

Journal of American Paranormal Research

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Part 1 of 2: Fantasy Roleplaying in Ancient Mesopotamia

The Cradle

By Ed Wetterman

Setting Notes

The Cradle campaign setting is a supplement designed to bring the world of **Innana's Kiss** to life. Part 1, below, provides the tools to create a richly detailed fantasy game set in ancient Mesopotamia. This article ends with some NPCs, monsters, and artifacts. It also includes several GM adventure ideas for both ancient and modern gaming.

In the following issue, Part 2 provides an alternate history involving aliens and demonic forces, as well as some of the recent history and places of this ancient land. It ends with some NPCs, monsters, and artifacts generated for the modern d20 System. It also includes several adventure ideas.

While based on actual history, the author has taken certain liberties with the facts to create a role-playing set-

ting both in the ancient and modern lands of Mesopotamia. Don't use this in a report for school!

The Cradle

Mankind created the first cities 10,000 years ago. This leap of civilization developed due to an agricultural revolution that advanced man from gathering food, to producing it. The earliest settlements known were Jarmo in modern Iran, and Jericho in modern Iraq. Humanity developed new technologies such as the plow, sickle, hoe, and the wheel. Cities provided a central location with food and protection for the people. These fledgling cities often fought for survival, as barbarian raiders and newly developing tribes savagely invaded the lands and sought to steal and to destroy the urban way of life.

Sumer: A Bronze Age Civilization

Sumer was one of many city-states that dotted the valley between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in modern day Iraq from approximately 3500 B.C. to 2000 B.C. The fertile plains that made up Mesopotamia (the Land Between Two Rivers) first began to be settled over 7,000 years ago and

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Midnight Deadlines

12 to Midnight News
by Ed Wetterman

Hey y'all,

We are constantly changing the scope of the Journal and look forward to seeing it grow into a great horror and gaming resource. In this issue we are introducing the "Cradle Campaign," which is our version of the history of the lands of Mesopotamia from its earliest days to modern times. Unfortunately, the campaign backgrounds, NPCs, plot ideas, and cultures are so immense that it must be broken up into several articles that we will include in future issues of the Journal.

We hope that GMs of fantasy and modern games will use these articles in some form and find enjoyment in them. We are also introducing the Paranormal Lexicon, which will be a running article describing the Paranormal, chock full of ideas and backgrounds for GMs looking for a new hook or angle to their horror game. Every issue of the Journal, should include at least one new creature feature, a Pinebox locale, and GM ideas and threads. Of course, you may also find free maps, adventures,

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would prove to be the earliest recorded civilization in human history.

The Sumerians established city-states and advanced human technology in irrigation and construction. In addition, they invented the wheel, the sail, the plow, the first school system, Cuneiform (wedge-shaped writing), city walls, a number system in base 60—from which stem the modern units for measuring time- the 360 degree circle, and architectural advances such as the arch, columns, ramps and pyramid-shaped ziggurats. By 2500 B.C., the Sumerians had developed bronze; skilled metalworkers turned out thousands of spearheads and swords, and had created the first suits of armor.

One of the earliest works of literature is the epic poem of Gilgamesh and his unsuccessful journey in search of immortality. The poem describes some of the various Mesopotamian myths and legends, religion and deities. The Sumerian religion was polytheistic and incorporated over 3,000 gods and goddesses.

The Sumerian gods were very human in their behavior, falling in love, giving birth to children, fighting, arguing, and murdering each other. Despite their human foibles, the gods were considered immortal and all-powerful. Humans were nothing more than servants of the gods and lived at their whim. To keep the gods happy, the people built huge, pyramid-shaped temples (ziggurats) in each city-state. Here they would offer various sacrifices to appease these fickle beings.



A relief of the goddess Inanna.

Sumerians strove to always appease the gods, as the displeasure of these deities would lead to fire, drought, floods, disease, or war. Priest-Kings became the earliest rulers of these cities living high in the ziggurats, just below the top level, in which the gods were believed to live. These Priest-Kings served as the intermediaries between the deities and the people of each city-state.

The people believed that the souls of the dead went to the “land of no return,” or “Sheol” - a dark gloomy place between the ancient sea and the Earth’s crust. They believed that the souls of those departed were doomed and that, “dust is their fare and clay their food.” In Sheol, the souls of the deceased would linger only for a generation before vanishing forever.

Bodies were simply buried beneath the floors of their homes with little ceremony and no coffin.

The city-states of Ur, Babylon, Akkad, Umma, Lagash, Uruk, and Sumer often fought amongst themselves, in brutal wars of conquest and control of the fertile plains and water rights. Eventually the Priest-Kings lost their political power over the people of Sumer and were replaced by military generals, who established the first dynasties. The Kings and Priests occupied the highest levels of society, followed by the merchants, and the farmers. At the bottom were the slaves, some of whom were taken in battle from other city-states.

Children were sold into slavery by their parents to pay off debts to rich merchants, priests, or the government. However, it is worth mentioning that Sumerian slaves could earn their freedom from working obediently and loyally for their owners.

Wealthy young men attended the first schools, where they learned how

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Midnight Deadlines

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quick scares, and even book or movie reviews.

Also, don't forget to click the “accept general mail” button at RPGNow.com. This enables us to send you valuable coupons and can save you money when you purchase our games. Our philosophy is to give as much support to our gamers as they give us with their purchase.

Finally, we would like to accept gamer submissions for the Journal, so if you have an idea for an article, creature, or even a quick scare, email me at Jackson@12tomidnight.com

So, enjoy this issue and look for the next soon.

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to become scribes, and upon completing their education were guaranteed to become the top members of society.

Women could pursue various occupations in the culture from merchants to artisans. They could own property, and even served in the lower ranks of the priesthood.

Eventually, the working of bronze was discovered in Akkad, and Sargon I, became the first conqueror in world history. His armies, clad in bronze armor and carrying shields, swords, and spears, covered Mesopotamia and united the various city-states. His empire only lasted a few decades, as the other city-states soon learned the secret of making bronze weapons and armor. Civil war erupted throughout the empire upon his death.

A second empire arose about 2,000 B.C.-the Babylonians. Their greatest king was Hammurabi, who was known for writing a code of laws that would unify all the city-states under the same government and laws. By 1500 B.C., the Babylonians were conquered by numerous nomadic invaders. This ancient land suffered many wars and was conquered time and again as many new civilizations rose and fell in the Land Between Two Rivers.

The Assyrians, Chaldeans, Phoenicians, Hebrews, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Ottoman Turks, British,

and Americans all came to this ancient land and fought wars of conquest. The land of Mesopotamia, the cradle of civilization, is truly a land of bloodshed and tears, ripe with stories of adventure that can provide many tales for Game Masters of ancient and modern games.

Sumerian Life

Sumerian society was divided into various levels, with the kings and priests being the most powerful citizens of the city-states. These were followed by the nobles, lower priests, merchants, scholars, farmers and slaves.

Farmers planted in the fertile valley following the sometimes violent and very unpredictable flooding of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The most common trade good in a Sumerian city-state was food with farmers planting dates, grains, vegetables, and raising domestic animals, mainly oxen and goats. Each city-state had its own laws and customs and some were much harsher than others. Law would finally become unified under Hammurabi, when Babylon conquered all of Mesopotamia.

Women had some basic rights in the earliest civilizations. They had property rights and could become merchants, traders, or scribes (by the time of the Babylonian empire). Most of the men served in the city-state's army, but the first professional regular

Sumerian Gods & Goddesses

Tiamat- Primordial chaos, bearer of the skies and the earth She takes the form of a dragon.

An (Anu)- The sky god, father and king of the gods.

Enlil- The god of storms.

Enki (Ea)- The all-knowing god of the waters.

Sin- The moon god, son of Enlil.

Nusku-The god of fire and Enlil's vizier.

Marduk- Son of Ea. Supplants the earlier gods and became the ruler of all.

Ashur-God of the Assyrians, and greatest of the war gods.

Annunaki-The gods of the earth, angels, and demons.

Ereshkigal- The goddess of Sheol, the underworld.

Namtar- Ereshkigal's messenger and vizier of the underworld. Also known as the herald of death, commands over sixty diseases.

Nergal- Husband of Ereshkigal.

Lamashu- Female demon known as "She Who Erases."

Nedu-The guardian of the first gate of Sheol.

Dagan-Male god of fertility and servant of the underworld.

Sebitti- The seven warrior gods led by Erra, also known as the Pleiades. Children of An and the Earth Mother.

Nanna- God of the Moon. Son of Enlil.

Nammu- God of the primordial waters.

Ki- Original goddess of the Earth.

Utu- A later sun-god.

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army did not develop until the rise of the Assyrians.

Cities were made of mud brick and typically were surrounded by large walls. The buildings were flat roofed and during the long, hot summers eople would assemble on the roofs under awnings to enjoy the slight breeze and to remain cool, as the bricked homes were too hot inside during the summer daytime.

Each city contained a ziggurat dedicated to various gods, with the primary deity of a city living in the top most room, accessible only by the High Priest.

The Sumerian Pantheon.....

The Sumerians believed in over 3,000 gods and goddesses and every deity was believed to be a celestial, all-powerful, and immortal being. The gods suffered, as did the later Greek and Roman gods, from the same vices and corruption that always plagued mankind.

The ancient Sumerians believed that the goddess of the primordial waters was Nammu, who gave birth to Ki-goddess of the earth, and An- the deity

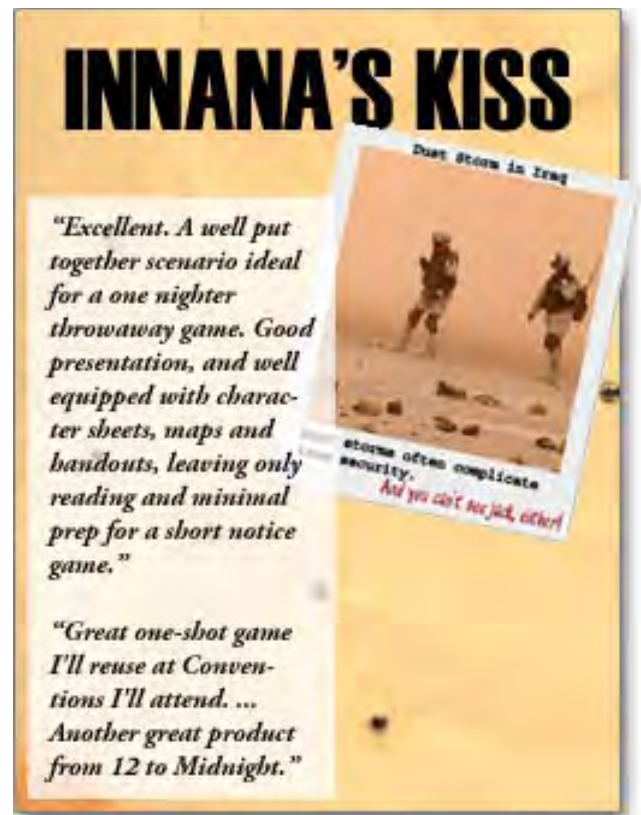
of the sky. An and Ki became lovers and gave birth to Enlil, the god of the atmosphere- who divides the sky from the earth.

The greatest of the most ancient gods were the Sumerian Triad. The Triad consisted of An, Elil, and Enki. Enki served as the god of the earth.

Another important triad of the Sumerian gods were the planetary gods, Nanna (Sin in Akkadian)- god of the moon, Utu, the sun-god, and Innana (Ishtar in Akkadian)-the goddess of love, fertility, and war.

The Goddess Innana.....

Innana became the most influential of the Sumerian deities after she replaced her mother as An's spouse and becoming the true earth goddess, but she wanted control of the underworld as well. The story of Innana's descent into Sheol is one of the oldest myths of



the ancient world. Innana was viewed as the goddess of the living, and had fallen in love with a beautiful shepherd boy named Dumuzi.

She set him upon the throne of Uruk and together they ruled the land of the living. Innana wanted immortality and decided to overcome her sister, Ereshkigal- the goddess of Sheol and death. When Innana entered the Palace of the Dead, the gatekeepers stripped her of her powers and her sister fixed the "look of death" upon her, killing Innana. Enlil had pity on Innana and sent two messengers to Ereshkigal to ask that Innana be revived and returned to the land of the living. Before she could return, the Annunakis- the judges of Sheol- demanded that she provide a replacement for her spirit. She agreed.

Upon returning to the lands of the living, she was angered to find that Dumuzi was happy to be the sole ruler of the lands and apparently had not mourned her death. She cursed him by "fixing the eye of death" upon him, uttering the "word of despair," and

Plot Ideas and Threads

Attack of the Bull of Heaven. Characters are in a city that is set to be destroyed by the Bull of Heaven.

Huwawa's Brother. Yes, Huwawa had a brother, and he's pissed. He's looking for Gilgamesh and revenge, but any hero will do.

Sword of Gilgamesh. Undertake a quest to locate the legendary sword. Some say it now rests upon the wandering island in the Persian Gulf.

Tribe of Enkidu. Characters discover the a long-lost tribe of strange beings who do not want to be discovered! Are they another race of man, or something more? Some say they were creatures created by the Goddess Innana to serve her in all things.

Water is the most precious resource in Mesopotamia. Now two city-states are fighting over control of a dam and access to the water supply of the Tigris River. The heroes serve one of the city-state's Priest-Kings.

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pronouncing the “cry of damnation” upon him. He called upon his brother in law, Utu, to turn him into a snake so he could escape to the home of his sister, Geshtinanna. Demons from Sheol captured Dumuzi and dragged him back to Sheol and tortured him.

Ereshkigal took pity on Dumuzi and halved his sentence in the underworld, by allowing Geshtinanna to serve the second half of his sentence of death. Later, the Akkadians and the Babylonians would add to the myth. They changed Dumuzi’s name from to Tammuz and stated that he was not only Innana’s lover, but also her son. Their mythos resurrected him after death and he became an important deity symbolizing the cycle of life in nature. The story also changed, stating that Innana entered the underworld to rescue Tammuz who had died, but she failed to overcome death.

Innana is also known as the goddess of a thousand names, as her aspect has been copied by many civilizations throughout history. She has been called Ishtar, Nana, Nina, Anunit, Astarte, Ashtar, Athena, Aphrodite and Venus. Innana has been recognized as the goddess of battle and the queen of heaven. Her pet owls often accompany her.

She decided that she wanted to make her city of Urek, the greatest city on the earth. She accomplished this by getting the god Enki drunk and stealing the arts of civilization from him. Enki was angered and sent many evil monsters and creatures after her, but she destroyed them and became the most powerful goddess in all of human history, influencing each of the great rulers of Sumeria, including Sargon I.

Her most famous dealings came with the hero Gilgamesh. Gilgamesh and his friend, Enkidu, had traveled to the forests of the cedars and killed

the monster, Huwawa. On their trek home to the city of Urek, Innana saw the beauty of Gilgamesh and asked for him to marry her. He remembered what she had done to her previous husbands, especially Dumuzi, and he replied, “Your lovers have found you like a brazier who smolders in the cold.” He continues, “Which of your lovers did you ever love forever... And if you and I should be lovers, should not I be served in the same fashion as all these others whom you have once loved?”

Innana became angry and asked her father, An, to kill Gilgamesh and to destroy the city of Urek. She threatened to return the dead to life if An ignored her. The dead would have outnumbered the living and eaten all of mankind. An agreed to help her, and created the Bull of Heaven. The beast was sent to destroy the city of Urek. It killed men by the hundreds, but Enkidu finally caught its tail and the great beast was slain by Gilgamesh’s sword.

Ishtar sent her followers and demons to attack the city walls and pronounced curses upon Gilgamesh. Enkidu tore a thigh from the great Bull of Heaven and threw it to land at the goddess’ feet while he hurled insults at her from the protection of the city walls. That night, Enkidu dreamed of his own death. The next day he grew ill and died, cursed by the angered goddess. His death prompted Gilgamesh to undertake his failed quest for immortality.

Enkidu.....

Enkidu was created by the goddess Aruru as a great warrior and hunter. Fine hair covered his body, and his mane was long and luxurious. His head was large, with two great horns, similar to a bull’s, and his legs were stout and powerful with cloven hooves instead of feet. Enkidu lived among the animals as an animal, running with

the gazelles, and living high in the mountains. A hunter spied him, and was so terrified of the wild man, that he went to the great King Gilgamesh and asked for help in overcoming the beast-man. Gilgamesh sent a harlot named Shalot, who found Enkidu next to a lake and seduced him. After a week of lovemaking, Enkidu found that he could no longer be with the animals as they now fled from him. He and Gilgamesh fought, but after a while they became great friends. It was Enkidu who grabbed the Bull of Heaven by the tail and held it, so Gilgamesh could finally kill the beast. He was cursed by Innana for this act. He died the next day. His death was greatly mourned by Gilgamesh, and caused the hero to quest for immortality.

There are other beast-men in the mountains, commonly referred to as the Enkido by most of humanity.

Enkidu:

Male Enkidu Monstrous Humanoid 4/Rgr2; Medium Monstrous Humanoid ; HD 4d8+12 (Monstrous Humanoid) , 2d10+6 (Ranger) ; hp 67; Init + 8; Spd 40; AC 15; Atk + 11 base melee, + 10 base ranged; +11 (2d6+7, Horns) ; +11 (1d6+7, Hoof kick); +12 (1d8+7, Longspear, Masterwork); SA: Animal Frenzy (Ex) Bore Charge (Ex); AL NG; SV Fort + 11, Ref + 10, Will -1; STR 20, DEX 19, CON 17, INT 6, WIS 6, CHA 6.

Possessions:

Weapons: Longspear, Masterwork.
Skills: *Animal Empathy* + 2, *Climb* + 8, *Hide* + 8, *Jump* + 7, *Move Silently* + 8, *Swim* + 6.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Run, Toughness, Track. Enkidu Beast Men are strong bull-like, humanoid creations of the Earth Goddess, Aruru. They typically live in the Zagros Mountains among the animals. They have the gift of speaking with any animal, but may lose this gift if they

Enkidu Beast Men

Medium Monstrous Humanoid

Hit Dice: 4d8+16 (37)

Initiative: +8

Speed: 40 ft.

Armor Class: 15 (+4 Dex, +1 Natural), Touch 11, Flat-Footed 11

Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+9

Attack: Horns +9 (2d6+7), or Hoof Kick +9 (1d6+7), or by weapon type

Full Attack: Horns +9 (2d6+7) or Hoof Kick +9 (1d6+7)

Space/Reach: 5 ft. x 5 ft.

Special Attacks: Animal Frenzy (Ex), Bore Charge (Ex)

Special Qualities: Speak with Animals

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +10, Will -1

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 6

Skills: Animal Empathy +2, Climb +8, Handle Animal +1, Hide +7, Jump +7, Move Silently +7

Feats: Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Run, Toughness, Track

Environment: Mountains

Organization: Solitary, pair, or family group (3 or 4).

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Generally Neutral

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +2

This creature is a bit taller than the average human, with very dense and powerful muscles. Its body is covered with fine hair, similar to that of a short-haired dog or cat, and is capped with a mane of flowing long locks. The head is larger than that of a human, but has definite human-like features, despite the foot-long, bull-like horns that protrude from the top of the skull. Its legs are built like a bull's hind quarters with cloven hooves instead of feet. The dark eyes portray anger and animalistic rage, but belie a basic intelligence.

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choose to live among men, or take on the trappings of men (such as using spears, wearing armor, or living in a civilized community for any length of time). Enkidu are very territorial and often attack other humanoids that enter their home range. They speak their own language and that of the animals, though they may learn Common.

Enkidu stand 6 ½ feet tall and typically weigh over 300 pounds.

Combat

Enkidu prefer to engage in melee combat, where their great strength and horns can crush an opponent. They often use stealth to track and hunt their prey, preferring to surprise their enemy with a Bore Charge.

Animal Frenzy (Ex): An enkidu may give in to its animalistic rage once per day during combat. This temporarily increases the Strength of the creature by +4, allows it to take an extra attack every round, and lowers the creatures AC by 2. The frenzy lasts for six combat rounds, and has the additional effect of allowing the

creature to fight past zero hit-points until negative 10 is reached and the creature dies.

Bore Charge (Ex): An enkidu typically initiates an attack with a Bore Charge. In addition to the normal benefits and hazards of a charge, the Enkidu also receives an extra 2d6 damage due to its sharp horns and powerful cloven legs.

Gilgamesh

Gilgamesh is the greatest hero of Mesopotamian lore. He was a mighty hunter and king of the great city of Uruk. He befriended Enkidu, and together they traveled to far-away Phoenicia and the Forest of the Cedars. There they fought and defeated the construct known as Huwawa. On their trek home, the Goddess Innana fell in love with Gilgamesh and asked him to marry her. He refused. The Goddess was so angry that she asked her father to kill Gilgamesh and to destroy his city of Uruk. Her father created the Bull of Heaven and sent it to destroy the city. The Bull killed hundreds of men, before Enkidu caught it by the tail and Gilgamesh killed it with his Sun Sword. Enkidu cursed Innana, and in his animal frenzy, ripped the Bull's thigh from its body and threw it at the goddesses feet. Innana cursed him and he died the next day.

Enkidu's death was greatly mourned by Gilgamesh, and he undertook a futile quest for immortality.

Gilgamesh:

Male Human Rgr4/Drd2; Medium Humanoid ; HD 4d10+12 (Ranger) , 2d8+6 (Druid) ; hp 51; Init + 7; Spd 30; AC 13; Atk + 9 base melee, + 8 base ranged; +11 (1d8+6, Sun Sword); +9 (1d6, Shortbow, Masterwork); AL N; SV Fort + 10, Ref + 4, Will + 7; STR 18, DEX 17, CON 17, INT 16, WIS 17, CHA 17.

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Possessions: Weapons: Arrows (50); Longsword of Gilgamesh; Shortbow, Masterwork. Armor: Leather, Masterwork. Shields: Shield, small, wooden, Masterwork.

Skills: *Animal Empathy + 10, Climb + 6, Concentration + 7, Diplomacy + 8, Handle Animal + 6, Heal + 7, Hide + 12, Intuit Direction + 6, Jump + 7, Knowledge (nature) + 9, Listen + 7, Move Silently + 12, Search + 6, Sense Motive + 4, Spellcraft + 7, Spot + 6, Swim + 5.*

Feats: Ambidexterity, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track.

Spells Known (Rgr —/1): 1st - Alarm, Animal Friendship, Delay Poison, Detect Animals or Plants, Detect Snares and Pits, Entangle, Magic Fang, Pass without Trace, Read Magic, Resist Elements, Speak with Animals, Summon Nature's Ally I.

Spells Known (Drd 4/3): 0 - Create Water, Cure Minor Wounds, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Flare, Guidance, Know Direction, Light, Mending, Purify Food and Drink, Read Magic, Resistance, Virtue; 1st - Animal Friendship, Calm Animals, Cure Light Wounds, Detect Animals or Plants, Detect Snares and Pits, Endure Elements, Entangle, Faerie Fire, Goodberry, Invisibility to Animals,

Magic Fang, Obscuring Mist, Pass without Trace, Shillelagh, Summon Nature's Ally I.

Spells Prepared (Rgr —/1): 1st - Animal Friendship.

Spells Prepared (Drd 4/3): 0 - Cure Minor Wounds, Detect Magic, Detect Poison, Light; 1st - Cure Light Wounds, Entangle, Invisibility to Animals.

Animal, Eagle: Animal, Eagle ; CR 1/2; Small Animal ; HD 1d8+1 (Animal) ; hp 5; Init + 2; Spd 30, 10, Fly, Average 80; AC 14; Atk +1 base melee, +3 base ranged; +3/-2 (1d3, 2 Claws; 1d4, Bite); AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +2; STR 10, DEX 15, CON 12, INT 1, WIS 14, CHA 6.

Skills: Hide + 6, Listen + 6, Spot + 6.

Feats: Weapon Finesse, Weapon Finesse: Bite.

(Note: These are his statistics before his great adventures.) Fortunately only one Bull of Heaven exists on this plane at any one time, as they are creations of Anu and are only used, but rarely, to punish humanity. When sent to the earth the bull wreaks destruction and chaos everywhere, his sole purpose being to kill and destroy.

Huwawa

A huge construct that guards the Forest of Cedar. It was defeated by Gilgamesh and Enkidu. He is made of magical metals and wood and has two clawed hands.

Huwawa has a humanoid body made of many materials and imbued with special powers from the God Enlil. Huwawa is the guardian of the Cedar Forest. Huwawa is imbued by the God Enlil with strange and powerful magics referred to as auras. Huwawa is surrounded by seven auras of power that he uses to attack his enemies. These auras take the form of Clerical Domains and includes the Domain

powers and spells up to the appropriate level, which Huwawa can cast at will once per day. The first aura is the **Earth Domain** at 7th level. The second aura is the **Water Domain** at 4th level. The third aura is the **Plant**

Huwawa

Huge Construct

Hit Dice: 10d10 +x0 (m)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 20 ft.

Armor Class: 20 (+12 natural, -2 size), Touch 20, Flat-Footed 20

Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+10

Attack: +10 claw (2d10+5) or +10 slam (3d10+7)

Full Attack: +10 2 claws (2d10+5 each)

Space/Reach: 15 ft. x 15 ft.

Special Attacks: Frightful Presence (Su), Granted Cleric Domains

Special Qualities: Construct traits, Damage reduction 10/adamantine and bludgeoning, Low-lite vision

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +5

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 9

Skills: Listen +3, Spot +3, Sense Motive +3

Feats: Cleave, Multiattack, Toughness x2

Environment: -

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 16

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Lawful Neutral

Advancement: None

Level Adjustment: -

This huge construct is made of various skins, woodcarvings, and metals and stands over 50 feet tall and has two great clawed hands.

The Sun Sword of Gilgamesh

This longsword has a glowing edge and is normally a +2 magical blade. However when used against huge sized or greater creatures it also acts as a vorpal blade, allowing the weapon to sever the heads of those it strikes with a critical hit.

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Domain at 5th level. The fourth aura is the **Animal Domain** at 5th level. The fifth aura is the **Protection Domain** at 5th level. The sixth aura is the **Travel Domain** at 5th level. The seventh aura is the **Law Domain** at 7th level. Huwawa may only perform a domain's granted power once per day, and may only cast each spell once in a 24 hour period.

Combat

Huwawa is a huge construct and is very powerful and deadly. If given time he uses each of his Domain powers and spells, though if cornered into melee he resorts to his base melee attacks. The Huwawa can speak

common, and moves with a slow, clumsy gait.

Frightful Presence (Su): 50 foot radius, HD 12 or less, Will DC 20 negates.

Domain Powers and spells*(can cast each once per day)*

First Aura: Earth Domain Turn or destroy air creatures. Magic Stone, Soften Earth and Stone, Stone Shape, Wall of Stone, Stoneskin, and Earthquake. **Second Aura: Water Domain** Turn or destroy fire creatures. Obscuring Mist, Fog Cloud, Water Breathing, and Control Water. **Third Aura: Plant Domain** Command plant creatures. Entangle, Barkskin, Plant Growth, Command Plants, and Wall of Thorns. **Fourth Aura: Animal**

Domain Speak with Animals once per day. Calm Animals, Hold Animal, Dominate Animal, Summon Nature's Ally IV, and Commune with Nature.

Fifth Aura: Protection Domain May generate a Protective Ward. Sanctuary, Shield Other, Protection from Energy, Spell Immunity, and Spell Resistance (22%). **Sixth Aura: Travel Domain** Freedom of Movement. Longstrider, Locate Object, Fly, Dimension Door, and Teleport. **Seventh Aura: Law Domain** Cast spells at +1 caster level. Protection from Chaos, Calm Emotions, Magic Circle against Chaos, Order's Wrath, Dispel Chaos, Hold Monster, and Dictum.

Bull of Heaven

Created by Anu to destroy Gilgamesh and the city of Uruk on behalf of the goddess Innana. The Bull of Heaven is a colossal magical beast and is the most feared of all the god's creations.

Combat

The Bull of Heaven attacks with its massive body by slamming into its enemies and trampling them under its massive hooves.

Frightful Presence (Su): The Bull's massive size and ever changing rainbow hide inspire terror within a 60 ft. radius. Affected creatures must make a DC 20 Will save or become shaken and remain that way as long as they remain within 60 feet of the creature.

Trample (Ex): The beast may attempt to overrun all opponents within a 10 ft. x 10 ft. area. If the target blocks or is knocked prone, the bull receives a +4 melee attack bonus. The beast may then take 4 attacks with his hooves on any target(s) within a 10 ft. x 10 ft. area.

The Bull of Heaven

Colossal Magical Beast

Hit Dice: 20d10+120 (225)**Initiative:** +8**Speed:** 40 ft.**Armor Class:** 20 (+4 Dex, +16 Natural), Touch 16, Flat-Footed 16**Base Attack/Grapple:** +39/-

Attack: +39 Slam (3d6+7) or +39 two hooves (2d10+5)

Full Attack: +39 Slam (3d6+7) and +34 two hooves (2d10+5)

Space/Reach: 20 ft. x 20 ft.

Special Attacks: Frightful Presence (Su), Trample (Ex)

Special Qualities: -

Saves: Fort +29, Ref +25, Will +12

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 18, Con 24, Int 3, Wis 6, Cha 6

Skills: Listen +0, Spot +0

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Overrun, Improved Initiative, Iron Will,

Environment: -

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 18

Treasure: None

Alignment: Neutral

Advancement: None

Level Adjustment: -

This gargantuan creature is a bull of rainbow light, the colors of his brightly colored coat constantly ripple and change as he moves. His massive eyes glow with an otherworldly red hue, and his thundering hooves shake the earth itself.

Pinebox Campaign Setting

Environmental Data By Craig Largent

I thought it might be a good idea to include some general information regarding weather, flora, and fauna that some out-of-towners might not be aware of.

Our Heat and Humidity

East Texas is well known for being hot and humid in the summer. Weather almanacs usually list the average summer temperatures as being in the 90's. However, a high humidity interferes with your body's ability to cool itself through the evaporation of sweat. A measly temperature of 95 degrees Fahrenheit, combined with 80% humidity yields a heat index of about 133 degrees. That means that the heat affects your body as if the temperature were 133 degrees! This makes the threat of heat stroke and dehydration a very big factor. Large-scale forays into the wild would involve characters lugging along copious amounts of water (rough on the ol' encumbrance), greatly increasing the odds of becoming fatigued or passing out.

Prolonged slug-fests are not much fun either: I've seen lots of real-life fist fights end VERY early due to both combatants dropping from sheer heat exhaustion.

Real World Flora, Fauna, and Little Beasts

All kinds of critters make East Texas their home. In reality, there is not a great deal of danger regarding most wild animals. There are not many bears in the area (mostly Louisiana black bears that have been re-introduced into the wild in a few places) or panthers, or other large carnivores. Well, except for alligators, some of

which do get pretty dang big! Of course, the GM can throw in whatever he wants to spice things up. There is the possibility of rabies outbreaks that can cause wild animals to attack. There is always the possibility of running across a pack of wild dogs or be chased by an angry bull. Etc, etc...

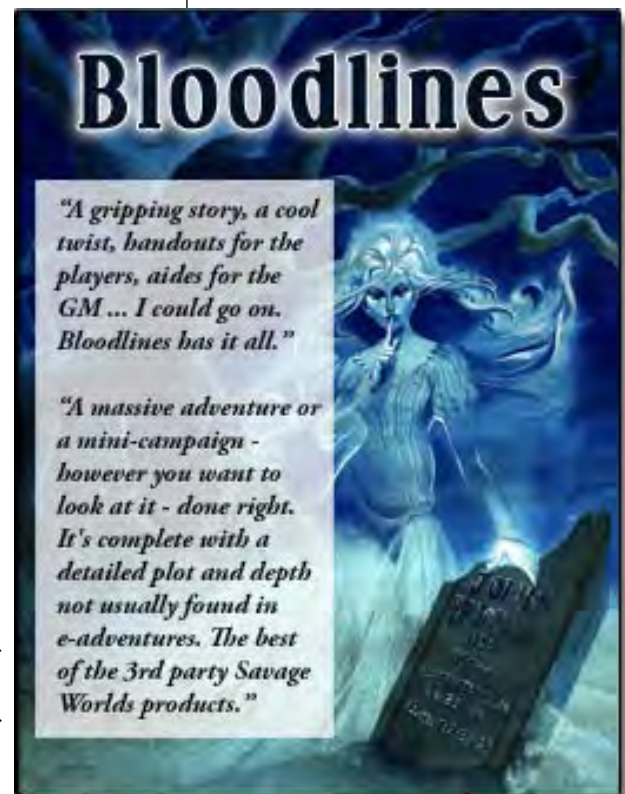
Most people overlook the little things. The biggest animal nuisance (in my opinion) is fire ants. They are all over the place. If you stand still for very long, it is very likely that you will get bitten by at least one. I have seen entire fields full of fire ant mounds, most located within two or three feet of one another. Their foragers and scouts run all over the place looking for food (or threats) and are not shy about biting or stinging. In a gunfight, staying prone could be very inconvenient in the middle of such a field!

Also, going back to the subject of heat stroke, it is not a good idea to faint outside in East Texas. The fire ants will swarm you like nobody's business. There are always tales of some elderly person passing out in the garden and dying of complications caused by ant bites. I had a friend whose grandfather had an accident bush-hogging and got pinned beneath an overturned tractor. The fire ants ate him alive. The actual cause of death was "heart attack", but that was probably due to being pinned on top of a large fire ant mound

There are all kinds of snakes, venomous and

otherwise. I suppose those are pretty standard as listed in the various d20 books, but some details with regard to species, could be in order.. There are also venomous spiders and scorpions (although East Texas scorpions do not have a very bad sting). There have been a lot of folks killed lately by bees, most likely the dreaded Africanized or "killer" bees. There are billions and billions of mosquitoes and ticks, both of which can carry pretty nasty, even deadly, diseases.

As far as plants go, poison ivy and poison oak are all over the place. They are not really life threatening items (unless you're very allergic to them) but they can become a real nuisance. I dunno, I figure that poison oak and/or excessive insect bites would be good for a nuisance factor such as -2 to certain skill checks, negatives to charisma rolls, etc.



Pinebox Places

Crenshaw's Woods

One of the most beautiful wooded areas of town. Crenshaw's Woods contains several hiking trails and the famous Lost Pond of Eli Crenshaw. Eli was an early settler of Pinebox and reportedly during the drought of 1877, he was desperate to find water for his cattle and family. Legend states that Eli made a pact with the Devil and the next day "found" a pool of clear cool natural water in his woods. The entire area celebrated the find, but Eli died exactly a year later. Neighbors found his body floating in the "Lost" pond. The Lost Pond is a naturally flowing spring with cool, clean water that attracts many visitors and swimmers. Many reported sighting the "Crenshaw Devil" in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Until recently, the last documented sighting was in 1934. However, it appears the beast is back.

New sightings of Crenshaw's Devil have been reported to the Pinebox Police Department and local authorities are baffled. The fur-covered creature stands upright on two-legs, is approximately three feet tall, and has a large head and sharp canines. Witnesses state that Crenshaw's Devil has red glowing eyes and quickly disappears into the woods once spotted. There have been seven reported sightings since Halloween, and many locals in the area are afraid to allow their children or pets to enter the woods.

Annie Mae Olson was one of the first locals to spot the creature at the Lost Pond, deep in Crenshaw's Woods, "Something is in those woods, I seen it, and something has got to be done about it. It ain't safe. Maybe it's an escaped monkey or something, but until they catch it, I ain't lettin' my kids go there." Annie stated that the creature seemed to be drinking from

the popular swimming hole at approximately six pm, when she and her kids happened upon it. She said, "It raised up, looked at us and screamed, then fled into the woods."

Samuel Curtis also reported spying the creature from his mobile home, just outside the wooded area. "I heard a racket, and looked out my window. It was attacking my dogs, and had already killed my basset hound. I grabbed my shotgun and chased after it, but lost it somewhere in the woods. It took my dog's body with it." Local authorities investigated and determined that some animal had "broken into the yard and apparently killed the dog and dragged the carcass into the woods."

For map, see www.12tomidnight.com

Crenshaw's Devil

CR 4; Small Outsider (Evil); HD 3d8+6 (Outsider) ; hp 22; Init + 8; Spd 20; AC 18; Atk + 5 base melee, + 8 base ranged; +5 (1d6+1, 2 Claws); +5 (1d4+1, Tail); SA: Blood drain (Ex), Fear (Su), Howl (Ex), Pounce (Ex); AL CE; SV Fort + 7, Ref + 8, Will + 5; STR 12, DEX 19, CON 15, INT 14, WIS 12, CHA 10. **Skills:** *Balance + 7, Climb + 4, Escape Artist + 6, Hide + 14, Intimidate + 4, Listen + 5, Move Silently + 10, Spot + 3.*

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, and Improved Initiative.

Plot Ideas & Hooks:

- The Devil is actually an orangutan that escaped its owner and has been living wild in the woods for the past few months. The beast is sick (rabies?), and easily frightened and angered.

- The Devil is actually a demonic being summoned by a local coven. The witches did not know the repercussions of their actions, and they are being hunted by the demon. The demon cannot return to its own plane of existence unless the three summoning witches are all killed and their body parts used in a ritual of returning.

- A local gang of teens has made the woods their hangout and want to frighten everyone else away. They have created a costume and various wild noises. The prank has gotten out of hand, and the publicity has had the opposite effect of bringing even more people into the woods. The teens have decided that they must actually hurt someone in order to scare people off. The leader uses the gang to run drugs from Houston to Louisiana. He stores the drugs in an old dilapidated wooden barn deep in the woods.

Paranormal Lexicon

The following lexicon describes all things paranormal and is meant as a Modern GM game aid. This journal presents the As-Bs.

ABE - (Atmospheric Ball of Energy) Small balls of energy which are rarely seen with the naked eye, but are often captured on film or video. They may be any color, and some investigators believe the colors may be used to communicate feelings. Many ghost hunters refer to ABEs as Orbs.

Aerial Phenomenon - Ghost planes or lights that have been reported throughout history. An example would be WWII Zeros seen inexplicably flying over Hawaii in the winter of 2001, or the Marfa Lights of West Texas. Commonly confused with UFO activity.

Alchemy - A combining of chemicals and magic common in the Middle Ages. Many Alchemists have searched for a way to create precious metals such as silver or gold from lesser metals, such as tin or bronze. Alchemy was often combined with rituals of astrology, religion, mysticism, magic, theosophy and spiritualism to bring about such changes.

Alien - A being from another planet, dimension or state of existence.

Alien Intelligence - A powerful entity from another planet, dimen-

sion, or state of existence. This entity may or may not fully manifest and is often mistakenly believed to be a deity. These entities often display fantastic or paranormal powers and many reported instances of Alien Intelligences involve evil acts and the controlling of others through religious beliefs, possession, or brainwashing.

Angels - A spiritual being that often acts as a messenger of God. Historically seen as having wings and supernatural powers. May be good or evil. Evil angels are commonly referred to as Demons. Some investigators believe that any physical manifestation that is not commonly visible to the eye may be of Angelic origin, such as ABEs.

Angelical Stones - Special scrying stones, quarried in Heaven and given to Chosen Ones by Angels or Demons. The most famous Angelical Stone was used by Dr. John Dee, Astrologer for Queen Elizabeth I, who claimed to have received it from the Angels Raphael and Gabriel.

Animism - The religious belief that everything in nature is invested with spirits or souls. This includes, but is not limited to the wind, rocks, ani-

mals, trees, and even people. Animism is commonly found in early or developing civilizations and cultures. It is interesting that cultures in East Asia, South Asia, Africa and the Americas all developed forms of Animism.

Astral Projection - The idea or belief that a person or animal may send out a spirit or soul to travel somewhere separate of the physical body. The US and Soviet governments both experimented with Astral Projection in the late 1960s and early 1970s. These experiments reportedly were controlled by branches of the CIA and KGB and are considered Ultra Blue Top Secret. The US and Russian governments deny any of these activities.

Astrology - The practice of reading the positions of stars and planets to determine their influence on people and events. First practiced by the ancient Sumerians, but later the Babylonians made Astrology a fine art and many tomes were written regarding the mixing of Mysticism, Astrology and Prophecy.

Atmospheric Apparition - These are the classic ghosts of history, fiction, and movies. These apparitions may



Paranormal Lexicon, continued

take the forms of real people who have died, and may appear solid, though they often walk through doors, windows, or walls. Some experts believe that these ghosts are somehow attached to a place and may have suffered some great trauma or emotional difficulties in life, which continues to dominate their souls in death.

Aura – A mystical or electrical field that surrounds all living things. Many experts believe that auras have different colors and may show the health, perceptions, or feelings of the subject being studied. Auras have been photographed and have been widely studied since the 1950s. An interesting experiment is to have a person make a fist and to extend their arm out in front of them. The Tester will then press down on the wrist and arm of the subject, asking the subject to remember the strength in the arm. The subject will then relax, as the tester will begin waving his or her hand over the subject's body (approximately 3 to 4 inches away), as if wiping away the flows of aura around the body. Then have the subject again hold out his or her arm, and have the tester apply downwards pressure to the wrist. This often results in a person feeling weaker in the arm.

Martial artists have learned to harness this energy in Ki. Many martial artists have been known to break solid objects by focusing their Ki.

Automatic Writing –Some psychic mediums allow their hands to be “possessed” by various spirits and to communicate with these spirits by writing or typing their messages for the living. The medium usually begins by performing several relaxing exercises, then placing a pen or pencil on paper and allowing the hand to begin making circles until the possession begins. Reportedly, Automatic Writing has written volumes of information regarding many varied subjects.

Bilocation –This is the image or voice of someone who is alive at the time, but not physically present at the actual haunting. Most experts believe this is not actually a spirit, but an effect of naturally occurring telepathy.

Black Magick –The use of magick to gain power over others or for evil purposes. Black magicians often make pacts with demons or devils to gain in power and self-aggrandizement. Black magick is considered a perversion of the mystic powers of magick.

The Cradle campaign notes

This article derives from many sources, including-but not limited-to the following:

***Middle Eastern Mythology** by S.H. Hooke, 1983.*

***The Ancient World** by Paul Alexander, 1968.*

***Past Worlds: Collins Atlas of Archaeology** by Times Books, 2003.*

Various textbooks in the personal library of the author.

Many great websites exist regarding Sumeria, Mesopotamia, early Gods and Goddesses, the Epic of Gilgamesh, and many other legends.

Next Journal:

The Cradle campaign setting, Part 2. Including fifteen Mesopotamian cultures described for use in an ancient's game, more plot ideas and threads, and a well-defined timeline chock full of ideas for adventures and political intrigues of the ancient world. Plus more Pinebox goodies, and much more.

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