

G U R P S[®]

LENSMAN[™]

STARKLY ASTOUNDING SPACE-OPERA ADVENTURE!

SECOND EDITION

Roleplaying in E.E. "Doc" Smith's
Classic Space Opera

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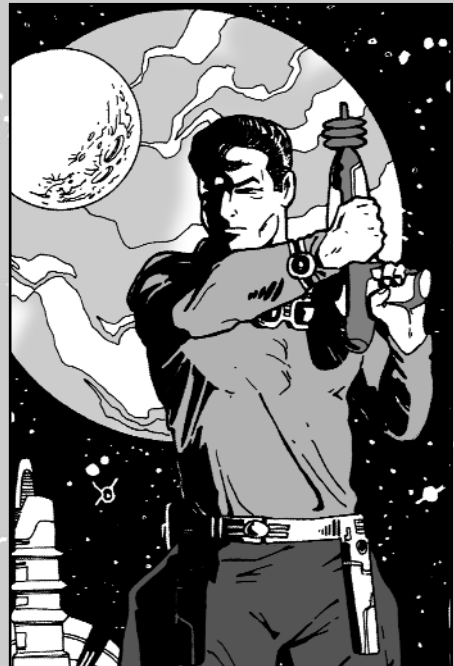
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INTRODUCTION

“Two thousand million or so years ago two galaxies were colliding; or, rather, were passing through each other.” So begins the Epic of Space; so begins the war for freedom. The story does not stop until the human race produces its ultimate development: minds of such maturity that they can *think* – think with drive, scope, and clarity – think so competently as to be able to visualize the details of the entire macrocosmic universe, from the instant of its creation to its ultimate end.

Two races are already ancient when the saga begins. Eddore seeks conquest, and on the myriads of planets formed during the interpassage of galaxies they find life enough to temporarily sate even their lust for dominion. Arisia opposes them, but cannot stop them without help. That help is the Galactic Patrol, and its assemblage has taken several long Arisian lifetimes, two thousand million years.

The work is done in complete secrecy, for if Eddore learns of the plan prematurely, its failure is certain. Even more, Civilization itself must not learn of its ultimate purpose, for that knowledge would introduce an inferiority complex that would ruin it forever. The Patrol believes it is fighting a war on drugs and piracy. The true scope of the War, though, can only be fully comprehended by entities of the third level of development. It is nothing less than the War of Good and Evil.

This book describes that conflict’s final phase, the Boskonian War, from the invention of the Bergenholm inertialess

drive by the Triplanetary League through the annihilation of dread Floor.

The Ultimate War has begun. Many of you won’t come back. But Lensmen always go in.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

The *GURPS Basic Set* is required to use this worldbook. GMs will find *GURPS Space* and *GURPS Psionics* useful as well. Though an interesting assortment of technology is described in Chapter 5, some weapons and equipment from *GURPS Ultra-Tech* may be used in *GURPS Lensman* campaigns. The martial arts practiced by the various peoples of Civilization and Boskonian are surveyed in Chapter 7, though a GM will need *GURPS Martial Arts* to make use of that information.

GMs should read the *Lensman* series to understand the unique feel of this universe. *GURPS Lensman* is based on those books. William B. Ellern’s stories, and David Kyle’s trilogy about the nonhuman Second-Stage Lensmen, were used where they did not contradict the original series. Several other books are listed in the bibliography that are not strictly compatible with the *Lensman* series, such as *Spacehounds of IPC*, but which have similar tones and may enhance a *Lensman* campaign.

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

Pyramid (www.sjgames.com/pyramid/). Our online magazine includes new rules and articles for *GURPS*. It also covers all the hobby’s top games – *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Traveller*, *World of Darkness*, *Call of Cthulhu*, *Shadowrun*, and many more – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *In Nomine*, *INWO*, *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre*, and more. And *Pyramid* subscribers also have access to playtest files online, to see (and comment on) new books before they’re released.

New supplements and adventures. *GURPS* continues to grow, and we’ll be happy to let you know what’s new. A current catalog is available for an SASE. Or check out our Web site (below).

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Q&A. We do our best to answer any game question accompanied by an SASE.

Gamer input. We value your comments. We will consider them, not only for new products, but also when we update this book on later printings!

Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.sjgames.com for an online catalog, errata, updates, and hundreds of pages of information. We also have conferences on CompuServe and America Online. *GURPS* has its own Usenet group, too: rec.games.frp.gurps.

GURPSnet. Much of the online discussion of *GURPS* happens on this e-mail list. To join, send mail to majordomo@io.com with “subscribe GURPSnet-L” in the body, or point your World Wide Web browser to gurpsnet.sjgames.com/.

The *GURPS Lensman* Web page is at www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/lensman/.

Page References

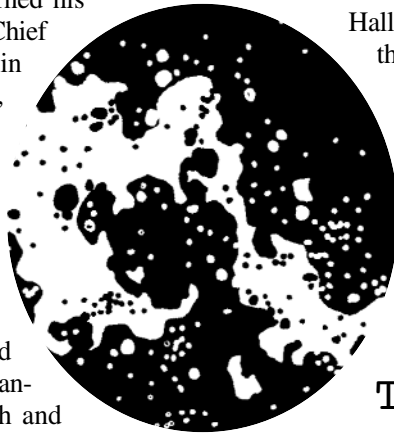
Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* – e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Page references that begin with CI indicate *GURPS Compendium I*, S refers to *GURPS Space*, MA refers to *GURPS Martial Arts*, and MAA refers to *GURPS Martial Arts Adventures*.

There exists a Japanese anime and comic book series with the same name as this work. It has nothing whatsoever to do with Doc's story, and is not authorized.

THE FIRST HISTORIAN

The significance of the *Lensman* series cannot be overestimated. In 1966 it was nominated for a special Hugo Award as "Best All-Time Series." It was the first multi-volume science fiction novel ever published – conceived from the beginning as a single story line. From our viewpoint here in the future, Doc's courage is not obvious. We have seen many interminable series, designed never to end. Once parts of Doc's story had appeared in the pulps, though, he could not expect them ever to be reprinted. But the First Historian of Civilization planned a story with the full scope and range of his imagination, and wrote it with the drive it deserved.

Edward Elmer Smith was born in 1890. In 1915, he married Jeanne MacDougall and began collaborating on *The Skylark of Space*. In 1918, he earned his Ph.D. in chemistry and later became Chief Chemist for a company specializing in doughnut mixes. He had three children, Verna, Clarrissa, and Roderick. During World War II, he was head of the Inspection Division of an ordnance plant at a laboratory called "Outer Siberia," but was fired for refusing to pass substandard shells. Doc was a master of many professions including lumberjack and carpenter, cereal and explosives chemist, chemical and mechanical engineer, metallurgist, blacksmith and machinist, hardrock miner, photographer, and cook. In university, he captained a crack drill and rifle team, sang in Gilbert and Sullivan light operas, and was president of the mandolin and guitar club. The remarkable skills of Doc's characters are sometimes hard to believe. Doc made them as capable as he, and Doc was a starkly incredible man.



Characters From Other Campaigns

Characters from other campaigns may encounter some difficulties fitting into a *GURPS Lensman* adventure. If they are from a high-tech background, they will find the Galactic Patrol's equipment incomprehensible, since they will be unfamiliar with both the high power usage and the vacuum tube technology. (Even if the heroes have a tube background, those used by the Patrol will be far more sophisticated than anything they have ever seen.) If the PCs are from a low-tech environment, they will be even more lost. The psionic powers of nearly every race in *GURPS Lensman*, augmented by the Lens, will render trivial even many *Supers* abilities. Magic simply doesn't work. And, most important, the newcomers were probably not raised in a society that values the ability to *think*, and requires a moral stature uncommon elsewhere.

Political Correctness

The *Lensman* series was written years before World War II by a man who grew up in the 1910s. It is sometimes accused of being sexist. Equal justice under the law for both sexes is a fundamental principle of Civilization, but Doc did *not* think men and women were equal (any more that he thought all men were equal; as Heinlein said, "he would as lief equated oranges with apples"). The entire *Lensman* saga is predicated on the fact that humans are extremely *unequal*.

GURPS Lensman describes Civilization the way Doc created it. "He" is the generic third-person singular pronoun, and it may or may not include females. Sex-specific occupational titles, such as steward and stewardess, will be used where appropriate.

Doc was Guest of Honor at the Second World Science Fiction Convention, and was inducted into the First Fandom Hall of Fame at the 21st Worldcon. He was a true fan. At the second Worldcon, he attended the masquerade in his leather motorcycle garb with a homemade ray-gun as a C.L. Moore character, Northwest Smith. He contributed frequently to fan magazines.

On 31 August 1965, the First Historian suddenly left this plane of existence; his friend Robert Heinlein reported that he had "urgent business a long way off, no time to spare to tell us more stories."

THE PRESENT HISTORIAN

Sean Barrett has been, in accord with the Guardians' Visualization, readied to some extent for his present task; *Galactic Patrol* was the first science fiction book he read. However, since his introduction to the First Historian, his preparation has continued for only little more than two-and-a-half decades.

He has trained only as a short-order cook and an operator of the prodigious atomic engines of submarines, a tutor of mathematics and physics and a nucleonicist at the recovery from the hellish disaster of a melted atomic pile, an actor on stage and film and a journeyman programmer of electronic automatic computers. His only foreign language is Japanese. His unarmed combat skills are barely adequate, his swordplay unoriginal, and his marksmanship unremarkable.

He fully realizes that this brief and narrow training leaves him starkly unqualified to continue the monumental History. He has consulted several entities who were contemporaneous and familiar with the First Historian, and extends heartfelt thanks for their help. In particular, Kelly and Laura Freas and Verna Trestrail were utterly invaluable.

Even more vital was the help and true love of the Historian's wife and First Reader, Susan Miller. This manual could not have been produced without her, nor without the three requisite Lenscats.

Respectfully submitted,
Sean Barrett, Tellus

15];

Overconfidence [-10]; Sense of Duty (Civilization) [-20].

Quirks: Confirmed bachelor and “lady killer”; Dislikes “slipstick creeps” – scientific, engineering or technical professionals; Eager to talk about conquests – but his stories are always completely fictitious (he *never* talks about his real girlfriends); Hostilely impatient with displays of sexual inhibitions; Is creating a private collection of (beautifully drawn) portraits of his girlfriends. [-5]

Skills: Acting-14 [1/2]; Administration-15 [2]; Artist-16 [4]; Astrogration-14 [1]; Bard-18* [2]; Battlesuit-14 [1/2]; Beam Weapons (DeLameter)-20** [8]; Carousing-18 [8]; Chemistry-12 [1/2]; Dancing-15 [2]; Diplomacy-14 [2]; Electronics (Sensors)-12 [1/2]; Fast-Draw (Pistol)-16 [2]; Fast-Talk-15 [2]; First Aid-15 [1]; Free Fall-15 [2]; Gambling-13 [1/2]; Holdout-14 [1]; Inertialess Agility-14 [2]; Integrating Calculator Operation-14 [1]; Karate-13 [1]; Knife-16 [2]; Law-12 [1/2]; Leadership-18* [2]; Mathematics-12 [1/2]; Merchant-15 [2]; Performance-15 [1 1/2]; Physics-13 [1]; Piloting (Speedster, inert)-14 [1]; Piloting (Speedster, “free”)-13 [1]; Psionics-12 [1]; Psychology-12 [1/2]; Running-14 [1]; Savoir-Faire-16 [2]; Sex Appeal-18 [3]; Space-Axe-14 [1]; Strategy (Space)-14 [2]; Tactics-15 [3]; Vacc Suit-16 [3].

* Includes +3 for Charisma.

** Includes +2 for IQ.

Telepathy Skills: Mind Shield-13/11 [2]/[1/2]; Telereceive-13 (Interstellar Range, +50%) [3]; Telescan-13 (Interstellar Range, +50%) [3]; Telesend-13 (Interstellar Range, +50%; Cannot Lie, -30%) [2 1/2]. *Mind Shield numbers are with Lens/without. Others are Lensed only.*

Maneuvers (Military Hand-to-Hand Combat): Back Kick-12 [1]; Close Combat (Space-Axe)-10 [1]; Elbow Strike-13 [1]; Eye Gouging-5 [1]; Head Butt-9 [1]; Hit Location (Space-Axe)-12 [1]; Jump Kick-12 [1]; Knee Strike-14 [1]; Kicking-13 [2]; Spin Kick-13 [1].

His father was a Tellurian Lensman, a cousin of the Kinnison family, who met his mother while stationed on Aldebaran II, married her, and made their home there. He was killed in action when Anson was seven years old. Anson remembers his father as an idealized hero. He has no special drive to “avenge” his father, just the conviction that he must continue his work.

Anson’s mother tried to raise him in the pacifistic Aldebaranian society. Anson showed some artistic ability, and she enrolled him in art classes, hoping he would become a painter. Anson, however, inspired by the memory of his father, was fascinated by the military and hung around the base, talking to the Patrolmen. Over his mother’s objections, he applied to the Academy and entered a few months after his 18th birthday.

Anson’s artistic talent served him well in the Academy, once he discovered that he could sell “pin-up” drawings to other cadets. (He also eluded some hazing by not charging upperclassmen.) He has very little scientific ability, and was

not a remarkable cadet, graduating 53rd of 97. The Academy’s requirement of a solid engineering background has given him a strong distaste for “slipstick creeps.” He learned what he had to, but dislikes academic study.

He has served in the fleet for over a year now, performing better than might be expected from his lackluster scores. He continues to make extra money from his drawings: pin-ups for individuals, murals in the crew spaces, and “nose art” for small craft. He usually charges \$200 and a fifth of bolega for nose art but can be dickered with.

Anson has a reputation as a “lady killer” that is completely deserved. The uninhibited attitudes of Aldebaran II were the only part of his upbringing that stuck with him. He has *at least* one girl in every port. He is punctiliously honorable and frank about his intentions – he is a confirmed bachelor, and will not be “tied down.” Some of his girlfriends may still entertain hopes of “catching” him, but not because he is leading them on.

Anson is aiming his career at Grand Fleet Operations, concentrating on developing his administration, strategic planning, and related skills.

QUOTES

*“I dunno. The XO’s gonna take a dim view if we paint his sweetheart **there**.”*

“C’mon, sweetcakes. Put down the book and let’s go dancing.”

*“Well, no, sir, not **exactly** by the book. Sir, they’ve **read** the book.”*

KIMBALL KINNISON

3,398 POINTS

Second-Stage Lensman, Unattached. Galactic Coordinator.
Age 49; 6’2”, 216 lbs. Male exalted human with gray hair and gray eyes.

Attributes: ST 18 [90]; DX 18 [125]; IQ 22 [225]; HT 18 [125].
Speed 9; Move 9.
Dodge 10#.

Advantages: Alertness +5 [25]; Allies (Clarrissa, 15 or less) [540]; Nadreck [200], Tregonsee [220], vanBuskirk [115], and Worsel [255], each 9 or less); Attractive [5]; Charisma +5 [25]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Compartmentalized Mind 3 [150]; Eidetic Memory 1 [30]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Intuition [15]; Lensman [100]; Longevity [5]; Luck [15]; Military Rank 9 (Unattached) [45]; Patron (Kathryn Kinnison, 9 or less) [120]; Patron (Mentor, 6 or less) [40]; Rapid Healing [5]; Reputation +4 (As savior of Civilization; all Civilization, all the time) [20]; Second-Stage Stability [25]; Sense of Perception [100]; Status 7 (Galactic Coordinator) [35]; Strong Will +5 [20]; Telepathy, Power 31 [155].

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Gray Seal) [-15]; Enemy (Boskonian, 15 or less) [-120]; Extremely Hazardous Duty (Galactic Patrol) [-20]; Fanaticism (Civilization) [-15]; Honesty [-10]; Impulsiveness [-10]; Overconfidence

[-10]; Sense of Duty (Civilization) [-20].

Quirks: Chivalrous, reluctant to “make war on women”; Habitually uses mildly derogatory nicknames for acquaintances; “Meat-and-potatoes” man: prefers plain food, and lots of it; Reads (and sometimes writes) pulp fiction; Swears by Klono’s body parts. [-5]

Skills: Administration-22 [1]; Astrogation-22 [1]; Battlesuit-24 [40]; Beam Weapons (DeLameter)-25** [24]; Carousing-20 [8]; Criminology-22 [1]; Diplomacy-21 [1]; Disguise-22 [1]; Fast-Draw (Pistol)-24# [24]; Fencing-18 [2]; Free Fall-20 [8]; Holdout-22 [1]; Inertialess Agility-20 [16]; Judo-20 [16]; Karate-20 [16]; Knife-23 [24]; Leadership-29* [3]; Motorcycle-18 [1]; Piloting (Speedster, inert)-23 [32]; Piloting (Speedster, “free”)-23 [40]; Prospecting-22 [1]; Space-Axe-23 [32]; Strategy (Space)-27 [7]; Streetwise-25 [4]; Tactics-28 [8]; Vacc Suit-22 [1]; Writing-22 [1].

Telepathy Skills: Illusion-30 [40]; Mental Blow-25 [20]; Mental Stab-30 [40]; Mental Blast-35 [60]; Mind Shield-25 [10]; Mindwipe-28 [32]; Suggest-35 [60]; Telecontrol-35 [60]; Telereceive-22 (Intergalactic Range, +150%) [10]; Telescan-22 [4]; Telesend-30 (Intergalactic Range, +150%; Cannot Lie, -30%) [44].

Maneuvers: Aggressive Parry-14# [6]; Arm Lock-22 [1]; Back Kick-20 [2]; Close Combat (Space-Axe)-20 [2]; Elbow Strike-20 [1]; Eye Gouging-12 [1]; Head Butt-18 [4]; Head Lock-20 [6]; Hit Location (Space-Axe)-23 [4]; Jump Kick-20 [2]; Kicking-20 [2]; Knee Strike-21 [1]; Neck Snap-21 [12]; Spin Kick-20 [1]. *Kimball Kinnison knows both the standard Military and the Marine versions of all these maneuvers.*

* Includes +5 for Charisma.

** Includes +2 for IQ.

Includes +1 for Combat Reflexes.

Kinnison, the human male penultimate, was Released after his first mission. He was the only human to receive additional training from Mentor, becoming the second Second-Stage Lensman. He suffered heavy wounds during his many operations against Boskonian, and met Nurse Clarrissa MacDougall while recovering and repeatedly thereafter. Their superiors in the Patrol and Mentor saw to it that they fell in love.

Stymied by the uncooperative persons of Lyrane II, he assigned that planet’s investigation to Clarrissa, whom he made the only human female Lensman ever. Kinnison eventually succeeded in infiltrating Boskonian so thoroughly that he



became its Tyrant and learned that the real power was the Prime Minister, Fossten. Kinnison led an assault on the Patrol base Ultra Prime, but attacked Fossten at the last moment, discovering that he was a renegade, insane Arisian. Kinnison slew Fossten and surrendered Boskonian to Civilization. He then married Clarrissa, became Galactic Coordinator of the Second Galaxy, and eradicated the fragments – the “Spawn” – of Boskone.

Some twenty years later, disturbing patterns formed. He assigned his son to investigate, assisted by all the Second-Stage Lensmen. Kinnison’s characteristic pattern of infiltration discovered a corps of Black Lensmen, but also led him into a series of ambushes specifically designed for him. The first snares he escaped by luck, but he was finally trapped such that Mentor could not locate him. His wife in fusion with their children did, however, and Mentor arranged his return.

QUOTES

“Such a bloated swine; such a mangy, low-down cur; such a pussy-gutted tub of lard; such a brainless, filthy spawn of the lowest dregs of the rottenest scum of space; such an utterly incompetent, self-opinionated, misbegotten abortion as you are. . . .”

“Consider very carefully and very thoroughly an iceberg; its every phase and aspect.”

“Klono’s tungsten teeth and curving carballoy claws!!!!”

many Tellurian liquors, Aldebaran bolega, Martian zyzmol, and Radelgian laxlo, among many others, are also popular.

ILLEGAL DRUGS

Many of the drugs known on Tellus prior to the end of the World War are still available. In general, those derived from native plants have not remained popular, as their costs rise sharply off-world. Drugs that can be cheaply synthesized with readily available equipment have proven more lucrative. Thus, peyote and marijuana are all but forgotten, and morphine and poppy opium are rare, but heroin (a formerly trademarked brand of synthetic morphine) still has its adherents. Exceptions exist, of course. Cocaine is popular in some subcultures of the zwilnik world and obviously thionite is immensely profitable despite – or because – of the unimaginable difficulties involved in its acquisition from the one locale where broadleaf grows.

Apart from those few exceptions, modern pharmacology has yielded psychotropics more hellish than any Nature can create.

BENTLAM

The psychoactive ingredient of bentlam (also known as “benny,” “benweed,” or “happy-sleep,”) is *anandamide*, a chemical closely related to tetrahydrocannabinol (“THC,” found in Tellurian marijuana). It is easily synthesized at a purity and potency undreamed of by the hashish-eaters of ancient Tellus. A fibrous material much like finely-cut chewing tobacco, bentlam is usually formed into small cakes or “units,” like miniature candy-bars, and chewed. For a number of hours equal to the number of units chewed, the user is in a state of euphoric intoxication.

If a bentlam eater (a “benhead”) needs to do anything while under the influence, he must first work up the motivation by making a Will roll, minus the number of units chewed. Body weight reduces the drug’s effects; add the user’s weight divided by 50 pounds (rounded off). For example, a 220-lb. user with IQ 22 and five levels of strong Will who took the heroic dose of 24 units would have to roll 7 or less (22 IQ + 5 Strong Will - 24 units + 4 50-lb. increments). If that roll succeeds, he has convinced himself that the task is important enough to think about. Then, in order to force his body to actually *do* what must be done, he must make a HT roll, with the same modifiers as above. If the user above has a HT of 18, he must roll a 3 – he is almost completely incapacitated. He is able to *think* fairly clearly, but his body has betrayed him.

Street prices start at \$1 per unit in quantity. Bentlam is cheap, mildly addictive, and illegal; a bentlam chewer has a -5-point addiction if he can limit himself to non-incapacitating dosages, -15 points if he routinely knocks himself out with it.

HADIVE

Hadive is a black, tarry, inflammable gel with a consistency much like pudding. It is smoked in a wide variety of ways, from special water-pipes to soaking it into shredded paper and rolling a “cricket” that is smoked like a cigarette.

The name of this drug is properly pronounced “hah-DEE-vay” on Vandemar, its planet of origin – but it would be considered a humorous affectation to do so anywhere else. “HAY-dive” is universally understood and expected. The active ingredient, *synalthiozole*, can be created without much difficulty in any biochemical laboratory.

Hadive causes *synaesthesia*, an unusual “cross-circuiting” of the senses in which, for example, smells are perceived as colors and textures are audible. The effects are almost always pleasurable, so a hadive smoker is usually idiotically smiling; the pleasure is directly related in intensity to the stimulus. A startle response will set off orgasmic sensations. Hadive dens are always full of stroboscopic lighting and deafening, discordant music.

Hadive costs \$5 for a quarter-ounce, which will provide 10-15 doses. It is illegal, cheap, stimulating, and hallucinogenic; addiction is a -15 point disadvantage.

HEROIN

Clear-quill heroin costs \$10,000 per pound in bulk. On the street, it is usually cut with inert filler and sold in “trey bags” of one gram each, costing three credits.

Heroin is medium-expensive, incapacitating, illegal, and totally addictive; an addict has a -30-point disadvantage.

LADOLIAN

Ladolian is a thick yellowish-green liquid, aromatic, with a bitter taste. Its active ingredient, *thujone*, causes hallucinations, and prolonged use results in mental deterioration and sterility. For every ounce that is drunk, the user must make a HT roll. On a critical failure, he permanently loses a point of IQ.

Ladolian was created by the ancient Martians from native rock molds, but proved quite simple of synthesis. There is a cachet attached to *Martian* ladolian, however, and it commands double or even higher price. There is no real way to tell *Martian* ladolian from any other, though. *Caveat zwilnik*.

Though illegal throughout Civilization and quite dangerous, ladolian is a popular psychedelic in the wealthier circles. Its hallucinations alter the perceptions of the user to fit his desires. The visions have their bases in objective reality, but the user believes that whatever (or whoever) is present is what he desires it (or them) to be. Thus, a pile of trash may seem to be thousand-credit bank-notes, or a passer-by may be believed to be a devoted slave. Obviously this effect can produce both hilarious and tragic consequences.

Ladolian’s bitter taste is frequently disguised by diluting it with water flavored with herbs such as licorice or fennel. The classic method, considered by aficionados to be the only “proper” way, is to use a special, finely made, and *very* expensive glass that allows ice water to seep through a sugar cube into the drug. The ultimate refinement – inarguable proof that one is a true connoisseur – is to use super-cooled Martian canal water. Ladolian turns opalescent white on contact with water.

At roughly a \$10 an ounce, it is a moderately expensive habit. It is hallucinogenic and illegal. It is not physically addic-

tive, but psychologically it is quite seductive. A ladolian Addiction is a -20-point disadvantage.

NITROLABE

Nitrolabe is an exception to the general rule that regionally developed drugs do not have widespread popularity. In this case, ease of transportation explains the drug's success.

The nine-fish (*Nitroso labile*) of Centralia VI is a small amphibian, massing about a pound and vaguely resembling a nine-armed starfish, living in the alkali tidal pools of VI's ammonia-rich oceans. It is covered with a host of needle-sharp spines that secrete a nerve toxin deadly to native Centralian life. A hardy creature, it can survive most reasonable environments; in unreasonable ones, it curls up in a ball and goes into a state of suspended animation. Balled-up, their bodies are about three inches in diameter, and the needles add another inch all around.

However, all life on Centralia VI has copper-based blood. Nine-fish toxin has a very different effect on beings with iron-based blood. It still attacks the nervous system, but rather than blocking neural transmissions, it induces them. The result is an orgasmic trance that can last more than an hour.

It also has some unpleasant side-effects. It not only throws the user into a totally incapacitating twitching paralysis in which it is physiologically impossible for them to voluntarily move or think *at all*, it permanently alters the addict's neurochemistry. His nerves become unable to function without the toxin. If the addict does not get at least a dose a week, he suffers excruciating pain throughout his body as his nervous system begins to fail. Each week in which a dose is not taken, the addict permanently loses one point of DX and one hit point. This damage has all the same effects as battle damage, including consciousness and death rolls, except that it cannot be cured by anything short of Phillips regeneration.

With every dose, a user must roll against HT minus the total number of doses ever taken. On any failure, he has become addicted. On a critical failure, his nervous system fails, and he dies in convulsions. Nitrolabe is instantly lethal to all epileptics and about 1/2% (a roll of

three on 3d) of all other humans. Those acutely vulnerable populations will automatically critically fail their HT roll.

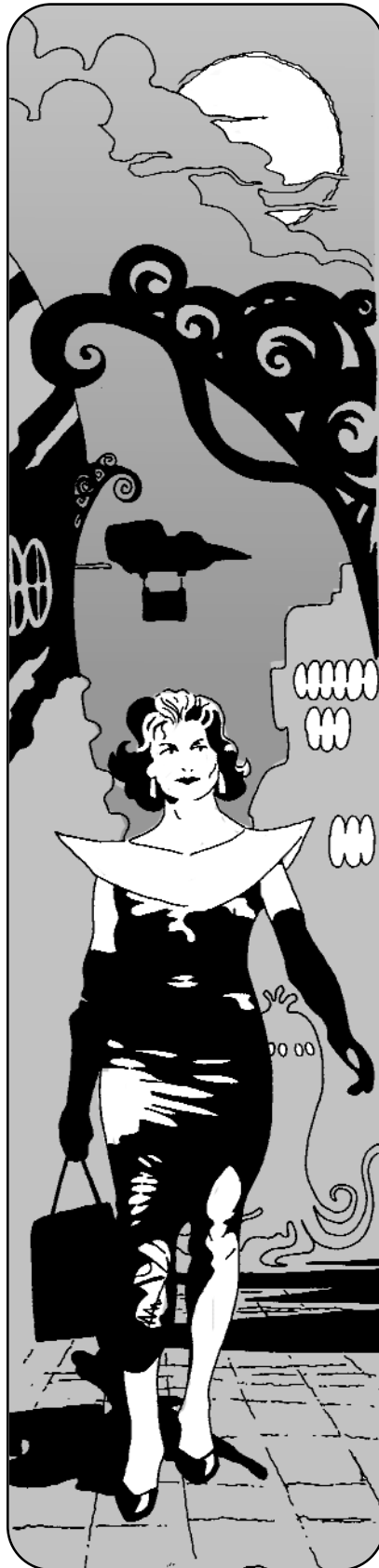
Shipment of nine-fish is a very simple matter. Thick gloves will protect the harvester from the needles, and exposing them to pure water will cause them to estivate (nine-fish consider water without dissolved ammonia *very* unreasonable). In that state, they can be packed in a wide variety of ways, though care must be taken to prevent them from stabbing each other, since they are susceptible to their own toxin. Dead nine-fish not only do not produce nitrolabe, but also smell unbelievably horrible. An entire nine-fish is worth about 100 credits, and will produce about 500 needles in its life. Individually, needles costs at least \$10 each. Nitrolabe is very expensive, incapacitating, illegal, and totally addictive; a -40-point disadvantage.

THIONITE

Thionite is the *ne plus ultra* of drugs, the zwilnik's dream cargo. This purple powder is incredibly valuable, incredibly addictive, and totally illegal. Clear-quill thionite is a fantastically potent drug, easily metabolized by any creature with hemoglobin-bearing blood. A light dose is half a microgram; a single ounce contains over 60 million doses. The most common way to take thionite is to sniff it into the sinuses, but it can also be swallowed or liquefied and injected. It is even slowly absorbed through the skin, which requires it to be handled with care. Law enforcement typically calculates thionite's "street value" at \$10 per microgram. In practice, a user's first dose is often free, while following doses are priced at what the dealer estimates the addict is capable of paying – since the addict *will* pay anything he can for that next dose.

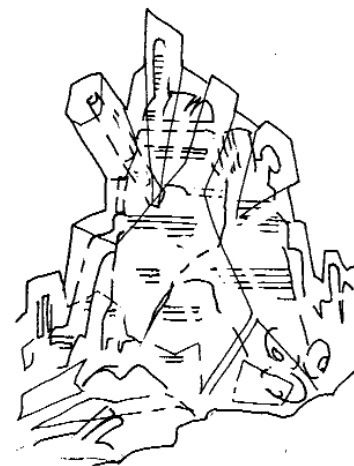
While high on thionite the user has the Delusion that *every* desire, mental or physical, is being completely satisfied. It also gives +3 to ST, -8 to IQ, and -15 to DX. If DX goes below 3, the user is in "muscle-lock," where "every voluntary muscle in the body goes into a rigor as extreme as death itself."

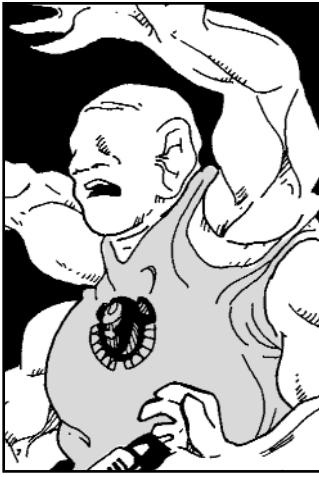
Every time a dose is taken, the user must roll versus his HT divided by the number of micrograms taken *in the past twenty-four hours* (to a maximum of 16, no minimum). If he fails the roll, he permanently loses one point of HT. On critical failure, he dies of heart failure. The high and accompanying muscle-lock come on within seconds, and



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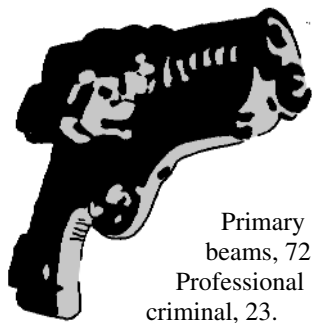
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