

Iridia

role-playing games and miniatures, old and new
by Christian Walker

On Point

On a recent day off, I decided to head out for an early surf session. It was 7:30 am and the streets were fairly deserted. As I was passing through an intersection, an uninsured driver ran a red light and smashed into my truck. I didn't get to surf that day, nor for several days thereafter while I nursed a sore back, neck and general anxiety.

I've been meaning to play test the vehicle rules for Star Frontiers for some time and the car accident kind of inspired me to take a look. According to the rules, I think I took 4d10 points of damage. (1d10 of damage per 20 meters/turn of vehicle speed) In light of the fact I was feeling pretty worked for several days, I think I rolled a 5, 4, 3 and 7 for a total of 19 points of damage. The rules say that skeinsuits absorb half of the damage in a crash, so perhaps I'll wear my wetsuit the next time I drive to the beach.

In other news, I have Skype up and running. I purchased a web cam, so I'm all set for video chat. I think it'd be a lot of fun to talk with Iridia's readers about the zine, or perhaps we could game online with the help of an application called Screen Monkey. If you're interested, my user name is Jhaevin. Hit me up!

Until next time, Christian



My ground car got thrashed.

The Ink Bug

gurps 4e

This is a small, mobile robot that can print or draw on paper or other suitable surfaces. Ink Bugs are a common substitute for computer printers when only a few pages must be printed, but a printer would be too large. An Ink Bug receives data from a nearby computer via radio or infrared, but it can also store the equivalent of 20 pages (double for ever TL above 8) and print them when a tiny button is pressed, or when it is placed on paper. This is very practical for standard forms and contracts; businessmen and civil servants may carry several Ink Bugs instead of an attaché case full of forms.

An early TL8 Ink Bug costs \$50, is roughly the size of a palm and moves on wheels or legs. It has sufficient sensor capacity to recognize paper sizes and to format correctly, but is easily confused by non-standard paper sizes and types (vellum, alien paper, etc.). It prints about one page per minute in black or white at 600dpi.

A late TL8 Ink Bug is the size of a walnut shell and can be disguised as a brooch or other piece of jewelry (egyptian scarab replicas are always in fashion). It prints two pages per minute and does very well with odd paper sizes and types as long as the software tells it what to do. Cost is \$40. It can print color very well and its resolution is about 1200dpi.

A TL9 Ink Bug does not get much smaller, but it imitates handwriting rather well. It costs \$30 and prints three pages per minute. Forgers often use TL9 Ink Bugs to imitate another person's handwriting. Most commercial Ink Bugs have a precise, steady writing that can be recognized as the work of an Ink Bug with a cursory analysis (though not with the naked eye). However, some models are very sophisticated and resist all attempts to detect the forgery with a skill level of 12. These models of Ink Bugs cost \$300 at least and are often illegal. A good forgery also requires samples of writing and analysis equipment.

Stirge

gurps 4e

"Aieee! Get it off me! Get it off me!"

Unfortunate victim of a stirge attack

Stirges are bat-like creatures that feed on the blood of living beings. While just one poses little danger to most adventurers, multiple stirges can be a formidable threat. In combat, a stirge attacks by landing on a victim, then plunging its proboscis into the flesh.

A stirge's coloration ranges from rust-red to reddish-brown, with a dirty yellow underside. The 10" long proboscis is pink at the tip, fading to gray at its base. A stirge's body is about 18" long, with a wingspan of about 3 feet.

Stirge (11 points)

SM -2 (3' wide, 18 lbs.);

ST 5 [-50], DX 15 [100], IQ 4 [-120], HT 11 [10];

HP 7 [4], Will 10 [30], Per 10 [30], FP 12 [3];

Basic Speed 6.5, Basic Move 2 (ground), 12 (air);

Dodge 9 (in flight), Parry -, Block -;

DR 0.

Advantages and Perks

Flight (winged -25%; air move 12) [30], Night Vision 5 [5],

Striker (cannot parry, -40%) [3], Vampiric Bite [30].

Disadvantages and Quirks

Bloodlust [-10], No Fine Manipulators [-30], Wild Animal [-30].

Skills

Brawling-17 [4], Stealth-15 [2].

Attacks

Proboscis-17: 1d-3 pi, reach C, no parry.

Upon a successful grappling attack (using the brawling skill), the stirge is able to land on the victim and grab hold with its claws. (The victim is at -4 DX after being successfully grappled.) The following turn, if it is still attached, it plunges its proboscis into the flesh using an All Out Attack. If the attack is successful and penetrates the victim's DR, see below.

Blood Drain: If the proboscis penetrates the victim's DR, the stirge drains 1 HP per second until dislodged. For every 3 HP stolen, the stirge heals either 1 HP or 1 FP. The stirge cannot raise HP or FP above normal this way. A stirge is vulnerable when feeding in this manner and will be unable to dodge any attack directed at it. However, a missed attack or excess damage may wound the stirge's victim!



*Illustration from the 1e AD&D
Dungeon Masters Guide*

The War of the Dragon Queen expansion for the D&D miniatures line features a stirge. (fig. #56) It is an uncommon



figure and is selling for \$6 + S/H on EBay. That seems like a lot for a small piece of painted plastic.



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