

OTHO'S Guide To RIFTS

In Cold Pursuit

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Rules for travel in a cold climate

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1. Precursor

I originally wrote this in circa 2001 with a view to submitting it as a 3 part article to "The Rifter", Palladium Games In-house magazine. However, I never got around to doing so. So here are the 3 parts and the rules that go along with the text.

Part 1: Extreme cold and environmental armour starts with a scene based upon a scenario I ran in my campaign when I was running it back then, and one which I'm likely to run again after the restart.

2. Extreme cold and environmental armour

2.1 Introduction

Ivanova turned to her sergeant, "Martin, you're sure they crossed the river?"

"Yes, Dena. The tracks lead down to the river, then stop. There is evidence of snow disturbance on the other side, but without crossing I can't be 100% sure. Wall also concurs with my analysis".

They had been tracking the Slavers for two days now and this would be the fourth river they had crossed. Ivanova wondered, not for the first time, how they managed to cross the rivers without all the slavers they had in tow dying of hypothermia. For that matter how had they been keeping them alive, especially during the night?

"Ok everyone, you know the drill. Strip the kit off the horses and stack it for Jeremiah to carry across. Make sure the barding goes back on properly. And make sure you all turn your environmental controls on your armour down, we can't afford to lose any more units."

The first river crossing had been a disaster. Three of the environmental control units had failed, due to sudden overload, before they realized what was happening. It was only the Mind Melter's affinity with machines (Telemechanics) and her quick thinking that had saved her and the commando's suits. Luckily, Hartzweig had the same ability and had been able to repair two of the suits by cannibalizing bits from the third damaged suit, and the third suit itself by taking the control unit from Jeremiah's suit. Jeremiah didn't seem affected by the cold and he still unnerved her. What exactly he was she had yet to work out. He appeared human but she knew that wasn't his true form. Some of them had seen it when they sprung the coalition ambush and it was not something she particularly wished to see again.

The snorting of the horses as they were exposed to the cold wind brought her back to her senses and she dismounted. Dropping her backpack to start her kit pile, she began removing the saddle and saddle bags. Next came the barding, first the chest protector, then the head armour, and lastly the body armour. Her horse shied at the sudden cold and she quietened it before removing the thermal blanket. The blanket would go back on after they crossed the river, but for now it had to come off in-order to stay dry. She replaced the main body of the barding and checked that it was fastened securely. Hartzweig would activate the impervious to cold facility when she was ready to cross. She dialed the internal temperature of her armour down to 45°F and shivered as the suit reacted. Both squads were now ready to cross, B squad would go first with A squad providing covering fire if necessary. Once they were across and had sorted the horses out, then A squad and the packhorses would follow. All in all this crossing like the last would cost them two hours and another 8 miles on their quarry.

"Dena", "Yes Martin what is it?" The Sergeant was on point as usual. "We've possibly got trouble. Looks like they've picked up another vehicle, probably a Mountaineer ATV by the tracks. Com". Dahm! What now? The commed message was interrupted by Dena's suit alarm. She checked the comp readout on the wrist display, "Warning, E-Clip charge low. Systems failure in 3 minutes". Pulling another clip from her webbing she reached behind her and unplugged the discharged clip from the power control unit. All her readouts went dead. She swapped the dead clip for the new one and rammed it home. "Environmental systems re-initializing, outside temperature one degree Celsius, wind speed 20 mph, wind chill 3 degrees Celsius, internal temperature seventeen point six degrees Celsius, set internal temperature 18.4 degrees Celsius, On-board computer re-initializing". Dena silenced the internal check sequence. "Sorry Martin, say again please",

"Problem?"

"No just the E-Clip for the suit systems running out"

"Yea, know the feeling, mine went about 10 minutes ago. Anyway we may have a problem, looks like they've gained a Mountaineer ATV. Tracks come in from the East, join the main group and then continue. Do you want us to back-track it?"

"How far ahead of us are they?"

"Not sure. These tracks look to be about 12 hours old. Assuming they're following the same pattern as us then they'd be about 10 miles ahead"

"No, we'll press on. With luck we'll catch them before night fall and before the storm hits"

Vlassel smiled to himself, it had been a reasonably good trip, all apart from the loss of the Overlord. The raid had gone very much according to plan, until the borg and his two friends appeared. How they had been missed he didn't know but the Overlord took the full force of their initial attack. If the borg hadn't had one of those German rail guns then he might have survived. Still look on the bright side, he had one himself now.

Something wet landed in his face. That's all we need. He shivered. Even with the Torc he was still cold. He scanned the local area. It was starting to snow quite heavily. The Altarans had pulled their cloaks about them and didn't look pleased. He knew the snow would foul their senses. At least the Kittani in their power armour would be unaffected. He spoke into his com and the Samson power armour pilot moved to intercept the flagging slave. Raising the slave prod he jabbed the unfortunate slave who screamed and fell. "Get back in line or you'll get another one". Vlassel smiled again; it was so amusing watching slaves inflict punishment on their own kind. He had hoped to run into another patrol of natives, as native warriors were bringing top dollar in the market at the moment. Still something would turn up to host the eight zombitrons he'd reserved.

"Lord Vlassel", it was one of the Kittani Serpents.

"Yes?"

"We're being followed. There's a group of something closing on us. They're moving slightly faster than us, probably natives on horses."

"Investigate". The two Kittani Serpents peeled off from the convoy and turned in the direction they'd come, as did two of the observation eyes. Vlassel slewed the barge out of the path of the convoy, which was busy reorganizing itself. The Mountaineer roared past him as it now took point. The Altarans were busy belting their cloaks out of the way, their torcs now clearly visible round their necks. The Creax was now behind the slaves and he moved the barge to fall in behind it.

2.2 Wind Chill and Environmental Armour

Travel in winter has never been easy. Apart from the problems caused by snow and ice, there is the cold, especially the cold from a wind that blows over a frozen landscape. Cold is the biggest killer in winter, especially prolonged exposure (See Rifts World Book 20: Canada™). You would think that in the world of Rifts putting on a suit of environmental body armour would be all that is required but this is not the case.

All environmental body armour has

- Computer controlled life support
- Internal temperature control and cooling
- Artificial air circulation systems, gas filtration, and humidification.
- Computer controlled independent oxygen supply.
- Directional short range radio.
- Insulated, high temperature resistant shielding to 200 degrees Celsius.

Now all but the last one of these requires power but nowhere does it state "independent nuclear power supply", after all it's not power armour. It must therefore be assumed that environmental body armour must run from E-clips as the alternative of a built-in rechargeable battery would make its extended use in the wilderness impossible.

So how long does an E-clip last? Well that depends on the suit's usage and its surrounding environment. Again referring to Rifts:Canada prolonged exposure to extremes of temperature can result in failure of the environmental systems. So how long is prolonged and what are the extremes. Unfortunately this is where Rifts:Canada falls down. What follows is a suggested set of rules for the use of environmental and power armour in extreme conditions.

Before we can consider what is extreme we need to define what is normal. Humans are comfortable in the temperature range 10°C (50°F) to 26°C (80°F) so any environmental system must be able to maintain this range within the normal range of temperatures encountered. If we assume temperate through tropical temperatures to be normal then our working range would be -6°C (21°F) to 40°C (104°F). This means our extremes are below -6°C and above 40°C in still air and below 10% humidity. Since the prime purpose of this article is dealing with the cold we don't need to worry about humidity, as once the temperature drops below 0°C (32°F) the humidity drops too nearly zero. This just leaves us to worry about wind chill and immersion in water.

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Wind Chill is the removal of heat caused by the flow of air. The faster the flow the greater the cooling effect. Some rules for wind chill appeared in Rifts:Canada but these don't reflect the fact that the actual wind chill is dependant on the ambient air temperature. There is also the problem that materials don't cool in the same way that a human body does. The table below is a reproduction of the table published in November 2001 by National Weather Service in the USA.

Calm	40F/ 4C	35F/ 1C	30F/ -1C	25F/ -3C	20F/ -6C	15F/ -9C	10F/ -12C	5F/ -15C	0F/ -18C	-5F/ -21C	-10F/ -23C	-15F/ -26C	-20F/ -29C	-25F/ -32C	-30F/ -34C	-35F/ -37C	-40F/ -40C	-45F/ -43C
5	36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-52	-57	-63
10	34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41	-47	-53	-59	-66	-72
15	32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45	-51	-58	-64	-71	-77
20	30	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48	-55	-61	-68	-74	-81
25	29	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	-17	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51	-58	-64	-71	-78	-84
30	28	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53	-60	-67	-73	-80	-87
35	28	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-82	-89
40	27	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78	-84	-91
45	26	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79	-86	-93
50	26	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81	-88	-95
55	25	18	11	4	-3	-11	-18	-25	-32	-39	-46	-54	-61	-68	-75	-82	-89	-97
60	25	17	10	3	-4	-11	-19	-26	-33	-40	-48	-55	-62	-69	-76	-84	-91	-98

Frostbite Times 30 minutes 10 minutes 5 minutes

Table 1 NWS Standard Wind Chill Index

Calm	35F/ 1C	30F/ -1C	25F/ -3C	20F/ -6C	15F/ -9C	10F/ -12C	5F/ -15C	0F/ -18C	-5F/ -21C	-10F/ -23C	-15F/ -26C	-20F/ -29C	-25F/ -32C	-30F/ -34C	-35F/ -37C	-40F/ -40C	-45F/ -43C
5	35	30	25	20	14	8	2	-3	-8	-14	-19	-25	-31	-36	-41	-47	-52
10	35	30	25	20	14	7	1	-5	-10	-16	-22	-27	-33	-39	-44	-50	-56
15	35	30	25	20	13	6	0	-6	-12	-17	-23	-29	-34	-40	-46	-52	-58
20	35	30	25	19	13	5	-1	-7	-13	-18	-24	-30	-36	-42	-47	-53	-59
25	35	30	25	19	12	4	-2	-8	-13	-19	-25	-31	-37	-43	-48	-54	-60
30	35	30	24	18	12	4	-2	-8	-14	-20	-26	-32	-38	-44	-49	-55	-61
35	35	30	24	18	12	4	-3	-9	-15	-21	-27	-33	-39	-45	-50	-56	-62
40	35	30	23	17	12	3	-3	-9	-15	-21	-28	-34	-39	-46	-51	-57	-63
45	35	29	23	17	11	3	-4	-0	-16	-22	-28	-34	-40	-46	-51	-58	-64
50	35	29	22	17	11	3	-4	-0	-16	-22	-29	-35	-40	-47	-52	-58	-65
55	34	29	22	17	11	2	-5	-1	-17	-23	-29	-35	-41	-47	-52	-59	-66
60	34	29	22	16	11	2	-5	-2	-17	-23	-30	-36	-42	-48	-53	-60	-67

Table 2 Armour Wind Chill Index

Table 2 shows the wind chill index for environmental armour. The environmental systems of most suits of armour are designed to maintain the internal temperature between 45F and 85F based upon an external temperature of between 20F and 104F, ie they can raise the temperature by a maximum of 50F or lower it by 45F. The closer the environmental systems run to their maximum tolerance then the more power they drain and the greater their chance of failure.

Wind Speed	0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	50+
0	72/1	70/1	68/1	66/1	63/1	60/1	57/1	54/1	48/2	40/3	30/5	18/11
5	72/1	70/1	68/1	66/1	63/1	60/1	57/1	54/1	48/2	40/3	30/5	18/11
10	70/1	68/1	66/1	64/1	61/1	58/1	55/2	52/2	46/3	39/4	29/6	17/15
15	68/1	66/1	64/1	62/1	59/2	56/2	53/2	51/2	45/3	37/4	28/6	17/15
20	64/2	62/2	60/2	59/2	56/2	53/2	51/2	48/3	43/4	35/5	27/8	16/20
25	60/2	59/2	57/2	55/2	53/2	50/2	48/2	45/3	40/4	33/5	25/8	15/20
30	57/2	55/2	54/2	52/2	50/2	47/2	45/3	43/4	38/5	32/6	24/11	14/25
35	53/2	52/2	50/2	49/2	47/3	44/3	42/3	40/4	35/5	30/6	22/11	13/31
40	48/3	47/3	45/3	44/3	42/3	40/3	38/4	36/5	32/6	27/8	20/15	12/38
45	43/3	42/3	41/3	39/3	38/4	36/4	34/5	32/6	29/8	24/11	18/20	11/47
50	38/4	37/4	36/4	35/4	33/5	32/5	30/6	29/8	25/11	21/15	16/25	9/57
55	31/5	30/5	29/5	28/5	27/6	26/6	24/8	23/11	21/15	17/20	13/31	8/69
60	22/6	22/6	21/6	20/6	19/8	19/8	18/11	17/15	15/20	12/25	9/38	5/84
65+	11/8	11/8	11/8	10/8	10/11	10/11	9/15	9/20	8/25	6/31	5/48	3/98

Table 3 E-Clip Duration and Environmental System Failure Percentage

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To determine how long an E-Clip lasts and the chance of environmental systems failure consult table 3. The table quotes 2 figures, the length of time an E-Clip will last and the cumulative chance of systems failure. For each 5DC of the suit, in minutes, that the suit is exposed make an environmental systems failure roll.

For example Jed the dogboy is travelling in Coalition Deadboy light armour. The outside temperature (ignoring wind) is 37F and the average wind speed is 25mph. Jed has his suit to maintain an internal temperature of 60F. The wind chill index to the suit's systems is 37F, thus it is operating at a 25F difference. The E-Clip will thus last 50 hours with a cumulative chance of failure of 2%. The suit's DC and the length of time Jed has been travelling determine the actual chance of failure. Jed has been travelling for 4 hours (240 minutes) and his suit has 250 DC. This means that there is a 10% chance of systems failure. If the temperature dropped to 20F and the wind increased to 35mph then the E-Clip would only last 30 hours and every 50 minutes the chance of systems failure would increase by 6%.

When applying the rules to power armour treat the ambient temperature as 5F higher and the winds speed as 5mph less.

Water is a considerably better conductor of heat than air, 25-30 times better in fact. This means that immersion in water kills faster and places a far greater strain on the environmental systems than wind chill does. The easiest way of handling water without the creation of more tables is to treat water as air that has an ambient temperature 20F lower than in reality and that is moving 10mph faster; ie still water at 40F is treated as air at 20F moving at 10mph. In addition multiply the chance of systems failure by 3.

The other problem with water occurs when sudden immersion takes place. The shock to the body of sudden immersion in cold water can kill instantly. Any non-MDC being not in environmental body armour must save vs Lethal Poison (14 or higher with appropriate PE bonuses) or suffer a heart attack. If they survive the shock then make the HF roll as per Rifts:Canada to avoid panicking. Whilst a character in environmental armour is initially safe the environmental system isn't. The chance of immediate systems failure is 5 times the base chance for the temperature difference based on a 20mph wind; eg Jed has to cross a river. The water is moving at about 15mph and is 35F. When Jed enters the water the actual water temperature as far as the environmental system is concerned is 12F. Jed still has the suit set to 60F meaning a temperature difference of 48F (50F on the table). The immediate chance of system failure is therefore 40%. If the water had been colder or the internal temperature of the suit higher, then the chance of failure would have been 100%! Once Jed is in the water there is a 40% chance cumulative that the environmental systems will fail for each 50 minutes he is there.

If the environmental system fails roll on the table below to determine the severity of failure. The roll is modified by the chance of failure at the time the failure occurred. When rolling due to sudden immersion in water use the base chance before multiplication.

Roll	Result
01-05	Minor Systems Failure. System continues to run. Use column 5F higher from now on. Field repair possible in 30+2D6 minutes.
06-25	Minor Systems Failure. Field repair possible in 2D6 minutes allowing system to continue running but use column 10F higher. Full repair requires replacement components equal in cost 1D4x5% of environmental system cost and takes 30+1D4+1x10 minutes
26-55	Moderate Systems Failure. Field repair possible in 30+1D4x10 minutes but requires components equal in cost to 1D4x5% of environmental system cost. System will then run but use column 20F higher. Full repair requires replacement components equal in cost 2D4+1x5% of environmental system cost and takes 60+1D4+1x30 minutes
56-95	Major System Failure. Field repair possible in 30+1D4x30 minutes but requires components equal in cost 2D4+2x5% of environmental system cost. System will then run but use column 35F higher. Full repair requires replacement components equal in cost 1D6+2x10% of environmental system cost and takes 2D6 hours.
96+	Total System burnout. Replace the entire control system! System replacement takes 2D6+1 hours.

Environmental systems cost between 35% and 50% of the base price for the armour. Add 5% for Coalition armour unless in Coalition territory.

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If the environmental system fails then the suit at least provides some insulation and slows the rate of cooling. The time it takes to cool 10F depends upon the DC of the suit and the wind speed. If the suit is immersed in water treat the water speed as a wind speed 20mph higher.

DC	150	175	200	225	250	275	300	325	350	375	400	750+
Calm	27	33	39	45	50	55	60	65	75	85	95	240
5	27	33	39	44	50	55	60	65	73	82	92	225
10	26	32	38	44	49	54	59	64	72	81	90	220
15	26	31	37	42	47	52	57	62	70	78	87	214
20	25	30	36	41	46	51	55	60	68	76	85	207
25	23	29	34	39	43	48	52	56	64	72	80	196
30	22	27	32	36	41	45	49	53	60	68	75	184
35	21	25	30	34	38	42	46	50	56	63	71	173
40	19	23	27	31	35	38	42	45	51	58	64	157
45	17	21	24	28	31	35	38	41	46	52	58	142
50	14	17	20	24	26	29	32	34	39	44	49	119
55	11	13	16	18	20	22	25	27	30	34	38	92
60	7	8	10	11	13	14	16	17	19	21	24	58
60+	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10	12	13	15	36

3. Horses and the Minions of the Splurgoth.

3.1 Horses and Horse Barding

There are two mentions of horse barding in the Rifts sourcebooks, one in Rifts:Warlords of Russia and the other in Rifts:New West. The two sets of barding listed appear to contradict each other in terms of their weights and effects on the horses wearing them.

With the reversion to 19th Century technology across large parts of the wilderness, the horse and other beasts of burden has once again become the mainstay of wilderness transport. Since body armour is common and relatively inexpensive we theoretically have the prevalent problem of armoured riders on unprotected horses. For bandits and supernatural predators the horse becomes the main target, leaving the rider more or less a sitting duck.

There is therefore a requirement to provide some form of protection to the mount, which is where horse barding comes in. Given the size of the market it would be expected that there would be a similar variety in barding as there is in personal body armour. What follows are some guidelines for creating barding for horses.

Horse barding comes in three standard categories, Light, Medium, and Heavy. With the discovery of the Iron Hyde spell by the mages in Shiftsville a fourth category of featherweight will become available once the spell becomes common place. The barding for a horse comes in several sections, which can be fitted or not at the rider's discretion. The sections are Body, Chest, Head, Fore leg, and Hind leg.

The body section covers the horse like a blanket, from the withers to the rump. It provides no protection for the neck and head, limited protection to the breast, and limited protection to the upper legs (it hangs such that it is just below the brisket). The chest section fits around the lower neck and passes between the horses front legs where it attaches to what is effectively a girth strap. The head section fits over the head and down the neck, where it joins the chest and body sections. Both the Fore leg and Hind leg sections are supplied in pairs. They wrap around the legs where they are fastened with straps and/or locking catches. Both are supplied with straps that pass over the horses back and prevent the sections from slipping down the legs. When fitting the barding the leg armour is fitted first, then the chest armour, then the body, and lastly the head armour.

Section	Light (DR:4)	Medium(DR:6)	Heavy(DR:10)	Featherweight(DR:7)
Head (DR+2)	DC 175-250 Weight Cost 3000+500/25 pts	DC 225-450 Weight Cost 4000+550/25 pts	DC 400-600 Weight Cost 10000+700/25 pts	DC 125-200 Weight Cost 3000+550/25 pts
Body	DC 375-450 Weight Cost 6000+300/25 pts	DC 450-750 Weight Cost 8000+350/25 pts	DC 675-975 Weight Cost 12000+450/25 pts	DC 300-375 Weight Cost 6000+350/25 pts
Fore leg(2) *	DC 50-100 Weight Cost 1250+300/25 pts	DC 100-175 Weight Cost 2000+450/25 pts	DC 175-250 Weight Cost 4500+650/25 pts	DC 25-75 Weight Cost 1250+400/25 pts
Hind leg(2) *	DC 75-150 Weight Cost 1750+300/25 pts	DC 125-250 Weight Cost 2500+450/25 pts	DC 225-375 Weight Cost 5500+650/25 pts	DC 50-125 Weight Cost 1750+400/25 pts
Chest	DC 125-200 Weight Cost 2000+350/25 pts	DC 175-400 Weight Cost 3500+400/25 pts	DC 375-525 Weight Cost 10000+600/25 pts	DC 75-150 Weight Cost 2000+400/25 pts

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* If leg armour fitted reduce abilities as follows

	Running Speed	Leaping Distance	Swimming ability
Light	5%	10%	-5%
Medium	10%	20%	-10%
Heavy	15%	40%	-20%
Featherweight	0	5%	0

The Head armour can also be modified to provide limited environmental capability (primarily air filtration, humidification, and an independent oxygen supply). This increases the base cost of the armour by 70%. Horses do not like this modification as it blocks their natural senses. When first fitted all horsemanship rolls are at -40% for a period of 1D6 hours. The penalty then drops to -25% until the horse adjusts to the armour after 2D4 days of wearing the armour for at least 4 hours per day. 20% of horses never adjust to wearing the armour. Even after adjustment all horsemanship rolls are made at -10%.

Barding is also capable of being modified by a Techno-wizard. The following enhancements can be applied to the armour. In the majority of cases the enhancement is applied just to the main body but the effect applies to the whole horse. The enhancement is activated by the rider unless the horse is sentient (Psi-Pony, Pegasus, Kryygorth Pegasus, Unicorn, Centaurs).

Armour of Ithan	10 P.P.E. / 20 I.S.P.
Armour Bizarre	15 P.P.E. / 30 I.S.P.
Invincible Armour	30 P.P.E. / 60 I.S.P.
Impervious to Energy	20 P.P.E. / 40 I.S.P.
Impervious to Fire	5 P.P.E. / 10 I.S.P.
Impervious to Cold	5 P.P.E. / 10 I.S.P.
Breathe Without Air	5 P.P.E. / 10 I.S.P.
Sustain	12 P.P.E. / 24 I.S.P.
Superhuman Speed	10 P.P.E. / 20 I.S.P.
Superhuman Strength	10 P.P.E. / 20 I.S.P.
Superhuman Endurance	10 P.P.E. / 20 I.S.P.

The Iron Hyde spell developed by the mages of Shiftsville to make Featherweight barding is identical in function to the spell of the same name known by the Splurgoth for several millennia. Whilst the Splurgoth themselves have no use for the spell, they teach it to their Alchemists for use in making MDC protective clothing for their minions.

3.1.1 The Splurgoth and their Minions

The Splurgoth operate their slaving raids all year round in all climates, however neither the Slaver nor the Altarans are M.D.C creatures and neither have any particular adaptation or resistance to cold weather. The Splurgoth solved this problem centuries ago by providing them with protective clothing, where appropriate, and items that instill cold resistance. When operating in a cold climate both the Slaver and his Altaran minions are provided with Torcs of Cold resistance. Since the Slavers barge not only provides protection to the Slaver but also a heated regenerative bath, the Slaver requires no further protection. However this is not the case for the Altarans. They are therefore provided the Kursal cloaks, boots, vambraces, and gauntlets.

3.1.2 Torc of Cold Resistance

The torc is a band of metal worn around the neck. It functions similarly to the armour talismans worn and used by the Altarans, except that it has a permanently on feature. Whilst worn the torc makes the wearer less susceptible to the effects of cold. The wearer doesn't start to feel cold until the wind chill index reaches 25F (-3C) and thereafter the wind chill index affects the wearer as if it were 10F higher.

Twice per 24 hour period the Torc can cast Impervious to Cold equivalent to a 6th level mage.

3.1.3 Kursal Cloak

These are knee length semi-circular cloaks fastened at the front of the neck onto the Altarans body armour. This allows the cloak to be folded back and belted so that it is out of the way during combat but still provides additional protection to the back, shoulders and neck. When fully wrapped in the cloak the wearer suffers no affect from winds up to 40mph and temperatures down to 10F(-23C). Outside of this range treat the wearer as if they were wearing environmental body armour. The cloak is waterproof and has 150 DC.

3.1.4 Kursal Boots

These knee length boots provide protection to the lower legs and feet similar to Inuit seal skin boots except that they are far more efficient. The boots are waterproof and allow the user to walk on ice or in snow without the risk of frostbite. Like the cloak winds of up to 40mph and temperatures down to 10F have no affect on the area covered and beyond this the wearer should be treated as if they were wearing environmental body armour. The boots have 40 DC each.

3.1.5 Kursal Vambraces

These arm guards provide protection for the forearm of the wearer similar to that provided by the cloak for the rest of the body. The vambraces have 25 DC each.

3.1.6 Kursal Gauntlets

These gloves provide protection for the hands, wrists, and lower forearm (they extend about 3 inches (75mm) above the wrist) that the cloak and boots provide for the rest of the body. The gauntlets have 15 DC each.

3.2 Slaves: Moving and protecting them!

Protecting the Slaver and his minions is only half the story. Once slaves have been captured then they need moving to the pickup point, especially when conducting raids far inland, which may entail crossing rivers, marshes, ravines, and similar obstacles. Slaves are invariably moved on foot, driven by the use of jolt guns and slave prods. Slavers often use zombitrons to control captured slaves and make them drive and guard the remainder of the slaves. This frees the Slaver and his minions to deal with major threats and capture additional slaves if the opportunity arises. When driving slaves in harsh conditions the Slaver will leave the slaves in environmental armour, if they possess it, or otherwise attempt to find them suitable clothing from amongst captured equipment.

In both the northern half of North America and the East Coast of South America, rivers provide major natural obstacles to anyone on foot. Not only is there the danger of water born predators, but in winter in North America, the consequences of exposure to cold water, cold air, and the wind pose a lethal hazard to the movement of slaves. To counteract this the Slaver is either provided with a Slaver Staff (similar to the Eylor Staff but with a different spell program) or a causeway gun.

In winter in North America, rivers are not the only obstacles to moving slaves, particularly at night. Apart from the problem of the dark, the weather poses major problems especially when resting the slaves. Slavers may be cruel but they're not stupid and know that they must rest the slaves for at least 8 hours in every 24. The problem is keeping them alive whilst they sleep (exhaustion is a wonderful sleep inducer). Again magic is the answer, but in this case it's only available from the Slaver Staff.

If as a GM you feel the Biosphere spells unbalances your game then use the Sheltering Force spell as described in The Federation of Magic in place of Biosphere(Enhanced). I don't use it in my campaign as I think it's too weak for a sixth level spell.

3.2.1 Staff of the Slaver

This staff is nearly identical to the Eylor Staff as described in Rifts:Atlantis except that the spell program is as listed below. Each spell can be cast twice per day. All spells and blasts are cast at eighth level.

1. Carpet of Adhesion, 10 P.P.E, as per the spell
2. Magic Net, 7 P.P.E, as per the spell
3. Energy Bolt (Enhanced), 20 P.P.E, as per the spell
4. Befuddle, 3 P.P.E, as per the spell
5. Call Lightning, 15 P.P.E, as per the spell
6. Energy Disruption, 12 P.P.E, as per the spell
7. Dispel Magic Barriers, 20 P.P.E, as per the spell
8. Negate Magic, 12 P.P.E, as per the spell
9. Tongues, 12 P.P.E, as per the spell
10. Causeway of Wood, 30 P.P.E, as per the spell
11. Biosphere (Enhanced), 25 P.P.E, as per the spell

3.2.2 Causeway guns

These stocky, odd-looking weapons are all very similar. Each particular gun can 'fire' one particular version of the causeway spell, although it has been reported that some guns can 'fire' more than one version.

The guns must be fired with the lower edge of their box funnel mouths resting on the area of ground where the causeway is to start. When the trigger is pulled the guns fires as slowly travelling beam of light. Provided that the beam hits a solid surface within its range, the beam will thicken and form in to the appropriate type of causeway. If the beam does not hit an appropriate surface the charge is wasted

Range:	By type
Rate of Fire:	1 per melee
Payload:	10 Causeways, Magically recharged by High Lords, Techno-Wizards, or at Stone Pyramids. P.P.E to recharge by type.
Duration:	30 minutes
Cost:	By type; limited availability. Guns that fire two types cost 3 times that of the highest type fired and are extremely rare.

Type	Beam Colour	Range (feet)	P.P.E	Cost
Water	Blue-green	100	300	150,000
Wood	Golden Brown	250	610	250,000
Ice	Ice Blue	500	930	450,000
Stone	Black	500	1300	750,000
Energy	Turquoise	1000	2700	1,250,000
Steel	Silver	1000	4000	2,000,000

3.3 New Spells

Level 3

Biosphere (Simple)

Range: 4feet (1.2m) radius sphere around self or up to 20 feet (6m) away

Duration: 30 minutes per level

Saving Throw: Not Applicable

P.P.E: 12

The Biosphere is a semi-opaque light force field that appears either as a blue-white, yellow-white, or red-white dome. The dome is semi-permeable and reduces wind speed by 20 mph within the dome. The air in the dome is 15F colder or warmer than the air outside, and the dome will block light rain or snow, fog, and prevent ingress by flying insects. Moderate rain or snow and fog are reduced to light rain or snow and mist respectfully inside the dome. It has no affect on heavy or torrential rain or snow or on thick or freezing fog. Since the dome is semi-permeable gasses can pass through the dome. The dome is permeable to gasses and smoke leaving the dome but reduces the concentration by 50% for gasses filtering into the dome.

The semi-opaque nature of the force field obscures those inside causing ranged strikes by those outside the dome to be made at -3.

Impervious to Cold

Range: Self/Touch

Duration: 20 rounds per level

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: 5

This spell makes the recipient immune to the effects of Normal or Magical cold. The effects of cold below -40C are treated as if the temperature were 40C higher.

Level 4

Causeway of Water

Range: A causeway of up to 100 feet in length up to 10 feet away.

Duration: 5 rounds per level

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: 15

This spell can only be cast on a body of water (river, lake, canal, marsh) and only on a body of water whose surface is fairly flat (ripples or waves of less than 1 inch in height). When cast in a marsh the spell only works if the range of the spell is sufficient to allow both ends of the causeway created to be on solid ground.

When the spell is cast the surface of the water becomes still and solid (it does not freeze!). The causeway created is about just over 3 feet wide (1m) and can bear the weight of any object, person, creature up to 350lbs(160Kg), with a limit of 1100lbs(500Kg) on the causeway at any one time. Any object, person, or creature greater than 350lbs in weight that attempts to use the causeway will sink through it. If the total weight on the causeway exceeds the weight limit then the causeway collapses.

Level 5

Causeway of Wood

Range: A causeway of up to 200 feet in length up to 10 feet away.

Duration: 12 rounds per level

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: 30

This is the first of the causeway spells that can be used to bridge any obstacle- river, lake, marsh, ravine, gap between buildings, minefield, lava field, etc. The magic is such that the most suitable type of bridge to cross the obstacle is constructed. As with the causeway of water both ends of the bridge must be on stable ground.

The bridge created is about 5 feet wide (1.5m) and can bear the weight of any object, person, creature up to 1100lbs(500Kg), with a limit of 6600lbs(3000Kg) on the causeway at any one time. Any object, person, or creature greater than 1100lbs in weight that attempts to use the causeway will sink through it. If the total weight on the causeway exceeds the weight limit then the causeway collapses.

Note: When used to bridge mine fields, which are usually on flat ground, the bridge is usually just a platform on stilts. The chance of one or more of the stilts hitting a mine is left to the GM as is the result, but it is most likely that the bridge will be blown apart.

Level 6

Biosphere (Enhanced)

Range: 4 feet (1.2m) to 10 feet (3m) radius sphere around self or up to 50 feet (15m) away

Duration: 1 hour per level

Saving Throw: Not Applicable

P.P.E: 25

This is an enhanced version of the Biosphere (Simple) spell. The creator has a much greater control over the colour of the force field created allowing it to blend better with its surroundings. The dome is opaque to all noxious gasses and air born particles entering but permeable to gasses and air born particles leaving. Wind speed inside the dome is reduced by 40mph and the air temperature can be maintained at up to 40F colder or warmer than the air outside. The dome also blocks all but torrential rain or snow, which is reduced to light rain or snow. Thick (visibility of 25 feet or less) or freezing fog is reduced to a light mist.

Entry and exit by anything smaller than a small bird (approx. canary sized) is also blocked. The improvement in force field opacity means that ranged strikes from outside the dome are made at -6 and melee strikes into the dome are made at -3. The dome will reduce M.D.C ranged attack damage by 1D4 per blast/projectile.

Causeway of Ice

Range: A causeway of up to 500 feet in length up to 150 feet away.

Duration: 10 minutes per level

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: 45

The bridge created by this spell conforms to all the characteristics as laid down for a causeway of wood except that the weight limits are increased to 3,300lbs(1500Kg) and 22,000lbs(10 tonnes) and the bridge is made of ice not wood.

Note: Because the bridge is made of ice it will start to thaw once created if the temperature is above 32F(0C). Unless the bridge is subject to extensive heat (such as that put out by a river of lava) the bridge is unlikely to thaw significantly during the duration of the spell. Also because the bridge is solid anyone sinking into the bridge is liable to become stuck fast!

Level 7

Causeway of Stone

Range: A causeway of up to 500 feet in length up to 150 feet away.

Duration: 10 minutes per level

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: 60

Like the causeway of wood this spell creates a bridge that can be used to cross obstacles. The bridge created is about 10 feet wide (3m) and can bear the weight of any object, person, creature up to 11,000lbs(5tonnes), with a limit of 55,000lbs(25tonnes) on the causeway at any one time. Any object, person, or creature greater than 6,600lbs in weight that attempts to use the causeway will sink into it and is likely to become stuck fast. If the total weight on the causeway exceeds the weight limit then the causeway collapses.

Level 9

Causeway of Energy

Range: A causeway of up to 2500 feet in length up to 500 feet away.

Duration: 12 minutes per level

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: 120

The bridge created by this spell conforms to all the characteristics as laid down for a causeway of stone except that the weight limits are increased to 15,400lbs(7tonnes) and 66,000lbs(30 tonnes) and the bridge is made of energy not stone. The bridge is therefore not solid like the stone and ice bridges and any object exceeding the weight limit will fall through. The other advantage of this bridge is that the bridge itself is weightless and will not detonate mines. However, objects crossing the bridge may cause the mines to detonate.

Level 11

Causeway of Steel

Range: A causeway of up to 10,000 feet in length up to 500 feet away.

Duration: 12 minutes per level

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: 200

In terms of span and capacity the bridge created by this causeway spell far exceeds all the others, but like all the other causeways, except the causeway of energy, the bridge itself has weight. The bridge created by the spell is 20feet(6m) wide and can bear the weight of any object, person, creature up to 44,000lbs(20tonnes), with a limit of 330,000lbs(150tonnes) on the causeway at any one time. Any object, person, or creature greater than 44,000lbs in weight that attempts to use the causeway will sink through it. If the total weight on the causeway exceeds the weight limit then the causeway collapses.

Level 12

Biosphere (Superior)

Range: 4 feet (1.2m) to 50 feet (15m) radius sphere around self or up to 250 feet (15m) away

Duration: 4 hours per level

Saving Throw: Not Applicable

P.P.E: 60

This is an superior version of the Biosphere (Simple) spell. The creator has almost total control over the colour of the force field created such that it can be made 60% undetectable in a non-urban environment. The dome is opaque to all noxious gasses and air born particles entering can be made permeable to gasses and air born particles leaving (casters choice). The wind speed inside the dome is reduced by 90mph and the air temperature can be maintained at up to 70F colder or warmer than the air outside. The dome blocks all forms of rain, snow, mist, and fog.

Entry and exit by anything smaller than a cat is also blocked. The chameleon nature of the force field means that ranged strikes from outside the dome are made at -9 and melee strikes into the dome are made at -6. The dome will reduce M.D.C ranged attack damage by 2D4 per blast/projectile and melee attack damage by 1D6.

Create Metal

Range: Line of Sight up to 50 feet away

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: variable

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The spell enables the mage to convert magical energy to metal. Elementary particles are drawn together at the sub-molecular level and bonded into the appropriate metal alloy. The mage can create 1 cubic feet of mundane metal or metal alloy per level either in the form of ingots, bars, tubes, or sheets. The base PPE cost of creating the metal or metal alloy is determined by the type created:-

Copper	136
Cobalt	312
Brass	152
Bismuth	168
Tin	176
Zinc	172
Manganese	180
Nickle	180
Chromium	312
Iron	144
Mild Steel	168
Tool Steel	180
Stainless Steel	210
Aluminium	172
Titanium	256
Tungsten	360

Notes:

The PPE cost increase by 10% for each additional unit of volume created.

This magic will not create sodium, potassium, lithium, calcium, gold, silver, platinum, mercury, rare earth metals, or radioactive metals.

Note: The Arcanist requires a sample of the metal to be created. A small rod of 6mm diam 100mm in length is sufficient. This spell is extremely rare. If a character should come across and N.P.C. that knows this spell then the cost of buying the spell should be between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000 credits. It should never be freely available as a choice spell (even to Mystics) unless the GM has a particular reason for rewarding a player in this way. Of course, if any mage finds out that a player character knows this spell, then the character finds out what it is like to be the President of the U.S.A.

Iron Hyde

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: Varies dramatically; 30 P.P.E. minimum

This spell is very similar to the Iron Wood spell, but rather than transforming S.D.C. wood into M.D.C material it transforms S.D.C. animal hides into M.D.C material. S.D.C material is converted into M.D.C on a point for point basis, thus a leather jacket with 30 S.D.C becomes a 30 M.D.C leather jacket. Unlike Iron wood each point of S.D.C transformed costs 2 P.P.E points, so to transform the jacket would take 60 P.P.E.

This spell only converts simply tanned and processed hides into M.D.C material. It will not transform complex tanned or processed leathers such as Ironed Leather (a very hard leather used in making shoe soles) or Curboilli (Leather hardened by boiling in oil).

The transformation is instantaneous and permanent. Although an M.D.C structure the material retains its original look, feel, and buoyancy. It does however gain one ability - it is now completely waterproof.

The spell is typically used on cow or buffalo hide, goat skin, sheep skin, seal skin, and bear skin. The Splurgoth use in to transform Kursal hide into protective cloaks for the Altarans.

Mould Metal

Range: Touch or within 5 feet of the caster

Duration: 5 Minutes per level, Results are permanent

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E: variable

The spell enables the mage to shape metal in the form of ingots, bars, tubes, or sheets into finished shapes. These shaped pieces may be assembled into machines or fixed as armour but the shapes themselves contain no moving parts. The mage must have a clear picture in his mind of the shape(s) to be created. The chance of producing the desired result depends upon the information available to the mage.

Drawings 20%+2% per level (in using this spell)

2D Picture 36% + 2% per level (in using this spell)

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Hologram 60% + 3% per level (in using this spell)
Similar part or damaged original 80%+2% per level (in using this spell)
Original 98%

If the mage has the appropriate engineering skill then add 5% per level in that skill when interpreting drawings, 2D pictures, and Holograms to a maximum of 98%.

The PPE cost per 12 cubic feet is determined by the type of metal or metal alloy to be created:-

Copper	136
Brass	152
Tin	176
Zinc	172
Magnesium	180
Lead	156
Cast Iron	144
Wrought Iron	148
Mild Steel	168
Spring Steel	180
Stainless Steel	210
Aluminium	172
Titanium	256
M.D.C. Alloy	430
Polychromatic M.D.C Alloy	780

Once the spell is cast the metal becomes malleable to the mages hands and remains so until the duration of the spell expires. If small shapes are required then the mage is able to cut pieces from a larger block and shape them as required. As long as all pieces remain within 5 feet of the mage whilst the spell is active the mage can pick them up, put them down, and manipulate them as often as desired.

In the last part of this series I'll wrap up the loose ends, items for making slave driving easier, the Kursal and its habitat, and some general skills for rounding out characters and N.P.C.s.

4. Slave Driving, Beasts, and New skills.

4.1 Causeway Rituals

In the previous section I presented a whole batch of new spells, including those really useful Causeway spells. Please note the use of the word spells here, the Causeway spells only exist as spells, there is no version, which can be cast as a ritual. In time somebody will develop ritual versions of all of these spells (except Causeway of Water) but the ritual version and spell versions will differ substantially. The ritual version will allow the creation of a permanent (until destroyed) bridge. Because of this change the P.P.E. cost for casting the ritual version will be 10 times that required for the spell version and it will permanently drain P.P.E from the caster as below

Wood	5
Ice	10
Stone	20
Energy	40
Steel	70

4.2 Moving Slaves – Revisited

4.2.1 Slave Bracelets

When moving slaves short distances the easiest method of controlling them is to put them in irons. However, this slows them down, and makes it difficult for them to move over uneven or treacherous terrain. The Splurgoth have solved this problem using a combination of magic and technology. Each slave when captured is fitted with a slave bracelet, a magical locking band of about 50mm in width and 6mm in thickness. Bands are available in various diameters and can shrink or expand by 20mm to ensure a tight fit about the limb they are fitted to. Each band is tuned to a controller unit, and each controller unit can handle 50 bracelets. The controller unit can lock, unlock, activate, and control each bracelet remotely up to a range of 2500 feet. Once a bracelet is activated it is in the slave's interest to stay between 50feet and 250feet of the controller unit and to do as instructed by the Slaver, Altarans, or other Minions. The bracelet has several modes of operation, induce pain, stun, and kill, although the latter two are just instant applications of high levels of the first. The pain induction mode works both on a signal from the controller and automatically. The levels of pain and the distances at which they are automatically inflicted are given below

Pain Level	Automatic Distance (feet)	Affect
0	50-250	None/Mild tingling sensation.
1	<50 or >250	Save vs Pain at +8 (ie 8 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character is -1 on initiative, -1 to strike, parry and dodge, -5% on speed. -1 to save vs pain.
2	<45 or >300	Save vs Pain at +6(ie 10 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character is -2 on initiative, -2 to strike, parry and dodge, -10% on speed. -2 to save vs pain. If the save made treat as level 1 failed save
3	<40 or >450	Save vs Pain at +4(ie 12 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character is -3 on initiative, -3 to strike, parry and dodge, -20% on speed. -3 to save vs pain. If the save made treat as level 2 failed save
4	<35 or >500	Save vs Pain at +2(ie 14 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character is -4 on initiative, -4 to strike, parry and dodge, -30% on speed. -4 to save vs pain. If the save made treat as level 3 failed save
5	<30 or >750	Save vs Pain(16 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character is -6 on initiative, -6 to strike, parry and dodge, -40% on speed, -1 attack. -5 to save vs pain. If the save made treat as level 4 failed save
6	<25 or >1000	Save vs Pain at -1 (ie 17 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character is -8 on initiative, -8 to strike, parry and dodge, -50% on speed, -2 attack. -6 to save vs pain. If the save made treat as level 5 failed save
7	<20 or >1250	Instant application of this level causes stunning, save vs pain, gender bonuses only apply. If the save is made the affects as below apply otherwise the character is rendered unconscious for 1D6x10 seconds. When consciousness returns it takes 2D6 minutes for the pain to subside. Save vs Pain at -2 (ie 18 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character is -10 on initiative, -10 to strike, parry and dodge, -60% on speed, -2 attack. -8 to save vs pain. If the save made treat as level 6 failed save
8	<15 or >1500	Save vs Pain at -4(ie 20 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character acts last, is -10 to strike, parry and dodge, -75% on speed, -3 attack. -10 to save vs pain. If the save made treat as level 7 failed save
9	<10 or >1750	Instant application of this level causes unconsciousness and possibly death, save vs Electrocution@+2 (P.E. bonuses apply). If the save is made the character is rendered unconscious for 2D4x10 minutes. When consciousness returns it takes 2D6 hours for the

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		<p>pain to subside. If the save is failed then a second save vs Electrocutation@+6 (P.E. bonuses apply) is required. If the second save is failed the character suffers a major heart attack and is dead unless immediate medical attention is available. See Rifts:Cananda.</p> <p>If the second save is made then the character is rendered unconscious for 2D4x30 minutes. When consciousness returns it takes 4D6 hours for the pain to subside.</p> <p>Save vs Pain at -6(ie 20 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character acts last, is -12 to strike and parry, cannot dodge, -90% on speed, -4 attack. -12 to save vs pain. If the save made treat as level 8 failed save</p>
10	<5 or >2000	<p>Instant application of this level causes death, save vs Electrocutation (P.E. bonuses apply). If the save is made the character is rendered unconscious for 2D4x30 minutes. When consciousness returns it takes 4D6 hours for the pain to subside. If the save is failed then the character suffers a major heart attack and is dead unless immediate medical attention is available. See Rifts:Cananda.</p> <p>Save vs Pain at -8(ie 20 saves), M.E. and gender bonuses apply. If the save failed the character acts last, is -12 to strike, cannot parry or dodge, has a speed of 3, has 1 attack if they had 5 or more to start with, cannot use any special combat manoeuvres (paired weapons, leap kick, knockout/stun, critical strike etc), and is -15 to save vs pain. If the save made treat as level 9 failed save.</p>

Anyone wearing the bracelet must save vs pain(16 or higher) every round they remain at a range that inflicts pain. Any non-magical or non-supernatural creature can endure the pain at level one for a number of melee rounds equal to 2xP.E.+level unless they are somehow immune to the affects of pain. Magical and Supernatural creatures, which feel pain, can endure it for 5xP.E.=2xLevel. Every two additional levels of pain count as double the amount of exposure, ie pain at level seven is equivalent to 8 rounds of pain at level 1. Once they reach their limit of endurance they must save vs pain (all bonuses an penalties apply) every round or collapse unconscious. This save is in addition to the save required for being the distance they are from the controller. Once unconscious they remain so for (30-P.E)x5 minutes. If the result is less than 5 minutes they remain unconscious for 3D6x10 seconds.

4.2.2 Bracelet Controller

The controller resembles a laptop computer about 3 inches thick, with a slot in the side for inserting bracelets. The controller has a specialised Braille display and keyboard, so that it can be used by the Altarans. It is nearly always carried by one of the Altarans who remains about 100 feet from the slaves. If a slave convoy is attacked and they are losing badly then all the slaves can be stunned/rendered unconscious/killed immediately at the press of a button. Destroying the controller, which has 50 M.D.C, causes all bracelets to act as if they had just received a kill signal. Similarly, attempting to cut a bracelet off, results in it reacting as if it had received a kill signal. Bracelets reacting in this way continue to do so every round for as long as they have remaining P.P.E . Each bracelet has 15 M.D.C and 50 P.P.E. . Each level of pain costs 1 P.P.E per round to inflict and the bracelets regenerate 1 P.P.E per 10 minutes (twice this rate if within 1 mile of a ley-line, and 5 times this rate if within 1 mile of a nexus). Only the controller, Dispel Magic Barriers, and Anti-Magic Cloud can cause the bracelet to unlock. In the latter two cases the bracelet is allowed a saving throw.

Note: The Altarans are taught to use the controller, they are not taught to read. Each bracelet has a Braille code equivalent to the system of numerology used by the Romans and the keyboard is specifically designed to allow quick and easy entry of these codes.

4.2.3 Slave Prod

The other item used by the minions and often given to slave guards controlled by zombitrons is the Slave-prod. This is a 5ft (1.5m) long staff, conical in section, 1.5 inches thick tapering to 1 inches thick made of M.D.C material. The Staff can be used as a blunt weapon, to slash or strike at opponents and inflicts 2D4MD. The narrow end, however, rather than being blunt ends in two prongs, each about half an inch long. These, in combination with placing the thumb in one of the four indentations near the thick end of the staff, results in the administration of one of four levels of pain to anyone struck with the prongs. The first two indentations inflict level 2 and 5 pain from the table above respectively. The next two indentations can only cause activation if used by an Altaran as they are keyed on a genetic level. The third indentation inflicts level 7 pain (stun) and the last, level 10 pain(kill). The staff has 30 M.D.C and 70 P.P.E . Each level of pain costs 1 P.P.E per strike and the staff regenerates 1 P.P.E per 30 minutes (twice this rate if within 1 mile of a ley-line, and 5 times this rate if within 1 mile of a nexus).

4.3 Animals

4.3.1 Kursal

OTHO'S Guide To RIFTS: Rules for travel in a cold climate

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Imagine a bear twice the size of an elephant. Now give it the temperament of a grizzly crossed with a camel, place it on a world where the highest temperature recorded is 3°C and the average is -30°C. Add in a landscape similar to the Himalayas and a wind that rarely drops below 25kph and you have the Kursal and its home world. As usual when the Splurgoth discover a new world they are never one to miss an opportunity and the Kursal looked a prime candidate for inclusion in arena fights. The problem is the Kursal reacts to temperatures above -10°C the way Polar bears react when the temperature rises above 10°C. They become lethargic, slow, and try to do as little as possible to prevent overheating. This means that on most worlds they are useless as arena attractions. Never to be deterred the Splurgoth set about creating a market for their skins, teeth, and claws. They have been somewhat taken aback by the enthusiasm of the market, especially amongst the Kydians who love whole skins with the skull still attached!

Alignment:	Considered to be anarchistic predators
Attributes of Note:	I.Q. 1D4+2, P.S. 3D6+20 (super human), P.P. 1D6+8, P.E. 5D6+15 (super human), Spd 2D6+4
Size:	Body - 18-27 feet
Weight:	4000-9000 pounds(1814-4082Kg)
Hit points & S.D.C:	P.Ex15 for females, P.E.x20 for Males
Horror Factor :	12
Natural Abilities:	Immune to cold (to -100°C)
Vulnerabilities:	Reduce attacks and speed by half when exposed to temperatures above -10°C, and by 90% if the temperature is above 0°C. Normal fire inflicts double damage and plasma quadruple damage.
Attacks per Melee:	4
Damage:	Bite:6D6 S.D.C, Claw 1D6x10 S.D.C
Bonuses:	
Magic:	None
Psionics:	None
Average Life Span:	10-20 years
Habitat:	

4.4 New Skills

4.4.1.1 Literacy-Braille

Characters with this skill can read and write the braille version of a language. If they are naturally blind or have blind from an early age they get this as their native literacy skill if they are in a "modern" or "high tech" environment. This is not true of a lot of frontier settlements in Rifts. This skill can be selected repeatedly to add additional languages. **Base Skill:** 30% + 5% per level of experience.

4.4.1.2 History-General

This is the study and recording of events that chart the progress of the peoples of the earth over time. The skill gives the possessor a broad outline of the major events that have shaped the world up until the present day and provides bonuses to archaeological and anthropological studies. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** Literacy. **Bonus:** Adds 1% per 5% skill to both archaeology and anthropology.

4.4.1.3 History-<specific>

This is an in-depth knowledge of events and happenings within a particular geographical region for a given period in time. Time periods are either Early (pre 1800), Pre Rifts (1800 to End 21st century), Dark Ages (Beginning 22nd century to early 23rd Century). Post Rifts (circa Mid 23rd century to present day). Geographical regions are America (North), America (South), Europe, Central Asia, Eastern Asia, Indian Subcontinent, Africa, Middle East, and Australasia. Additionally specific History may be taken in the history of a specific Race or Culture, eg Greeks, Atlanteans, Wolfen etc.

Bonus: increases History-General in the specific area studied by 15% +5% per level. **Requires:** Literacy, History-General.

Note : The history skills are outlawed within Coalition Territory, since they are the true accounts of events, not the Coalition version. Rogue Scholars and Rogue Scientists get History-General and History<Post Rifts Native Region> as OCC skills.

4.4.1.4 Lore-Splurgoth & Minions

Base Skill: 25% + 5% per level of experience.