding in this isn't quite enough though. This is only an opposed roll against the shooter's attack roll. The dodger must get equal to or greater successes than the shooter, or he will still get hit. With explosives, the number of successes are subtracted from the number of dice rolled to determine damage. i.e. If a grenade goes off, and I get two success on my dodge roll, the grenade does 2d6 damage.

Let's see. Baxter had managed to make it to the warehouse, but he's far from out of trouble. His two pursuers are right on his tail, and all Baxter has is his pocket .22 tucked into his boot.

Lucky for Baxter the door to the warehouse is open and no one seems to be inside. He dives behind a stack of packing crates as the shadows of the two thugs are cast across the floor. Baxter will have to play this one close to the chest, if he want's to get out alive. He's out manned and out gunned.

Well, so much for close to the chest. Baxter rolls out into the open a pulls of a shot at first thug. The thug is surprised and unable to bid for initiative. Baxter has one dice in pistol and 2 dice in dexterity, giving him a dice pool of 3 dice. The thug has a dice pool of 4 with his pistol, which he plans to use if he can get the chance. Both difficulties are at 5.

Baxter rolls (first dice Fortune) and gets a 5, a 5, and a 4. Two successes! He lands a hit. Rolling a ten sided dice for hit location, Baxter gets a 9. A hit in the left leg (Baxter can't bump the shot, because he only got two successes). The damage with a .22 is 1d4 and Baxter rolls a 3. Adding the 2 successes from the hit, Baxter does 5 points of damage to the thug. The thug's leg buckles under him as the bullet rips through his thigh. He falls to the floor just in time for Baxter to see the second thug pull a Thompson SMG from under his coat.

Automatic Fire

Automatic fire is dealt with a little differently than normal range combat. First, the attacker must determine how many rounds he will fire in that round. Then he must roll to hit for one shot only. This is just like any other range combat shot, and is dealt with no differently.

If the first shot hits, even with only one success, roll one dice for every other bullet that was fired by the attacker, against the same difficulty as the first shot. The hits from this second group of rolls cannot be bumped, and their damage is not modified by the number of successes rolled on the first shot. If the first shot misses, still roll the dice for the other bullets, but against a difficulty of 2 higher.

Oops. Baxter dives back behind cover as the thug lets loose. Baxter's Agility-Dodge/Dive Dice Pool is at 4 dice, and the difficulty of his maneuver is at 5. The thug is going to shoot Baxter with 10 rounds, having 5 dice in his Dexterity-Rife dice pool. His action is at a difficulty of 6. Baxter bids 1 dice to go first and the thug lets him. Knowing the volume of bullets he's going to let loose, he figures Baxter doesn't has a chance.

Baxter rolls his three dice and gets a 8, a 4, and a 3. Well, one success is better than none.

The Thug rolls his five dice (for the first bullet) and gets a 10 (on his Fortune Die), a 5, a 4, a 3 and a 1. He re-rolls the Fortune Die and gets a 3. . That's a grand total of one success. Fortunately, that success cancels with Baxter's, who thanks his luck stars for the favor. But the thug now gets to roll for the rest of the shots he fired. The difficulty for these will be two higher since he missed with the first bullet. That's 9 dice at a difficulty of 8. He rolls a 9, a 4, a 6, two 7's, two 3's, a 2, and a 1. One success, meaning one bullet hit Baxter. For all of Baxter's luck he still catches a bullet.

The thug rolls for hit location for that bullet and rolls a 6, that's a hit in the right arm. The damage from a .45 slug is 1d8 points, and the thug gets a 4. Baxter subtracts that amount from his hit points in his right arm (no successes added because it was auto fire), and rolls painfully behind the crates he was diving for. Maybe Baxter will be a little more careful next time.

Spraying an area with an automatic weapon is dealt with differently even from just straight auto fire. The attacker must collect a number of dice equal to number of rounds that he will be firing. Then he must subtract a die for every ten degrees in his spray arc. The attacker then rolls these dice as his dice pool against a difficulty of two higher than the normal shot. Any successes are divided evenly amongst the targets. (Note: Spray fire does not use any skill-attribute dice pool, although these are still the dice that the attacker would bid with. One dice must remain in the dice pool at the end of bidding.)

Baxter grabs at the bullet hole in his arm. It looks pretty bad, and hurts like hell. But Baxter doesn't have any time to complain, the shadow of the machine gun thug moves quickly toward him. He clammers over a storage crate nearby with frantic intent, dropping to the floor just as the thug turns the corner.

The thug, not seeing where Baxter has gotten to in the dim light, decides to spray the area in a 50 degree arc. There are three crates that will act like targets (Baxter is behind the first crate, which acts as five points of cover, see below), and the difficulty will be at 6. Since the thug is spraying the area his attribute-skill dice pool has nothing to do with the shot. He is shooting 10 rounds, the max for his gun, which acts as his dice pool.

He subtracts five dice for the 50 degree arc, leaving him 5 dice to roll. The difficulty for the shot is two higher than normal, making it a difficulty of 8. He rolls and gets two 9's, a 6, a 3, and a 2; two successes. Two of the crates get zapped, both for 1d8 damage. One takes 4 points of damage, the other 8. I determine randomly which crates get hit (remember Baxter is behind the first), and find out that the first shot hits crate 1, and the second shot hits crate 3.

Cover & Body Armor

Cover and body armor act in the same fashion in the Screaming Silence. Both absorb damage to certain hit locations. Say a man is standing behind a half stone wall that provides 10 points of cover, any shot that hit his legs would have to get through the stone wall before they start damaging his legs. Also, a man wearing a bullet proof vest that provides 5 points of protection to the torso and abdomen would have to sustain 6 points of damage before he took a point of damage. 7 points would do 2 points of damage, 8 points 3, etc. Of course if the shot hits in a location that does not have any cover or armor, then damage is at full.

Luckily for Baxter, the first shot only did 4 points of damage, the crate gives 5 points of cover. If it had been the second shot that had hit crate 1, Baxter would have taken 3 points of damage.

Well, Baxter has managed to take out one of the thugs, but as a result he is pinned down with has a badly wounded right arm. Will our hero survive? Only time (and more examples) will tell.

Hand to Hand Combat

Hand To Hand Combat involves fist fights and other bare handed struggles. This type of combat is threaded in almost the same manner as range combat, with a few important differences.

Determine dice pools, difficulty, and initiative for the combatants as normal. The remaining dice in the dice pool can either be rolled as normal or they can be spent to raised the opponents difficulty. This is done on a one to one basis. i.e. I have three dice remaining in my dice pool and my opponents difficulty is a 6. I could spend a dice and raise his difficulty to 7, or two dice and raise it 8. Leaving me two dice or one dice to roll for my retaliation strike respectively.

Dice are then rolled against the difficulty as normal. The number of success that are scored are the number of damage points done.

Since Baxter dropped his pistol when he was shot in the arm, Hand to Hand Combat has become his only alternative to death. If we take a brake in the action for a second to review Baxter's Character sheet, we can see that he has 1 die in Hand to Hand. Hopefully this will be enough to get him out of the mess that he has gotten himself into.

Still cowering behind the remains of the bullet ridden crate, Baxter waits for the Thug to get closer. The Thug, not hearing a sound from behind the crates, decides to check on his handy work. As he approaches Baxter prepares to attack.

As the Thug's hand pops around the edge of the packing crate, Baxter leaps in with a kick. The Thug tries to pull off a shot. Baxter has 3 dice in his Agility-Hand to Hand dice pool; the Thug has four dice in his Dex- Rifle pool. Since Baxter is surprising the Thug he automatically gains the initiative. The thug, in an attempt to save himself, spends two of his dice to raise Baxter's difficulty from 6 to 8, leaving the Thug two dice in his dice pool.

Baxter rolls his dice pool of 3 dice against 8 and gets a 10 (on his Fortune), an 8, and a four. He re-rolls the Fortune and gets a 5, giving him two successes all together. Baxter has scored a hit on the thug and rolling for hit location, he finds he does 2 points of damage to the thug's chest. The thug gives out a nasty grunt and staggers back across the floor. He grips his chest in pain, and lowers the machine gun. Baxter wastes no time and attacks again. Because the last hit stunned the thug, he can only defend himself for the next two rounds (see Damage section below). His Agility-Hand to Hand dice pool is 3 dice, and he puts all three dice into raising Baxter's difficulty. Giving Baxter a difficulty of 9. Baxter rolls a 9, a 6, and a 2. One success, one point of damage. Rolling for hit location Baxter finds he hit in the head. The thug recoils from the shock of Baxter's blow, falling backwards to the ground. Baxter relaxes, thinking both thugs beaten to a halt. But his glee is quickly cut short as a pistol butt cracks across his head.

Melee Weapons

Melee Weapons include everything from Broadswords to broken bottles. Anything that is used to do damage, but which is not shot or thrown.

Melee Combat is treated just as Hand to Hand Combat, with the difficulty level being determined by the weapon. A damage modifier is added to the number of successes received from an attack. See the equipment list for these values for each particular weapon.

The first thug, the one Baxter had shot in the leg, had pulled himself onto of one of the creates. As Baxter fought with the second thug he had moved within reach of the first, who then took the opportunity to bash Baxter a good one across the head. He is using the butt of his pistol, which counts as a improvised weapon. Giving him a difficulty of 7 and a

damage mod. of +1. He has 3 dice in his dice pool, and Baxter is unable to raise the difficulty (Since he doesn't know what's going on). He rolls a 8, a 6, and a 1. One successes Adding the +1 damage modifier to the success gives the Thug 2 points damage to do. Since he was attacking Baxter from above and behind he hits him in the head. Baxter subtracts the damage points from his head location.

For Baxter the lights begin to dim.

Damage

Speaking of hits to the head, a discussion on taking damage is long overdue. As stated before, a character has a number of hit points in each of the hit locations equal to his Endurance dice. This is not the maximum amount of damage a character can take in that location. Multiples of the hit point score relate the effect of the amount of damage taken. Refer to the chart bellow:

| <u>Multiple of Hit Points</u> | <u>Effect</u> | <u>Medic Diff</u> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| x 0.9 | Scratched | - |
| x 1 to x 1.9 | Flesh Wound | - |
| x 2 to x 3.9 | Injured | 6 |
| x 4 to x 6.9 | Seriously Injured | 7 |
| x 7 to x 9.9 | Critical Injury | 8 |
| x 10 up | Area Destroyed | 9 |

i.e. If you have 2 dice in Endurance, 1 point of damage would mean that you are scratched. 2 or 3 points of damage would mean that you have suffered a flesh wound. 4 to 7 would represent an injury. 8 to 13 a serious wound. 14 to 19 a critical hit. 20 or above would mean the area is destroyed.

Note: Any hits of any level that are inflicted to the head require the injured character to make a Well Being roll versus 5. If they fail they fall unconscious.

So what does it mean to be Injured? Or Critical? Or Seriously wounded? Quite a bit, to both the character and the player:

A Scratch has no effect on the character's performance. Though for the round after taking the hit the character can do nothing but defend and tend to his wound.

A Flesh Wound subtracts a dice from any dice pool rolled which requires the use of that body location (the head is considered to be used in all actions, the body in any physical one), until medical attention is received. The character will not be able to take any other action other than defend for two rounds after taking the hit.

A Injury halves any dice pool rolled which requires the use of that body location. The character will be out of commission for three rounds after the hit, only able to defend.

A Seriously wounded character has all of his dice pools halved until he receives medical attention. Not that he will be doing much anyway. A character with a serious wound will begin to go into shock and must make Well Being rolls versus 6 or become unconscious. He will take one damage point for every twenty rounds that he does not receive medical attention, until he finally reaches x10 his hit points. If the wound was to the body or head, the character dies. If the wound was to the arms or leg, they will have twenty rounds before they expire.

If a character takes a Critical wound to the chest body or head he must roll Well Being versus 6 as soon as he takes the hit or he will fall unconscious and begins to die. If medical attention is not received immediately the character will pass away in twenty rounds. If the wound is to the arm or leg the character still has to make the roll as above, but if they fail they will take 1 damage point for every five rounds they do not receive medical attention. If the character makes his Well Being roll he will take one damage point for every ten rounds that he does not receive medical attention. When the character reaches x10 his hit points he may die as above.

If a character receives a destroyed area to the head or body, they will die instantly. If the hit is to the arm or leg, they will have twenty rounds before they go.

Baxter comes around laying on a cot in a dimly lit room. His head throbs and aches from the thug's liberal use of his pistol butt, and the rest of him doesn't feel too good either. If you remember Baxter took 4 points of damage to his right arm, an amount we now know would count as a Flesh Wound (he has a Well Being of 3 dice). He also took 2 points of damage to his head, a scratch to Baxter.

Medical Attention & Healing.

If a character with medical skill makes a IQ-Medicine roll versus the Medic Difficulty listed on the chart the injured character is considered stabilized. This means that the injured character stops taking any damage from blood loss, and will no longer lapse into unconsciousness. The GM should determine if there are any more rolls required to keep the injured character stable. If not, the character begins the long road to recovery.

The recovery of hit points is dependent on the type of injury. A Scratch will heal at a rate of one point a day. A Flesh wound at two points per week. An Injury at a rate of one point every week. A Serious Injury at two points a month. A Critical Wound at one point every month. And a destroyed part will never heal.

These healing rates are for a character in perfect conditions: Plenty of medical attention, good medicine, a good doctor. If any of the factors in the character's recovery are less than perfect, the rate of healing may vary. It is up to the GM to decide what modifier should be applied, but if a character is trying to get better while laying in a muddy ditch he shouldn't be at all successful.

As Baxter surveys his surroundings he becomes aware that the dimly lit room is in fact a prison cell. Someone had cleaned and bandaged his injuries. "Strange thing to do," He thinks. "for people who had just tried very hard to kill me."

How long will it take Baxter to heal? Well, the bump on the head and the soreness in the ribs will clean up in a couple of days. As for the arm, four points of damage at a rate of 2 point per week, will take a total of 2 weeks. Though he will be using his arm long before then. "Hmm..." Baxter wonders. "Will I be in here that long?"

Hero Points.

There is one last subject that must be discussed before the rules of the Screaming Silence are anywhere near complete: Hero Points, and their use.

The Hero Point reflects the fact that the characters are special, more than just any old so and so. The Hero Point is what allows the character to get out of scrapes when most mortals would be cattle fodder. Players will come to rely very heavily on Hero Points, if they know what's good for them.

Using Hero Points

Every character starts out with 1d3 Hero Points. A Hero Point can be spent at anytime during the round to allow the player to collect all the dice that have been bid for initiative in that round (called the hero pool). i.e. If a player bid 1 dice for initiative and is countered with a bid of 2 dice, there would be three dice in the hero pool. If no dice have been bid for that round, then a hero point cannot be spent.

These hero dice are added to the players dice pool for that round, and are rolled just like any other dice. But Hero dice can also be spent in a fashion that no other dice can be spent in: Direct dodge in Range Combat. Hero dice, and only Hero dice, can be rolled against the attacker's attack roll, even if the character has lost the initiative. Difficulty is the same as the shooter's.

This is an effective way to save yourself from death if all else fails.

If we had known about Hero points back in the warehouse, maybe Baxter wouldn't have had to take that bullet. Let see: In the turn in which Baxter had been shot one dice

had been bid for initiative (by Baxter). When Baxter became aware that the thug had scored a hit upon him. He could have spent a Hero point and gained back that dice. Rolling that dice against the difficulty level that the thug shot at (6), he may have been lucky enough to dodge that bullet that caused him so much pain.

Hero points can also be spent on character improvement. At anytime, a player may spend a hero point and gain 1d6 pips that he may allocate through any of his character's skills or attributes.

Baxter has a 27 pips in IQ. Very close to 30 pips, and 2d. Baxter could spend a Hero point, roll 1D6, and add those pips to his IQ. 2d might come in very useful.

Gaining Hero Points

As you can see, apart from the three success rule, Hero Points are the only way to improved your character. This being so, Hero Points are what your character gains when he gains experience. Hero Points are awarded to the players on the basis of the quality of their play. The below chart should act as a guideline for GM's:

Awarding Hero Points

- 1 pt. - Per game session for playing according to the character's Method/Motive/Drive.
- 1 pt. - Per adventure for achieving the mission objective.
- 1 pt. - Per adventure for defeating the antagonist (if not the mission objective).
- 1 pt. - Per adventure for exceptional Roleplaying.

The Business 1.2: The Attack.

They had only two hours before the trunks was going to roll through town. They planned to hit it before it entered the city. Baxter took a cab back to his apartment to change, and get his gear. Simon and Michael took off to get the cars, and Lin said she had to prepare a little surprise. Back at his apartment, Baxter climbed into his leathers and dug his Screaming Silence pin out from under the floor boards. He grabbed his satchel and packed his bag: .45 auto, three clips, two hand grenades, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and half a bottle of coke.

He rode his motorcycle down to the warehouse where the cars were being stored. Everyone was there waiting for him as he rode in. Michael and Simon cleaning their weapons, Lin working on one of the cars.

“Lets go.” Was all that Michael said as Baxter climbed off his bike. Simon handed Baxter a walkie-talkie, and they all climbed into the cars. With the roar of engines, the cars pulled out of the warehouse and moved towards the edge of town. As always, a tranquil drive through the Boston night was like the calm before the storm.

“Testing one, two. Indifference checking in.” The walkie-talkie crackled to like.

“Check, this Ignorance, reading you loud and clear.” Baxter talked into the walkie-talkie then returned it to the car’s dashboard. He reached underneath his seat and retrieved the ice pick and golf shoes that were laying there. “So, what do you think this book is?” Baxter asked Lin as he removed his boots.

“I wouldn't even hazard a guess. Something subversive I assume.” Lin was keeping the car a discreet distance from Michael’s. She had changed out of her red evening gown into her motorcycle leathers. She seemed a lot more comfortable in the clothes of this trade.

“Well, that pretty much covers everything. You don’t have to do much to be subversive nowadays. I bet our Silence boys down in Texas didn't have any idea of what they were stealing.” Baxter put the golf shoes on his feet, and made sure they were tight. Last thing he wanted to do tonight was loosing his footing.

“You mean as much of an idea as we have know?”

“That’s different.”

“Is it?”

“Well... I guess not. Hell, we live in a crazy world Lin.”

“Tell me about it.”

* * *

Once outside the city, the two cars sat for about half an hour in lay-by, waiting for any signs of a convoy. Michael climbed on top of his car and scanned the distance, but it was far too dark to make anything out. Eventually headlights came into vision down the road. Lin and Baxter made sure they were well out of sight when the convoy rolled past.

“This is Indifference to Ignorance.” Simon’s voice came over the walkie-talkie. “Two targets. Lead vehicle is the plump, trailing vehicle is troopers. Wax it.”

“Check that.” Baxter said into the walkie-talkie as he sat up straight in his seat. Lin fired the engine to life, and spun the back tires in the gravel. Within thirty seconds they were within 100 feet of the rear most truck. The two trucks were of the regular army type. Canvas covers over their beds. In the back of the rear truck, a squad of the People’s Army could be seen. “What’s the business?” Baxter asked as Lin gunned the engine to overtake the rear truck.

“Watch and learn Baxy sweetheart. Watch and learn.” Lin pulled the car in front of the rear truck, only ten feet from its front fender. Baxter could see the surprised look on the driver’s face as Lin reached into the back seat and grabbed the end of a rope. The rope was lying on the backseat, and disappeared through the cushions and into the trunk. She gave the rope a stout pull, and the trunk popped open. Baxter could vaguely make out something sliding off the back of the car.

“What the-” Was all Baxter got out before the first land mine exploded under the truck’s front axle. The nose of the truck dove into the ground, and ignited the other land mines. The cab section of the truck erupted in flames. Quickly followed by the gas tank and the entire rear section. “Jesus Christ!” Was all Baxter could manage to say.

“Hah!” Lin let out, inspecting the destruction on the rear view mirror. “And Joe said I’d never find a use for those land mines!” The first truck was swerving wildly from the explosion.

“A-1 job Ignorance!” Simon’s voice over the walkie talkie was ecstatic. “Closed them out! Move on to the main target.”

“Check.” Baxter returned. He threaded his hand through the leather loop at the end of the ice pick. Lin brought the car a long side the first truck.

“Watch out Baxy, she’s weaving like a bitch!” Lin warned as Baxter climbed out of his side window. He concentrated on the movement of the truck, and jumped as the truck swerved towards him.

He hit the side of the truck hard, sinking his ice pick into the canvas of the canopy. His flailing feet quickly dug in with the spikes on the bottom of his shoes. With a few motions, we was up on the roof of the truck. Lin pulled the car to rear of the truck, just far enough back to keep Baxter in sight. Baxter thought about swinging down into the back of the truck, but changed his mind as machine-gun fire burst from it.

The hood of and windscreen of Lin’s car was peppered with bullet holes. The car swerved wildly but stayed behind the truck. Baxter had only a moment to think. He reached into his satchel, removed one of his hand grenades, pulled the pin, threw it into the back of the truck, and jumped for the hood of the car. He hit the windshield hard enough to pop it clean out. The car swerved off to the side of the road, as the back of the truck exploded in shrapnel.

The car came to rest in the soft mud of a plowed field. Baxter looked up in time to see the truck do the same. Michael and Simon skidded their car to a halt, and ran over to the truck. A few rounds fired into the cab of the truck, and the fighting seemed to be over.

“Lin, are you okay?” Baxter said, seeing Lin stir below him. He was laying on the dashboard of the car. Lin had slipped below her seat.

“Oh, what hit me? Oh it was you. Next time you do a flying leap into windscreen, let me know before hand, okay? I’ll duck.”

“I thought you got shot.”

“No. Just a good whap on the head. Did you get the truck?”

“Yeah, the guys are checking it out now.”

“This is Indifference, come in Ignorance. Anybody alive over there?” The walkie-talkie was still on the seat. Lin reached up and picked it up.

“Yeah, we’re alive. Find anything?”

“Negative Ignorance. Just a decoy. I repeat, just a decoy.”

Baxter and Lin looked at each other for a long moment.

“Damn.” They said in unison.

Chapter 5 - The World of the Screaming Silence

The world of the Screaming Silence is a world of contradictions. Of extremes. It is simultaneously comfortably similar to our world, and frighteningly different. There are no ingredients in **The Screaming Silence** that cannot be found in our own reality (or our own history); but like a fun house mirror, we see our own reflection, twisted and distorted beyond recognition.

The Screaming Silence is science fiction, and in being so, it need only hold on to reality by the slimmest thread. The author of science fiction has the imaginary equivalent of a blank canvas set in front of him, on to which he can paint the broadest strokes, or the finest detail, as he sees fit. But unlike the painter, the author's construction of an imaginary world is infinitely more complicated, with the possibilities expanding to match only those of our own reality. Large portions of the science fiction canvas must be left blank, or painted in base colors. There is often, simply too much for one person to do.

Unlike a novel, however, a Roleplaying Game is not just the product of one person's imagination. Where one author finishes his painting, numerous Gamemasters pick up the brush and continue on. In doing so, the blank spots, and base colors, are brought to life with the painting of a thousand other minds. All of the painters, added together, produce a picture more brilliant than one person could ever produce in all of his or her years.

This is the wonder of a Roleplaying setting, something that cannot be duplicated by books, plays, or television. Thousands of creative minds, working upon the same idea, in parallel.

History of the Screaming Silence

Probably the best place to start a discussion about the world of The Screaming Silence is with a narrative of its history. As you will see, the world of The Screaming Silence, and our own world, have existed in parallel for much of their history. It wasn't until a storm began to brew in the Indian Ocean, that the two world's history's diverged.

The War

It was the height of the Second World War. The U.S. had not yet entered into the war, and the British forces in North Africa were facing the possibility of a sound defeat. Their only hope stood in their ability to stop Rommel's push into Egypt. They were hanging by a slim supply threat, shipped around the Cape of Good Hope. This had to be maintained if they were going to turn back the assault. If this could be achieved, the war could still be won.

But a storm began to brew in the Indian Ocean. It was just a small one, easy enough to avoid; but a Japanese battleship, through a combination of poor planing and bad luck, sailed into it. They were out on the Indian Ocean for routine maneuvers, but the storm blew them far enough off course to put them off the coast of Africa. Off the coast of Africa, and in the path of the British supply lines.

Though the British and Japanese were not yet officially at war, foolish bravado and poor translations led to shots being exchanged. The British escort ships had insufficient firepower to defeat the battleship, and the supply convoy was held up for almost three days while ships were dispatched from Cairo. The Japanese Battleship, faced with a superior force, retreated with heavy damage, but it had inflicted a blow far greater than anyone could have conceived. The three day delay was only a hiccup in the grand scheme of the war, but it came at the height of Rommel's assault. The British, with insufficient ammunition and medical supplies, collapsed under the weight of the Afrika Corp. Egypt fell, and so did British plans for North Africa Campaign.

The German Army swept through Middle East and into the oil fields of Iraq and Iran. Hitler was free of all other concerns, able to focus in on his winter campaign in Russia...

While the German's attack on Russia was being fueled by new forces from Africa, and by Middle Eastern oil, things in England are not going as well. A small faction of Parliament that wished to make peace with Hitler, grows in strength and eventually overthrew Churchill's government. Peace talks began as the German army finished off the last of the Russian army. As the ink dried on the armistice, the German's toasted their victory with Russian vodka.

The war in Europe was intensively over. Though the British retained their sovereignty, the peace treaty left them all but puppets to the Third Reich. The war in the Pacific began, and the U.S. declared war on Germany. But it was a war in name only. For never an angry shot is fired between to two powers. Not one shot, that is, until the big one.

What followed was four years of small skirmishes and battles. The Americans made swift work of the Pacific Islands, and isolated the Japanese to Japan and China. The German face no real opposition in their expansion through Asia and Africa, only having to apply any real force against small bands of militant communist rebels in Russia. Europe remained in relative peace. The American's were faced with a difficult decision: An all out assault on the island of Japan, or an all out assault on Fortress Europe. Lucky for President Truman, his scientists gave him enough card to play.

The Nuclear Bomb was produced on schedule. Truman became aware of the immense power of this new weapon that was put at his disposal, and his only question became: Where to drop it? Truman secretly met with Churchill and DeGaulle, both in exile in Canada, to discuss the target. Their advice was clear. Berlin could be the only target.

On August 6, 1945 a greatly reconstructed Berlin disappeared off the map. With it went Hitler, and most of his Third Reich High Command. The next day President Truman received the official surrender from both the German and Japanese Commands.

The Revolution

With the destruction of one city, the United States had taken control of almost the entire globe. All of Europe, Russia, and most of Asia came under the U.S.'s control, along with all of Europe's colonial possessions. America's mission suddenly changed from a military one, to a desperate attempt to keep control of such a global empire. They hoped to restore the world to some sort of pre-war condition; but even with all of its hard won experience, the U.S. government wasn't up to such a massive task.. The world began to slip away from them. Slip away into the depths of anarchy. The fate of the world was placed onto the shoulders of one man: President Truman.

Arguments still rage to this day about the success of his actions. With the second explosion of a nuclear bomb, the world was united under the stars and stripes. The target was a small one, a remote base in Tibet used by Chinese Communist Rebels, but it was big enough to send a message to the world: America had the nuclear bomb, and they were willing to use it against all who brought arms against them. Truman had saved the world from anarchy, but at the cost of the sovereignty of nations. Some were horrified, some were elated, but all acknowledged the validity of America's claim.

Peace was assured throughout the world, through the ever present threat of nuclear assault. The U.S. was safe from attacks from without, but were still susceptible from attacks from within.

As the truth about the Nazi's atrocities started to come to light, questions started to be asked about the involvement of the U.S. in the war. Why did the U.S. not mount an assault on Europe? Could the U.S. have entered the war at an earlier date? Did the government know about the atrocities at the time? This, coupled with politicians use of the newly formed television media as a platform for personal assaults, led to a general feeling of mistrust for the government in the general public. Communist revolutionaries, playing on the fact that Soviet Russia was the only force that fought against the Nazis for the majority of the war, began to find favor with much of America.

By 1955, Communists of one type or another held one third of the seats on Congress. Very few people in America were actually members of the Communist Party,

but virtually everyone was against Democratic/Republican government that they saw a Imperialistic, and in some fashion responsible for the atrocities on Europe. The country was ripe for revolution, all that was needed was figure to lead.

This figure came in the form of William Malpho. A war hero from the Pacific Campaign, turned Communist Revolutionary. He was born to a middle class, mid-western, farming family, and was both a Patriot and a stout Christian. He personal version of Communism, which he developed while fighting in China, was far more watered down than Leninism, or Stalinism. It placed at its center the idea of the nuclear family, and the individual's duty to his society. "A loving family" He said. "bread men willing to fight for it. So will a loving country, if a man knows that the country loves him."

He was a charming man and a strong speaker, appealing to the common man. He and his followers, The Silence, preached peaceful overthrow of the corrupt Capitalist government, and the construction of a Democratic Communist government; by the people, for the people.

On December 10, 1958 he and his Silence marched on Washington. They met with no resistance as they marched through the city; and they walked, unhindered, into the Capital Building. There, William Malpho demanded the President Eisenhower step down from power, and that the Congress suspend all operation until further notice. Both the President and the Congress complied, and Malpho installed himself in power.

So the Silent Revolution, as it came to be called, began and ended. Of course, it wasn't as easy as just walking in and asking for power. Malpho had the backing of the majority of Congress, and the Armed Forces, who he had been promised full freedom in ruling the provinces under U.S. control.

The U.S. Congress, and the Constitution that governs it, were never officially disbanded. Malpho constructed his new Communist regime around the basis of the old U.S. government. Though the Congress, to this day (two hundred years later), has never been reconvened.

The Great Division

As one might presume, the private corporations of the world were not pleased at the end of the Capitalistic era. They had all profited greatly by America's dominant position in the world, and were not looking forward to the prospect of a Communist world government. They quickly learned that they were unable to dislodge the new Communist Government; and with the army behind the Communists, violent revolt was out of the question. So a few of the top leaders in the entire capitalistic system met to devise a plan by which they would be able to out last the Communists with all their

resources still in one piece. They thought that Malpho and his type wouldn't last longer than their first crisis, and the capitalists wanted to be ready to take back control of the world.

They quietly liquidated as much of their assets as they could, and purchased a small island in the Pacific. Here they figured they could wait out the Communist era in relative peace and luxury. This decision, in itself, was not enough to case the Great Division: The communist regime weathered through the storm, and alone the old capitalist would have eventually run out of time and money. But they did not go to their remote island on their own. They took with them some individuals who were very important to future of the world: America's top scientists.

The scientific community was thrown into turmoil after the dropping of the second nuclear bomb. The first use of the weapon they had given to the world was traumatic enough, but they were justified in it use to destroy a tyrant. The second use of nuclear bomb, however could only be interpreted as a tyrannical action.

The scientific community was abhorred. What kind of monster had they created? Then the old Capitalists, who were beginning their exodus, came to the top members of the scientific community. They promised them unlimited research funds, and isolation from government intrusion. Many of the scientists jumped at the chance, and left for the remote tropical island. Those that didn't leave with the first wave, trickled away from mainstream society as news returned as to what their colleagues were achieving.

Mainstream society began to suffer from the sudden brain-drain, but the new Communist government had no time to worry about such trifles. They were trying desperately to hold onto power, and to a world government. Their inability to stop, or even acknowledge, this exodus of capitalistic and scientific talent would lead to the shaping of the world for the next two hundred years.

The Era of Peace

For the next two hundred years, peace reigned over the world. The Communist government, and Communist theory, eventually installed itself firmly into power. The world outside of the U.S. was initially controlled by a military government, but through some fancy dealings and a lot of propaganda it came under the Communist's sway.

To begin with, life was hard. There was a cut in the standard of living across the world. But as time went by, and the Communist system installed itself, life generally became easier. It was over 80 years before the promise of a middle class lifestyle for all was achieved; but it was achieved, and it was achieved right across the board. The government was iron-fisted, but was not tyrannical. Much of the U.S. constitution was still, technically, in effect. Criminals received a trail before a jury of their peers, and

everyone had the right to assemble. Free speech, however, was strongly discouraged, and any armed militia met with a swift military end. One could not say that the people of the world were free, but they were far from downtrodden.

The old Capitalists, on the other hand, were left virtually unmolested. In the beginning, the government didn't believe that the Technocracy (as they came to be known) were a threat; and as time went on, they simply denied their existence entirely.

The Technocracy's advancements in science and technology were staggering: They quickly improved upon, and then surpassed, nuclear theory. By the end of the 1960's they had developed, and were using, microchip technology in their computer systems. As the decades past, their rate of technological progress didn't slow.

As more and more scientists joined their group, they quickly grew larger than their small Pacific isle. They began construction on half a dozen secret research facilities around the globe. They operated in parallel with normal society, only intersecting to buy raw materials, and recruit new talent.

In the beginning, scientists came to the Technocracy voluntarily; but after 50 years or so, normal society was dry of scientific talent. The universities and colleges of the world had abandoned their technical departments out of a lack of skilled professors. No students were study the sciences, and mainstream society ground to a technological halt. The Technocracy realized they were rapidly becoming a closed society, and their leaders worried about entropy. The Technocracy were advanced enough in their computer technology, and conversant enough in probability theory to be able to construct massive probability machines. These machines they used to predict the possibility of someone of high scientific merit being born amongst the population of the world. At first it was a hairy business, that produced a lot of failures; but as time went by, their system became more and more accurate, and almost infallible. Those predicted to be of great scientific talent would be abducted from their homes at a young age, and brought to the Technocracy. There they would received advanced scientific training, and a total immersion in their field.

This policy of abduction was general successful for the Technocracy, though mainstream society suffered from the loss of its greatest minds. Mainstream society became completely stagnant. There technology stuck in the 1950's. Rumor has it that they have even lost the ability to construct nuclear weapons, though the government stoutly denied this.

The Malphoist World

After all of this, what is it like to live in the world of 2159? For the average Malphoist, very much like life has been for the last two hundred years:

Little has changed in the Malphoist world since the Silent Revolution. The brain drain of the Technocracy is only partly to blame for this, though. The Malphoist have done more than their fair share to stop the social evolution of the world.

Malpho perceived the Middle Class lifestyle of the average American to be perfect in every way. They were well off, comfortable, honest, moral, and God fearing. He believed that if this lifestyle could be maintained into a communist era, the whole system would be perfectible. He made it the highest priority in his newly founded government to implement a middle class lifestyle right across the board: From Ethiopia, to Beverly Hills. It took almost 80 years, but this was achieved. Large scale housing and land reclamation projects build suburbs outside of every major city in the world, and cultures that would have much rather not lived a suburban lifestyle were forced into it at gun point. In one fashion, the world was depolarized: No more poor, no more rich.

Along with the American suburban lifestyle came, inevitably, American culture. Often supplanting any native culture that was already installed, the American 50's culture spread across the world. It first hit the teenagers, with the allure of cheap automobiles, and the drive-in everything. But the teenagers quickly grew to be the parents, and their children were instilled with the culture. Not only had Malpho depolarized the world, he had given the world a uniform culture. Regardless of whatever had been there before.

Population has been maintained at about 1950's levels, through the use of mandatory contraception, and a two child per family maximum (the Catholic church was declared Un-Malphoist in 1972, so they had bigger things to worry about). After the world got over a small pox, polio, and AIDs epidemic, population has been kept at about 1950's level.

Though all of these factors has lead to the stagnation of Mainstream society, by far the most powerful factor leading to it has been the Malphoist's discouragement of personal expression.

Like all communism, Malphoism places the needs of the state above the needs of the individual. Though in Malphoism, this idea has been taken to its logical extreme. Malpho proposed that no action should be taken by the individual that was not to the benefit of the state. Everyone, at all times, should have the needs of the state at the front of their minds. While Mapho had no intention of destroying such things as poetry, art, and day dreaming; those that followed Malpho implemented his teachings with brutal honesty. "Poetry and art serve no purpose in society; they only glorify the artist, and indulge their emotions." The arts, and personal expression, were declared Un-Malphoist, and anyone found perusing them would be prosecuted. Art forms such as the symphony

orchestra, and virtually all sporting events were saved from the chopping block, however. They taught team work, and other positive Malphoist qualities. People were allowed expression, but only in an organized, Malphoist, fashion..

The Life of the Regular Malphoist Joe

But what does all this mean to the regular Joe? How has his life been effected by the Silent Revolution? Is life so much different in the world of the Screaming Silence?

Just as in any period of history, life for the regular Joe and Jane is very much the same as it always has been. They laugh, they cry, they marry, they fight in wars they don't understand, they bury their dead, they have children, and continue the cycle. Revolutions and political systems have only a cosmetic effect on the lifestyle of the average person. The Silent Revolution was no different.

Everyone in the Malphoist world is expected to go to state school from the ages of 4 to 16, where they receive the basic Read/Write/Arithmetic education that most everyone needs to live. At 16, students are put through a battery of tests that determine their fitness for higher education. All but the simplest students usually qualify for the next state of education: The Upper School. This is a two year program similar to a community colleges/trade schools of our world. Those that either do not pass the tests, or do not wish to continue their education, are expected to serve a tour in the Armed Forces, though this is not mandatory. Many girls drop out at this point and marry.

At the end of the two years of Upper School, a student goes through another battery of tests. This time to determine their fitness for the Universities. Those that pass may go on to University to peruse a 4 year degree, those that do not are expected to take the skills they've learned and make themselves a life in the 'real world'.

Making a life for oneself is not as ominous a prospect under the Malphoist regime as it is in our world. Everyone, everywhere, pretty much works for one employer, and this employer always seems to be hiring.

A young Malphoist, fresh out of Upper School, usually will go down to the job office, where a job that fits his skills will be found for him. All jobs for an education level pay the same, and as long as a worker keeps his nose clean, he'll never get fired. With this kind of stability, most people marry, and as long as they don't have more than two children, the government will leave them pretty much alone. Housing for a married couple is all but assured in the large housing project suburb, whrere there are usually more houses than people. The housing project suburban houses are pleasant prefabricated affairs, placed on a modest amount of land; with a two car garage, and within easy walking distance to shopping. Cars are produced in sufficed quantity, and at cheep enough of a

price, to allow most families to have two. Male teenagers, just like in our world, define themselves by what they drive.

The infamous two hour waits for bread that was prevalent under Russian Communism have all but been eliminated in the Malphoist world. There is sufficient over production in the Malphoist system, that no one really has to stand in line of anything anymore (though your grandmother will tell you about having to stand in line for an hour to buy a pair of shoes). Not that there is very much to buy, anyway. Malphoist wardrobes and houses are, to put it nicely, drab. The basic two piece man's suit hasn't gone through any major revisions in all of the two hundred years of Malphoist rule. Women's clothes have fared a little better, with a new design once a year. A thriving home tailoring trade has sprung up, with ladies making dresses for themselves and their neighbors. This maintains the closest thing to fashion that the Malphoist world knows.

As you have probably guessed, the Malphoist world is a stoutly sexist one. The classic idea of Mother at home while Father goes off to work, is strongly imbedded at the center of Malphoist philosophy. This, of course, does not mean that women cannot make a name for themselves in Malphoist society. Only that they must do it at the cost of a family.

Racism, no the other hand, is all but a bad memory in the Malphoist world. Malpho himself declared Racism to be an Un-Malphoist quality, and put his propaganda machine to work eradicating it. 200 years later, race is a quality that seldom enters into the mind of a average Malphoist, with inter-racial marriages and immigration blurring any definable lines of hatred.

Religion is the aspect of society that has changed most since the Malpho's death. Malpho was a stout Christian, and he hoped that Christianity, Judaism, and Islam could live in harmony under his rule. Unfortunately, the need for a uniform dogma became strong after Malpho's death, and the three religions all slowly started to loose ground. What has risen up to replace them is a vaguely Judeo-Christian religion, who's main job is to justify Malphoism in the eyes of God. Much of the religion is still biased around the bible, but it is not a bible that you or I would recognize, with a new, official, version being released every decade or so.

But no matter what religion is followed in the churches of the world, Malphoists have a far more powerful god that lives in their living room: Television. Television is the only thing in the whole of Mainstream society to shown any technological advancement in the 1st 200 years. They have the equivalent of high definition, wide screen, televisions available for under \$100. Television occupied the center of Malphoist life, in a fashion that even out strips its place in our lives. Virtually all entertainment, and information is propagated through television, and as you can probably guess, there is only one broadcasting network. The World Broadcasting Network (W.B.N.) pumps 12 channels of

entertainment into everybody's home, and keeps strict control on what the public are allowed to watch. Here's a quick breakdown of the twelve channels:

- | | | | | |
|----|---|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 2 | - | The Young Malphoist Channel | - | Children entertainment. |
| 3 | - | Peoples World News | - | News, global and local, al la the Government. |
| 4 | - | The Family Channel | - | Family Entertainment, mainly sitcoms. |
| 5 | - | The Action | - | Sports channel. |
| 6 | - | The Aisle Seat | - | Movies. Mostly patriotic war or musicals. |
| 7 | - | What a Nice Day | - | Weather across the globe, and human interest stories. "And Mrs. Wong from Shanghai is 100 years old today!" |
| 8 | - | The Round Table | - | Political Channel. Discussion groups, official announcements, and public trails. |
| 9 | - | The History Channel | - | Documentaries about the Malpoist version of history. |
| 10 | - | The Pew | - | At home religion. For those who can make it to church on Sundays.. |
| 11 | - | The Sock Hop | - | Teenage propaganda channel. Tries very hard to be cool, but always fails. |
| 12 | - | The Rural Life | - | This channel is relatively new, responding to a trend in suburbanites to return to the country life. Lots of cooking shows, and guys talking about cows. |
| 13 | - | Local Access | - | Shows produced by local affiliates. The only channel anything even remotely interesting is ever shown on. |

Why television is the only area of Malphoist technology to advance in the last two hundred years is a mystery to anyone who ever took the time to realized it. But while the Rural life on 24 hours, who has any time to think about such things?

Crime And Punishment

Though the Peoples World Government is an oppressive regime, in was not built at the price of Justice. A criminal in the Malphoist system can expect to receive fair treatment, and an honest trial, in front of a jury of his peers. As stated before, the U.S. constitution is still, officially, in effect, and the protections (at least pertaining to criminal justice) are granted to everyone in the world.

This all goes out of the window, however, if you are a criminal accused of political crime. A member of the Screaming Silence, or a black marketeer, has very little chance of getting a fair trial in the Malphoist system. With the actual trials being more of a circus affair, than any type of real trial. The government loves nothing more than getting a deviant in the accused box, humiliating him publicly, and sending him up the river for life. They feel that it is both good for the soul of the accused, and soul the general public.

Prisons in the Malphoist system are divided into three categories: 1. The Gulags. These prisons, in Siberia and northern Canada, are for prisoners the government would rather not get back. Hard labor with rapists, murderers, and terrorists. 2. Secure Lockup. These are the regular prisons, where your average criminal will end up. 3. Correction Camps. These are low security prisons that house criminals the government determine need just a little 'personality adjustment'. This is usually for first time criminals, who get brain washed, and sent back out on the street. The Malphoists have been brain washing for over 200 years, and have gotten very good at it. VERY good.

Of course, no matter how fair (or unfair) the legal system is, there will always people who break it. The Malphoist have their fair share of regular murderers, rapists, burglars, and extortionists; but the Malphoists have produced a type of criminal all of their own: The Black Marketeer. Unlike our world, Black Marketeers are not just guys going for a quick buck. In the world of the Screaming Silence, the Black Market is a full time industry.

The Malphoists view Black Marketeering as one of their most heinous crimes, punishable with the death penalty. This is a strong discouragement for most people, but there is big money to be made in the Black Market, and regardless of the risk, someone is always willing to take it. The Black Market has become such an advanced system of supply, that the Black Marketeers are almost able to supply anything, anywhere, anytime. Something the Malphoists only wish they could do. Want something, anything? The Black Market can get it for you. If you have the money, that is.

And where ever there is big money to be made in illegal activities, you can be assured that organized crime isn't far behind. The Black Market is no exception to this rule, and much of the Black Market activity in the world is in fact controlled by the Mob. Or, to be more specific, a large number of small mobs. The mobs in the world of the Screaming Silence are more prevalent than they ever were during America's prohibition, and they make our drug cartels look like nickel and dime outfits.

The most profitable business for the Mobs, however, is their network of speakeasies across the globe. Unlike the speakeasies of prohibition America, alcohol is not the reason that these night clubs are underground. In the Malphoist world, alcohol is perfectly legal. It is the music that sends people to these illegal clubs. In the Malphoist world, it is jazz and blues that are against the law.

Even though the Malphoist outlawed personal expression, of late, jazz and blues have been flourishing in these illegal night spots. The speakeasies of the world have become the outlet for the small amount of artistic freedom that the government haven't squeezed out of its people; and have therefore become very profitable for the mobs who run them.

The State of the World

As you can see, the world of the average Malphoist Joe is simple and basically peaceful. In fact, this peace extends out to encompass virtually all of the Malphoist system, and has done so for longer than anyone can remember.

The People's World Government has been in power for two centuries. In that time, the World Government has had 7 Presidents. The first, Malpho himself, lived to be a ripe old age of 84. Dying in the year 2006. At his death, there was no system in place for choosing a successor to a dead President. Many ideas were put forth, but it was finally decided that a council of nine, made up of soldiers and civilians, would decide on the next President. 150 years, and 6 decisions later, no heinous errors have been made. The current President, Alfred Burk, is now 75 years old. He is an immensely obese man, who has suffered through three heart attacks, and survived. The council is expecting to meet once again, anytime soon.

The President of the People's World Government is, officially, absolute ruler of the world. His word is law. In practice, there is rather complicated bureaucratic system of checks and balances that has developed over the last two centuries. Those that actually know how the infinitely complicated system works, know that the President holds no real power in the system. The system is run from behind the scenes by a web of bureaucrats and Malphoist officials who decide what gets done. As a result, very little ever really gets done.

Geographically, The world is divided in to provinces. These provinces were intentionally drawn with no regard to old world political and ethics lines. Each province has a governor who maintains the police forces and local law for that province. Apart from law, however, everything else is handled on a global scale. All government agencies in a province are only answerable to Washington, not their local governor. This assures that no governor is ever totally in control of his province.

The only force that polices the world on a global scale is the People's Malphoist Army. There has been very little military action in the last 200 years of history, so the People's Army has had to change its mission to survive. Most of what the Army does is what our own FBI does. Acting as a police force in global spanning matters. Of course, the Army still has the ability to operate as a Military unit, but there hasn't been a need for over 70 years.

The Global Future

What generalizations can the outside observer make about the whole Malphoist system? Looking at it from our point of view, what do we know that they should? Well, it doesn't take a economists to realize that the Malphoist system is setting itself up for a big fall.

Nothing has changed in the Malphoist world for over 200 years. No inflation, no deflation, no population growth, no technological change. But not only has nothing changed for 200 years, the system has been using natural resources up at 1950's levels for all that time. The Malphoist are approaching a double disaster: Death from entropy, and the drying up of their fuel.

In Economics, just as in physics, a static system suffers from entropy. In physics, entropy is the tendency for all systems to collapse: No energy transformation is perfect. A little of the energy is always lost, going to heat up the background system. After a time, the background system becomes so hot that no work can be achieved. It is the same for the Malphoist system. Energy is replaced by money and labor, and the background system is replaced by the black market and worker unrest, but the principle is basically the same. The Malphoist systems is quickly approaching its death by Entropy, and the Malphoists are totally unaware of the problem. Soon, it will become far to costly to maintain the systems as is.

But apart from the theoretical problems the Malphoists are suffering from, they are quickly approaching a real, physical, crisis: The world has been using gasoline at far beyond the levels of the 1950's for over 200 years. Simply put, there is no more gasoline to be had. In a capitalist system, a drop in supply would be met with a rise in prices; but the Malphoist are not capitalist, and the price of gasoline has been fixed at a quarter a gallon for over 150 years. The Malphoists have neither the technical ability or

inclination to search for alternative sources of power, so in five or six years, their gasoline powered system is going to collapse.

This doesn't just mean that mother won't be able to drive to the corner store to get the shopping. This means planes won't fly, and tanks won't roll. This means anarchy for the Malpoists. Of course, the Malpoist refuse to admit that anything is wrong, and allow the populace of the world to keep on using fuel at a frightening level. Things are looking pretty bleak. Fortunately for the world, there is a section of society that has seen these problems coming for over 50 years. They are ready for the end of the Malpoists, and have a plan for stopping the world from collapsing into chaos. Who are they? You have only one guess...

Mundane Equipment

Equipment available to Malpoists (And therefore the Screaming Silence) is by definition boring. Being a Communist regime, they are a one type of gun, one type of bullet people. In the way of weapons and equipment, the below list is all that is available to the players:

Firearms:(Dice Mod,S/R,Ammo Type,Close Range (yards),Long Range (yards),Clip,Load Time,Cost)

Melee Weapons:(Base Diff,Damage Plus,Cost)

Equipment:(Cost,Weight)

Colt .45 Auto: (0,2,.45,40,180,7,1,NA) The standard issue sidearm of the Communist Army of the People. Hasn't changed or been modified in its two hundred and fifty years of service. This is the only automatic pistol that is officially built by the government, and is therefore the only one that will ever make its way into the hands of the Screaming Silence.

Browning HP: (0,2,9mm,30,200,6,1,NA) This model has not be in production since before the Silent Revolution, but some copies have been produced (unofficially) for collectors and gun enthusiasts. The pistol is a hell of a lot easier to come by, though, than the ammunition. 9mm ammo is not produced by the government and is therefore almost impossible to find. Many Brownings that are actually used are converted to a .38 chamber.

S&W .38: (0,1,.38,40,180,6,3,NA) Revolver that is almost exclusively used by the People's Police. These weapons are very seldom found on the black market, and is therefore seldom found in the hands of civilians. If a player gets his hands on one of these, he probably took it off a policeman.

M1 Carbine: (0,2,.30,100,1000,16,1,NA) Standard issue rifle for the military. Often found on the black market. Seldom used by the Screaming Silence, though. It is hard to carry or hide.

Lee-Enfield: (+1,1,.303,200,1500,10,2,NA) This rifle of British origin has survived the centuries mainly because of its use by military snipers. Its construction has gone from mass production of the World Wars, to the craft that it has become today. Every rifle is built by hand by craftsmen in England, and are therefore rather expensive. They are of fine workmanship, and completely reliable.

Thompson SMG: (0,2/10,.45,40,350,20/50,1,NA) Most players of any Screaming Silence game are going to spend a lot of time obtaining and using this weapon. Other than the Browning .50. this is the only automatic weapon that the government produces in any quantity. Many have found their way to the black market, and in to the hands of the Screaming Silence. They are employed extensively there, and their use is always at a premium. The 20/50 in Clip refers to the use of a clip or a drum.

12 Gauge Pump Action Shotgun:

(+2/-1,1,12gu.,15,40,10,5,200) This weapon, and its two barreled brother, are the only weapon that private citizens are legally allowed to own. One has to live in the country, and have a certain acreage of land to get a license, but they are still sold over the counter in most hardware stores. The +2/-1 in Dice Mod is for close and long ranges.

Browning .50: (0,20,.50,100,1000,Belt,Belt,NA) Industrial strength firepower. This liquid cooled weapon is the largest thing that the player can ever real expect to get their hands on (excluding Hi-Technology of course). Once and a while the players may find this weapon on the black market; but if they do, it will be over priced and dangerous to own. The Browning is no tiny weapon, and is rather hard to hide.

Grenade: (4d6,2) Standard military issue hand grenade.

Hunting Knife: (5,+1,15) Standard Bowie knife. Well made and long lasting. Available from any hardware store.

Night Stick: (6,+2,NA) Police Night Stick.

Sedan: (\$2000) The average mundane automobile. Everyone has a car in the Malphoist world, but they all pretty much the same. The price is for a brand new one, and that's all you can get (no used car salesmen).

Motorcycle: (\$1000) Malphoist motorcycles are of the Harley Davidson/Trumph type. Large, powerful, hard to steer. These bikes are of a high quality, and command a certain

love from those that ride them. Unlike cars, there is a large market for antique bikes, with different models being made every few years.

The Technocracy

The Technocracy has been operating outside of Mainstream society ever since the Silent Revolution. Their total commitment to scientific and technical research has given them power beyond even the imagination of the Malphoists. They have expanded their horizons and explored both our inner and outer space. They have walked on other planets, and on the floors of the deepest oceans. They have learned what makes both the universe and the human body run, and have used that information to harness all of the power that both systems can produce. They have used this power to gain more knowledge, and that knowledge to gain more power, and on and on.

But all of their power has come at a price. Their need for fresh talent has led them to drain mainstream society of its. The abduction of the most talented people ever born to human kind has granted the Technocracy their power, but it has cost mainstream society even the remotest chance of advancement. The Technocracy has flourished, while the Malphoists have stagnated.

Is not the abduction of a child from its family wrong? Of course, but for the Technocrats, it is certainly justifiable. Imagine if Einstein, Feynman, Edison, Picasso, Hemmingway had been removed from worldly concerns at an early age and allowed to peruse their art. What could they have achieved? Where the Malphoists can not see their talent, and would waste their abilities sweeping streets; the Technocracy acknowledges it, and nurtures it.

In the final analysis, however, the Technocracy feel that the ends will justify the means. As stated above, the Malphoist world is setting itself up for a big fall. Through either entropy and fuel depletion, the Malphoist's rule is going to come to an end within the next ten years. The Technocracy has seen this coming for over 5 decades, and has been preparing. They have stockpiled large quantities of food and fuel for when the end comes, so they may step in and take control. The world will be saved, but the technocracy will rule it.

The Corporations

As stated in the above history, the Technocracy is derived from the old capitalist corporations. Most of these corporations, however, have vanished long ago, consumed by their larger competitors. After two hundred years of a completely open free market economy, the Technocracy has petered down to three giant corporations: AquaTech, Terra Inc, and Aero-Sys. These corporations exist in harmony through a massive network of trade agreements, and monopolistic control of markets. As you can probably tell by their names: AquaTech controls all over/under sea operations and technology,

Terra Inc. controls all land based activity and technology, and Aero-Sys controls all air/space technology.

An observer from our world would find these corporations to be rather strange compared to corporations of our world. There are no marketing departments, they produce no product, and they have no general public to satisfy. We would see them more as giant research institutes than businesses, with virtually all their staff in the R&D department.

Exactly how far advanced is the technology of the Technocracy? What can a GM use as a basis? Think about it with respect to most modern science fiction. While the Technocracy has not developed faster than light drive or transporters (though ask a few questions around a Aero-Systems R&D base and you'll get a stout "We're working on it, alright?") their computer systems are quite advanced, and they have capability of building androids sophisticated enough to pass for humans. They have various types of energy weapons, though firearms are still more practical, and they can employ energy and cloaking shield technology (though its bulk only allows its use around buildings or spacecraft). They have the ability to genetically engineer humans, or extend a man's life span indefinitely, though all research in this area is strictly against corporate regulations.

Lets take a brief look at each if the three corporations in detail:

AquaTech

AquaTech has a total monopoly on all ocean based technology. Virtually all of their installations are underneath the ocean, and their corporate headquarters are actually built to the underside of the arctic ice cap. In the past few years AquaTech has moved more and more to Eco-friendly stance on technology, and has been pursuing sources of clean power. Their vast fleet of submarines has moved to a Electro-Magnetic flux engine technology that produces no pollution.

AquaTech has very little contact with mainstream society, though lately they have been making limited assaults on Communist installations that are large producers of pollution.

Terra Inc.

Having a total monopoly on land based technology, Terra Inc. is also the most advanced Corporation in natural resource acquisition and refining. This corporation works almost totally in parallel with mainstream society, having most of its facilities in normal cities. Their oil wells and coal mines are all staffed by normal Communist workers who know nothing of the actual owners of their installations. It is said the Terra Inc. has bought off most of the communist government, and this is why they are able to operate within normal society. Something like this can't be too far from the truth. Terra Inc.'s

corporate headquarters are in the Australian Outback. The whole continent of Australia is almost totally under Terra Inc's control.

Unlike AquaTech, Terra Inc. has a much more mercenary attitude to exploiting the worlds resources. This includes the populous of the Communist world. They feel that normal society is a resource to be used and, if done discreetly, will not compromise the privacy of the Technocracy. Terra Inc. is usual the first corporation a member of the Screaming Silence encounters.

Aero-Sys

This corporations is the most technically advanced of all the corporations. Though they began their corporate life building planes and helicopters, they have long since moved to space technology. The other corporations have holding in space: Terra Inc. has mines on Mars, and AquaTech has research vessels on Venus, but they are all dependent on Aero-Sys to get them to, and from, their locations. Aero-Sys has explored virtually all of our solar system, and has sent many probes out of it. Their major research at the moment is to produce an engine that can take them out of our solar system. Aero-Sys's corporate headquarters is clandestine station on the moon, employing various types of cloaking shield to hide it from the earth.

Even though most of Aero-Sys does most of its operations in space, it is still dependent on the each for fuel and water. Most of this they produce for themselves, but some they have to purchase from mainstream society. Much to their chagrin.

Shock Troops

None of the Corporations have a standing army. With the technology that the Corporations possess, war has become a painfully out moded concept. Each Corporation does, however, have what are know as Shock Troops. Being a combination of police and military, the Corperate Shock Troops work in a commando like fashion as either a peace keeping force, or an assault unit. They are heavily armed, armored, and very well trained. Whenever the Technocracy wished to make their military presence felt, it is the Shock Troops that are sent in.

Members of the Screaming Silence will encounter the Shock Troops of the Technocracy respeatedly during their exploits. Any terrorist threat will be met with an Av full of Shock Troops floating down out of the clouds. Shock Troops are not interested in politics or freedom. They are intently loyal to their Corporation, and will meet any threat with violent force. Players should be very careful when provoking the wrath of a Shock Trooper. It could be hazardous to their health.

Equipment of the Technocracy

The Technocracy is a gadget oriented society. Their use of technology to solve all sorts of simple problems borders on the unimaginative. If the problem can be solved with a new invention, the Technocracy will invent it. Technological and scientific advancement are the corner stone of their society, and almost everyone in the society works towards it.

As you might guess, a complete equipment list for the Technocracy is far beyond the scope of this book. Any attempt would almost certainly be inadequate to the task. Therefore, what is offered here is a small sample of Technocrat gadgetry to get you, as a player and Gamemaster, thinking in the right direction. Feel free to create your own gadgets and put them into the hands of the Technocracy. They are an amazingly creative bunch, and anything that you can probably think up, they would invent. If what you have in mind isn't possible with our science, then create a new science to explain it. The Technocracy would do the same, so why can't you? Be creative. What you invent doesn't really have to be that practical either. Unrestrained technological growth would produce a lot of technological dead ends. If what you think up doesn't make much sense, then it's probably one of these dead ends. Enjoy yourself. Keep the players on their toes.

Technology and the Corporations.

Before we begin with any equipment lists, there is an aspect of the Technocracy's technological advancement that must be emphasized: Even though we refer to the Technocracy as a single unit, it is in fact (as you know) made up of three corporations, and these three corporations do not, necessarily, share the same technology. Apart from the obvious differences in environment (Terra Inc. is land based, AquaTech is sea based, and AeroSys is air and space), the three corporations have fundamentally different approaches to technology. Where Terra Inc. bases most of its technology around combustion engines and firearm weaponry, AquaTech almost exclusively uses electromagnetic technology, and AeroSys concentrates on focused energy equipment. This fundamental difference between the three corporations, almost always leads to three different ways to solve a single problem. While the corporations exchange technology and ideas, most inventions stay within the corporation that invented it, and are used exclusively by that corporation. The players will quickly learn that they will be able to tell what corporation they are dealing with just by looking at their equipment.

Universal Equipment

Even though each corporation uses has its own technology and methods, some pieces of equipment are so useful they are used universally by all corporations.

Av: The Av (All-terrain Vehicle) is one of the few examples of cooperation between the corporations of the Technocracy. Almost twenty years ago, the three corporations got their best engineers together to build a vehicle that would be able to operate in the air, under water, and in a vacuum. What these engineers produced was the Av. It was such a tremendous success that the Av is still the major form a transportation for the Technocracy 20 years later.

The reason the vehicle was so successful was that it took advantage of each of the corporations strengths. The chassis and armor was supplied by Terra Inc., the engines were provided by AquaTech, and the computer systems were provided by AeroSys. What they built was one of the most advanced flying machines ever:

The Av is vaguely van like in its shape, with a windshield where a mundane would expect it. Any connection to a mundane vehicle stops their, however. When one would expect wheels, there are control jets; and the rear of the vehicle is totally consumed by the main thruster. The Av uses a Flux Pump Engine, which basically takes any substance in through its collector, ionizes it, and thrusts it out the back. Since this engine works just as well with air, water, or hydrogen (provided from internal tanks), the Av is capable of traveling through the air, water, or a vacuum.

The arms and armor of the Av are also remarkable. The vehicle is covered with what seems to be a rubbery jacket. This is in fact the armored coat of the Av and provides 20 points of armor to the vehicle. The coat is fire proof, laser proof, and generally impervious to any type of impact weaponry. Underneath this coat is the weapon pod. Seeming like a slug under the Av's skin, the Weapon pod can crawl to any point on the Av's surface, and then deploy its weapons through the armored coat. This gives the Av's weapon the ability to fire in any direction that is needed, without moving the vehicle. The contents of the weapon pod is not standard however, and varies from mission to mission, and corporation to corporation. Though the HB-HR-CF (see below) is the default weapon.

The computer systems of the Av are the most advanced in the Technocracy. They are updated constantly, and adapted when need be. Needless to say, the Av is equipped with every type of imaging device one can imagine, and all sorts or radars, sonars, and the like. One can assume that in any situation, the Av is not blind.

Body Armor: (8) Terra Inc. has produced a type of body armor that is far superior to anything the other corporations have been able to produce. This full body suit give 8 points of armors to ever hit location of the wearer, and has an unlimited structural strength. A little math with tell you that this makes the Technocracy all but impervious to mundane weapons. This armor is worn by all Technocrat Shock Troops.

Terra Inc.

As stated above, Terra Inc. bases almost all of its technology around combustion engines and firearms. This is probably a result of Terra Inc.'s close link with mundane society, and its need for powerful equipment that is easy to maintain. As the largest collector of natural resources among the Technocracy, a large part of Terra Inc.'s technological advancement was in the area of mining and refining. However, don't let this give you the idea that Terra Inc. is a slob when it comes to weaponry. They hold their own with the other corporations quite well.

Auto Carbine: (0,2/10 ,5.56mm [HEAP] ,60,450,50,1,NA) The most used weapon in Terra Inc.'s arsenal is their Auto Carbine. Made out of a single piece of shock proof plastic, the weapon is almost negligible in weight, and almost indestructible. The ammunition, a caseless 5.56mm high explosive armored piercing round (2d6), comes in what is known as a "clipless" clip. The ammunition makes up its own clip, and as the weapon fires, the clip is consumed by the weapon. Special adhesives at both ends of the clip allow for simple reloading through the attachment of another clip to the end of an old one. This can be done while only a portion of a clip has been fired, allowing reloading when the user wishes, not when the weapons wishes.

5.56mm Short Sidearm: (0,2,5.56mm [HEAP],40,200,20,1,NA) The 5.56mm Short is Terra Inc.'s standard sidearm. Like the Auto Carbine, the 5.56mm Short is made from a single piece of shock proof plastic, and uses the "clipless" clip. The weapon has a built-in suppresser that makes it almost completely silent.

HB-HR-CF: (0,20,7.62mm [HEAP],100,1000,Belt,Belt,NA) HB-HR-CF (pronounced: "Heb-hur-keff") stands for Heavy Barrel-High Revolution-Chain Fed. Using a sophisticated centrifugal loading system, the HB-HR-CF is an adaptation of the old gattling gun. The weapon is tripod or vehicle mounted, and fed from belt. It uses a 7.62 HEAP round (2d8), and can fire up to 20 rounds in a turn. This weapon can literally tears its target to pieces.

Av/2: Terra Inc. need to work within mundane society has given them the need to invent many clandestine devices for their agent's use. One of their more ingenious inventions is the Av/2. A scaled down version of the Av, the Av/2 can only carry 2 people, and has no weapon pod. Just like the Av, it able to travel through air, water, and vacuum, and has a 20 point armor coat. What makes the Av/2 different from the Av is its carrier. The Av/2 has a "shell" that it fits into and powers. The shell looks exactly like a mundane automobile, and even sounds like one when running. The Av/2 powers the shell, and the "car" can be driven around without rising suspicion. The internal controls are hidden behind revolving panels, and a mundane can even ride inside the car and not know that he is in an Av/2. However, with the push of a button, the panels revolve, the Av/2's

Thrusters power, and the top of the shell is blown off. The Av/2 can then take off from the chassis of the shell and go into full operation.

Lazarus Suit: (5) Actually called a “Full Body Environmental Suit”, the Lazarus Suit was dubbed such by Screaming Silence agents who have come in contact with it, and the name has stuck. The suit consists of two layers: The inner layer is body armor. Five points of it. The outer layer is a putty like substance that is hard to tell from skin. This gives the wearer a second skin under which body armor, and other devices, are hidden. Though the outer skin can be made to look like a particular individual, this is seldom done since the suit adds a good three inches, and 30 pounds to the wearer. Unless this is a description of the individual in question, the suit is not a good copy.

The Lazarus suit is internally cooled, and can be worn for extended periods of time with a minimal amount of discomfort. The suit has fake heart beat, and artificial sweat glands. It would take a talented mundane doctor to tell a Lazarus suit from a real person.

AquaTech.

AquaTech’s technological advancement has taken a very different path than that of Terra Inc. While Terra Inc. has become an exploiter of the Earth’s natural resources (and those of the other planets), AquaTech has tried to work in harmony with nature. AquaTech has taken a strong Eco-friendly stance on technology, and has pursued methods of power that do not pollute the environment. This fact, coupled with their water based monopoly, has made AquaTech adopt electromagnetic power as their major source of propulsion. It is clean, silent, and powerful.

Rail Rifle: (0,1/10,Fletch,150,2000,100,5,NA) The Rail Rifle is AquaTech’s major combat weapon. Almost 6 feet long, this weapon is mounted on the shoulder, and is very cumbersome to use. Working on electromagnetic rail technology, this weapon accelerates a projectile up to speed by passing it through a series of magnets. This method of propulsion is effective and silent, but requires a long barrel to get a projectile up to effective speed. AquaTech has perfected the system, however, and developed a weapon that works both on land and under water.

The normal ammunition fired from the Rail Rifle is a fletch of sodium composite that is reactive when exposed to air or water. The magazine that the ammunition is held in is filled with an inert gas that retards the reaction, and keeps the ammo stable; but after a shot is fired, this gas quickly boils off, and the sodium fletch reacts explosively. The net effect is a weapon that spits silver fletches of highly explosive sodium that explode (2d10) a few moments after impact.

Rail Cannon: (0,15,Fletch.300,3000,500,5,NA) A tripod or vehicle mounted version of the above Rail Rifle. Very dangerous.

Needle Gun: (+1,2,Needle,50,200,30,1,NA) It is hard to build an effective handgun with EM Flux technology, and the Needle Gun is the best that AquaTech could come up with. The weapons is the size of a pistol, and fires thin titanium needles at high velocity. While these do relatively little damage (1d4), and are easily stopped by armor (armor counts as double); but if the needles are coated with poison or tranquilizers, the weapon can be very effective. The weapon has a selecting device that allows multiple loads to be placed in the same clip, and selected before firing. The Needle Gun isn't a very effective combat weapon, but is popular with assassins because of its quiet firing.

Artificial Gill: This piece of equipment is standard issue to all members of AquaTech. It is a small pocket sized device that, when placed in the mouth, allows a person to breath underwater. The Artificial Gill is almost idiot proof, and 100% effective. It has enough power to run for about 30 or 40 hours before it needs to be recharged. There is also a built in transceiver that always a wearer to communicate underwater.

Hover Skipper: This is a rather popular invention with the younger members of AquaTech. A Hover Skipper is a small nimble hover bike that AquaTech used for reconnaissance missions. The Skippers are rather fragile, and not designed for combat. However, they're get fun to take for a spin, or water ski behind.

AeroSys

Unlike the other corporations, AeroSys' technology has taken it off the Planet Earth. Although the other corporations have holdings in space, they are holdings only, and the mass of AquaTech and Terra Inc. are still on earth. AeroSys, however, has had a large part of its operation in space for the best part of a century; and by 2159, are almost exclusively off the Planet Earth. This fact has had a strong influence on the technology of AeroSys, making it the most advanced, and by far the most alien.

The requirements of space operation has lead AeroSys to long ago abandon combustion, and EM flux technology. They have concentrated on focused energy weapons, and alternative means of propulsion. They have also invested a large amount of their power into the production of cloaking technology, to hide their space operations from prying eyes upon the earth.

Ion Blaster: (+1,2,Energy,100,500,20,1,NA) The basic combat weapon of AeroSys. The Ion Blaster is somewhere between a larger pistol and a small carbine. Firing a focused stream of ions, the Ion Blaster has two settings: Stun, with overloads the human nervous system, giving an almost 100% guarantee of unconsciousness; and kill, with does 2d8

points of damage. The major draw back of an Ion Blaster is its ineffectiveness against no organic matter. Armor counts as double when being attacked by an Ion Blaster.

Wrist Stunner: (+1,1,Energy,20,100,5,5,NA) A miniature version of the Ion Blaster, a Wrist Stunner is worn around the wrist, and hidden by a person's sleeve. The Wrist Stunner can only fire a stun pulse, though this pulse is almost assured to knock out its target.

Ion Cannon: (Varies) AeroSys makes over a dozen different sizes of Ion Cannons. From a tripod mounted version, to an orbital platform version. Ion Cannons do not share the ineffectiveness of the Ion Blaster against inorganic matter, and pretty much anything hit by an Ion Cannon is disintergrated. The GM can determine the damage dependent on the size of the Cannon.

Thrust Suit: (3) Designed for EVA in space, the Thrust Suit allows an individual free moment within a weightless environment. It can also be used in the atmosphere. A person wearing a Thrust Suit is able to fly in a super hero fashion through the air. However, the fuel supply will burn itself out in about fifteen minutes if used in this way. The suit also provides 3 points of armor.

The Screaming Silence

The Screaming Silence Manifesto

When Sunlit morn bids welcome
To star threaded night,
And the marrow of Society
Cascades away in atoms of dust,
Then will our mute voices raise
To the tune of such sober immorality.
Then, in that night, will all our
Silence Scream.

Across the world the cry fills the air. Voice after voice finds strength in chorus that has become our mighty scream. But many seek to stop our voices. Many wish to gag the call of truth. Many would trample us under heel, and stitch our mouths as quiet as church mice. But in hopes that our screams many never be quiet, here we write our Manifesto of the Night. These words, before only spoken in whispers, can now be cried from the highest rooftops. Read here the Manifesto of the Silence. Read here the Manifesto of the Scream.

The Acydem and the Medioc

Know that history has always been a conflict of classes. Be it freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, or bourgeois and proletariat; oppressor has always stood in conflict with the oppressed. These days of the Malphoist, these days of one single class, are do different.

But what classes exist in the our world today? In our world of proletarian bliss? Are we not all equal in eyes of God? So great Malpho said. But know this above all other things: Malpho lied to us, and Malpho was wrong. Without this knowledge, everything else here will mean nothing.

We exist in a world with two classes: The Acydem, and the Medioc. The Knows and the Know-nots. We are the Mediocs, the Know-nots, and have been for longer than anyone can remember. But if you are reading this, this is the fact that you wish to change.

Know the Acydem. They call themselves the Technocracy. Their existence is the world's most highly guarded secret. They possess power far beyond anything that we can imagine. Far beyond that of our government's, far beyond that of the atomic bomb. They have power over the land and the ocean. They can fly without planes, and walk on the surface of the moon. Know that their knowledge has granted them this power, not magic or sorcery.

Know the Medioc. Know that the knowledge that we possess is but a grain of sand to the desert of the Acydem. Know that our government knows of the Acydem, but keeps the information from the people. Know that our government keeps much from the people. Know what we, as the Medioc, must do:

The Screaming Silence

It was the Silent Revolution that split our society. The Acydem was born at the same time as the Medioc. Where we pursued the teachings of Silence, the Acydem pursued the teachings of Sound. The time has long passed for the silence to be broken. The time has long past for our Silence to Scream.

Consider this a call to arms. It is time for the Medioc to take up weapons against the systems that maintains the division between classes. Both the Malphoist Government, and the Acydem must fall; and knowledge must disperse itself freely throughout our society. The longer this system remains in place, the more the Medic will be eclipsed by the Acydem. There is no time to be lost. The system must be toppled down.

We are the Screaming Silence. We wage war against our oppressive system. We feel that no method is to extreme in our battle to save the world. Since we have neither the man power or the weapons for direct revolution, sabotage and terrorism must be our

weapon of choice. The destruction of the Acydem's means of production and supply, is our best chance for disrupting the system; general fear and mayhem, the best way to incite revolution.

Know that there are powers more potent than the law that will try to stop us. Know that our lives are in danger every moment of the day. This is the price we pay for victory in our war. This the all that we can give, and we must give all that we can to save our world.

The Final Battle

Know that the final battle is almost upon us. The division between the Acydem and the Medioc will soon come to a head. Soon everyone must choose side in the conflict. Arm yourself well, and join with the side of honor. For our cause is noble, and are aims are just. Those that fight to maintain the system will be swept under by the tidal wave. Those that fight for the Acydem, fight for oppression and injustice.

So comrade, rise up against the system that oppresses you. Use arms against the forces that would crush you under foot. Rage against the trappings of ignorance, and throw off the burden that pulls you down. Friends, we have nothing to loose but our chains.

Raise up and fight against the machine.

The Screaming Silence

At first glance, the Screaming Silence do not seems to be the good guys. They're terrorists, saboteurs, political radicals, revolutionaries, and anarchists. Not the cloth from which most heros are made. But in the insane world produced by the Silent Revolution, the Screaming Silence are the closest thing the world has to heros; and the closest thing the world has to crusaders.

The Screaming Silence advocates the violent overthrow of the system. Though the Screaming Silence's goals are good, their grasp of the facts leave much to be desired. A member of the Screaming Silence will often mention the Technocracy and the Malphoist government in one breath. It is commonly believed that they are two aspects of the same thing: The oppressive system that is keeping the common man crushed under foot. While this may, on the surface, be true, the Malphoists and the Technocracy have nothing to do with each other. Though no one in the Screaming Silence really knows that.

Much of the information that the Screaming Silence has come from either half truths, or outright lies. Many of the people in the Screaming Silence are prone to wild conspiracy theories, and these theories often catch on. In fact a few years ago, a theory

circulated that the Technocracy was in fact an alien culture operating on earth. Fortunately, this theory fell out of fashion quickly...

The Screaming Silence is not a terribly well organized group. It is more of an elaborate distribution system for supplies and information, than any real structured legion of terrorists. Enclaves often group together in a city, and have a command structure within themselves, but any kind of global command is missing. A enclave of the Screaming Silence in Boston, and a enclave in New York may have a lot of contact, or none. They share no common command, and if they come in contact, they are as likely to fight among themselves as they are likely to fight against the system. Though most Screaming Silence enclaves try to stay on a friendly basis, and help each other out when they can.

Even if the Screaming Silence is short of leadership, the one thing they are not short of is equipment. With many sympathizers in the People's Army, the Screaming Silence is seldom short of weapons and explosives. Storage and distribution, on the other hand, is not as easy as one might think. With border inspections and routine house to house searches, keeping weapons and equipment out of the hands of the authorities is a full time job. Luckily for the Screaming Silence, there is an underground system already in place that serves their needs quite nicely:

The Screaming Silence has come to work very close with the Mob and the Black Market over the last few years. The Mob's network of speakeasies has served the Screaming Silence well as safe ground for its agents to meet. In fact, the Screaming Silence has come to be an integral part of the speakeasy scene, with its agents becoming both the bad boys and the trend setters of the culture. Lately it seems that being a terrorist have become very 'in'.

Unlike most information, the Malphoists do not suppress information about the deeds of the Screaming Silence. In fact, their usually headline news. In the Screaming Silence, the government has found the perfect enemy to exploit in the eyes of the people. With a terrorist threat, the government finds it far easier to conduct house to house searches, or make arrests without charges. Declaring a state of emergency over the Screaming Silence has allowed the government to crack down harder on the populace of the world. But in doing this, the government has given the Screaming Silence their most potent weapon: publicity. Without this, the Screaming Silence would be nothing.

The general public's reaction to the Screaming Silence is either one of horror, or one of romanticism. The government makes the Screaming Silence out to be monsters, but in a world where it's government policy that nothing ever happens, the Screaming Silence is often viewed with romanticism. Like Robin Hood, or Bonny and Clyde, the Screaming Silence are not necessarily considered right, just exciting. This is enough to

make little children play at being Screaming Silence agents, or teenage girls to run to the television when a story about the Screaming Silence is on.

But regardless of the publicity and the views of the general public, what is it really like to be in the Screaming Silence? For most agents it is neither romantic or exciting. An agent is lucky if he lives through his first mission. New initiates to the Screaming Silence are given no training, and are expected to prove themselves through action. The forces that the Screaming Silence fight are ruthless and violent, so one false move by the new initiate means death. If their lucky, they'll only get arrested by the Malpoists. Destined to spend the rest of their existence in a Alaskan gulag.

Those that survive their first mission, and those missions that follow, have earned their stripes. The missions, though, never get easier, and death lurks behind every decision. Most agents last about 2 years with the Screaming Silence. Those that have stayed alive longer, earn a great respect from their peers. To be 30 years old, and a member of the Screaming Silence is a great achievement indeed.

But where did the Screaming Silence come from? What is its history? Very little of this is known, even to the members of the Screaming Silence. Government records show that the first Screaming Silence attacks were in California about 20 years ago, so it is assumed that the Screaming Silence started there. It doesn't appear that there was ever a founder of the Screaming Silence, so most assume that it grew out of a group of similar terrorist organizations that were operating in that area at the time. Why they came together, and who dubbed them the Screaming Silence is unknown.

The Business 1.3: The Double Cross.

Lin kindly popped Baxter's shoulder back into its socket before they crossed the muddy field. Michael was waiting for them as they approached the truck, searching the dead bodies.

"So no book huh?" Lin said as soon as she was in ear shot.

"Nothing. Empty box." Michael gestured into the back of the truck. Lin and Baxter looked through the tattered remains of the canopy at the empty strong box sitting at the center of the truck's bed.

"It could have been in the other truck?" Baxter suggested.

"Maybe, but I doubt it. Simon has gone back to check. If it was, there won't be much left of it after that mine trick."

"Hay, it got the job done didn't it?" Lin said. She had always been the kind of person who used two stick of dynamite, when one would do just fine. Simon drove up in the one remaining car, and shook his head.

"Nothing." He said out of the driver's side window.

"We better get out of here before the police, or worse, start showing up." Baxter dug into the breast pocket of motorcycle leathers and retrieved a small golden coin. He looked at the Screaming Silence insignia inscribed on its surface, then tossed it into the back of the truck. "Just so they know. Let go."

Michael, Lin, and Baxter climbed into the car, and Simon gassed it to life. As the car pulled back onto the road, Baxter caught sight of the smoldering remains of the destroyed truck.

"So where to now?" Lin asked Michael, leaning forward from the back seat to get his attention.

"There's a bolt hole about five miles away from here. We'll hold up there until we get word from Joe Jo." Michael's walkie-talkie crackled to life. "Speaking of word from Joe Jo."

"Indifference. Come in, Indifference. This is Slough, come in Indifference."

“This is Indifference. Go ahead Slough.”

“Have monitored your transmissions. Situation understood. Proceed on original course until farther notice.”

“Check that Slough. Indifference out.”

“Slough out.”

* * *

Baxter had always wondered why people painted barn red. It wasn't like they were hard to miss, or needed attention drawn to them; but for some reason every barn that Baxter had seen had been painted that particular shade of red. Maybe the Malphos only produced that one color of barn paint. Who knew? Baxter surely didn't, and probably never would. Baxter had a mind that thought about such things, though. Often.

Michael jumped out of the car as it approached the barn, and swung the doors open. The car rolled into the barn slowly, and Michael closed the doors behind. He threw the door's bolt with a loud slam.

“This is the bolt hole?” Lin asked, looking at the hay bails stack around her.

“What were you expecting? A suite at the Ritz?”

“I don't know... But this is the first time I've been in a bolt hole with a dirt floor.”

“Stop complaining,” Simon said. “and find the food. I'm starved.” For a few minutes everyone concentrated on finding the supply pack. Michael was the one to find it, off in the tool locker.

“Oh God, K-rations again.” Baxter said as Michael started handing out the supplies. “We have to have a sit down, and talk about what actually constitutes food.”

“Stop complaining Blaine.” Michael grumbled and sat down to eat. “They're free, so don't knock them.”

“Great. Not only is it crappy food, someone went to the trouble of stealing it. You'd thing with all the resources of the world behind them, the Malphos could at least produce a tasty field ration.”

“I suppose you’d rather be eating some of that Technocrat crap you got last month.” Simon sad through a full mouth.

“Damn straight, that stuff was great! One of those nut bar things feed me for a week, and came in four flavors. Not like this stuff. One flavor: Dirt.”

“You should be glad to be eating at all, after that stupid stunt.”

“What?”

“Jumping from the truck like that. You’re lucky Lin was there with the car, or you’d be a red smear on the highway right about now.”

“The guy had a Tomy! I had to think quick. I didn’t see you guys doing anything to take him down.”

“Well, we were-”

“Were nothing. I did what I had to do. If you guys had been-”

“Shh!” Lin suddenly interjected. “I hear something...” Everyone stopped and listened to the air. A faint rumbling was just audible.

“What the-” Baxter got out before Michael waved for him to be quiet. All four of them quietly picked up their weapons and moved for cover.

The rumbling turned into the sound of multiple engines. They stopped outside the barn, and the sound of car doors and footsteps could be heard. Baxter dug his Pistol out of his satchel and clicked off the safety. Suddenly, the whole barn was bathed in a bright light.

“This is the Police!” A megaphone bleared from outside. “We have the building surrounded! Throw out your weapons, and come out with your hands up!” Michael moved over to the barn doors, and looked through the crack between them. From the look on Michael’s face, it seemed the voice was telling the truth.

“What now?” Baxter whispered. Michael again gestured for him to be quiet. Voices could be heard talking outside, then the barn was suddenly full of automatic gun fire. Everyone dove to the barn floor.

“That was a warning shot!” The megaphone announced.

“Christ! I’d hate to see them shoot to kill!” Baxter joked.

“Throw out your weapons, or face the consequences!” The megaphone continued. The amplified voice clicked off, and the air was filled with a deadly silence.

“Well?” Lin said to no one in particular.

“Yeah, well?” Baxter added.

“Well what? Does anyone have any bright ideas?” Michael said as he returned to his feet.

“No” Lin said.

“Not me.” Baxter added.

“Nada.” Simon completed.

“Then what else are we going to do?” Michael turned and opened the barn doors. Spotlights flooded through the doorway. He threw his pistol out of the opening and shielded his eyes.

“Put your hands over your head. Tell your companions to do the same!” Michael raised his hands into the air. Lin, Baxter, and Simon emerged from their hiding places and walked out into the open. With the clatter of weapons to the floor, they all surrendered.

“Come forward, into the light!” The megaphone instructed. They all started forward.

“I don’t like this at all...” Lin whispered to Baxter as they moved. “Follow my lead.” Baxter wasn’t to sure what she had planned, but he knew enough to trust her. As they walked forward, four shadows appeared in the light. As the shadows got closer, their police uniforms could be made out. As the police approached, cuffs in hand, Lin suddenly said “Now!”

Lin struck the first policeman in the chest with a flying back kick. Baxter did the only effective hand to hand maneuver that he knew, and threw his whole body at one of the policemen. Michael seized the opportunity and cracked one of the policemen a good one in the jaw. Unfortunately, the fourth policemen caught Michael across the back of the head with his night stick, and the air was filled with the sound of safety catches disengaging. Baxter and Lin grabbed their respective policemen by the necks, and kept the policemen between themselves and the guns.

“The game is up.” A voice from behind Lin and Baxter said. They turned around to see Simon, gun in hand. “Hands on your heads.”

“What the hell is going on here!” Lin said as she raised her hands. “What the hell are you doing Simon?”

“My job.” Simon smiled cunningly. “You see, as a government agent, catching terrorist scum is my job.”

“You back stabbing son of a bitch!” Baxter yelled and lunged for Simon. One wave of Simon’s pistol, and Baxter thought twice. The two policemen restrained Lin and Baxter from behind.

“It’s too late for insults Baxter. You, Lin, and Michael are going up the river, along with the rest of your Screaming Silence friends once I get back to Boston. Isn’t that right boys?” Soft chuckles emanated from the policemen.

“You God damn-” Lin grinned her teeth in hatred, and strained against her policeman,

“Arh, arh. You should be nice to me. After making a big bust like this, I’m going to be a very important man. If anyone is ever going to get you out of one of those God forsaken frozen gulags, its going to have to be me. Be nice to me, and I might be nice to you...”

“I’d rather eviscerate your stinking hide, you-”

“Oh well, take them away boys.” Simon waved at the policemen smugly.

“I don’t think so.” One of the policemen said.

“What?”

“He says he doesn’t think so.” The megaphoned voice began. The spotlights dimmed to reveal twenty leather clad terrorists. Joe Jo lowered the Megaphone from his lips and smiled. “You just made a big mistake, asshole.”

“What the hell is going on here?” Simon eyes almost exploded from his head. “Where are the police?” The two policemen holding Lin and Baxter loosened their grip. Lin and Baxter were just as confused as Simon.

“No where close enough to save your hide, turn coat.” Joe Jo limped forward toward Simon. “Game’s up Simon.”

“No wait, you got it all wrong! It was a trick! I was trying to convince the police that-” A flare of gun fire from the Tommy guns and Simon was silenced. He collapsed to the floor like a sack of potatoes.

“What the hell is going on here!” Baxter said as Joe Jo approached.

“Just taking care of business Baxy.”

“But, you guys are the police? What the-?”

“We knew one of our agents, one of our top agents, was a traitor. It had to be one of you four. So we sent you guys out on a mission, knowing the traitor will tip of the authorities, and the mission would fail. We show up afterwards, play at being the cops, and the traitor plays his hand. Simple, huh? And it worked. Simon. Boy, I’ve worked with the guy for ten years.”

“So there was never any book? We were on a wild goose chase?”

“No. That part is true. Simon tipped the Malphos off, and they changed the route of the convoy. The book is probably already at the airport by now.”

“Christ!”

“I want you two to go after it. Take a car, get moving, now. I want that book no matter what the cost.”

“But what about Michael?” Lin and Baxter picked up their weapons.

“When he comes around, I’ll fill him in. Now go!”

“Check!” Lin and Baxter said as they sprinted for the car.

Chapter 6 - The Moonlight Club

You'll excuse me Gentlemen. Your job is politics, my job is running a saloon.

- Rick, Casablanca

Good evening, welcome to the Moonlight Club. I have a table for you close up to the stage, if you will follow me...

The Moonlight Club is one of the hottest night spots in Boston. It is a restaurant, a speakeasy, and hub for the local Screaming Silence enclave. This chapter will detail the club, and some of its more interesting inhabitants. You, as a Gamemaster, may wish to use this as a basis for your own games, or simply as an example of a speakeasy in the Screaming Silence world. Use as much, or as little, of it as you see fit.

The Club

This section will breakdown the Moonlight club by room. In each room, a general description will be given, and the things of most interest will be highlighted. Refer to the floor plans for a map of each room.

A - Dining Room

From the street, The Moonlight Club looks like any other restaurant. There are no clues from street level that would indicate a speakeasy below the restaurant floor. The Moonlight Club relies completely on word of mouth for its patronage. The Moonlight restaurant is a four star restaurant in its own right. Specializing in Italian food, the restaurant has earned a healthy reputation for quality dining. This fact, along with its downtown location, has made the restaurant prosperous, regardless of any other activities going on there.

The Dining Room is decorated in somber green and mahogany, with the chairs and tables being of the finest wood. The walls are decorated with a few tasteful pastoral paintings, and a picture of Comrade Malpho over the front door. This front door is flanked by two flower beds, which double as book shelves. The flowers are real, but the books are fake. The room is almost always filled with the pleasant aroma of cooking pasta, and the low murmur of polite conversation. The serenity of the restaurant is a marked contrast to the mood below in the speakeasy.

A guest entering into the restaurant is met by Alfonzo the maitre d' at A-1. Alfonzo has spent most of his life as a maitre d', and has become very astute at detecting restaurant customers from speakeasy customers. The general protocol for persons who

wish to go down stairs, is for them to tell Alfonzo that they would like a table in the bar. Since there are no tables in the bar, there is little chance for confusion. Alfonzo will show the guest to the bar (C), and return to his post.

If a guest is silly enough to come barging into the restaurant, and ask to go to the speakeasy below, Alfonzo will meet them with a blank stare. He will say he knows nothing about any speakeasy, and would sir or madam like a table? Alfonzo is the speakeasies first line of defence from intruders, and he talks his job seriously. Those who do not follow the protocol, will not get into the speakeasy.

Alfonzo has a panic button underneath his podium which will set of an alarm down in the speakeasy. He will use this only in dire need.

B - Kitchens

These kitchens serve both the restaurant and, by the dumb waiter (B-1), the speakeasy below. The kitchens are almost always occupied by Luigi and Lucas, the two Italian chiefs, and various waiters of all shapes and sizes. Luigi and Lucas are both masters at their craft, and perpetually argue about it. Despite this, they run an efficient restaurant, and a clean kitchen.

C - The Bar

The back room of the Moonlight Restaurant is the bar. The room contains the bar (C-1) and two pool tables (C-2). This room is done in the same decor as the rest of the restaurant, and is usually occupied by a few guests waiting for a table. There are three permanent residents of this room: Paddy, the barman, Ralph, and Joe. Ralph and Joe generally hang around the bar, sipping drinks and playing pool. They are in fact bouncers, and stay in this room in case any trouble brakes out. They have .45 autos under their jackets, and cudgels in their pockets. If there's any trouble in the Moonlight Restaurant, Ralph and Joe take care of it.

Paddy is the second line of defense for the Moonlight Club. After Alfonzo shows a guest to the bar, they are expected to order a drink and pay for it with a \$5 bill. Paddy will take out the price of the drink, and the \$3 door charge; and when the guest is ready, Paddy will then push a button under the bar (C-1) which unlocks the entrance (C-2) to the wine cellar (F). If anyone asks where the wine cellar door goes to, Paddy will say it goes to the bathrooms.

At the top of the stairs (C-2), leading down to the wine cellar, there is a moveable wall. Normally when a speakeasy guest enters into the stair well, the wall is open and they can walk down to the wine cellar; but if Paddy pushes a button, the wall swings closed, blocking the stairs to the wine cellar, and the passage seems to only leads to a door

to the bathroom corridor (E). The door from the bathroom corridor can only be opened if the moveable wall is in the closed position.

If there is any trouble in the bar, Paddy has a pump action shotgun under the bar, which he will have no hesitation to use if he sees fit. Ralph and Joe will try to subdue and trouble makers if they can, but will shoot if they think it's necessary.

D - Refrigerator Room

This giant refrigerator is reachable from behind the bar. It contains perishables for the kitchen and bar. There is nothing unusual about it.

E - Bathrooms

These are the restaurants bathrooms. Men's (E-1) and Women's (E-2). The windows are just large enough for a person to crawl out of into the back alley.

F - Wine Cellar

This room is, in fact, used as a wine cellar. The walls are lined with the restaurants fine wine supply, and not so fine wine supply. The secret door (F-1) in the wall here is left open most of the time, allowing guests to go down to the speakeasy. The secret door is usually only closed for emergencies, disguising the entrance as a wine rack. The room is dimly light and gloomy, to maintain the wine cellar image.

G - The Grand Staircase

In total contrast to the gloominess of the wine cellar, the Grand Staircase that leads down into the Moonlight Club is decorated in luxury. The carpet is plush, and the walls are decorated with fine paintings. The banisters are gold plated and gleam brightly in the light of the fine chandeliers. The Staircase curves gently around to a pair of finely crafted double doors. These doors, which are usually open, lead out onto the balcony of the Moonlight Club. The effect here is to make every guest's entrance that of a king or queen. The effect is, for the most, part successful.

At G-1 there is rather nice painting of a nude woman. This painting hides the opening to the machine gun post at L-1. Unless the painting is removed, this opening is completely hidden.

H - The Main Floor

This is the heart of the Moonlight Club. It is decorated in a definite Far East flavor, with the lighting coming from behind rice curtains, and paper lanterns. The walls

are covered with intricate designs in red and black, that occasionally resolve into a Taoist or Buddhist symbols. Behind the decoration, however, there are several layers of concrete for sound proofing. The management of the Moonlight Club has gone to great effort to make sure that what happens on the main floor cannot be heard by the outside world.

Apart from waiters, the main floor is paroled by at least 5 bouncers at any one time. These Gentlemen are dressed in tuxedos, and carry .45's underneath their jackets. They stick out like saw thumbs, and they don't try to hide themselves. They take no crap, and give none. Anyone who is causing a disturbance is dealt with swiftly.

There are two major sections to the main floor: The lower level (H-1), and the Balcony (H-2). They are connected by the continuation of the grand staircase (H-4), and two spiral staircases (H-3). Tables are set out on both of the two levels, all with a respectable view of the stage (I). Martino (H-5) is the main floor's maitre d', and greets all guests upon entrance. He will seat all guests as well as he can, but the main floor is usually very busy. Many guests often have to wait at the bar (L).

Those that do get a table, will be seated amongst some of the most shady characters in the Malphoist World. At every table sits Terrorist, Mobsters, Black Marketers, and Assassins.

I - The Stage

The stage of the Moonlight Club was designed for performances of drama and musicals, though neither have ever been performed here. There is a orchestra pit at I-1, but since most acts that perform in the Moonlight Clubs are musicians themselves, the orchestra pit seldom gets used. There is raised section at the back of the stage (I-2) that is accessible from the rear. This is used for dramatic entrances, and quick escapes. The stage is accessible stage left, and stage right, of course.

The ceiling of the whole rear section of the Moonlight Club is two stories high. The second story consisting of catwalks, lights, and ropes. The rear walls of the stage are painted in a plain white. Various backgrounds can be lowered down to cover the back walls, and other sections of the stage. Again, since most acts at the Moonlight Club are musical, this part of the theatrical stage is seldom used.

There is a trap door in the center of the stage (I-3). This leads to the storage area below the stage.

J - Backstage

Backstage of the Moonlight Club is much like the backstage of any theater. The walls are of plain concrete, and decorations are sparse. The backstage is only accessible from the stage (I), and the stage door (J-7). The stage door is guarded by Bob, an aging gentleman who makes sure that no one unauthorized gets backstage. If there are any signs of trouble, Bob will call for the bouncers from the main floor.

J-1 through J-5 are dressing rooms for the performers. J-1, being the biggest, is usually saved for the biggest star. J-6 are makeup mirrors, which are seldom used.

J-8 are ladders that lead up to the catwalks above the stage. Lighting technicians are usually up on these catwalk, operating the lights.

J-9 is the door to the storage area under the stage. There is a button right next to the door that operates the trap door (I-3).

J-10 is a secret door that very few people in the club know about. It leads to the sewers below Boston, and is the ultimate escape route out of the Moonlight Club.

K - Offices

These are the main offices for the Moonlight Club. K-2 belongs to John Drake, the Owner; K-1 belongs to Mary Bo, the Manager; and K-3 belongs to Stephen Linch, Chief in Charge of Auxiliary Purchasing. B-1 is the dumb waiter from the kitchens above, and the corridor is used by the waiters for food delivery.

L - The Lower Bar

This is the bar for the main floor. Drew is the head bartender, and has been so for 10 years. The bar specializes in cocktails, though their drinks supply is quite complete.

L-1 is the last line defense for the Moonlight Club. In this room there is a Browning .50 caliber pointing out of a small opening into the grand staircase (G). In case of trouble, Drew will slip into this back room and ready the machine-gun. Anyone coming in from the wine cellar (F) will be in his arc of fire. Fortunately, this weapon has never had to be used in the history of the Moonlight Club.

M - Bathrooms

Bathrooms for the main floor.

The People

Below are descriptions of the staff and some of the more frequent customers of the Moonlight Club.

Staff

John Drake

Age: 32

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Pacifist

Height: 5' 10 Weight: 150 lbs

Attributes: Well 3d, Str 2d, Agil 2d, Per 3d, End 2d, Dex 2d, Wits 3d, Will 2d, IQ 2d.

Skills: Acting 2d, Etiquette 3d, Leadership 1d, Hand to Hand 1d, Pistol 1d, Finance 1d, Gambling 4d, Streetwise 3d, Bur 2d, Deception 3d, Drive 2d, Observation 2d, Running 2d.

Exp. Abil: Luck 1d.

Det Abil: The Moonlight Club 1d.

Description: Average height and weight. Charming and gallant. Keeps his hair slicked backed, and mustache trimmed. Always pleasant and friendly to people who are buying.

Quote: "Hello sir, is there a problem here?"

John Drake is the owner of the Moonlight Club. A job he is neither wishes to do, or is at all suited for. John Drake won the Moonlight Club from the former own in a card game about two years ago, and he has been unable to get rid of it since. You see, being the owner of the Moonlight Club is not as sweet of a deal as one might expect. In fact, its down right hazardous to your health.

With the mob on one side, and the Malphoists on the other, the owner of the Moonlight Club must do a perpetual juggling act to keep the place open. Throw in the fact that half of the clientele are raving mad bombers with large caliber weapons, and the whole thing becomes just one giant headache.

Before going into the night club business, John was a professional card player. An occupation that matched his skills and his temperament well. He has done well as the owner of the Moonlight Club mainly because he has let Mary Bo pretty much run the place. He has saved his particular brand of skills for shmoozing with mobsters, and greasing the pockets of Malphoist officials.

If anyone offered to buy the Club from John, he would jump down their throats; but no one in that last two years has offered to do it, and no one likely will. So until he can pawn the Club off on some poor sucker, John will slip into his white dinner jacket, and press some flesh down on the main floor. Hell, maybe its not such a bad job after all...

Marry Bo

Age: 35

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Militant

Height: 5' 7" Weight: 105 lbs

Attributes: Well 2d, Str 1d, Agil 2d, Per 2d, End 2d, Dex 2d, Wits 2d, Will 3d, IQ 3d.

Skills: Economics 2d, Law 2d, Leadership 2d, Social Sci. 1d, Writing 1d, Finance 4d, Gambling 1d, Intimidation 2d, Streetwise 1d, Bur 3d, Deception 1d, Drive 1d.

Exp. Abil: Iron Will 1d

Det. Abil: Criminal Record 1d

Description: Attractive and bright. Always smartly dressed, and ready for anything. A nasty person when angry.

Quote: "What do you mean the vodka still in Moscow? Well it better be here by Tuesday, or Lenin won't be the only dead guy on public display!"

Marry Bo is the real power behind the Moonlight Club. She makes virtually all of the decisions: From what to put on the menu, to how much vodka to put in the martinis. The success of the Moonlight Club since John Drake took over has more to do with Marry, than it does with John. Together they have worked out a comfortable working relationship: John deals with the politics and crime of running the Moonlight Club, and Marry deals with the business.

Marry is, much to her parent's shame, a rabid capitalist. She hungers after the profit margin, and knows the difference between net and gross. The Moonlight Club is as good for Marry, as Marry is for the Moonlight Club. There is no where else that Marry could put her passion to work so well as in the Moonlight's speakeasy. She has made herself, and the Club, into a success story.

Outside of the Club, Marry has very little else in her life. She is consumed by her work, and cares little for anything else. In fact, if anyone spent anytime to get to know Marry, they would realize that she's a remarkably boring person. She lives and breaths in the Club, when she's away from it, she almost fades away.

Stephen Linch

Age: 56

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Pacifist

Height: 5' 10" Weight: 250lbs

Attributes: Well 1d, Str 1d, Agil 1d, Per 1d, End 1d, Dex 1d, Wit 3d, Will 2d, IQ 2d.

Skills: Leadership 1d, Dodge/Dive 1d, Explosives 2d, First Aid 2d, H to H 2d, Hvy Weapons 1d, Melee 1d, Pistol 2d, Rifle 2d, Gambling 2d, Lockpick 1d, Streetwise 2d, Bur 2d, Deception 2d, Drive 1d.

Exp. Abil: Charm 2d,

Det. Abil: Alcoholism 1d, Enemy 1d, Criminal Record 1d.

Description: Overweight and knows it. Always drinking with one hand and gesturing with the other. Great sense of humor and fun. Likes people of the same disposition.

Quote: "Did I ever tell you of the time I plucked a hair from President Burk's nose?"

Stephen Linch is Chief of Auxiliary Purchasing. What this job entails, and who his subordinates are, is not known to anyone, including Stephen Linch. Stephen is, to put it nicely, a big fat drunk. He was one of the founding members of the Moonlight Club, and has been with the Club ever since. He has a clause in his contract that makes it almost impossible to fire him, so Marry has shuffled him around from one job to another, finally creating him a job all of his own. Marry has made a great effort to make sure that Stephen has no real power, and is unable to get messed up in any of the workings of the Club.

The truth be known, Stephen is one of the better reasons to come to the Moonlight Club. He spends most nights sitting at the lower bar, sipping whisky, and

telling some of the wildest tales that anyone could ever hear. He has a tremendous sense of humor, and great imagination (despite the booze), and can entertain a group for hours. According to his stories (which very few people believe) Stephen was a Black Marketeer, a Mobster, a terrorist, and has had every type of adventure in the book. Even though his stories can scarcely be believed, he tells them with such great mirth and humor, that they are a joy to listen to in themselves. The actual content of Stephen's history is anybody's guess. Stephen sure as hell won't tell anyone.

The Screaming Silence

Joe Jo

Age: 45

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Militant

Height: 6' Weight: 180lbs

Attributes: Well 1d, Str 2d, Agil 1d, Per 2d, End 2d, Dex 2d, Wit 2d, Will 3d, IQ 3d.

Skills: Law 2d, Leadership 3d, Dodge/Dive 2d, Explosives 2d, H to H 2d, Pistol 2d, Rifle 2d, Stealth 1d, Intimidation 3d, Lockpick 1d, Streetwise 1d, Bur 2d, Deception 3d, Drive 1d.

Exp Abil: Tactical Genius 2d.

Det. Abil: Crippled 2d.

Description: His body is scarred and broken, but his mind below is still strong and alive. He walks with the help of a cane, and never walks far. At his best when sitting down.

Quote: "We must do many things that we despise Gentlemen. Many things that turn our blood. But these things we do we do for the greater good; and in that we shall always be justified."

Despite his funny name, Joe Jo is one of the most feared men in Boston. He is the head of the Boston enclave of the Screaming Silence, one of the most dangerous Silence enclaves in the world. Joe Jo is 45, and has been with the Silence since he was 20. If he had not lost most of his left leg in an car accident, he would still be an active agent; but the lose of his leg forced him into retirement, and into a position of command.

The Moonlight Club is Joe Jo's 'place', and is therefore the major hangout for most of the Screaming Silence operatives in Boston. Joe Jo has no hideout or base of operations, so most of his business is done of the main floor of the Moonlight Club. When a Screaming Silence agent wants to talk to Joe Jo, they come to the Moonlight Club. When Joe Jo wants to talk to someone, he asks them to the Club.

As a terrorist, Joe Jo is ruthless. He has masterminded some of the largest strikes against the Technocracy in the history of the Screaming Silence. He casual regard for the lives of innocents has earned Joe Jo a reputation for brutality and instability. Whatever people think of him though, Joe Jo has shown the ability to achieve results when everyone else has failed.

To those around him, Joe Jo is generous and pleasant. He jokes and laughs, and the evening is always on him. But when it comes to business, Joe's tone changes. He expects results and dislikes excuses. He treats all of his operatives as he treats himself: ruthlessly, with no margin for error. He is a hard man to work for, but all his operatives know that Joe plans his missions well, and would not waste their lives on useless gestures.

Michael Donervich

Age: 29

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Militant

Height: 6'1" Weight: 200 lbs

Attributes: Well 3d, Str 3d, Agil 2d, Per 2d, End 2d, Dex 2d, Wit 2d, Will 2d, IQ
2d

Skills: Etiquette 1d, Dodge/Dive 2d, Explosives 2d, First Aid 1d, H to H 2d, Hvy
Weap. 1d, Melee 1d, Pistol 3d, Rifle 3d, Stealth 1d, Electronics 2d, Intimidation
3d, Mechanics 2d, Streetwise 2d, Bur 1d, Deception 2d, Drive 2d, Running 2d.

Exp. Abil: Feared 1d.

Det. Abil: Sadism 1d

Description: Smooth and charming. Prone to practical jokes that are seldom very funny. It takes the average person about 10 minutes to decide that they despise him.

Quote: "I say we park a truck full of TNT in front of the High School. Hell, when that sucker goes off, everyone will know that we mean business!"

Michael Donervich is Joe Jo's right hand man. Second in command of the Boston Screaming Silence enclave. Michael achieved his position by impressing Joe Jo with his ability and his ruthlessness. Much like his boss, Michael has earned himself a reputation for brutality in his missions. Michael has found that fear is the most effective weapon

that the Screaming Silence has, and he takes pleasure in its use. Some who have accompanied Michael on missions have reported that he often lapses into fits of violence, losing sight of the mission at hand. Despite such reports, Joe Jo has named him his second in command, and gives him plenty of freedom to operate with the city. A freedom that he has not as yet abused.

Michael is not well liked by the other Screaming Silence agents. Where Joe Jo's brutality is balanced by his ability, Michael is viewed as too random and unstable. Being assigned to one of Michael's missions is always considered bad news.

Baxter Blaine

Age: 24

M/M/D: Rebel/Charitable/Pacifist

Height 5' 10" Weight 180lbs

Hero Points: 1

Attributes: Well 3d, Str 2d, Agil 3d, Per 3d, End 2d, Dex 2d, Wit 3d, Will 3d, IQ 2d

Skills: Chemistry 3d, Law 1d, Leadership 1d, Medicine 1d, Physics 1d, Writing 1d, Dodge/Dive 1d, Explosives 3d, H to H 1d, Pistol 1d, Rifle 1d, Mechanics 2d, Drive 1d, Ride Cycle 3d, Sail 1d, Throw 1d.

Exp. Abil: Fearlessness 1d

Det. Abil: Phobia - Spiders 1d

Description: Tall and good looking. Calm and caring. Takes no joy in killing, but knows that what he does he does for right.

Quote: "Evil? No, I wouldn't say I'm that. Sure, I'm no hero, but there's a thousand shades of gray between butcher and patriot. If it were obvious that what we do to be right, everybody would be doing it."

Baxter Blaine, along with Mi Lin, make up one of the most effective teams that the Boston enclave of the Screaming Silence has ever known. They have successfully completed (and survived) numerous of the most dangerous missions that the Screaming Silence has to offer. The pair have become Joe Jo's top agents, and are mostly responsible for the effective reputation the Boston enclave has.

Baxter Blaine has risen to the top of his profession quickly. At the age of 24, Baxter has only been with the Screaming Silence for a little more than three years. He dropped out of collage one summer vacation to team up with Mi Lin and the Screaming Silence. He has been with both ever since.

Despite Baxter's violent profession, he is at heart still a kid from the suburbs. He believes very strongly in the cause that he is fighting for, but often wishes to return the quiet ignorance of the Main Stream Malphoist. He simultaneously loves and hates the system he is fighting against. He longs for the ideal life that Malpho has provided, but know that it cannot last. In the Screaming Silence, Baxter Blaine is very much a man who is doing what he knows he must do, not what he wishes he could do.

Mi Lin

Age: 29

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Militant

Height: 6' Weight: 120lbs

Hero Points: 3

Attributes: Well 3d, Str 2d, Agil 3d, Per 2d, End 2d, Dex 3d, Wit 2d, Will 3d, IQ 3d.

Skills: Acting 2d, Leadership 1d, Dodge/Dive 2d, H to H 2d, Melee 1d, Pistol 2d, Rifle 2d, Stealth 2d, Intimidation 1d, Lockpick 2d, Streetwise 2d, Bur 1d, Deception 1d, Drive 1d, Gymnastics 2d, Play Inst (Sing 40, Piano 20) 3d, Swim 1d.

Exp. Abil: Good Looks 1d

Det. Abil: Mission (Find sister) 1d

Description: Tall and sultry. Classic femme fatal. Her good looks are only matched by her brains. She dedicated and driven. Not stopping until her mission is complete.

Quote: "You may damn me now, but wait until the Malphos kick up their legs, and the technocrats come around for your children. You'll change your tone then, I'm telling you..."

Mi Lin has been a regular performer at the Moonlight Club for about two years. She has sung with some of the most talented musicians to play the speakeasy circuit. She has earned a fair reputation for herself; but in addition to her abilities as a vocalist, Lin is also one Boston's most wanted terrorists. A top agent of the Screaming Silence.

When she was a teenager, Lin's younger sister was kidnapped by the Technocracy. Lin sort out the local Screaming Silence enclave in hopes they could get her sister back. Her sister was never found, but Lin has been with the Screaming Silence ever since.

About three years ago, while hiding out after an attack, Lin met up with Baxter Blaine. They have been together, both professionally and romantically, ever since; and have become one of the most effective teams in the Screaming Silence. In contrast to Baxter, Lin has no love for the system she is fighting against. She finds both the Malphoist and the Technocrats to be abhorrent, and hopes to see them both destroyed before she dies. She believes very strongly in the importance of the Screaming Silence's mission, and justifies its methods by the results that it will produce. If, to topple down the technocracy, innocents have to die, then so be it. The cost in lives and happiness will be far greater if the Screaming Silence fails.

Rowe

Age: 35

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Militant

Height: 6' Weight: 180lbs

Attributes: Well 2d, Str 2d, Agil 3d, Per 2d, End 2d, Dex 3d, Wit 2d, Will 2d, IQ 3d.

Skills: Dodge/Dive 3d, Explosives 2d, H to H 3d, Hvy Weap. 2d, Melee 3d, Pistol 3d, Rifle 3d, Stealth 2d, Track 2d, Electronics 2d, Bur 2d, Climb 1d, Drive 2d, Observation 3d, Ride Cycle 2d, Survival 2d, Swim 1d, Throw 2d.

Exp Abil: Fearlessness 1d

Det Abil: Addiction (Technology) 1d

Description: Strong and silent. Every motion, and every word, are used to their full effect. When he speaks, people listen.

Quote: "Killing is like any profession. The better the tools, the easier the work."

Rowe is a killer. Before joining up with the Screaming Silence, Rowe was a hit man for the local mob. A job he excelled at, never failing to get his target. About a year ago, the mob unknowingly assigned him to hit a technocrat agent. A job he did successfully, but only after a battle that raged across Boston. His target was equipped with some of the more interesting gadgets of the Technocracy, and as soon as Rowe got his hands on the stuff, he was hooked. Technology became like a drug to him. He collected it, hoarded it wherever he could. He started searching out Technocrat agents on his own, and killing them for their equipment. A practice that soon brought him into contact with the Screaming Silence.

Rowe cares nothing for the politics of the Screaming Silence, and everyone around him knows this. Still, Joe Jo is glad to have Rowe, and his abilities, in the group. Rowe working with the Screaming Silence is based simply on one thing: Technology. On any mission that Rowe goes on, he is given first pick of any equipment taken. This is an arrangement that works every well for both parties. The Screaming Silence gets an excellent agent, and Rowe gets more tech than he could ever get on his own.

Jill O'Conner

Age: 18

M/M/D: Rebel/Charitable/Militant

Height: 5'9" Weight: 110lbs

Hero Points: 2

Attributes: Well 2d, Str 2d, Agil 3d, Per 2d, End 2d, Dex 2d, Wit 2d, Will 2d, IQ 2d.

Skills: Leadership 1d, Dodge/Dive 1d, First Aid 1d, H to H 1d, Pistol 1d, Rifle 1d, Lockpick 1d, Bur 2d, Drive 2d, Play Inst(Violin 10) 1d.

Exp. Abil: None

Det. Abil: None

Description: Young and strong. Determined but inexperienced. Has great potential, but little skill.

Quote: "Look, I've got just as much right to be out there fighting and killing for my people. If I spend another night in this damn bar, I'm going to go insane!"

Jill is not really an official Screaming Silence agent. She is 18, and is yet to go out on a mission. Joe Jo has led her to believe that he will send her out more for a laugh than anything else. He doesn't believe she has what it takes. Something that Jill is itching to prove.

Jill was born in San Francisco. Her father was a Screaming Silence agent back in the early days of the organization, but quit when Jill was born. Her family moved to Boston shortly after her birth, and live a quiet Malphoist life. When Jill was ten, her father died of unknown disease. It struck him quickly, killing him in less than 24 hours. One day he was fine, the next he was dead. The doctors had no idea what had killed him, but in the next few years Jill figured it out. All the members of that early Screaming Silence enclave were dying of the same strange disease, and Jill's father had told her enough about the Technocracy that she knew what was going on. She vowed that she would avenge her father death once she was old enough.

Jill really has no special skills. She's never shot a gun or set a bomb. All she has is her hatred for the Technocracy, and pig headed determination. If Joe Jo ever sends her out, she'll show them all...

Mute Martin

Age: 23

M/M/D: Rebel/Charitable/Pacifist

Height: 5'10" Weight: 230lbs

Hero Points: 2

Attributes: Well 1d, Str 2d, Agil 1d, Per 1d, End 1d, Dex 1d, Wit 1d, Will 1d, IQ 1d.

Skills: Pistol 4d, Rifle 5d.

Exp. Abil: Marksmanship 2d

Det. Abil: Slow 2d.

Description: Tall and pudgy, Martin can never find clothes that fit him. He only speaks when spoken to, and usually doesn't understand.

Quote: "One shot. One kill... Definitely. One shot. One Kill..."

Nobody knows what Martin's last name is. Many people have asked him, but he has never told anyone. Martin very seldom tells anybody anything. Martin is not the brightest person in the world. In fact, if the Malphoist allowed the use of the word, Martin would probably be called retarded. However, despite Martin's limited intelligence, he has cut himself quite a notch in the world.

Martin is from West Virginia. Joe Jo went out there specifically to get him. Martin was living with his mother, 6 brothers and sisters, in a rotting shack out in the back country. Usually Joe Jo wouldn't go out the West Virginia for anything, but reports of Martin had made their way all the way to Boston, and Joe Jo had to go see for himself. It seemed that this Martin fellow could shoot, and I mean shoot.

With a rusty old .22, Joe Jo watched Martin literally shoot a fly of a cow's back at 200 yards. Joe Jo brought Martin back from West Virginia, promising to send Martin's mother all the money Martin earned. In the year that Martin has been in Boston, his mother has moved out of her shack into the best house in town.

To say that Martin is a good shot is to totally under value his ability. Martin is probably the best shot any normal person is ever going to see. With the .303 that Joe Jo bought him, Martin can shoot anything, anywhere, anytime. One shot, one kill, no questions asked.

Martin seldom talks to anybody, and when he does, its usually a very simple instruction of need. Wherever he goes he carries his small mahogany case with him. His case with his rifle in it. Martin is very attached to the rifle that Joe Jo bought him, and he gets very irate if anyone touches it. He has practiced assembling and disassembling the weapon so much, that he can do it in five seconds flat. In less than fifteen seconds, Martin can assemble his rifle, load it, kill you, talk the rifle apart, and put it back in the box. And remember: Martin never misses.

Martin is a very useful addition to Joe Jo's team. Martin almost always stays with Joe Jo, unless instructed otherwise. As an assassin, Martin is invaluable to the Screaming Silence.

Dr. William "Shaky" McEyre

Age: 43

M/M/D: Rebel/Charitable/Pacifist

Height: 5'9" Weight: 150lbs

Attributes: Well 2d, Str 2d, Agil 2d, Per 2d, End 2d, Dex 2d, Wit 3d, Will 1d, IQ 3d.

Skills: Biology 2d, Chemistry 2d, Etiquette 1d, Linguistics 1d, Leadership 1d, Medicine 3d, Social Sci 1d, First Aid 3d, Pistol 1d, Stree-wise 1d, Bur 2d, Drive 1d, Observation 1d.

Exp Abil: Popularity 1d

Det. Abil: Alcoholism 1d

Description: Pleasant and well meaning. Judges himself far to harshly, and never lets himself forget a mistake. Always kind to those he deems nice people.

Quote: “Was in 1 cc’s, or 2 cc’s of Cortisone? God, I’m getting to old for this.”

Shaky is a doctor. Despite his nickname, he is a competent doctor with plenty of experience and training. He no longer holds a license with the People’s Government because he was a little to prone to the drink.

Five years ago, Shaky had a few to many drinks, and screwed up a routine operation. He was barred by the government from practicing medicine, and slumped into a drunken nothingness. Jo Joe, who is always looking for doctors, offered him a position practicing underground medicine, as long as he stayed sober. Shaky jumped at the chance, and for the last five years he's been practicing medicine for the Screaming Silence, and has stayed sober.

Apart from patching up injured terrorists, Shaky is a GP for some of the local Bostonians. Government hospitals and doctors are always over crowded and over worked. Shaky has become a nice alternative to standing in line for many people. Doing this has built Shaky a strong bond with the local people. Shaky looks out for the locals, and the locals look out for Shaky.

Shaky’s practice is only a few blocks away from the Moonlight Club, and he often goes there to eat. He is not a regular club goer, however.

Mobsters

The Mob has a hefty stake in the Moonlight Club. The local mob boss: “Six Card” Stallone, likes the place, and spends a lot of time there. Mobsters and Terrorists are not known to get along very well, and some nights things can get a little hairy. Of course, to the customers, this is what is known as “atmosphere”.

“Six Card” Stallone

Age: 41

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Militant

Height: 5’10” Weight: 180lbs

Attributes: Well 2d, Str 2d, Agil 2d, Per 2d, End 2d, Dex 2d, Wit 2d, Will 2d, IQ 2d

Skills: Law 1d, Leadership 1d, Dodge/Dive 1d, H to H 2d, Pistol 3d, Rifle 2d, Finance 2d, Gambling 3d, Intimidation 3d, Streetwise 3d, Bur 2d, Deception 3d, Drive 2d, Ride Cycle 1d.

Exp. Abil: Power (Mob) 1d

Det. Abil: Unlikable 1d.

Description: Genuinely an unpleasant man. Very few redeeming qualities (except for his tailor). Prone to fits of bravado.

Quote: “Hay! Who do I look like? Some chump? Why don’t you just shut the %#&@ up! Okay?”

The Boston Mob is much like any other mob. A little more successful perhaps, a little more overt, but all together much like any mob. Mob bosses often change every five or ten months, and Boston is no different in this fact. Six Card just happens to be the flavor of the season.

For the few months that Six Card has been in control, organized crime in Boston has been floundering. Hits are down, Bribes are down, Extortion is down, prostitution is up (but hey, prostitution is always up), and booze is down. The mob is full of unhappy ruthless blood thirsty killers, and there is one person that they all blame: Six Card. As you can probably guess, Six Card is a very nervous man.

The Mob scene in Boston is rip for a revolution, and Six Card knows this. He is in the process of rounding up as much support as he can before the big hit comes; and unless things change drastically in the next few weeks, Six Card is in trouble. Six Card is almost desperate enough to ask Joe Jo and the Screaming Silence for help. Six Card knows that they have enough weapons and bombs to put an end to any kind of

revolution, but there is little reason that Joe Jo would get caught up in Gang War. If he could only find a reason, maybe he could save his skin...

Until then, however, Six Card and his boys spend a lot of time at the Moonlight Club. All mobsters in town have agreed that the Moonlight Club is neutral ground, and no fighting takes place there. But once outside of the Moonlight Club, the game begins again.

“Dice” Barokov

Age: 32

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Militant

Height: 6’1” Weight: 200lbs

Attributes: Well 2d, Str 3d, Agil 2d, Per 2d, End 2d, Dex 2d, Wit 2d, Will 2d, IQ 3d.

Skills: Law 1d, Leadership 2d, Dodge/Dive 2d, Explosive 1d, H to H 2d, Melee 2d, Pistol 3d, Rifle 3d, Gambling 2d, Intimidation 3d, Streetwise 2d, Bur 2d, Deception 2d, Drive 2d, Ride Cycle 2d.

Exp. Abil: Charm 1d

Det. Abil: Sadism 1d

Description: Slick and vicious. Would be just as happy to tear your arm off as talk to you. Always smoking a fat cigar.

Quote: “You just drew to an inside straight, asshole.”

Dice is Six Card’s most powerful competitor. If any attempt on Six Card takes place, it will probably be Dice who masterminds it.

Dice has been waiting for Six Card to slip. He knew that Six Card didn't have what it take to run the mob, and has been waiting for the right moment to strike. Now that most of the mobsters in the city are turning against Six Card, Dice sees his chance. He is ready to take Six Card’s place, and is only waiting for the perfect moment. Dice has Six Card out manned and out gunned.

Of late, Dice has taken to hanging out in the Moonlight Club, as kind of a torture to Six Card. With the Moonlight Club being neutral ground, Dice can sit feet away from his enemy and gloat. Dice is hoping to drive Six Card crazy, but that's just a wild hope.

“No Problems”

Age: 34

M/M/D: Rebel/Selfish/Pacifist

Height: 5'6" Weight: 180lbs

Attributes: Well 1d, Str 1d, Agil 2d, Per 2d, End 1d, Dex 2d, Wit 3d, Will 2d, IQ 3d.

Skills: Economics 2d, Law 2d, Dodge/Dive 2d, Pistol 1d, Finance 4d, Gambling 2d, Streetwise 4d, Bur 3d, Deception 3d, Drive 2d.

Exp. Abil: Connections (Black Market) 1d, Wealth 1d.

Det. Abil: Criminal Record 1d, Greed 1d.

Description: Fast talking business man. Terrible taste in clothes.

Quote: “Hay! What do I look like? A vending machine?”

Named after his favorite saying, No Problems, aka Walter Heart, is the most efficient Black Marketeer in town. He is not really a mobster, but spends most of his time with them. He reportedly can get you anything, anywhere, anytime. While this maybe exaggerated, he is a most useful person to know in Boston. Want two tons of powder white bathroom tissue? Tomorrow? No problems.

The Business 2.0: The Adventure.

(This section should only be read by a GM who is planning to run this adventure. If you are a player, stop reading here! Reading on will only spoil the adventure for yourself and the other players.)

The Business is a sample adventure set in the world of the Screaming Silence. Those of you who have already read the first three narrative sections of **The Business**

will already know the background to this adventure. For those of you who haven't, a little recap:

A few weeks ago, Screaming Silence agents working out of Texas hit the Controlled Media center down in Houston. They managed to liberate three books which had been written before the Silent Revolution. Two of the three books were almost immediately recaptured by the authorities in Houston, but one managed to slip through their fingers and all the way to Connecticut. There, the book was eventually captured by the police, but no before the Boston enclave of the Screaming Silence had become aware of its existence.

One of the top agents of the Boston enclave of the Screaming Silence was a traitor. Many of their missions were getting ratted out before they were even implemented; but no one had an idea of who. In an attempt to discover this traitor, Joe Jo, the leader of Boston enclave, decided to send all of his best agents out after the book. Knowing that the mission would fail, he hoped the traitor would play his hand, and reveal his identity. As things turned out, Joe Jo was not disappointed: The traitor was uncovered, but the book slipped through the fingers of the Screaming Silence. Now the top Screaming Silence agents in Boston must race after the book and retrieve it from the grasp of their Malphoist oppressors, or else it will vanish from the view of the common man for another 200 years.

The narrative sections of this adventure were written from the point of view of the Baxter Blaine and Mi Lin. You are welcome to use these characters if you wish, but your players will most probably have their own characters that they will wish to run. Feel free to give your players an abridged version of the story from the point of view of their characters; or go ahead and roleplaying the whole thing out for yourselves (your players can't screw things up much worse than Baxter and Lin).

Once you have your cast of characters straight, its time to get down to the adventure. Remember: It is best to read everything over completely before running the adventure.

2.1: *The Airport.*

The convoy that is actually carrying the controlled book took a different route into Boston, and is at the airport before the players will be able to do anything about it. Once the convoy has reached the airport, it comes under the guard of the airports turreted machine-guns, and a platoon of the People's Army's best. Any assault on the airport by the players would be complete suicide on their part, and you should do everything but tell them so. They players will have to be a little cleverer than going in with guns blazing.

The convoy will stay at the airport until dawn (about 4 hours after it gets there), at which time the book will be loaded onto a DC-9. The plane will take off about an hour after dawn and make its way to Greenland. (Why is the book going to Greenland and not Houston? The Houston controlled Media bank is being closed down. All the books are being moved to the one in Greenland. So there.) This leaves a few options open to the players:

1. The players have four hours to come up with a clever plan to get them close to the book (dress up as ground crew, start a fire and get the convoy guards to help, etc). Unless one of these plans is amazingly clever, they should probably fail at this point. The soldiers are on their best behavior, and won't let anyone close to the book. Let the players try though, and don't punish them too hard for failure.

2. Once the book has been put on the plane, it will sit out there for about an hour. The guard around it at this point will be much less, and if the players **must** make a direct assault, this would be their best time. Again, remember the turreted machine-guns and the platoon of crack troopers about 200 yards away. Also, the plane will try and take off as soon as any trouble starts.

3. If the players are sneaky, they might try and sneak aboard the plane. This can probably be achieved through the use of good disguises and plenty of bluff rolls. Remember: The insides of a DC-9 isn't very large, and there are two guards on the inside of the plane. So walking up and jumping in the back isn't going to work! Of course, if the players figure out a way to get in the plane, they still have to figure out away to get out of it with the book. If they start a fire fight while the plane is on the ground, they won't last two minutes.

4. If the players get desperate, they might try and take the plane out. While there are plenty of .50 calibers around that would make short work of the plane, the players should ask themselves what this will get them. If they destroy the book, their doing no one a favor; and if the plane gets grounded, the book is going to stay at the airport.

Whatever the players come up with, the plane will probably leave the ground with the book aboard. If the players are lucky, they might have someone aboard. If not, their going to have to think fast. There are plenty of planes around the airport that the players can steal without too much trouble. A pilot, though, will be a little harder to find. Hopefully one of the players will have pilot skill. If not, they might be in a little trouble...

2.2: The DC-9. Boston to Hebron, the Refueling Station.

Once the DC-9 is in the air, there will only be two guards, two pilots, and ten thousand feet between the players and the book. If the players have managed to get someone aboard the plane, they will be in good shape, but far from home free. The guards both have Thompson submachine-guns, and the two pilots have .38's. The cabin of the DC-9 isn't pressurized, so shooting off firearms won't be that big of a deal. The cargo hold, however, isn't that large, so swinging a SMG might be a little cumbersome. All the better for the players, probably.

If the players failed to get anyone aboard the DC-9, but have managed to give chase in their own plane, they might try an in air hijacking. While this will be close to impossible, it would make for some breathtaking action. If the players try this, give them the benefit of the doubt. Its only a roleplaying game after all.

Even if the players do manage to neutralize the guards, and get their hands on the book, their troubles have just begun. The pilots, at the first sign of trouble, will radio for jet fighter escort; and if things really start going bad, they will start ejecting the fuel.

The jet fighters will arrive after about 15 minutes, and will automatically destroy any other planes near the DC-9. They will radio the DC-9 and ask for the code word. If the code word is not supplied they will destroy the DC-9 also. If the code word is given, they will ask for father instruction, then return home.

If the pilots start ejecting the fuel, it will take about 20 rounds before all the fuel is gone. Any player getting to the controls before then will have to make an IQ-Pilot roll vs. 8 to switch the fuel drain off. If the plane loses more than 5 rounds of fuel, it will be unable to make it to Hebron, New Foundland, the refueling station. If the plane loses more than 15 rounds of fuel, it will be sketchy if the plane will be able to make it anywhere at all.

There are parachutes aboard the DC-9, so if the players get the book they can jump for it. The problem is that most of the flight is over water, and the rest is over New Foundland. If the players jumps from the plane, no guessing where they will land.

If the players fail to get the book at this point. The plane will continue on to its refueling stop in Hebron, New Foundland.

2.3: Hebron. The Refueling Stop.

If the DC-9 makes it through the first leg of its flight, it will land in Hebron, New Foundland for refueling. Hebron is far from a miliary installation, and its airport is a frozen stretch of asphalt just outside of the fishing town. If the players have been

following the DC-9 in their own plane, the refueling stop may be an advantageous time to make their assault.

The plane will set down on the runway, taxi to the end of it, a fuel truck will roll up next to it, and start filling the planes fuel tanks. No one will get off or on the plane, and as soon as the plane is refueled it will turn around and take off. The ground crew at Hebron have no idea what is aboard the plane, and the occupants of the plane are taking no chances. The DC-9 has taken the most direct route between Boston and Hebron, so unless the players have stolen a jet fighter (no, and I mean no...) they won't get to Hebron before the DC-9. The players will have to set down behind the DC-9 and make their attack.

The Hebron airport has little to no defenses. There is a twin .50 machine-gun on the balcony of the control tower, but it is frozen solid and would take a good half hour to get it in working order. The ground crew is unarmed, and will run for their lives at the first sign of trouble. The players major problems will be fuel truck, and keeping the plane on the ground.

The fuel truck is the standard Hollywood, explodes if someone kicks the tire, type. If the players start firing weapons wildly around it, it will go up and take the plane with it. They players can try and take the tanker out before it reaches the plane, but they would have to land right on the DC-9's tail. The players will have to be careful, and that's that.

If the pilots of the plane expect no trouble, they will land the plane and turn the engines off while they refuel. If, however, they know that their is a plane following them, or an attempt was made on them during flight, they will keep the plane turning over while they refuel. If the engines are off and fighting starts, it will take the pilots a good 5 turns to get them going. If the engines are going, the pilots will release the brakes and try to make an emergency take off (leaving the fuel truck pouring fuel over the runway, no doubt). Of course, if the players have landed their plane on the runway, the DC-9 isn't going to get very far. Even if the plane does get off the ground, they won't have enough fuel to get anywhere; but the pilots orders are to keep the book out of the players hands at all costs. Even at the cost of destroying the book and plane.

If the players manage to get the book. They better have to make a quick escape (remember, their plane is almost out of fuel too). The local troops from the Hebron will be at the airport within 10 minutes (if will take a good 15 minutes to fuel their plane), and they'll have machine-guns, bazookas, and a tank. If the players are still on the runway at that time, they're in a world of hurt.

2.4: DC-9. Hebron to Greenland.

If the DC-9 makes it off the runway at Hebron, the players will have to hit the plane before it reaches Greenland. Once the plane lands in Holsteinborg Greenland, the book will be rushed off into the controlled media vaults, and far beyond the reach of the players. The flight to Greenland will be the players last change to get the book.

Weather will get increasingly bad as the DC-9 flies north from Hebron. An in-air hijacking will be impossible on this leg of the flight, as the wind and snow buffet the planes. The players only chance is to use their weapons to disable the DC-9, and force it to make a emergency landing in the snow. This will be easily achieved with large enough of a weapon (like the twin .50 calibre from the Hebron airport), and if the DC-9 loses one of its engines, it will have to ditch. Of course, the problem that faces the players is how to land their plane in the snow without killing themselves, and then how to take off again. Neither the players plane, or the DC-9 are fitted for landing in the snow, so a lot of praying maybe the players best bet for survival.

If the players manage to land safely, retrieving the book won't be much of a hassle. The guards and pilots are far to shaken to put up much of a defense, and the players can pretty much climb into the plane and take what they want. Getting the book out of the snowy wasteland will be quite a trick, however. Even if the player's plane survived the landing (not much chance), they won't be able to take off until the storm blows over. By that time, their plane will be buried under ten feet of snow.

2.5: The Book.

If the players ever actually get the book in their hands, their probably in some serious trouble. Either they're buried up to their heads in arctic snow, fighting with Hebron Troopers in the snowy wastes of New Foundland, floating in the atlantic ocean, in a plane that is about to run out of fuel, or being buzzed by jet interceptors. Whatever way you look at it, the players are in deep doodoo.

So as the players stare into the deep dark maw of death, they may turn a little introspective. They will no doubt wonder what it is that they are just about to die for, and they will want to look at the book. The book itself is held within a large steel folder like contraption, with a large latch on its front. If a player shakes the steel folder, they can hear the book rattling around inside. The latch on the front of the folder does not, in fact, open the folder. It is welded closed and would require a blow torch to open. What the latch actually does is activate a homing beacon so the Malphoists can find the book if lost (that's how they found the three books so quickly in the first place). The homing beacon is far to weak to be detected by Malphoist technology unless it is set off inside a city, but the beacon is strong enough to register on the equipment of the Technocracy.

Through ignorance and poor design, the homing beacon of the steel folder broadcasts across many frequencies, including that of the Technocrat emergency channel. If the players turn the latch on the steel folder, it will register as a call for help on the radios of the Technocracy, and an Av will be dispatched to investigate. It doesn't matter where the players are, the Technocrat's equipment will detect it. An Av will reach them within 10 minutes of the activation of the beacon. This may be useful to the players in many ways:

1. If the players are being dogged by jets, and a Av shows up on the scene, things will get explosive. The jets are under orders to destroy any other planes surrounding the DC-9, and will move to attack the Av. The Av will take measures to defend itself and blast the jet fighters out of the air.

2. If the players are being attacked by Hebron Troopers, the appearance of a Av will shake things up. The Troopers, not knowing any better, will turn their weapons against the Av. The Av will create enough of a stink to send the Hebron Troopers running for their lives.

3. If the players are stranded in the arctic circle, or floating in the Atlantic Ocean, the Av will show up and bail them out. Unless the players do something stupid like fire on them, the Av will take the players aboard.

Of course, the involvement of the Technocracy has its good points and its bad points. The Av will pretty much bail the players out of whatever trouble they have gotten themselves into, but once things have calmed down, the Shock Troopers aboard the Av are going to want to know what the players are up to. They will want to know who the players are, what they were doing, why those people were after them (or why they were stranded), and how and why they were broadcasting on that frequency. If the players can come up with a story that doesn't mention a. The Screaming Silence, b. The book, or c. the Malphoists, the Technocrats will let the players go. Otherwise the Technocrats will confiscate the book and its folder, and take the players into custody for further questioning. If the players attack the Technocrats, the Technocrats will wipe them off the map. No questions asked.

2.6: *Ice Base Friedman.*

It's pretty much assured that players will be taken into custody by the Technocrats. A neural suppressor will be attached to their foreheads, and they will fall unconscious. They will awake some time later in a dark unfurnished room, with a single door set into one wall. There is no doubt that this is a prison cell, and there is no means

of escape for the players. After sufficient time has passed for despair to set in, a disembodied voice fills the room.

“Who are you? What were you doing (wherever the players were found)? Why did you have such a device on your person? etc.”

The voice will ask a full barrage of questions, and will always know if the players are lying. The voice will keep asking questions until all of the story so far has been revealed. It will then disappear as quickly as it emerged.

After another long wait, the door swings open. A couple of fully armed Shock Troopers enter into the cell and escort the players out. They are lead through the corridors of what seems to be a Technocrat base. Describe the pleasant decor, and the computer panels mounted flush to the walls. As they round a corner, a hovering steel ball almost whacks one of the players in the head. It beeps loudly, then flies up beyond their reach.

The troopers lead the players to an elevator. Climbing in, one of the troopers pushes the button for the sixth floor, and the elevator starts to rise. The doors will open on a plushly decorated office with a panoramic view of the arctic ice caps. The troopers will push the players out into the office, and remain behind in the elevator. Behind the large desk at the center of the room is an aging man in a business suit. He looks up from his computer panel and addresses the players.

“Well, hello there. I am Junior Vice President Styke. You must be the mundanes who were broadcasting on our emergency channel. As I hear, you’ve caused us quite a bit of trouble. Care to explain yourselves?”

VP Styke will listen attentively to anything that the players have to say. He will answer any questions that they wish to ask. If the players try anything funny, the elevator doors will swing open, and the troopers will come in shooting. Below are VP Styke’s answers to some commonly asked questions:

Are you with the Technocracy? (Or any such stupid question).

“Yes, I believe that’s what you people call us. Technocracy, really.”

Where are we?

“You are at Ice Base Friedman.”

What is this base for?

“Our mission is peaceful monitoring of the mundane air waves. Our equipment can pickup radio and television transmissions from all over Northern America.”

Which Corporation does this base belong to?

“We are a inter-corporation project. We have employees from all three Corporations here. The service we provide is universally useful.”

Are there many of these bases?

“Oh, one or two.”

Who are the mundanes?

“Oh, that is a slang term we use to refer to the Malphoist world. Not very flattering I’m afraid...”

Are you in charge here?

“Yes, I run this base.”

Your men attacked the Hebron Troopers (Jet Fighters), who’s side are you on?

“My dear boy (girl), we’re on no one’s side but our own.”

Where’s our book?

“Oh yes, your book. We have it down in a lab at the moment. X-rays and all that. Interesting device that holder. The extent you mudanes will go to stop the spread of information.”

What are you going to do with us?

“Arh. Well, that’s rather complicated. You see, we’re a very secretive bunch, and we can’t have mundanes just wandering around telling all their friends about us. And besides, you Screaming Silence people might get it into your heads to come back here and try to blow us up or something. Foolish notion. Anyway, we’ll have to brain wipe you before you leave. Don’t worry it won’t hurt, and we’ll only remove your memories from after we picked you up. You won’t remember any of this. We’ll drop you a few miles outside of... err... What city did you say you were from?”

What if we refuse?

“Oh please, don’t make me play the villain. I’m not very good at it at all.”

Can we have our book back?

“Err, no. I’m afraid the upper ups will want to take a look at it. Sorry.”

This conversation can go on for as long as you think that its interesting. VP Styke will not discuss Technocrat politics with the players, stating that he just a **Junior** Vice President, and doesn't know anything about that. All through this conversation, however, something is going on behind VP Styke’s back (literally). Styke’s back is turned to the panoramic view of ice caps. The players are facing Styke, and therefore have a perfect view out. As the above conversation begins, a small speck can be made out on the horizon. As the conversation continues, the players will slowly be able to make the speck out. It seems to be a jet fighter coming towards Ice Base Friedman at a low altitude. As the conversation is winding to a close, it is obvious that the plane is on an attack run. If the players mention it to VP Styke, he will at first be annoyed that the players are interrupting him, then he will turn around and watch the plane with interest.

“Oh dear.” He will say as the plane releases two belly mounted bombs, and quickly pulls out of its dive. The bombs will strike the Ice Base two floors bellow VP Styke’s office, but it will be sufficient to completely total the office.

2.7: The Attack.

Smart players will take this opportunity to make a quick escape. VP Styke will be knocked out from the blast, and buried under a pile of rubble. The two troopers in the elevator will fall victim to an oversight in the base’s security system: The automated systems will call a red alert as soon as the bombs strike the base. During a red alert, the elevator is taken out of operation, and automatically sent to the basement. So by the time the troopers have recovered from the explosion, they are on their way to basement of Ice Base Friedman.

For the players, there is both good news and bad news: With VP Styke and the two troopers out of the way they are free to run around the base on their own. However, the only obvious escape from Styke’s office is by the elevator, and that has just closed down.

There are stairs hidden behind one of the walls. But to open the wall, one of the players would have to know how to use the computer. Unless the players have a very good reason for knowing how to do this, they won’t be able to in the time allotted.

The doors to the elevator, on the other hand, can be opened with a bit of brute force. The problem is: No elevator. The players will, however, see something coming up the elevator shaft. A few turns after the bombs struck the base, the defense systems engaged, and the computers decided to employ the base's ion cannon. The ion cannon, which rises to firing position through the elevator shaft (this is why the elevator is taken off line), is now rising up towards the players. Unless the players have any other bright ideas, this is their only way out.

Jumping down onto the ion cannon before it passed the player's floor is easy enough to do. The ion cannon is kept in a solid steel casing, and the players will land on this. When the cannon reaches the roof, however, things will get a little hairy. As the ion cannon emerges into the open air, the casing will fall back (along with the players), and the ion projector will telescope into position.

The players will have to make a Agil-Gymnastics roll vs. 7 to hang onto the casing as it opens. The cannon will then go through a series of sudden turns as it tries to get the jet fighters in its sights. The players will have to roll Str-Climbing vs. 7 to hang on while the cannon makes these turns. If the players make these rolls, the cannon will fire three times, destroy three fighters, then close its case and start back down the elevator shaft. If any of the players fail their rolls, they will be thrown loose of the cannon and on to the ice roof of the base. They can make one last Agil-Climbing roll vs. 9 to stop themselves from falling off the edge of the base. If they fail, it's a 3 story drop into softly packed snow. They won't be hurt, but they'll be stranded outside of Ice Base Friedman, dressed only in their Screaming Silence leathers.

Those that don't fall, can ride the ion cannon back down to the basement. If the players are still in Styke's office, they can jump on the ion cannon as it makes its way down. Though the players won't know it, both the security system and Technocrats won't have any idea where the players are. For a little while at least, the players are one step ahead of the game.

If the players stay in the office, they will be in trouble. 5 minutes after the ion cannon returns to the basement, an elevator full of shock troopers and technicians will come to Styke's office. The players will be captured, returned to their cell, and their memories wiped of the last day or so. They will wake up in a field a few miles outside of Boston, scratching their heads in confusion.

If the players get it into their head to take Styke with them on their escape attempt, tell them it's impossible. He's trapped under some rubble, and it would take more time than the players have to dig him out.

Once the cannon reaches the basement, it will move along a Mag-Lev track to its storage unit. There is a door to the storage unit which can be easily opened by the

players. It leads out into a service corridor lined with other doors that lead to other storage units. As the players exit their storage unit, they will see two technicians walking towards them. The technicians will be as surprised to see the players as the players will be to see the technicians. The technicians are un-armed, un-armored, and have no experience in hand to hand combat. They will try to get away from the players and raise the alarm.

After the players have dealt with the technicians, they can follow the service corridor until it opens into the supply room. Inside the supply room the players can get all sorts of supplies and equipment (warm clothes, camping gear, radios). All of it is at the Technocrat technology level, so the players will probably have a field day.

Off to one side of the supply room is a door marked **Weapons Locker**. It is locked, and requires a passcard and hand print to open. The technicians have passcards that will open the locker; and if they are unconscious, they will have no objection to giving their hand print. Inside the locker are five auto carbines and ammo. Oooo...

2.8: The Hanger.

The only exit from the storeroom (other than the service corridor) is a staircase leading up. If the players follow this, it will lead them up to the hanger bay of Ice Base Friedman. Sitting in the hanger are two Av's, and four Hover Skippers. There are three mechanics on the hanger floor, and two troopers. The control room can be seen through a large plexi-glass window at the far end of the hanger, and three or four controllers can be seen in there. Even if the players think they can take care of the troopers and mechanics, any escape plan will be hindered by the fact that the hanger doors are presently closed.

At this point, the players will have to make a decision: Are they going to try and escape, or do they want to venture into the depths of Ice Base Friedman in search of the book they have fought so valiantly to retrieve? This section will detail what will happen if the players just decide to make a run for it (or make a run for it after they get the book).

The two troopers are armed with auto carbines, and the mechanics are unarmed. If the players start a fire fight, the troopers will dive for cover, and the mechanics will run for their lives. The controllers in the control room will almost instantly sound the alarm and call for backup. They will drop the blast shield in front of their window to protect them from weapons fire. The players will have little time to act.

The players have twenty rounds to dispatch the troopers and make their escape before backup shows up. After the blast shield is down, it will be impossible for the players to get to the control room. There is an emergency override switch to the hanger doors, but it will require a IQ-Mechanics roll vs. 8 for any of the characters to figure out the controls. As for the vehicles, the players will find that they are unable to get into

Av's (not that they could fly one, anyway). None of the technician's, mechanic's, or guard's passcards will open them. The Hover Skippers, however, can be activated by any of the passcards. The Hover Skipper's controls are almost exactly like those of a normal motorcycle, so a roll of IQ-Ride Cycle vs. 6 will get the things going.

If the players are still in the hanger after the twenty rounds, they are in deep trouble. The troopers will show up with a tripod mounted rail cannon, and demand the player's surrender. If the players refuse, they will open up on the players. There's little chance that they'll come out of a fight with a rail cannon alive.

The players can try to fool the controllers, but there is no way they are getting out of the hanger without a fight. The controllers will refuse to raise the hanger door (even if they buy the players story) under any circumstances. The base is still considered to be under attack, and opening the hanger would be a big mistake.

2.9: *In Search of the Book.*

If the players decide to go look for the book, they won't run into much trouble. As long as they wear appropriate disguises, they will be free to wander around the base. VP Styke's office has not yet been cleaned out enough for anyone to realize that the players are missing. If they're quick, they may be able to get out of the base before the alarm is raised.

Finding the laboratories is an easy task. The corridors of Ice Base Friedman are well indexed. No one will pay any attention to the players as long as they do nothing stupid. The Technocrats are very busy at various tasks, and many are running up and down the corridors. The top three floors of the base have suffered heavy damage, and there are casualties to be taken care of.

Once the players reach the laboratories, they will find that they are unable to get into any of them. A passcard and hand print are required to get into any of the laboratories, and the players are fresh out of both. There are windows into each of the labs so the players will have no trouble finding the particular lab with their book inside it. Laying on the bench they can see that the steel case has been cut open, and the pages of the book can just be seen inside it. All the players have to do is get inside and take it.

To get a passcard and print, the players would have to ambush a technocrat. Attacking a passing technocrat would have to be done very discreetly, and then there is very little chance that the particular technocrat has access rights to the labs. Weapons fire will have little effect other than to bring troopers down upon the players heads. The players only hope lies in one of the round beeping hovering droids that the players ran into while being taken to see VP Styke. At the top of the door there is an opening through

which one of these floating droids can enter the room. The opening is too small for a human to climb through, but if the players are smart, they can use it to their advantage.

As the players are trying to find a way into the room, one of these droids floats along and enters into the room, it picks something up in a gripper that emerges from its underside, and flies out again. The droid is an errand droid, it runs around doing things for the Technocrats. It is not sentient, but its function requires it to be intuitive. Therefore, if the players mess with the droid's environment, it will try to do its job in the best way that it can. i.e. Say the droid goes into the room and the players block its exit behind it. When the droid returns to leave, it will find its exit blocked. Since the door can be opened from the lab side without a passcard, the droid will simply use its gripper to open the door and let itself out. Thereby letting the players in. It may take the players awhile, but they should come up with something similar. Give them time, and be kind to their ideas.

Once the players are in the lab, they can grab the book and go. There is nothing else in the lab that would be any use to the players, or even anything they could remotely understand. If they want to look around, great, but don't spend a lot of time describing things. All that is left for the players to do now is get out of Ice Base Friedman. See section 2.8 for details on that.

If the players get captured. Styke will not be so civil with them. He will go through with his plan to brain wipe the players, and will drop them off outside Boston. They will have no memory of what has happened to them.

2.10: *The Snowy Wastes.*

So the players have made it out of Ice Base Friedman. They have (or don't have) the book, and are making a run for their lives on a few Hover Skippers. Best of luck, because the two Av's are right behind them. You can stretch or shrink this section as you see fit. Gauge if your players really want another action scene.

Once the players are out of the hanger, the Av's will come after them. The players will have the advantage that the Hover Skippers can stay close to the ground, and if the Av's get too low, they'll kick up a cloud of snow. But then again, all the Av's weapon pod needs is one clear shot and the players are history.

Run the chase to the point where the players think that they've had it, then tell them they hear the sound of cannon fire in the distance. The Av's will suddenly pull away from their chase and head back to the ice base. Leaving the players to escape.

What's going on? What was the cannon fire (and who were the jets for that matter)? Well, it seems by some lucky chance, the Malphoists actually picked up their

home beacon all the way up in the arctic circle. Thinking that the ice base is a secret Screaming Silence base, they called in an air strike and sent up a couple of destroyers to take the place out. Ice Base Friedman, being only a few miles from the ice's edge, is within range of the destroyers' guns. The ice base had to call back its Av's to defend it from the attack. Lucky brake for the players, bad brake for the sailors. As the players crest a nearby snow mound, the sound of the ion cannon punching a hole in the side of a battleship can just be heard.

2.11: *The Rescue.*

The players will be left a million miles from anywhere. The Hover Skippers will quickly run out of fuel, and the players will be stranded in the ice once more. Luckily for the players, as the last destroyer went down, it broadcast a distress signal on the mundane emergency channel. By the time the players reach water, every boat in Greenland and Northern Canada will be on its way to save the sailors of the two destroyers. The players will be saved by a civilian boat, and taken back, along with a lot of cold sailors, to civilization. As long as the players have discarded their autocarabines and Hover Skippers, things should be so hectic that very few questions will be asked about the players. It will be easy for them to slip away from the rescue effort, and catch a plane back to Boston. If the players try to take back their technocrat equipment, however, things might get a little sticky.

2.12: *The Moonlight Club, Once Again.*

If the players make it out of Ice Base Friedman, they should be able to make it back to the Moonlight Club. If the players return with book in hand, they will be hailed as the conquering heros. Everyone will want to hear their tale. If the come back without the book, their reception will be somewhat cooler. Joe Jo quite possibly might reevaluate the players position as his top agents.

Whatever the result, now is the time to give your players their experience. Apart from the usual 1 Hero point per game session, refer to the following chart for Hero Point guidelines.

Experience

| | |
|----------------|---|
| 1 Hero Point - | For a clever plan at the airport, or a successful in air hijacking. |
| | (No hero points for attacking the plane in Hebron, or after.) |

- 1 Hero Point - Solving the problem of the errand droid without prompting from the GM.
- 1 Hero Point - For escaping from Ice Base Friedman with the book.
- 1 Hero Point. - For exceptional Roleplaying.

2.13: Recital of the Text.

Oh. After all of that, you'd probably like to know what book it was that the players were fighting for. Well, read on:

Baxter Blaine sat down at his usual table and rubbed the soreness in his arm. Lin kissed him softly on the cheek and took the seat beside him. The house lights slowly faded, as a spot light focused on the stage. The young skinny poet moved to the enter of the stage, and pushed his stool into position. He sat down, moved his microphone, and coughed slightly. The standing room only audience fell silent as the young poet removed the ancient book from its protective covering. All ears and eyes turned towards the stage as the young man's hands cracked to book.

That Sam-I-am

He said in deep solemn voice. The audience rumbled with approval. He gestured the audience to silence.

*That Sam-I-am
I do not like
That Sam-I-am.*

The audience burst into spontaneous applause. For almost two minutes, the poet couldn't continue.

*Do you like
Green Eggs and Ham?*

*I do not like them
Sam-I-am
I do not like
Green Eggs and Ham.*

The poets voice was one of deadly earnest. The audience listen intently.

*Would you like them
here and there?*

*I would not like them
here or there*

*I would not like them
anywhere*

I do not like Green Eggs and Ham

I do not like them

Sam-I-am.

All ears listened as the poet continued through the volume. Their attention hanging on his every word.

Chapter 7 - The Job of the GameMaster.

By far the hardest job in any Roleplaying Game is that of the GameMaster. He is responsible for the construction of a game, keeping a game running, holding the players attention, and basically being entertaining. The quality of a Roleplaying Game often pivots on the quality of the GM.

Luckily, to balance out the work required for a GM, is a Roleplaying experience beyond that of anything a player can receive. While players have total control over the actions of their characters, and generally experience the abandonment attached with make-believe; the GM has control of the whole course of the world she has created, and can take her stories wherever she sees fit.

However, to create an effective Roleplaying session often takes more talents than most GM's possess. The GM must be a Storyteller, an Actor, a Reporter, a Mathematician, a Psychologist, a Weapons Smith, a Scientist, an Occultist, a Scholar, and half a dozen individual personalities all at the same time. Most of us excel in one or two of these categories, but fall short in the rest. This is to be expected- after all, we're only human -none of us can do everything at once. Below are some tips, specific to **The Screaming Silence Roleplaying Game**, and otherwise, that will hopefully help out prospective GM's, and fill in the holes that we all have in our talents.

The Screaming Silence. Fact vs. Feel.

From reading all of the information in Chapter 5, you should have a pretty good idea about the world of the Screaming Silence. All the facts are there. All the history, and all details. But what does this tell you about running a game set in the world of the Screaming Silence? In the end, probably very little.

As a GM, you have to impart to your players something more than the facts and figures of the Screaming Silence. Facts and figures are important, of course, but a roleplaying game is more than the sum of its parts. There is a feeling that must be transmitted with the facts, and that is what you as a GM must try to deliver as you run your game.

What is the feel that should be imparted while playing Screaming Silence? While every GM will have their own take on this, there are some things that sit at the heart of game. Amongst the strongest of these is the Gothic feel to the setting.

Gothic? You ask. Isn't that Dracula, Witches, and gargoyles? Dilapidated castles lit by the flash of a lighting bolt? And all that scary stuff we only think about around Halloween?

Well, yes, while this is all part of the Gothic genre, there is far more to it than that. The cities of the Screaming Silence are the realms of Urban Gothic. Skyscrapers tower high about the dirty streets, and darkness seems to cling heavily even during the day. The cities are ruled by crooked politicians in the sunlight, and violent street gangs by the light of the moon. Lush speakeasies give way to dilapidated warehouses, perched along the banks of sewer swollen rivers. All the men wear dinner jackets and ties, while all the women wear evening gowns and jewels. Behind every grin lies an ulterior motive; behind every trench coat, a Tommy gun.

The rural scene is no different. In the small towns, locals are a suspicious lot, eyeing strangers carefully. Monolithic barns jut out of fields of corn, as rusty iron bridges cross muddy water. Empty highways, surrounded by nothing, cross vast expanses of wind swapped land. The monotony only broken by an abandoned gas station, inch thick in dust.

Of course, the world of the Screaming Silence is still very much the world of our own 1950's. High Schoolers in Lettermen's jackets, cruise their suped up V-8's to the malt shop to meet their friends. Drive-in movie theatres dot the wide landscape, showing mind numbingly bad movies to enamored couples. Television spews hysteric propaganda to an easily convinced populace, weakly disguising itself as patriotism and religion.

This Gothic feel, however, is only half of the Screaming Silence world. The world of the Technocracy should be delivered with exactly the opposite effect. The Technocracy is not gothic, decaying, or fearsome. Its a world of advanced technology, working in unison with humanity. The people are basically happy, imaginative, and well off. Art and learning abound, and everything is clean and in order. Think of one of our best run corporations, fused with a art museum. The players should feel that they've stepped out of the wilderness when they enter a Technocrat installation.

But, you may ask, who are the good guys, and who are the bad? Facts imply that the Technocracy are the antagonists, but the feel implies the opposite. Who are the players to believe? If you are running your Screaming Silence game well, the players will be tormented by this question.

The most important thing a GM of a Screaming Silence game can do is destroy his players belief in good guys and bad guys. In the world of the Screaming Silence, everyone is an antagonist to the players at some point. They should never feel that they are on anyone "side".

After all, the players are terrorists, they themselves are not the "good guys". They endanger the innocent to achieve their goals. The Malphoists are an oppressive regime that has enslaved the human race for their own purposes. The Technocracy are virtual demi-gods who look down upon the world populace as just another resource to be

exploited. The mobsters and black marketeers are only out to make a quick buck before the end of the world. All of them are fighting against each other, and none of them have humanities best interests at heart.

Of course, this does not mean that the players won't have to choose a side. The Screaming Silence has the luxury of being a free agent, but as the future unfolds, they will be unable to afford such a luxury. Which side will the players choose when the end of the world comes? Will they side with the Malphoists and try to maintain the status quo? Will they side with the Technocracy and sacrifice human dignity for the chance of a better future? Or will they cut their own path into the new future? There should be no easy choices for the players as your game of the Screaming Silence unfolds.

Rules and Game Play.

The Reflex System is not the easiest Roleplaying System invented. Neither, however, is it the most difficult; but when your in the middle of a gun fight, all of your players are screaming at you at once, you've just spilt your drink across your adventure notes, and you can't find the hit chart to save your life, you may develop a different opinion. It is important that you, as a GM, develop the ability to know when, and when not, to use the rule book.

Sometimes the use of a rule is not worth the time to look it up in the book. Knowing if a Tommy gun can shoot 200 yards isn't really that important, unless its a player that's getting shot at. As the GM, you have the power to ignore rules that have slipped your mind, or simply seems silly to use in a particular situation. As long as your fair, and not to arbitrary.

Never tolerate a "Rule Jockey" in your group (a player who owns a copy of the rules, and is always pointing out where your screwing up), or a player who simply won't accept your decision. GM stands for GameMASTER, and your word has more sway than any rule book. Inversely if the players are upset at one of your decisions, don't simply blow them off by saying: "I'm the GM, and what I say goes." Your job as the GM is to entertain the players, and if they're unhappy (especially in numbers) then your not doing your job. Smoothness in play is the important concept here, if it takes less time to look something up in the rule book than it would to argue with the players, do it. If it's just as easy to make up a rule on the spot, do that instead.

Not every situation that will emerge in a Roleplaying session is covered in the rules. In fact, very few situations are actually covered in this book. However, a parellel-achievement based system is very easily adapted to any situation that might arise without the addition of extra rules. With a little bit of tweaking, you can slap together some rules within minutes.

i.e. Sky diving isn't covered in the rules. Most of the time, when a player jumps out of a plane its a narrative action, and no rules are needed to determine success. However, say a player has been pushed out of a plane without a parachute, and must wrestle with a villain to try and get his. In this situation, sky diving rules would come in very handy.

So, the first thing you need to do is assess the situation: What attributes, and what skills will the player be using? Since the character is wrestling, Strength is probably the most important attribute. There's no Sky Dive, or Parachute skill (and it's way to late to make one), so the closest applicable skill is Pilot. Pilots have to know who to use a parachute right? Sure, whatever.

After you know what attribute and skill to use to build the dice pool, you have to determine what type of action the character is really doing. Is it just a normal one turn action? Is it extended? Opposed? In the case of wrestling a guy for a parachute, it would probably be an extended, opposed action. Once you know this, all you have to do is set the boundary conditions:

Every action has to have a difficulty. This has already been discussed, and no changes to the usual process are made here. Next you must determine how many successes are required to complete the action. One? Two? Twenty? Unless the action is an extended one, more than three successes would mean that the action is almost impossible to compete. If the action is an extended one, what does it mean to get half the required number of success? Three quarters? Lastly, all that needs to be determined is any kind of time limit on the action? Do you only get one turn to do the action, or twenty?

Back to the sky diving action. I determine that it will take 8 successes for the character to get the parachute off the villain, and onto himself. Since the villain will be trying to do the opposite, this would have to be 8 successes more than the villains total successes. I put a time limit of 20 rounds on the whole action. Any less than that, and the two of them are street pizza. I decide that they both have to roll against 8. Fighting in zero-g has to be difficult.

As you can see, it is quite easy to quickly patch together rules to cover almost any situation. Don't worry if your rules aren't terribly realistic, giving your players a fighting chance is far more important.

You will also need stats for many of your NPC's. While you should create the stats for major villains individually, you don't want to be filling in character sheets for every two bit thug the players run into. Instead of having a long list of character archetypes from which you can choose from, it is far easier for you to learn these simple rules: A normal human has two dice in all of his attributes. Unless you have a good

reason for thinking otherwise, give them that. A NPC should have two dice in whatever skills they make their living with. i.e. A gun man should have 2d in pistol and rifle. A police man should have 2d in law, a Nurse would have 2d in First Aid. Give the character one dice in any skills that you think are used in their profession, but or not necessary. i.e. a police man would need at least 1d in drive, 1d in pistol, 1d in melee (nightstick) to do his job. Unless the NPC is an expert in a field, they should never have 3d in any of their skills. With only a little thought, you can put together the stats for most NPC's that the players will encounter.

Adventure Creation

Next to game play, the GM's next more important job is adventure creation. Being a tough skill to master, adventure creation requires the integration of many different talents. Storytelling, of course, is a very important part of adventure creation, but creating a successful plot for a roleplaying game is very different than creating a plot for a novel or a play. In some respects it is harder, in others it is easier, but all in all it is quite different.

The major trouble with creating a roleplaying adventure is the immense lack of character advancement (personality-wise, not on the character sheet) that takes place during a game session. Even in the best roleplaying groups, characters seldom work their way out of the realm of a single dimension. While, at first, one might think this to be a plus to adventure creation, one quickly realizes how many stories out there really require the hero (or heroine) to under go some sort of personality change. Character advancement is a very important tool in fiction, and a GM must all but ignore it as a tool in adventure creation. If you create an adventure that hinges on the personality of a character (and trust me, its easy to do without even realizing it), its destined to end up in the toilet. Quite quickly, the emotional range of your adventures becomes sorely limited. Of course, with a lack of emotional range in most roleplaying adventures, you players expect less, and you, therefore, can get away with more. Well, maybe...

If you play a lot of roleplaying games. you quickly learn that most groups has a cycle to them. In a single game session, a group will move their focus to different parts of the game. Usually the order is something like: Fighting/Roleplaying/Plot /Resolution. First the group wants to get into so sort of fight. They quickly tire of that, and want to get into some roleplaying. Once roleplaying has run its course, they turn their focus to the plot. Once they tire of the plot they will start looking for the end of the adventure, making their own if they have to. Some groups go though this cycle, some don't (some never get out of the Fight stage). As a GM, if you are responsive to your groups cycle, and create adventures accordingly. A game that fits a groups cycle will probably go down with much greater ease than one that goes against it.

Despite all of the problems that come with creating an adventure, there is one thing that every GM can do to make sure their adventures come out better: Prepare. Being a GM that creates most of his adventures on the fly, I can testify to how badly such an adventure can go. Preparation puts all of the difficult plot work behind you as you enter into the gaming session, and allows you to concentrate on the curve balls that the players will be sending you. Different GM's like to prepare for different amounts of time, but at the very least, notes on the major plot points and plot twists will give you a strong base to work off. Don't be too rigid however. Keep in mind that anything you have written down will get blown away as soon as you start to play.

Campaign Creation

When a GM moves beyond the scope of a single adventure, and moves into the realm of a roleplaying campaign, all of the above issues become exasperated. How do you create adventures that not only lead into each other but also follow your group's cycle? Where exactly is a campaign going if the player's characters aren't going anywhere?

A successful campaign requires all of the creative skill of a GM. A long series of adventures based around a single group of characters, in more or less the same location, is always difficult (just look at any sitcom); and keeping the adventures fresh and exiting is almost impossible. The only creative suggestion I can give to a prospective campaign GM is to plan at least two adventures ahead. If you can introduce foreshadowing and other elements of an adventure two adventures before it even begins, you will drastically reduce the feeling of contrivance in your plots, and bring smooth transmissions to your campaign. Of course, this can be hard to do, but even an attempt will greatly increase the quality of your campaign.

Outside of creativity in a campaign, there is another factor that a GM must keep squarely in mind: Power. In a single adventure, a GM seldom has to worry about his players becoming too powerful; but in a campaign, the problem is thrust solidly into view. All players want to increase their characters power; but too much, too quick, often ruins of campaign, and players quickly bore of their superhuman powers. A GM has to give power to his players slowly, but surely. Inch by inch, the players should increase. Always hungering for more.

The problem of power becomes even more difficult to deal with in **The Screaming Silence Roleplaying Game**. In the bi-polar world of the Malphoist and the Technocrats, power is held by those that hold the technology. The players will unquestionably want to get their hands on all the technology they can find. While this is to be expected (and is in fact a corner stone of the game), too much too quick will tear the game apart at the seams.

The players will start with plenty of guns and bombs, but they will have little effect against the Technocracy. In a fight, firearms will have little effect against Shcokc Trooper's body armor, and only a bazooka will even put a dent in Av. As they get their hands on Auto Carbines and Rail Guns, they'll be able to start inflicting damage upon the Technocracy; but what does this do to the game? If the players are nuking Technocrats left and right, the game will quite quickly lose its challenge. But still, you want your players to get their hand on some technology... After all, that's half the fun of the game. What is a GM to do?

Well, there are a few characteristics of the Technocracy that might help a GM out in this situation: First of all, the Technocrats are very anal about keeping their technology to themselves. They will search for lost equipment to the point of obsession. Any large piece of equipment (Rail Guns, Carbines, Av's) will assuredly have a homing beacon built into it, that will allow the technocracy to track it down. The players have no chance of deactivating such a homing beacon (integrated circuit, what's that?), and they will quickly learn that keeping Technocrat equipment around is hazardous to their health. However, the effectiveness of these beacons can increase and decrease as you, the GM, see fit. Hey, maybe the Technocrats are too busy to go looking for their lost tool kit...

Secondly, unlike the sturdy nature of Malphoist equipment, the Technocrats build their equipment with a short life span. In a society that totally reinvents itself every four or five years, building equipment that lasts doesn't make very much sense. The delicate nature of Technocrat equipment will make it quite incompatible with the Terrorist lifestyle. Mud, dust, and water will have an adverse effect on the equipment if exposed to it for a long period of time. Unless the players were born Technocrats, they can't even pretend to be able to fix the stuff. When it's broken, it's broken.

Lastly, there is the whole ammo and power issue. All weapons require ammunition, and most gadgets will require power. Both are going to run out eventually, and no matter what the origins of the junk, it will still become junk. D cells from the corner store aren't exactly going to power up a Technocrat palm computer. Once the equipment runs out of juice, the players are probably screwed.

The Screaming Silence Roleplaying Game

Name: _____ **Method:** **Conformist/ Rebel**
Height: _____ **Weight:** _____ **Motive:** **Charitable/Selfish**
Age: _____ **Drive:** **Pacifist/Militant**
Hero Points: _____

Attributes

| Physical | | Mental |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| ___ Well Being ___ | ___ Perception ___ | ___ Wits ___ |
| ___ Strength ___ | ___ Endurance ___ | ___ Willpower ___ |
| ___ Agility ___ | ___ Dexterity ___ | ___ IQ ___ |

Skills

| Academic | Military | Blue Collar | General |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| ___ Acting ___ | ___ Dodge/Dive ___ | ___ Carpentry ___ | ___ Bureaucracy ___ |
| ___ Biology ___ | ___ Explosives ___ | ___ Electronics ___ | ___ Climb ___ |
| ___ Chemistry ___ | ___ First Aid ___ | ___ Finance ___ | ___ Deception ___ |
| ___ Etiquette* ___ | ___ Hand to Hand ___ | ___ Gambling ___ | ___ Drive ___ |
| ___ Economics ___ | ___ Hvy. Weapns ___ | ___ Hvy. Mach. ___ | ___ Gymnastics ___ |
| ___ History* ___ | | ___ Intimidation ___ | ___ Observation ___ |
| ___ Linguistics* ___ | ___ Melee ___ | ___ Lockpick ___ | ___ Photography ___ |
| ___ Law ___ | ___ Pilot ___ | ___ Mechanics ___ | ___ Play Inst* ___ |
| ___ Leadership ___ | ___ Pistol ___ | ___ Smithy ___ | ___ Ride Cycle ___ |
| ___ Mathematics ___ | ___ Rifle ___ | ___ Streetwise ___ | ___ Running ___ |
| ___ Medicine ___ | ___ Stealth ___ | | ___ Sail ___ |
| ___ Philosophy ___ | ___ Track ___ | | ___ Survival* ___ |
| ___ Physics ___ | | | ___ Swim ___ |
| ___ Research ___ | | | ___ Throw ___ |
| ___ Social Sci. ___ | | | |
| ___ Writing ___ | | | |

Sub-Skills

Time Spent: _____
 Academics: ___ Military: ___
 Blue Collar: ___ Silence: ___

 Exception & Detrimental Abilities

