


PYRAMID[®]



Issue 3/75 January '15

HERO'S JACKPOT



JUST REWARDS

by Sean Punch

A FAMILIAR PATH
by Christopher R. Rice

STEALING MAGIC
by J. Edward Tremlett

REWARDING COLONEL OMSFORD
by David L. Pulver

**DRINKABLE, WEARABLE,
IMPOSSIBLE POINTS**
by Steven Marsh

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*Interviewer: Can you destroy the Earth?
The Tick: Egad, I hope not! That's where
I keep all my stuff!*

– *The Tick* #1.7

ARTICLE COLORS

Each article is color-coded to help you find your favorite sections.

- Pale Blue:* In This Issue
- Brown:* In Every Issue (humor, editorial, etc.)
- Green:* Columnist
- Dark Blue:* **GURPS** Features
- Purple:* Systemless Features

COVER ART
Jim Zubkavich

IN THIS ISSUE

A haunted spaceship. The boon of a god. A dragon who sits on your shoulder and answers your cell phone. All of these would be awesome bonuses that would make a hero proud. This month's *Pyramid* looks at rewards, which can serve as either a wish list for adventurers to drool over, or a selection of new and different prizes to bestow upon imperiled protagonists.

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy heroes expect loot; it's best not to disappoint them! That line's mastermind, Sean Punch, ensures that heroes get their *Just Rewards*, with a meaty assortment of new and different bonus abilities for crypt-crawlers. Don't settle for gold when you can become a saint of the city, gain the power of mingled trollblood, or have a psychic awakening!

Practitioners of the arcane arts revealed in **GURPS Thaumatology: Ritual Path Magic** often find themselves treading strange and mysterious roads. Sometimes you need the help that can come when you take *A Familiar Path*. With these rules, you'll summon, create, and control your own preternatural companion to help you with your mystic arts . . . or whatever else needs doing.

Renowned **GURPS** author David Pulver has run a staggering number of varied and interesting campaigns. Thus, this month's Eidetic Memory looks at the topic of heroic rewards through the lens of the possibilities and troubles that arose while *Rewarding Colonial Omsford*. Discover how this space-opera hero acquired a new **GURPS Spaceships** vessel, unusual weapons, unique opportunities, and more – all with **GURPS** stats you can crib for *your* campaign!

When you're a thief in a magical world, you can always use an edge – including an advantage that can only be gained by *Stealing Magic*. Whether drinking the Twin Potions of Returning, donning the Coward's Cloak, or using the Fluid of Free Passage, this assortment of systemless magical gear will augment any sticky-fingered rogue.

Rewards are good, but sometimes you want to bend reality to your will. That's no problem . . . *if* you have *Drinkable, Wearable, Impossible Points*. These suggestions start with a basic premise, then tweak it for various genres. Find out how to bring the possibilities of **GURPS Power-Ups 5: Impulse Buys** to any campaign without permanently altering the long-term status quo of the setting.

This issue also includes a Random Thought Table that lets you reward heroes with a whole new genre. Whether your heroes are in the past, present, or future, let's face it: with this issue of *Pyramid*, you've just hit the jackpot!

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FROM THE EDITOR

LOOT, I AM YOUR FATHER . . .

The notion of player rewards is one that's near and dear to Your Humble Editor's heart. In fact, one of my earliest writing projects after becoming Your Humble Editor nearly 15 years ago was a meaty contribution to 2002's award-winning *Gamemastering Secrets, Second Edition*. My section was all about awarding, controlling, and rethinking treasure.

PLAYERS WELCOME!

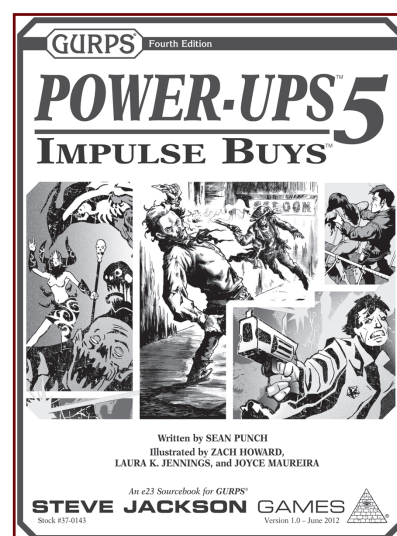
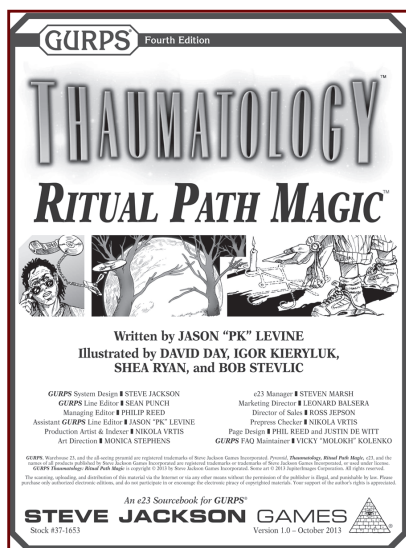
This issue is perhaps the first installment of *Pyramid* Volume 3 that's been designed with an eye toward being a "goodie list" for players. By its nature, many supplements tend to be GM-oriented; after all, they're the ones who have to come up with the threats, challenges, and adventures. However, we know that players love poring over this stuff, so we wanted to make an issue that could serve as both inspiration for Game Masters and a wish list of items for gamers to buy, hint at wanting to their GM, or aspire toward.

SCIENCE FANTASY CLIFFHANGER HORROR . . .

This issue is also somewhat rare for being devoted to a wide array of genres. We've had issues that have focused on a number of genres before (the various *Alternate GURPS* issues spring to mind), but this might be the first where we've gone out of our way to make sure that a wide array of genres and setting types are represented. In a way, this approach is a throwback to older eras of *Pyramid* (and other classic gaming magazines), with numerous possible topics in each issue.

WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

Since we *have* mixed things up a bit this month – we're curious: What did you think? Do you like our player-targeted schemes? Should we do more cross-genre issues? Let us know privately what you thought about whether you hit the jackpot, at pyramid@sjgames.com. Alternatively, you can share your thoughts with other treasure-seekers at forums.sjgames.com.



Additional Material: Sean Punch

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Benefits: Some elves know the secret of awakening magical aptitude; others can offer advanced archery training. If you agree to live among the elves and train for a while after an adventure that merits a special reward, you'll earn from 5 to 20 points (depending on your actions) toward Heroic Archer, Magery, or Weapon Master (Bow). Every 5 points of training takes a mere week . . . and there are no living expenses. However, there *will* be a training montage – elves are cool that way. If this reward doesn't let you afford the advantage you desire, you can save up to acquire it later, but you won't see these "free" points until you can cover the difference with unspent points.

Traits: Any of Heroic Archer [20], Magery 0 [5], +1 or +2 to Magery [10 or 20], or Weapon Master (Bow) [20]. In the interest of niche protection, scouts may *always* opt for an equal number of points in scout power-ups (**Power-Ups**, pp. 32-33), while non-scouts *do not* gain access to these. Similarly, wizards may improve Magery up to 6, or take an equal number of points in wizard power-ups (**Power-Ups**, pp. 36-37), but non-wizards are limited to Magery 2 and cannot acquire wizard power-ups.

Fauned Memories

3, 6, 10, or 13 points

Thankful fauns (**The Next Level**, p. 8) may put their musical talents to work for their new pal. Saving a piece of wilderness is the classic way to earn such gratitude. Throwing a legendary party – one with food, drink, and music dangerously obtained – is an offbeat possibility.

Benefits: Your name is lauded by the fauns, who spread it far and wide – both in conventional song that bards of all races will eventually adopt and on the wings of birds. Each level (maximum four levels) grants a general +1 to reactions; this is similar to the Hero power-up (**Power-Ups**, p. 16), but recognized by everyone *other than* underground denizens.

Traits: Reputation +1 (Everyone who doesn't live in a hole) [3], +2 [6], +3 [10], or +4 [13].

Hero Ink

1, 4, 5, or 8 points

Goblin-kin (**The Next Level**, pp. 10-11) respect fighting and destruction. "Heroes" who serve goblin-kind well in this capacity – and this often involves affronts against *other* races – may be given tattoos normally reserved for gobs, hobs, and orcs.

Benefits: Goblin-kin who see your tattoos will react at +1 per level. Anybody might earn two levels; full-blood goblins, hobgoblins, and orcs can have up to four. At the first or second level, this ink *also* gives you -1 to Disguise and Shadowing, and +1 to others' attempts to identify you; at the third or fourth level, double these drawbacks.

Traits: Reputation +1 (All goblin-kin; All the time) [2], +2 [5], +3 [7], or +4 [10]. Also add Distinctive Features 1 [-1] at the first or second level, Distinctive Features 2 [-2] at the third or fourth.

WHERE ARE THE HALF-SPIRITS?

The half-spirit "races" are catchall categories for remarkable *individuals*. Such beings lack extensive societies and repositories of cultural wisdom to leverage for rewards. Services for them are *personal* and repaid with treasure; see *Items of Power* (p. 5) and *Riches* (p. 5). Where a half-spirit represents an associated higher power, the GM should choose something suitable from *Rewards from the Gods* (pp. 9-12):

Celestials (**The Next Level**, p. 12): A god of any sphere might be Good, but constructive and life-affirming rewards are most fitting. Consider Healing Hands (p. 10), Look of Love (p. 11), Righteous Repair (p. 11), Savior of the Harvest (p. 11), and Sunlit Soul (pp. 11-12).

Infernals (**The Next Level**, pp. 12-13): Any kind of deity might be Evil, too – but rewards tied to stealth and bloodshed fit best, notably Debt of Death (p. 10), Fear Not the Night (p. 10), Holy Haste (pp. 10-11), Master of the Hunt (p. 11), and War-Bringer (p. 12).

Infused (**The Next Level**, p. 13): Fair-Weather Friend (p. 10) suits air-infused; Faith Moves Mountains (p. 10), earth-infused; Burning Faith (pp. 9-10) or Sunlit Soul (pp. 11-12), fire-infused; and Sea Servant (p. 11), water-Infused. Where bestowed by greater elemental spirits rather than true gods, replace Divine, -10% with Mana Sensitive, -10%.

Elder-Spawn (**The Next Level**, p. 12) are an exception. These creepy beings grant Elder Gift (p. 6).

Lucky Bastard

Variable

Despite their famous crankiness, leprechauns (**The Next Level**, p. 9) *do* thank saviors of green glens and similarly wholesome heroes. Contrary to myth, they *do not* give away Charms or pots of gold; rather, they bestow a magical blessing.

Benefits: Each level makes you one step luckier. If you have Ridiculous Luck – say, you're a leprechaun yourself – you enjoy lucky breaks (Serendipity) instead. These gifts work only in areas with mana. And if you're Cursed, you're out of luck . . . leprechauns can be little jerks.

Traits: To price this, find the difference in point cost between the new and old levels of luckiness – Unluckiness [-10], nothing [0], Luck [15], Extraordinary Luck [30], or Ridiculous Luck [60] – and apply -10% for Mana Sensitive. At Ridiculous Luck, add levels of Serendipity (Mana Sensitive, -10%) [13.5]. In all cases, round final cost *up*. Not everyone gets the same number of points, and Cursed delvers get nothing.

Made Man

10 or 15 points

Ordinary halflings (**The Next Level**, p. 14) are too small and provincial to offer much more than food and tobacco. Adventuring-grade ones dominate the criminal underworld.

BONDED ABILITIES FOR FAMILIARS

The following abilities are only available to those with the Familiar meta-trait (above).

Oh, right; you haven't actually met my familiar. Pardon my rudeness. His name is Loiosh, and he's a jhereg. If you don't what a jhereg is, you're probably better off, but I can at least explain that it is a poisonous reptile with two wings, two eyes, two legs, and one form of wit: irritating.

– Steven Brust, *Tiassa*

Arcane Boost

78/93 points for levels 1-2

Prerequisite: IQ 10+ and a master with Draw Energy (below).

Once per hour you can give your master +3 to *any* Path skill for the sole purposes of gathering ambient energy, as long as he is within two yards of you. This requires you take a Concentrate maneuver and make an IQ+4 roll. Level 2 works the same way, except that you may choose to reduce the Greater effects multiplier of a ritual by one (e.g., ×5 becomes ×4) *instead of* giving him a bonus to gather energy.

Statistics: Control 2 (Magic; Accessibility, Master Only, -80%; Cosmic, No die roll required, +100%; Paths Only, -20%; Reliable 4, +20%) [60] + Control 1 (Magic; Accessibility, Master Only, -80%; Cosmic, No die roll required, +100%; Does Not Increase Area, -50%; Paths Only, -20%; Reliable 4, +20%) [18]. Level 2 removes the Paths Only limitation from both [70 + 23]. This trait first appeared on *Pyramid* #3/66: *The Laws of Magic*.

Mana Collector

10 points/level

Prerequisite: IQ 10+.

You can help your master gather energy. To do this, you must be within two yards of him and conscious. You then roll your IQ, just as if you were another caster helping him cast a spell (*Ritual Path Magic*, p. 25), except neither you *nor* he takes -1 to rolls. Each additional level after the first (up to five) gives +1 to the IQ roll.

Statistics: Level 1 is Quick and Focused (Master)* [1] and nine One Task Wonder (One chosen Path defaults to IQ when gathering energy for master) perks [9]. Further levels are IQ (Accessibility, Only for gathering energy rolls, -50%) [10/level].

* This perk either allows a caster to ignore the penalties associated with helping to cast a spell for any other caster or removes the penalties entirely for both casters if you specialize in a specific pairing.

BONDED ABILITIES FOR MASTERS

The following abilities are only available for those with the Familiar Master meta-trait (p. 15). Additionally, some traits have the Granted by Familiar limitation. If the cost of this trait changes (see p. 21), you'll need to adjust the costs of some bonded abilities.

Conduit

Varies

Prerequisite: Deep Bond (p. 17) or Psychic Link (pp. 17-18).

Whenever you benefit from *any* positive supernatural effect (healing spell, temporary attribute bonus, and so on), your familiar is *also* affected. At level 2, you may treat your familiar as a part of your person for *any* spell, power, or ability if that would be beneficial to you.

Statistics: Level 1 adds Cosmic, Shared Effects, +50% to Ally (Familiar) [Varies], while level 2 adds Cosmic, Shared Body, +50%.

Draw Energy

30/60/90 points for levels 1-3

Prerequisite: A familiar with Mana Collector (above).

Your familiar allows your mana reserve to replenish faster than normal; you regain 1 point of your reserve automatically every minute. At level 2, you regain 1 point per *second*, and at level 3, you regain *10 points* per second.

Statistics: Regeneration (Fast; Energy Reserve Only, +0%; Granted by Familiar, -40%) [30]. Level 2 makes Regeneration Very Fast [60]. Level 3 increases Regeneration to Extreme [90].

Efficient Energy Reserve

Varies

The mana reserve your familiar gives you is far more effective than normal, providing an amount equal to its full FP. What's more, your familiar loses only 1 FP per 2 ER you use, instead of a 1:1 ratio.

Statistics: Replace Drains Familiar (p. 20) with Drains Familiar, Efficient, 1 FP per 2 ER and double the caster's available ER. For example, if a caster previously had Energy Reserve 6 (Drains Familiar, -50%) [9] and bought this ability, he would now have Energy Reserve 12 (Drains Familiar, 1 FP per 2 ER, -40%) [22], which would make the cost of this trait 13 points.

Plasma Sword (TL10[^])

Plasma swords consist of a plasma generator hilt that ejects hot ionized gas and holds it in blade form. They appear one TL lower than force swords (see *Ultra-Tech*, p. 166) but are otherwise identical with these exceptions.

The plasma blade is not *solid*. It can parry another plasma sword (and optionally, a force sword as well). Like a force sword, it will damage other blades or body parts that it parries or that try to parry it. However, if it fails to break or destroy the object it is parrying, the attack passes through it and does damage.

Plasma swords are available in all force sword weapon types. At TL10, they are 10 times as costly as force swords, and their power cells operate half as long.

Rewards can be points, gear, or friends.

SALVAGE AND MEMORIES

Omsford and company didn't start out with their own starship, but eventually two of the players decided it would be useful to have one and began looking for ways to buy or steal a ship within their limited resources. Inspired by a re-read of Robert Heinlein's *The Rolling Stones*, I worked up a "used spaceship yard" seemingly haunted by some mysterious force. The characters were offered a discount on an old second-hand ship with para-military capabilities if they could solve the mystery and could help repair the ship.

I'd tailored this adventure to grab the interest of the group's ex-Navy space pilot and another PC, a parapsychologist. Omsford was mostly along for the ride, but I figured it would be a good idea to add a sort of "Easter Egg" for him. To this end, I decided that the war-surplus ship in the yard was modified space commando carrier and, by coincidence, one that Colonel Omsford served aboard as a young Marine lieutenant.

By adding this detail, I could get Omsford's player tightly invested in the adventure once he recognized the haunted ship as one of from his character's past. Despite having no parapsychology or engineering skills, he could contribute IQ rolls for flashbacks and knowledge of the interior details. After the PCs dealt with the mystery, he became quite fond of it, even naming the vessel. Reward successful!

Ivy Serpent (TL10[^])

The *Serpent*-class Low-Observable Commando Assault Transport (LOCAT) was a starship built in limited numbers by the interstellar navy to support Marine special operations raids. During a post-war round of budget cutting, these vessels

were decommissioned, stripped of classified material and weapons, and sold as surplus to shipping lines and courier services as fast "executive couriers" or "fast packets." Most of the vessels were demilitarized, but some under-the-table dealing allowed certain ships to retain their tactical fit; these were used for merchant-adventurer expeditions in uncharted frontier space. *Ivy Serpent* was one such vessel, and it spent years opening new markets and trading with newly discovered alien races. This lasted until her corporate owners, the Nineveh Phylum, fell on hard times and were acquired by a notorious crime syndicate. The once-proud warcraft and explorer was used as a drug-runner and slave ship until it was eventually run down by a Navy destroyer. Impounded, the battle-scarred craft was auctioned off to a private yard and her injuries slowly repaired, only to spend a few years waiting for the right buyer. Its limited cargo space and high operating costs made it an unattractive purchase for normal merchants . . . but perfect for a group of adventurers!

It has a SM +8 streamlined hull and masses 1,000 tons. It is 75 yards long.

Front Hull Systems

[1-2]	Metallic Laminate Armor (dDR 20).
[3]	Habitat (six cabins).
[4]	Habitat (10 hibernation chambers, two sickbay with automeds, minifac, 2.5 tons cargo).
[5-6]	Defensive ECM.
[core]	Control Room (C8 computer, comm/sensor 7, and four control stations).

Central Hull Systems

[1]	Metallic Laminate Armor (dDR 10).
[2!]	Major Battery (300 MJ UV laser turret).
[3-6]	Hangar Bay (120 tons cargo capacity).

Rear Hull Systems

[1]	Metallic Laminate Armor (dDR 10).
[2-3!]	Stardrive Engines.
[4-5!]	Hot Reactionless Engines (total 2G).
[6]	Engine Room (one workspace).
[Core]	Fusion Reactor (two Power Points).

It has artificial gravity, a chameleon and stealth hull, and hidden weapon batteries. The usual crew carried are four control room crew and one technician.

Variants

LOCAT: This is the original military version, a few unneutered examples of which are still in service, e.g., the *Ivy Serpent*.

Executive Courier: This is the demilitarized civilian version. Downgrade the major battery to a secondary battery with just one turret (30 MJ ultraviolet laser) plus 45 tons cargo. Replace both defensive ECM systems with cargo holds (50 tons each).

TL	Spacecraft	dST/HP	Hnd/SR	HT	Move	LWt.	Load	SM	Occ	dDR	Range	Cost
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PILOTING/TL10 (HIGH-PERFORMANCE SPACECRAFT)

10 [^]	LOCAT	70	-1/5	13	2G/c	1,000	123.7	+8	12ASV*	20/10/10	2×	\$65.9M
10 [^]	Executive Courier	70	-1/5	13	2G/c	1,000	268.7	+8	12ASV*	20/10/10	2×	\$40.5M

* Plus 18 in suspended animation.

Air speed is 3,500 mph.

ABOUT *GURPS*

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