

GURPS[®]

Fourth Edition

MONSTER HUNTERS[™] 6

HOLY HUNTERS[™]



Written by
JASON "PK" LEVINE
Edited by **NIKOLA VRTIS**

Illustrated by
ALEX FERNANDEZ,
MICHAEL HARMON,
and **NIKOLA VRTIS**

Additional Material by **KENNETH HITE**
and **CHRISTOPHER R. RICE**

GURPS System Design ■ **STEVE JACKSON**
GURPS Line Editor ■ **SEAN PUNCH**
GURPS Project Manager ■ **STEVEN MARSH**
Managing Editor ■ **MIRANDA HORNER**
Production Artist and Indexer ■ **NIKOLA VRTIS**
GURPS FAQ Maintainer ■ **VICKY "MOLOKH" KOLENKO**

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Page Design ■ **PHIL REED** and **JUSTIN DE WITT**
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Reviewers: David Chart, Douglas Cole, Peter V. Dell'Orto, S.A. Fisher, Phil Masters,
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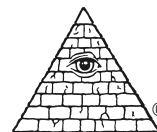
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*A man consists of the faith
that is in him. Whatever his
faith is, he is.*

– Bhagavad Gita

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ABOUT GURPS

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Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

INTRODUCTION

The stench was cloying, as if it were trying to crawl down Danielle's throat. She had dealt with dead bodies before, even seen bigger corpse piles than this, but never any this decomposed. Aging gave them a tangy, sickly sweetness that somehow made everything even worse. "Baron Samedi," she muttered, "please make my heart stone. Harden my senses. Just . . . don't let me puke."

"You okay in there?" Scott asked over the radio.

"You and Everett just keep the cops busy, please." She reached down and touched what remained of a young man, atop the pile. Images flashed in her mind: a smiling woman and man, suddenly gone; out of nowhere, a lion's paw slashing at the face, tearing it in half; darkness.

"Guys, this doesn't make sense." Brad's voice was breaking up from distance. "I've spoken with two people who walk by that house twice a day to the bus stop, and they never smelled anything until today."

"Not possible," Scott insisted. "I can barely stand it, and I'm way across the street! Danni, please tell me you didn't go in there for nothing."

"I didn't recognize The Enemy, but I will pray for guidance – while taking a very long shower."

Stories of brave holy warriors, empowered by their faith to fight the forces of evil, have long captured our hearts and minds. Some of the most iconic supernatural threats can be traced back to religious beliefs, like the demons of Christianity and the zombies of Vudú. So it's no surprise that religion and monster hunting are intertwined. **GURPS Monster Hunters** reflects this with the crusader and brother templates, the mystic lens, and the Mysticism power – with faiths broken down into three rough categories (Abrahamic, Shamanic, and Voodoo).

But **GURPS Monster Hunters** takes place in the real world – a version of it, at least – and our wide range of faiths is one of the things that makes this world so interesting and diverse! A Hindu crusader may have a completely different worldview from a Jewish one, yet both can devote their lives to The Mission. And these religions offer new ideas for miracles along with new threats to keep these holy warriors on alert. It's time to ramp up the battle between Good and Evil, with **GURPS Monster Hunters 6: Holy Hunters**.

Holy Hunters briefly presents the fundamental beliefs of several faiths (or categories of faiths), with a particular focus on why an adherent would take up arms against The Enemy. Use the advice within to build a believable crusader, or to add interesting religious flavor to a different kind of champion. This includes expanding Mysticism – learn how to animate objects via spirit possession, open up your heart and share your body, or banish demons with a wave of your

hand. You'll need it when facing the monsters drawn from various cultures and beliefs, like the lightning-summoning impundulu, the demonic illusionist rakshasas, or the stone-shattering shamir.

Champions aren't just fighting to save a world; they're fighting to save *ours*. **Holy Hunters** is a way to drive that home by making things a little more real – and a lot more fun!

Respecting the Faith

This work discusses real-world religions with millions of active adherents or more, so it tries to ensure that each is presented respectfully and accurately. However, the need to summarize means that numerous details and sectarian differences have been condensed or omitted, and each faith has been addressed in the context of **GURPS Monster Hunters** – that is, less liturgy and more “kicking butt in the name of a higher power.” If that sounds good to you, you should enjoy this book.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

This book requires the **GURPS Basic Set** and **GURPS Monster Hunters 1: Champions** to use fully. There are also several references to **GURPS Monster Hunters 2: The Mission**, **GURPS Monster Hunters 3: The Enemy**, and **GURPS Monster Hunters 4: Sidekicks**. Although it doesn't connect directly to **GURPS Monster Hunters 5: Applied Xenology**, the two works are fully compatible – crusaders can kick alien butt, too!

Those without any **GURPS Monster Hunters** supplements can still find inspiration here. The summaries of faiths will help when creating *any* religious character, the new Mysticism abilities can be easily adapted into other powers (in fact, one already comes with a psi conversion), and the monsters are fun to throw at any group.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

It's no surprise that this work was written by a holy man – Reverend “PK” Levine of the Church of the SubGenius. In his time as the Assistant **GURPS** Line Editor, he created or helped to launch several new series, including his two biggest, **GURPS After the End** and **GURPS Monster Hunters**. When he isn't championing the apocalypse or throwing apocalypses at champions, he maintains the website **mygurps.com** and goes on dates with his amazing and loving wife.

Go forth alone, you will soon find a stone on the road that you that you cannot pass.

– Zulu Proverb

CHAPTER ONE

COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY

Danielle closed the book with an angry thump. The others turned. “Nothing,” she sighed. “Nothing about werelions who can mask smells, nothing about leonine in-betweeners who devour flesh, nothing that helps us.”

“And whatever did this is blocking my divination spell,” Brad replied.

“But you said there was no trace of magic anywhere in the house,” Everett countered. “So that means . . . actually, I don’t know what that means.”

Anna cleared her throat. “I think it’s time to admit that we’re stuck, and explore alternative options. I have a friend whose girlfriend knows this guy Minoru, a Shinto diviner who might be able to help us –”

“Shinto?” Danielle bristled. “You really think his little spirits are gonna learn something that the loa couldn’t?”

Brad frowned. “That hurts. Or did you forget that the ‘little spirits’ of this Wiccan have saved your butt repeatedly?”

“I know, but . . . that’s magic. It’s different. I wasn’t trying to insult you.”

“It may be magic, but it’s still all about faith. And none of us have a monopoly on that.”

Crusaders (**GURPS Monster Hunters 1: Champions**, pp. 10-11) are empowered by *faith* – an unshakable belief in their religion and deity or deities. Deciding on a fitting doctrine is crucial, which is why this chapter looks at several real-world creeds with an eye toward how each influences a **Monster Hunters** crusader’s attitude and abilities.

These are all active religions with countless devout followers; as such, an in-depth analysis of just one could fill a library!

Thus, what follows are *summaries* that intentionally simplify beliefs and tenets, and avoid going into the differences between most denominations, so that someone new to the faith can understand the basics without being overwhelmed. The result is a mix of realism and fantasy – theologies that offer spiritual enlightenment while also fueling Mysticism powers for hunting vicious monsters.

Most important, remember that, both in and out of game, *most religious folk do not believe in blatant, tangible supernatural things*. For most modern believers, prayer is a show of faith; demons or the equivalent are metaphorical (nothing but the root of unwholesome urges); and things like lycanthropes and aliens are frankly unbelievable. Obviously, a crusader requires a very different mindset! Each summary in this chapter thus discusses the religion’s view of the supernatural; for the more “rational” faiths, this includes which specific denominations may be more mystical or open-minded.

Each summary comprises:

Description: A brief treatment of the religion, including any sects that make particular sense for a crusader.

Theology Skill: The appropriate specialty – Abrahamic, Polytheistic (p. 8), Shamanic, or Voodoo – for Theology and Religious Ritual skills.

Behavior: Some roleplaying tips along with specific disadvantages that fit a typical practitioner.

Training: Suggested skills for the crusader.

Mysticism: Notes on how the faith views miracles and spiritual power, followed by a list of particularly appropriate Mysticism abilities. Unless the GM rules otherwise, the latter is a *suggestion*; crusaders of all creeds have access to the entire Mysticism power.

The One True Way?

A practitioner of Mysticism must have confidence in his beliefs, but this does not automatically make him dogmatic or intolerant! Many religions (or denominations within a religion) are *universalist*, recognizing the validity of other faiths – or at least believing that their true god(s) will forgive and accept the “spiritually misguided.” And even religious exclusivism can be spun as “my faith is the only valid choice for me” rather than “my faith is the only valid choice.” That said, Intolerance (Religious) is a valid crusader option, but first make sure the other players are okay with it; it’s not a disadvantage choice worth offending your friends over.

AFRICAN (TRADITIONAL AND DIASPORIC)

While the traditional religions of Africa vary from region to region, they share enough in common to be discussed as a whole. They believe in a distant, supreme Creator, named differently in each language (e.g., Bondye, Chukwu, Nyame, or Olorun). But rather than worshipping this deity directly, they venerate the spirits who serve as intermediaries between the mortal and the divine. These spirits include ascended ancestors and cosmic servitors, with the most powerful known as *loa* (this term also varies by language).

Traits: Alternate Form $\times 2$; Bad Temper (9); Bloodlust (6); Cannot Speak; Combat Reflexes; Danger Sense; DR 100 (Limited, Electricity); Enhanced Dodge 2; Enhanced Move 1 (Air); Flight; Low Empathy; Restricted Diet (Blood); Silence 4; Telescopic Vision 4.

Skills: Aerobatics-15; Brawling-16; Innate Attack (Beam)-18; Stealth-16.

Notes: In “beautiful man” form, it has Appearance (Handsome) and Sex Appeal-16 but loses Flight. In “small bird” form, it has ST 5, SM -4, and its beak does 1d-2(5) huge piercing + follow-up 1d injury; for simplicity, treat it as retaining HP 15 in this form instead of HP 5, but triple its HP loss from all injuries. Stealth does not include Silence bonus.

JORŌGUMO

Origin: Shinto (*Indigenous Animism and Shamanism*, pp. 8-9).

Legend says that when a spider turns 400 years old, it gains magical powers. It grows and grows, its form changing over time, until it appears to be an attractive woman. Using this facade, the jorōgumo lures its prey – usually a man, but the ruse is not always a romantic one! – to a secluded area, distracts him with lovely singing or music, and then opens its jaws impossibly wide to bite off his head!

The jorōgumo is not a fighter; if caught or confronted, its first instinct is to run, leaping over obstacles and scrambling up walls as necessary. But when backed against a corner, it can be surprisingly dangerous. It can produce webbing from its fingers, directing it at multiple targets if necessary. The jorōgumo will open its maw fully in a fight, after which it can attempt to bite a foe’s neck (taking only a -2 hit location penalty due to instinct) for a $\times 2$ wounding multiplier. If that isn’t enough to kill the victim, the jorōgumo can either release him or hold on and continue to worry the bite (as a free action) for full damage.

A jorōgumo is an even match for one champion, or perhaps two in its lair, where it’s had time to set up sticky web traps, obscure deep pits, and so on.

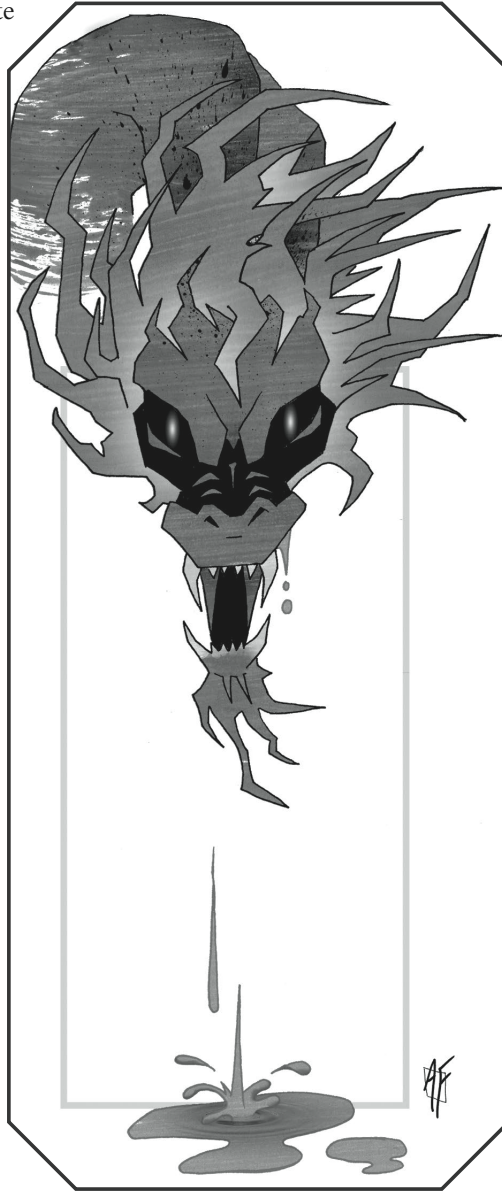
ST: 15	HP: 15	Speed: 8.00
DX: 18	Will: 15	Move: 8
IQ: 12	Per: 15	Weight: 100-150 lbs.
HT: 13	FP: 13	SM: 0
Dodge: 12	Parry: 14	DR: 2 (Tough Skin)

Fright Check: -4 (once maw is open)

Bite (20): 3d+1 cutting. Often aimed at the neck; see text. May bite *and* use webbing on the same turn. Reach C.

Punch (20): 1d+1 crushing. Reach C.

Webbing (20): Binding ST 25 (p. B40) with Engulfing and Sticky. Range 50, Acc 3, RoF 10, Rcl 1. The rate of fire may be split up among multiple foes; e.g., three strands at the commando, three at the sage, and four at the warrior, resolved as three separate attacks.



Traits: Ambidexterity; Appearance (Beautiful); Clinging; Combat Reflexes; Danger Sense; Extra Attack (see Webbing, above); Honest Face; Infravision; Injury Tolerance (No Brain; No Vitals; Unliving; see notes); Restricted Diet (People); Striking ST 12 (Bite Only); Nuisance Effect, Hideous Appearance; Subsonic Hearing; Super Jump 2.

Skills: Acrobatics-18; Acting-14; Brawling-20; Innate Attack (Projectile)-20; Musical Instrument (varies)-12; Jumping-20; Sex Appeal-15; Singing-14; Stealth-20.

Notes: Living being! “Unliving” simply reflects its odd physiology. As well, it has a brain and vitals, but not where you’d expect; knowing where to stab requires a successful roll against Biology at -4, Hidden Lore (Cryptozoology), Theology (Shamanic) at -2, or Veterinary. In combat, can leap 11 yards forward or three yards straight up; double this out of combat, double it with a running start, quadruple it for both.

LINNORMR

Origin: Ásatrú (*Neo-Paganism*, p. 11).

Also known as a lindworm, the linnormr is a massive serpent with the head of a dragon. It can burrow through the ground and swim through water with no loss of speed and full awareness of the world around (and above) it. This makes it a difficult opponent to fight, as it will surface, attack, and then retreat back into the earth. (Treat this as a Move and Attack, with the usual -4 to hit, but with no skill cap of 9.) Smart champions will take a Wait maneuver to strike when it surfaces, though the linnormr is canny enough to avoid coming up where it will be surrounded.

The linnormr has sharp ridges of teeth that ooze a deadly poison. Anyone bitten must roll against HT-4, taking 12 points of toxic damage on a critical failure, 2d toxic on a failure, 1d toxic on a success, and no damage on a critical success.

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Life is all about the ability to get up from challenge. Greatness is defined as getting up one more time than what you've fallen down. The Torah defines someone who's righteous not as someone who had succeeded, but someone who has persevered. It creates a paradigm of what righteousness is – trying to do what's right, getting up from failure, and keep moving forward.

– Charlie Harary

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