

PYRAMID[®]

Issue 3/122 December '18

ALL GOOD THINGS

THE BOUNCERS

David L. Pulver

NEW CRUSADERS

Christopher R. Rice

THE UNDEAD-HUNTER

Sean Punch

SUFFICIENTLY DERANGED

Phil Masters

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*It's the end . . . But the moment
has been prepared for.*
– The Doctor,
in *Doctor Who* #18.7

ARTICLE COLORS

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

- Pale Blue:* In This Issue
- Brown:* In Every Issue
- Green:* Columnist
- Dark Blue:* **GURPS** Features
- Orange:* Special Features

COVER ART
Brandon Moore

IN THIS ISSUE

As the classic adage goes, “All good things must come to an end.” And so it goes for *Pyramid*. For this – our final issue – we have a miscellany of articles that stretch across the bounds of genre and theme, bringing you what we can only hope are, indeed, “all good things.”

When you want to craft technological wonders far beyond the ordinary, it helps to be *Sufficiently Deranged*. Phil Masters – author of *GURPS Steampunk 2: Steam and Shellfire* – combines magic and gadgeteering, unleashing a new version of Magery for *GURPS*, gadget-based powers, and mad science that functions as syntactic Realm magic.

If the zombies and skeletons in your dungeon are getting to be too much trouble, call in *The Undead-Hunter*. *Dungeon Fantasy Roleplaying Game* architect Sean Punch provides details on this new evil-abating profession, including customization notes and power-ups, plus a sample character ready to add to your game.

Broaden your adventuring horizons with two new professions for *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy: Chevaliers and Commanders*. Christopher R. Rice – co-author of *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 19: Incantation Magic* – presents new templates, lenses, advantages, special abilities, and power-ups suitable for the animal-riding chevalier and the leadership-mastering commander.

Book passage to the newest frontier world and discover more about *The Bouncers of Caradoc* . . . but don't be surprised if it's not a round trip! This month's Eidetic Memory offering by David L. Pulver – author of the *GURPS Spaceships* series – gives you a tour of a new world, with planetary stats, dangerous fauna, and potential campaign ideas. You also get *GURPS Boardroom and Curia* stats for a new space-exploration company.

On Bismark-3, the British decided to lease a smaller, more easily defended island instead of Cyprus (like in our timeline), and thus began the alternate history of *British Rhodes*. Find out more about what the island now looks like, who the major players are, and what the rest of the world is up to. Several *GURPS Infinite Worlds* campaign seeds suggest ways to use this interesting location.

Add new possibilities to those presented in *GURPS Monster Hunters 6: Holy Hunters* with *Native American Crusaders*. Christopher R. Rice offers an overview of some elements of their religions, plus details on adapting the crusader template for these heroes. Learn about a new miracle, two new divine vessels, two new monsters, and suggested reading for those wanting more information.

This month's Random Thought Table offers some *Final Thoughts*, looking back on philosophies that can be used to guide both a magazine and great gaming.

This month's *Pyramid* may mark the end, but it's a trove of all good things!

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FROM THE EDITOR

AND IN THE END, THE LOVE YOU TAKE IS EQUAL TO THE LOVE YOU MAKE

Welcome, gentle reader, to the last issue of *Pyramid*. This humble publication began in 1993 and has continued through three different formats, spending the last 10 years as a monthly PDF publication. That's a great run for *any* endeavor!

When we tried to look back on what kind of theme we might do for this issue, we realized that it was a great chance to celebrate a swath of *Pyramid's* history, shining the spotlight on various genres that make **GURPS** an amazing system for those looking to game across different styles and themes.

Looking back at *Pyramid* through the decades, I've always been amazed at the variety of articles we've run: rules, character options, threats and monsters, campaign ideas, and insight. We've tried to stay true to that mix of inspiration in our final issue.

Though this is *Pyramid's* final issue, we hope you continue to enjoy its magic throughout the **GURPS** line. Obviously – being

digital – the entire run of the series is still available to enjoy. (It's a great time to pick up any back issues you might've missed!) And many of *Pyramid's* most-beloved creators have **GURPS** supplements in the past, present, and – as our digital gnomes continue to work even as I type – into the future.

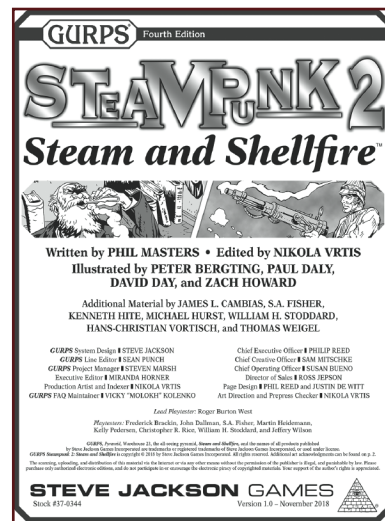
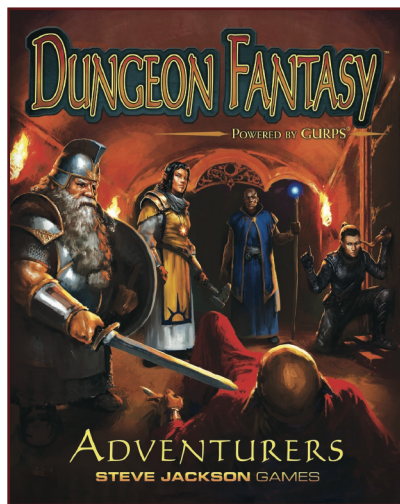
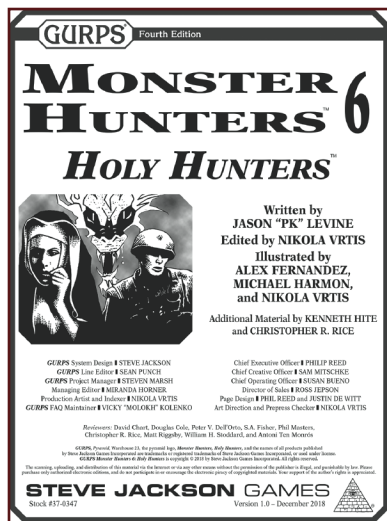
WRITE HERE, WRITE NOW

As I've noted in the past, we always love to hear from you. That remains true even now, as we sweep up and prepare to close the curtains.

What did you think of this issue? Were there bits that made an appropriate swan song, or did anything lay an egg?

Looking at the big picture – what have been your thoughts on *Pyramid* as a whole? Were there articles that are your favorites, perhaps that you'd like to see expanded further? Were there themes or ideas that deserve their own **GURPS** spinoffs?

Feel free to share your thoughts privately at pyramid@sjgames.com, or post your thoughts and memories publicly among other game-minded friends at forums.sjgames.com.



Additional Material: Peter V. Dell'Orto, Jason "PK" Levine, Sean Punch, and Antoni Ten Monró

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VASIN NIHANTA

245-point Human Undead-Hunter

Vasin is a physically and mentally powerful destroyer of undead. He believes that demon lords, though Evil, keep the cursed dead imprisoned in Hell. To him, the undead are a greater affront against Good than any demon below the level of infernal aristocracy.

Offensively, Vasin butchers enemies with a holy shovel. His skill is 17 with *his* shovel (Weapon Bond); against undead, add +3 for Higher Purpose. He prefers beheading, at -5 but +1 for Trademark Move: a net 13, 16 vs. undead. His keen-edged weapon does 2d+2 cutting – again, at +3 against undead – and Vasin can use Heroic Might and/or the Might spell to boost ST for truly epic damage.

Defensively, Vasin's shovel is dwarven, letting him parry after attacking. His Higher Purpose gives him +3 to defend vs. undead – and he'll try to cast Shield before combat, adding DB 1 to 4. His blessed armor ("Tanned vampire hide!") has DR 3, and Armor can improve DR further. He's highly resistant to sinister powers, with his basic +3 vs. undead *and* +3 more for Resist Evil. Protection from Evil can aid on all fronts.

Vasin is good at Turning, with Will 15, +2 for Power Investiture, and +1 for his blessed holy symbol giving 18. He carries garlic, holy water, and wooden stakes (these, too, benefit from Higher Purpose, Heroic Might, and Might) for finishing off fallen undead. He uses his fancy shovel when the job calls for exhuming or burying bodies, and it's also his power item; it holds 10 FP, which he saves for pre-combat castings against major undead foes.

ST 13 [30]; **DX** 12 [40]; **IQ** 13 [60]; **HT** 12 [20].
Damage 1d/2d-1; BL 34 lbs.; HP 13 [0]; Will 15 [10]; Per 13 [0]; FP 12 [0].
Basic Speed 6.00 [0]; Basic Move 6 [0]; Move 4.
Dodge 8; Parry 11 (Shovel); Block N/A.

Advantages

Clerical Investment [5]	Trademark Move (Attack with combat shovel swing to the neck: -5 to hit, 2d+2 cutting) [1]
Heroic Might +1d [9]	Turning [24]
Higher Purpose 3 (Slay Undead) [15]	Weapon Bond (Combat Shovel) [1]
Power Investiture 2 [20]	
Resist Evil 3 [3]	
Rest in Pieces [1]	
Signature Gear (Combat Shovel) [1]	

Disadvantages and Quirks

Bloodlust (12) [-10]
Obsession (Undead-Hunting) (9) [-15]
Sense of Duty (Adventuring Companions) [-5]
Sense of Duty (Good Entities) [-10]
Vow (Own no more than horse can carry) [-10]
Believes undead – not demons – are the *worst* Evil. [-1]
Carries spare garlic, holy water, and stakes for allies. [-1]
Casts magic before battle, not during. [-1]
Identifies as a warrior more than a cleric. [-1]
"Off with their heads! *Off with their heads!*" [-1]

Skills

Armory (Melee Weapon)-13 [2]	Physiology (Undead)-13 [4]
Exorcism-15 [4]	Psychology (Undead)-13 [4]
Fast-Draw (Knife)-13 [2]	Religious Ritual-12 [2]
Fast-Draw (Potion)-13 [2]	Stealth-12 [2]
Hidden Lore (Undead)-13 [2]	Theology-12 [2]
Knife-13 [2]	Throwing-13 [4]
Occultism-13 [2]	Two-Handed Axe/Mace-16/17* [16]

Spells†

Armor-13 [1]	Resist Pain-13 [1]
Final Rest-13 [1]	Sense Evil-13 [1]
Glow-13 [1]	Sense Spirit-13 [1]
Might-13 [1]	Shield-13 [1]
Protection from Evil-13 [1]	Stop Bleeding-13 [1]

* Use higher skill for Signature Gear combat shovel (+1 for Weapon Bond).
† Includes +2 for Power Investiture.

I lay to rest the dead kept from the afterlife. I'll fight demons when I get there.

– Vasin Nihanta,
Undead-Hunter

Equipment

\$3,500, 67.61 lbs. (Light encumbrance)
Clothing. \$0, 2 lbs.
Coins. 2 silver, 16 copper. \$56, 0.36 lb.
Combat Shovel, Dwarven, Fine. 2d+2 cut (reach 1) or 2d+1 cr (reach 1). \$1,400 + \$25 in inlay, 5 lbs.
Delver's Webbing. Holds coins, garlic, holy water, personal basics, rations, wooden stakes. +1 to Fast-Draw. \$160, 3 lbs.
Garlic x8. \$40, 2 lbs.
Heavy Leather Armor, Suit, w. Fortify +1. DR 3. \$1,450, 36 lbs.
Holy Symbol, Blessed. +1 to Exorcism and Turning. \$250, 1 lb.
Holy Water x8. \$60, 8 lbs.
Personal Basics. \$5, 1 lb.
Rations, 6 meals. \$12, 3 lbs.
Wineskin. 1 quart water. \$10, 2.25 lbs.
Wooden Stakes x8. 1d(0.5) imp (reach C). \$32, 4 lbs.

Vasin Nihanta in GURPS

To interpret Vasin's abilities, see p. 12. His gear is from the *DFRPG*. If using the *Basic Set*, his armor becomes leather helm, leather torso armor, heavy leather sleeves, heavy leather leggings, leather gloves, and boots (pp. B283-284), with the cheap Fortify enchantment from *Dungeon Fantasy 1*, p. 30. That's \$390, 19.5 lbs., liberating \$1,060. Ignore the coin denominations but keep their \$ value.

EIDETIC MEMORY

THE BOUNCERS OF CARADOC

BY DAVID L. PULVER

Bouncers are a species of lethal alien predator intended for use in science-fiction setting in which psi powers exist (at least for nonhumans). The adventure seeds detailed below assume their appearance in a *GURPS Space* campaign. However, with some minor tweaking in regard to the creatures' background, they could be used in other settings, such as a *GURPS Monster Hunters* or even *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* game.

Some basic details about the planet are given below, but the GM should feel free to substitute any other planet that includes an alien forest or jungle ecosystem and has had little in the way of settlement or exploration.

The planetary statistics format is from *GURPS Space*. The organization format (see *Wormstar Laboratories*, p. 27) is from *GURPS Boardroom and Curia*.

No frontier was ever explored by just one expedition.

— Dr. J.R. Matheny,
in *The Incredible
Petriified World*

PLANET CARADOC

Caradoc, the bouncers' homeworld, is a backwater, largely uninhabited frontier planet that has only recently been discovered. Caradoc has an rich native biosphere. Its average climate is tropical, with thick jungle and swamp covering a large fraction of the planet, although there are mountainous and desert regions. Rainfall is steady, and many rapid-growing fungal species and vines make it difficult for Terran-imported vegetation to gain a foothold.

Caradoc has two major continents, the equatorial and southern Cador and the smaller, northern Guinier. Most settlement and exploration has taken place on Cador. Major features include the 4,200-mile-long Great Serpent River and the highland forest of the volcanic Eliavres Plateau.

Caradoc possesses highly developed plant, fungoid, and animal life. Most animals are distinguished by three or six

limbs per side, sometimes with radial symmetry. Many creatures also possess a pyramidal head and long manipulator tentacle. There are numerous species of insect equivalents as well as plentiful larger animals. Most species have yet to be cataloged. Among the most surprising of these is the bouncer; see below. (Of course, if the PCs are the first to survive contact with the species, they can name it themselves . . .)

Caradoc Planetary Statistics

Caradoc's primary is Gwent, a yellow G3 V star with a mass of 1.1 solar masses and a luminosity of 1.2. Caradoc orbits Gwent at an average distance of 0.98 AU.

Year: 404 local days.

Day: 25 hours.

Diameter: 0.9 Earths.

Density: 1.1 Earths.

Surface Gravity: 1G

Dominant Terrain: Forest, mountains, plains.

Atmosphere: Oxygen-nitrogen.

Average Temperature: Temperate to tropical except in arctic and subarctic zones.

Climate: Varies; tends toward wet.

Hydrographic Coverage: 78% water.

Axial Tilt: 22°.

Moons: One large moon, Ysave.

Population: Small research station (with a daily average of a dozen off-world researchers).

Spaceport: Class I.

Government: Corporate (CR 1).

Tech Level: 10.

BOUNCER

Bouncers are predatory omnivores. They appear to be native to the forests and swamplands of Caradoc. Exact numbers are uncertain, but as they are apex predators, they are relatively uncommon, perhaps numbering anywhere from 10,000 to 100,000 (their unique mobility makes them hard to count).

The GM may allow a particular ancestor as an Ally or Patron, and the crusader may take other Mysticism abilities with “Granted by Ancestral Spirit, -40%” – but doing so requires that the mortal *also* take “Special Abilities, +50%” on their Divine Vessel advantage. This represents an especially close bond to one particular ancestor and may (at the GM’s discretion) allow the crusader to purchase traits not listed on the template that the ancestor possessed. Grants Common Sense (Conscious, +50%) [15], Racial Memory (Passive) [15], Reawakened (Ancestral*) [10], and Sense of Duty (Family) [-5].

Coyote (72 points): Somewhere between a totem spirit and a minor god, Coyote wanders the world of men, fascinated (as he has always been) by their ingenuity and spark. Mystics do not so much seek him out as a patron as he lays claim to them (usually at or shortly after birth); all crusaders with this trait have a small coyote-paw-print birthmark somewhere on their body, which cannot be removed except by Coyote himself. This mark visibly glows when Coyote’s power is drawn on. The GM may allow those who have this trait to take Talker! with the Mysticism power modifier reducing its cost, but at the expense of making the wildcard skill vulnerable to the same things that can shut down other Mysticism abilities. Grants Daredevil [15], Distinctive Features (Glowing coyote paw print on body somewhere) [-1], Elastic Skin (Requires Will vs. Will roll, -15%) [17], Gluttony (12) [-5], Hard to Kill 1 [2], Hard to Subdue 1 [2], See Invisible (Deception) [15], Slippery 3 [6], Trickster (12) [-15], and Wild Talent 1 [20].

* Instead of viewing *your* past lives, this variant lets you view your ancestors’ past lives (which may have been your own, too!). This lets you learn skills and abilities from your ancestors as if you had a teacher, or spend points on them normally.

NEW MONSTERS

The following new enemies should send chills down the stoutest of spines.

Flying Head

Origin: Native American mythology.

The flying head or “big head” of Iroquois folklore is a monstrous undead being the size of a man, with eyes like glowing goals and stringy, greasy hair. A flying head is created when a person falls to cannibalism (a big taboo for most, if not all, tribes) or is violently killed by having their head severed. It grows to a huge size and begins seeking victims to eat. Often associated with storms or whirlwinds, flying heads are primordial creatures of hunger with greedy guts and insatiable appetites. They typically open a fight with a flying slam (which can turn a normal human to paste) and then bite or head-butt targets until no one stands. Then they feast.

Use the skills listed under *Zombies* in *Know Thy Enemy (Champions, p. 16)* to figure out more about these beings.

Flying heads rarely work in groups, and one is a match for one or two champions. A group of heads that died together may stick together, feasting on the flesh of others as a group. In such a case, each head in a group is worth about 1.5 champions.

ST: 35	HP: 35	Speed: 7.00
DX: 14	Will: 16	Move: 14/21 (Air)
IQ: 12	Per: 16	Weight: 250 lbs.
HT: 14	FP: N/A	SM: 0
Dodge: 11	Parry: 13	DR: 14

Fright Check: -6 (it’s a person-sized *head*)

Bite (16): 4d+3 cutting. Made as a Deceptive Attack (-1 to defend against). Reach C, 1.

Flying Slam (16): 8d+13 crushing. Use the rules for *Slams* (p. B371). Made as a Deceptive Attack (-1 to defend against). Reach C, 1.

Head-Butt (16): 4d+7 crushing. Treat as a weapon, not a body part. Made as a Deceptive Attack (-1 to defend against). Reach C, 1.

Traits: Appearance (Monstrous); Bad Smell; Combat Reflexes; Doesn’t Breathe; Doesn’t Sleep; Enhanced Move 0.5 (Air Move 14/21); Flight; High Pain Threshold; Immunity to Metabolic Hazards; Indomitable; Injury Tolerance (Homogenous; No Blood; No Head; No Neck); No Fine Manipulators; No Legs (Aerial); Uncontrollable Appetite (6) (Human Flesh); Unfazeable.

Skills: *Brawling*-18; *Flight*-14; *Intimidation*-16; *Stealth*-16.

Notes: Affected by True Faith and Path of Undead magic. Because of their peculiar nature, flying heads get to use their maximum air Move when calculating slams, even if they didn’t travel that far.

The narratives of the Native Americans are as varied and numerous as the nations and tribes of the land.

Raven Mocker

Origin: Native American mythology.

The raven mocker is a horrific being from Cherokee legend (though it shows up in other tribes occasionally): a combination of evil spirit, shapeshifter, vampire, and witch. Its name is whispered only during the day, in sunlight, never indoors, *and* away from any nearby shadows. Raven mockers can take the form of black birds (primarily ravens, but magpies and crows are common as well), old men or women, or orbs of fire.

When hunting, raven mockers either take the shape of an old-and-withered human, or stalk their prey invisibly – whatever lets them get close to their target. Their presence can be felt by ravens, who cry when one is nearby. This is *always* followed by a strong northern wind. These two omens herald a raven mocker’s presence and can (similar to the banshee of Celtic myth) also herald the death of someone nearby. Raven mockers feed on the life force of others and need only be in their victim’s presence to do so (often invisibly). People with strong enough Will or magical ability can fend off this attack, and in many stories turn it *back* on the raven mocker! This backlash bleeds its life force away rapidly. Those with Magery or similar traits are highly effective against these monstrous beings.

Use the skills under *Rogue Witches* in *Know Thy Enemy (Champions, p. 16)* to learn more. Even for those who know its Weakness and have the capability to endure a battle in order to trigger it, a raven mocker is a trial for a whole party.

ABOUT *GURPS*

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Store Finder (storefinder.sjgames.com): Discover nearby places to buy *GURPS* items and other Steve Jackson Games products. Local shops are great places to play our games and meet fellow gamers!

Bibliographies. Bibliographies are a great resource for finding more of what you love! We've added them to many *GURPS* book web pages with links to help you find the next perfect element for your game.

Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Errata pages for *GURPS* releases are available at sjgames.com/errata/gurps.

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.

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