

# Ubiquitous Obliquity

#7

September 21, 2000

Forewarned

Gerheleths

Faratsu  
Kelubar  
Shaator

Baatezu

Lemure  
Nupperibo  
Abishai  
Barbazu  
Erinyes

Feedback #39

Feedback #40

Copyright 2000  
Robert Andrew Knop, Jr.

<http://www.pobox.com/~rknop>

## Boilerplate

*Ubiquitous Obliquity* is produced on an Amiga 3000/060 computer using PageStream3, ImageFX, ProVector, Final Calc, Aladdin 4D, DynaCADD, GNU Emacs, and other assorted software, with some help from a Pentium III/550 running Linux and the usual suite of mostly GNU software.

Republication requires permission of the author. You are free to use the information herein for any other purpose, including distributing copies to friends, without restriction; however, if you find any of it of use, I would like to hear about it!

*GURPS* is a trademark of Steve Jackson Games; no challenge to that trademark is expressed or implied. Lots of other things are trademarks of lots of other companies and people too, and I'm not trying to claim them either.

Robert Knop  
1233 Elm St.  
El Cerrito, CA 94530

rknop@pobox.com

<http://www.pobox.com/~rknop>  
<http://www.pobox.com/~rknop/Omar>



(Gratuitous Narcissism)

## Forewarned

Life continues to keep me very busy. I got married at the end of July; that is my excuse for missing the last issue. A couple of months before that, a smashingly successful run of *Fiddler on the Roof* at a local community theatre closed. I was both the producer of that show, and the Fiddler. (I understand it is something of a rarity to find an actor who is comfortable in character on stage who can actually *play* the violin well enough to do a credible job at that part. With my, shall we say, somewhat enhanced weight, together with my beard, I even looked the part.)

I very nearly missed this issue, and it was only due to the sympathy of our good Central Mailer that I was able to eek in under (or just past) the line. This was partly due to huge last minute work deadlines, but mostly due to taking my wife into surgery two days ago. This is nothing to be overly concerned about— it's hip replacement surgery, and we knew it was coming for many months. The surgery went very well, and she's recovering quite quickly from it. She will hopefully be home soon. I'm spending most of each day at the hospital with her, coming home and trying to squeeze out a submission for the APA at the very last minute.

I regret to say that I don't have anything for the theme issue this time around. I seem to have been several issues early with the theme; see my "GURPS AD&D Dragons" article from AotA #35. What I do present is some material I'd worked up already for the ongoing *GURPS Planescape* campaign I'm running monthly (skipping a month for the wedding) with my face-to-face gaming group. We're three sessions in, and it's going well. I'm having a blast— but I'm finding that the time it takes to prepare that campaign cuts into my AotA writing time!

*Planescape* is the 2nd edition AD&D setting of the Known Planes of Existence, and I love it (even though I don't love AD&D, and don't even have any of the 2nd edition core books). My GURPS conversion is on the web. Much of this issue's submission is there as well, although what is here has some additional explanatory text, and is a tad bit more up to date. (And less proofread.)

Because I knew that Alyson would be having her surgery, I'm not involved in any theatre at the moment. Next Spring, I'll be directing another two-week play in the Playmakers series at this community theatre that I've gotten so involved with. This one is entitled "The Elsinore Follies," and is a parody of Hamlet told from the point of view of the gravedigger. This is a play which I found on the Dramatic Exchange ([www.dramex.org](http://www.dramex.org)).

**Mini-Review:** Get *GURPS Ogre*, and read it. It's a great read, even if you don't like *Vehicles*; if you do like *Vehicles*, you'll go nuts. I'm probably biased by nostalgia for the microgame, but I was quite impressed with the job that Jonathan Woodward and others did with this GURPS conversion.

# Gerheleths

Gerheleths are the creatures which were known in 1st edition AD&D (and perhaps again in 3rd edition— who knows?) as “Demonands”. Say what you will about the political correctization of the names of the fiends in 2nd edition AD&D, I prefer the title “Gerheleths”. After demons and daemons, there were just too bloody many different things that sounded like they were demons.

Gerheleths are the race of fiends found on the plane of Carceri (formerly known as Tarterus). They are vile, loathsome, treacherous creatures. They are frequently described as the “summoning stock” of the lower planes. A wizard from the Prime Material Plane, when summoning an unspecified fiend, is as likely to get a Gerheleth as anything else, even though Gerheleths are much fewer in number than the more common Baatezu (aka Devils), Tanar’ri (aka Demons), and Yugoloths (aka Daemons).

The next adventure, just barely started, for my face-to-face *GURPS Planescape* campaign will be taking place on Carceri. Hence, I’ve converted Gerheleths into GURPS stats. They are presented below as monsters, though there is enough information that one could work up a complete character sheet (without worrying about the number of character points its worth) for a significant NPC who happens to be a Gerheleth.

For more information about Gerheleths’ descriptions, natures, ecology, etc., see the *Planescape Monstrous Compendium Appendix*.

## Faratsu

<b>ST</b> 18	<b>HP</b> 20	<b>Mv/Dge</b> 7/9	<b>Size</b> 1 (7' )
<b>DX</b> 15		<b>PD/DR</b> 2/4	<b>Weight</b> 430 lbs
<b>IQ</b> 10		<b>Dam</b> 1d+2 cut	<b>Origin</b> Carceri
<b>HT</b> 14	<b>Fat</b> 15	<b>Reach</b> C/1	<b>Habitat</b> Carceri

Faratsu are tall and slender with very long arms, and coated with a vile sticky black viscous fluid

which they secrete. They are vicious fighters, prone to attack anyone who isn’t a Gerheleth and often fighting to the death. Indeed, they will frequently eschew their innate magical abilities in favor of rending and tearing with the claws on their long arms.



After six rounds of combat, Faratsu go *Berzerk*, and automatically All Out Attack every round (either for double attacks or for damage); when *Berzerk* they get an additional +2 to each attack. It usually takes a weapon with at least +1 Accuracy *or* Puissance to harm a Faratsu; they have Extra DR/10 against nonmagical weapons. They have *Invulnerability* against acid and poison, and Extra DR/4 against all fire and cold based attacks. Their sticky hide gives them a +2 in any contents to grapple an opponent, and +3 against any opponent’s attempt to break a grapple. On any melee weapon attack which hits, roll 3d; the tarlike substance they secrete will make the weapon stick on a result of 16 or higher, meaning that it will require a Ready maneuver to free the weapon. In the mean time, the Faratsu may attempt to grab the weapon or weapon arm as if the opponent were grappled.

Faratsu have the following Knacks, with the indicated fatigue costs and durations: *See Invisible* (4/2, 1min), *Dispel Magic* (base 3, 2/day), *Detect Magic* (2, cast=5 sec), *Panic* (4/2, 1 min), *Mind Reading* (4/2, 1min, cast=10 sec), *Invisibility* (5/3, 1min, cast=3 sec), *Fatigue* (1 per ST/0.5 per ST, 1 min), *Borrow Language* (3/1, 1 min, cast=3 sec), *Fog* (base 2/1, 1 min).

## Kelubar

**ST** 19 **HP** 22 **Mv/Dge** 6/9 **Size** 1 (6.5' )  
**DX** 14 **PD/DR** 2/4 **Weight** 500 lbs  
**IQ** 11 **Dam** 2d-1 cut\* **Origin** Carceri  
**HT** 14 **Fat** 18 **Reach** C **Habitat** Carceri

Shorter and thicker than Faratsu, Kelubar are foul creatures with an extraordinary rank smell and secretions of corrosive acid. Although still quite aggressive, they are not as immediately combative as are Faratsu, and are more likely to make judicious use of both their innate magic and weapons. They are winged, and can fly with a Move of 18 (this is subject to change as I think about it more).



Kelubar have Invulnerability to fire, cold, acid, and poison attacks. It normally requires a total of +2 or more between Accuracy and Puissance for a weapon to hit them; against weapons of no or lesser enchantment, they have Extra DR/10. They have Infravision. Their slime is extremely rank; anyone coming within 10 yards of a Kelubar must make a HT roll or be affected for 1dx10

seconds (all skill use is at -5 due to choking and retching). Their slime also serves as a "Corrosive Venom" attack (p. CI71) doing an additional 1d of damage when a cutting attack with their claws hits.

Kelubar have the following Knacks, with the indicated fatigue costs and durations: *See Invisible* (4/2, 1min), *Dispel Magic* (base 3, 2/day), *Detect Magic* (2, cast=5 sec), *Panic* (4/2, 1 min), *Mind Reading* (4/2, 1min, cast=10 sec), *Invisibility* (5/3, 1min, cast=3 sec), *Fatigue* (1 per ST/0.5 per ST, 1 min), *Borrow Language* (3/1, 1 min, cast=3 sec), *Fog* (base 2/1, 1 min), *Wallwalker* (6/3, 1 min). They can attempt to summon additional Gerheleths (1-2 kelubar 9-, or 1-2 faratsu, 11-, 1/day).

## Shaator

**ST** 21 **HP** 25 **Mv/Dge** 5/8 **Size** 1 (6' )  
**DX** 14 **PD/DR** 3/5 **Weight** 560 lbs  
**IQ** 14 **Dam** 2d cut\* **Origin** Carceri  
**HT** 15 **Fat** 18 **Reach** C **Habitat** Carceri

The nobility of the Gerheleths, Shaator are smarter and more clever than most other Gerheleths. They are also more likely to be real mages (as opposed to simply possessing knacks, as *all* Gerheleths do.)

Shaator are squat and broad. They appear as if they were draped in shaggy skins. They have huge heads with wide, teeth-filled mouths. In addition to the claw attack noted above, a Shaator has sharp teeth; combined with the size and strength of its mouth, this gives it a Bite attack that does 3d-1 of cutting damage. If it is advantageous to do so, a Shaator will not hesitate to use a weapon. They are also much more likely than a Faratsu to make use of their inherent magical abilities.

Shaator have Combat Reflexes and Alertness/2. They have the following Knacks, with the indicated fatigue costs and durations: *See Invisible* (4/2, 1min), *Dispel Magic* (base 3, 2/day), *Detect Magic* (2, cast=5 sec), *Panic* (4/2, 1 min), *Mind Reading* (4/2, 1min, cast=10 sec), *Invisibility* (5/3, 1min, cast=3 sec), *Fatigue* (1 per ST/0.5 per ST, 1 min), *Borrow Language* (3/1, 1 min, cast=3 sec), *Fog* (base 2/1, 1 min), *Loyalty* (2/2, 1 hour, cast=2 sec), *Stench* (Base 1). They can summon other Gerheleths once per day, either 1d faratsu or 1d-2 kelubar, or 1-2 shaators on 8-.

Shaators have Invulnerability to all nonmagical attacks, to Illusion spells, and to Mind Control spells. Their biology is such that sharp weapons don't get bonuses for cutting damage, and only the cutting bonus (normally x1.5) for impaling damage.



# Baatezu

Baatezu are the dominant denizens of Baator, otherwise known as Hell. They are, by and large, powerful beings, although your average party of player characters ought to be able to handle some the lesser Baatezu without too much trouble. In my campaign, the players ran up against some Barbazu. I was conservative, not throwing too many of them at the players too fast, and they ended up pasting them to the wall. As a result, I've beefed up that particular subspecies a bit. Next time the PCs are put in a serious do-or-die combat situation (so far, it's only happened once in three sessions of gaming, and the players are chomping at the bit for more), I'll be a little less cautious in threatening them.

In AD&D, Baatezu are Lawful Evil. I have dispensed with the alignment mechanic (what with GURPS not such a rule), but this does not change the fundamental nature of the creatures. They naturally form hierarchies, and believe that it is right and just for the strong to bully the weak. Each individual just will do what it is necessary to advance through the ranks and become one of the strong. These fiends are the mortal (or, rather, immortal) enemies of the chaotic fiends known as Tanar'ri. They are involved in a plane-spanning war known as the Blood War, which goes back in time further than human history (and, indeed, likely further than human existence). The battlefields of this war are the lower planes, primarily the three planes between Baator and the Abyss (the home plane of the Tanar'ri): Gehenna, the Grey Waste, and Carceri.

I have begun converting the Baatezu, mostly as racial templates. They are interesting enough characters that it's worth working them up with full game mechanics, much as I did with AD&D dragons several issues back. They would even be suitable as player character races, if you're playing a high-powered game with characters of questionable (at best) moral fiber. For quick use as monsters, I've also presented a "standard" version of some of the Baatezu, with the skills that would matter in combat (or in whatever is the most likely circumstance for encountering the creature) listed.

## The General Baatezu Template

All Baatezu are based on the following General Baatezu template. Least Baatezu (Nupperibos and Spinagons) and Lemures do not have any of the

## Demons and Devils and Fiends, Oh My!

In first edition AD&D, there were these creatures from the lower planes known as Devils, Demons, and Daemons. Then came all those crazy putative links between demon worship and roleplaying. Sensitive to the need to be politically correct and the bad PR their game had gotten, TSR thoughtfully eliminated Demons and Devils from the second edition of AD&D. I scoffed along with everybody else at how pathetic a move that was. It was only later I realized that the creatures had not been removed, simply renamed, and there was so much pathetic to go around that it wasn't even scary.

*Planescape*, however, has managed to come up with a very appealing in-game reason for why creatures who were once known as "devils" are now known as "Baatezu". In the world of *Planescape*, the terms "devil" and "demon" are what the Clueless (i.e. those from the Prime Material Plane) believe are the proper names for the fiends from the lower planes. The Baatezu consider the term "devil" to be extremely offensive (a racial slur, as it were). As such, nobody in their right mind will use that term within the hearing of a Baatezu, but will rather use the proper term. The same applies to Tanar'ri, who just hate to be called demons.

As for the Yugoloths, who knows if they mind being called daemons or not; they are aloof and mysterious enough of creatures that nobody knows what they really think about anything. If it weren't for the fact that the name reminds me of poorly made European cars, I'd vastly prefer it to daemon, sounds too much like either the slang term for the Tanar'ri, or the name for background server processes running on BSD Unix.

## Planescape and Gate Magic

Naturally, the college of Gate Magic from GURPS Grimoire is very significant for *Planescape*. However, to fit the setting, several modifications are needed. Many of the time manipulation spells are not appropriate to the setting as written, although they might provide an interesting variant on *Planescape*. Many Gate spells depend on access to extra dimensions; not all of the planes in *Planescape* are adjacent to such a plane that could provide access to said extra dimensions.

Most gates and portals are *not* enchantments; the PCs should not be able to go around shutting down most portals (especially those maintained by the Lady of Pain in Sigil) with "Remove Enchantment." This is doubly true for conduits, which are probably effects of spacetime topology rather than anything strictly magical.

### Planar Visit

This spell is probably only appropriate for the Astral and Ethereal planes. It could stand in for AD&D's *Astral Spell*, but this does greatly increase the power and flexibility of the spell.

### Plane Shift

This is roughly the GURPS equivalent of AD&D's *Teleport Without Error*, except that it requires changing planes, and is plane specific. Assume that the caster can go to any location he wants on the destination plane, subject to the usual teleportation restriction as to how well he knows the place he's teleporting to. If the caster doesn't specify the specific location, or has no way of homing on to a specific position on a plane, then the destination is at the GM's whim. For purposes of *Planescape*, this spell should have an added prerequisite of *Teleport*.

...continued

Knacks.

General Baatezu Template [376 points]

*DR 6 (vs. Cold/Ice only) [12], Immunity to Poison [15], Infravision [15], Invulnerability to Fire [35], Planar [5], Unaging [15], Universal Communication [40], Knack: Loyalty [40], Knack: Major Plane Shift (costs only 10 fatigue) [240], Knack: Perfect Illusion [15], Knack: Suggestion [20], Bully [-10], Code of Honor (Baatezu) [-10], Enemy (Tanar'ri, utterly formidable, appears rarely) [-20], Greed [-15], Proud [-1] Sadism [-15], Selfish [-5]*

### Notes

- The Baatezu Code of Honor is: work towards the destruction of the Tanar'ri, don't get caught disobeying your superiors, never break your sworn word, bring order to the multiverse under the control of the Baatezu race.

- Don't worry about the fact that the template costs so much, as 240 points of it are from the Major Plane Shift Knack. Indeed, not worrying overmuch about character points is a good general survival characteristic when creating races or superpowered beings in GURPS.

- If a given Baatezu is an actual Mage, and plausibly has the prerequisites so that he could learn his Knacks as spells for real, consider eliminating them as Knacks, to reduce the cost of the template. For the most part, this sort of bookkeeping is an unnecessary detail; the creature can do what he can do, and unless he's a PC, the details of his point cost are irrelevant.

- Bear in mind the limitations on the use of the Major Plane Shift peculiar to Baatezu. Because they can still roam the lower planes freely, this limitation is not worth any points (though points are out the window as it is).

- The Invulnerability to Fire cost is based on a self-Powered "Resist Fire" Knack, rather than the 100-point Invulnerability advantage suggested by *GURPS Compendium I*.

- Universal Communication is equivalent to an always-on "Gift of Tongues" spell that costs no fatigue. It is telepathically based.

- Gelgulons modify the standard General Baatezu Template in that they have DR 6 vs. Fire, and Invulnerability to Cold/Ice. This does not change the cost of the template.

- There is no racial reputation because several of the racial disadvantages (Bully and Sadism in particular) already carry negative reaction modifiers. If an individual member of the species overcomes these disadvantages, he should still instead take a Reputation (with up to -4 in reaction penalties) to indicate that others will still think he shares all the odious

Baatezu traits.

- Most Baatezu have a “Summoning Baatezu” ability, which can be their greatest ally. I haven’t really tried to model this with a Knack, as the mechanics just get too messy to work out. Assume that each use of this ability, whether succesful or not, has an energy cost of 4 (taken from fatigue or mana, depending on whether the fiend is a Umana mage). The racial tempaltes list what the Baatezu can summon, and give a completely hand-

### Least Baatezu: Lemures

<b>ST</b>	7	<b>HP</b>	10	<b>Mv/Dge</b>	2/4	<b>Size</b>	1 (5' )
<b>DX</b>	10			<b>PD/DR</b>	1/2	<b>Weight</b>	130 lbs
<b>IQ</b>	5			<b>Dam</b>	1d-3 cut	<b>Origin</b>	Baator
<b>HT</b>	12	<b>Fat</b>	12	<b>Reach</b>	C	<b>Habitat</b>	Baator

As Baatezu Larvae, these creatures aren’t usually considered worth of the title “Least Baatezu”. The are grotesque, amorphous blobs of human shaped melting flesh, with unrecognizable features. Presentient, they are ubiquitous on Baator, and Baatezu are fond of driving them in mass attacks that overwhelm opponents with numbers.

If you’re bad enough in the right ways during life, when you die you may become a Lemure. That you may then be able to be promoted to more interesting forms of Baatezu is probably limited solace.

They regenerate at a rate of 1 HP every 5 turns. This regeneration happens even after they are slain; only reducing them to ashes can stop it.

### Least Baatezu: Nupperibo

<b>ST</b>	6	<b>HP</b>	6	<b>Mv/Dge</b>	4/4	<b>Size</b>	1 (5' )
<b>DX</b>	8			<b>PD/DR</b>	1/1	<b>Weight</b>	160 lbs
<b>IQ</b>	2			<b>Dam</b>	1d-4 cut	<b>Origin</b>	Baator
<b>HT</b>	10	<b>Fat</b>	10	<b>Reach</b>	C	<b>Habitat</b>	Baator

These guys are similar in appearance to Lemurse, but tend to be much more rotund, less melting, and more amorphous (although those clawed arms are there). They are less intelligent even than Lemures, but higher in the hierarchy of Baatezu. They are blind, deaf, and mute. They can use weapons, though probably nothing more complicated than a club.

Nupperibos regenerate just as do Lemures.

### Gate Magic (cont’d)

#### Control Gate

Most portals *cannot* be moved with this spell; since *Planescape* portals generally have to form within an archway or an enclosed space, it wouldn’t make sense to be able to move them. Gates can be *temporarily* closed with this spell, and it stands in for the AD&D spell *Gate Ward*.

#### Major Plane Shift (VH) (Regular)

This spell works just like *Plane Shift*, but this single spell can transport the player to *any* other plane. This spell may also be used as an enhanced *Teleport* spell which has no skill penalty for arbitrary distances. This spell is the real stand-in for AD&D’s *Teleport Without Error*.

*Duration:* Permanent

*Cost:* 20

*Time to Cast:* 10 seconds

*Prerequisite:* Magery 3,

Teleport, and four individual Plane Shift spells.

*Item:* Any item; cost 4,000.

## Nonrestrictive Magic Resistance

[5 points/level]

AD&D is loaded with spell-using creatures who have some magic resistance themselves; Planescape is no exception. This is at odds with the standard GURPS Magic Resistance advantage. Nonrestrictive Magic Resistance acts just as normal magic resistance does, only it does *not* prevent a character from also having Magical Aptitude. Normally, this advantage is only available as a *racial* advantage. In other words, characters can *only* buy it if they get it as a part of their racial template (or as one of their overlays).

## Standard Red Abishai

(838 points)

Useful if you're just looking for a quick "monster":

**ST** 12

**DX** 12

**IQ** 10

**HT** 10

**HP** 16

**Fat** 10

**PD** 3, **DR** 6

**Move** 5 / 10 (flying)

**Dodge** 5

*Advantages:* Red Abishai [837]

*Skills:* Brawling/12 [1]

Damage: 1d-3 cutting from a punch (for the claws), 1d+1 impaling from the tail. The Full Coordination ability lets the Abishai attack with his tail in the same round as his claws, without penalty.

## What's with all those points?

These racial templates are worth an obscene number of points, out of proportion to their challenge to a player character party. I believe that if you don't worry too much about character point balance in GURPS, you will be happier, especially with supernatural races.

Baatezu are loaded down with lots of inherent magic, meaning expensive Knacks in the template. They wouldn't be worth as many points if I bought them up as Mages with the spells learned normally—and they'd be more effective if purchased that way as well! Point balance, schmoint balance.

In my campaign, five 150 point PCs handled three Barbazu with no problem at all. Take all character point values for these races with a grain of salt.

## Lesser Baatezu: Abishai

The basic Abishai template is: *Baatezu* [376], *ST* +2 [20], *DX* +2 [20], *PD* 2 [50], *DR* +10 (vs. nonmagical and non-silver weapons) [20], *Ambidexterity* [10], *Claws (Sharp)* [25], *Full Coordination* [50], *Nonrestrictive Magic Resistance/3* [15], *Regeneration (1 HP/5 turns, limitation: not against holy water/weapons, -0%)* [80], *Striker (tail, thr+2/imp damage)* [60], *Venom/1* [15], *Winged Flight* [30], *Appearance (Monstrous)* [-25], *Vulnerability (Holy Water)* [-10], *Flight at DX* [2], *Knack: Create Fire* [6], *Knack: Shape Fire* [8], *Knack: Fear* [12], *Knack: Illusion Disguise (used with "Perfect Illusion" Knack)* [10], *Summon Baatezu (2d lemures on 11-, or 1-3 abishai on 8-, 1/day)* [40].

There are actually three sorts of Abishai, which share the above template plus the following:

**Black Abishai** (786 points): *DR* 4 [12]

**Green Abishai** (799 points): *DR* 5 [12], *Extra Hit Points/2* [10]

**Red Abishai** (837 points): *PD* +1 [25], *DR* 6 [18], *Extra Hit Points/4* [20]

Abishai look like classic reptilian gargoyles, with long thin tails and leathery wings. They tend to be quite large; Black Abishai stand eight feet tall, Green Abishai seven feet tall, and Red Abishai six feet tall. Red Abishai are highest in station amongst the three sorts, and Black Abishai the lowest. As among the lowest in station of Abishai, they enjoy bullying those few who they can.

Note that the *Full Coordination* advantage allows an Abishai to attack with claws and with its envenomed tail in the same round.





## Lesser Baatezu: Barbazu

The basic Barbazu template costs 617 points and consists of: *Baatezu* [376], *ST* +4 [45], *DX* +1 [10], *IQ* -2 [-20], *HT* +1 [10], *PD* 3 [75], *DR* 5 [15], *DR* +10 (vs. nonmagical and non-silver weapons) [20], *Disgusting Attack Beard* [30], *Combat Reflexes* [15], *Extra Hit Points/3*, *High Pain Threshold* [10], *Increased Speed/2* [50], *Nonrestrictive Magic Resistance/3* [15], *Appearance (Monstrous)* [-25], *Bad Temper* [-10], *Berzerk* [-15], *Bloodlust* [-10], *Knack: Create Fire* [6], *Knack: Shape Fire* [8], *Knack: Fear* [12], *Summon Baatezu* (2d abishai on 10- or 1d barbazu on 9-, 1/day) [50].

Barbazu are the battle-crazed shock troops of the Baatezu. They are more often warriors than leaders, for they tend to be the least organized of all Baatezu. Barbazu customarily fight with huge, dangerous polearms (frequently glaives), but they may be proficient with most any weapon. Some of the longer lived ones will have quite high weapon skill levels. Most Barbazu have strength higher than the racial base of 14; note that a strength of 16 lets a Barbazu reduce by one the normal two turns it takes to ready a glaive. (I use as a rule (which I think is a house rule) that an All Out Attack can allow a “ready and attack” for a weapon that normally takes a turn to ready. Thus, a sufficiently strong Barbazu who’s gone Bezerk will attack every round.)

They appear as foul humanoids with moist scaly skin, a long tail, clawed hands and feet, pointed ears, and a writhing, disgusting beard. They stand as tall as a slightly above average human.

The Disgusting Attack Beard is a close combat weapon which does thr/imp damage; generally it only works after a successful grapple. If any of the damage penetrates DR, then the victim must roll against HT to avoid contracting some sort of infection or disease. (The point cost I just guessed at– as I mention in a sidebar, point costs are of limited use and value with this whole Baatezu enterprise as it is.)



## Standard Barbazu

(673 points)

For quick use as a monster:

**ST** 16 [20]  
**DX** 12 [10]  
**IQ** 8  
**HT** 11

**HP** 19  
**Fat** 11  
**PD** 3, **DR** 5  
**Move** 7  
**Dodge** 7

*Advantages:* Barbazu [617]

*Skills:* Tactics/10 [8],

Brawling/13 [2], Polearm/15 [16]

Attacking with a glaive, a Standard Barbazu can swing for 2d+5 of cutting damage at reach 2 or 3, or thrust for 1d+4 of impaling damage at reach 1-3. Because their strength is 5 over the minimum of 11 to use a glaive without penalty, it only takes them one turn (or one action from a two-attack All Out Attack) to ready their weapon.

## Image Credits

All images used in this issue of *Ubiquitous Obliquity* (save the photo of me as the Fiddler) were taken from the 1st edition AD&D *Monster Manual* and *Monster Manual II*. Much better art depicting these creatures, drawn by Tony DiTerlizzi, may be found in the *Planescape Monstrous Compendium Appendix*.

## Standard Erinyes

(951 points)

**ST** 10  
**DX** 12 [20]  
**IQ** 12  
**HT** 12

**HP** 10  
**Fat** 18  
**PD** 2, **DR** 3  
**Move** 6  
**Dodge** 6

*Advantages:* Erinyes [917], Charisma/2 [10]

*Skills:* Broadsword-12 [2], Whip-12 [2], Acting-14 [6], Carousing-13 [4], Fast-Talk-14 [6], Sex Appeal-19 [4] (includes +8 for Appearance)

This is a very boring, basic, non-Mage version of an Erinyes. If you are introducing an Erinyes into a campaign, it's worth individualizing her as an NPC. Most Erinyes in Baator have far more abilities than this one would suggest. This one is most suitable if you need a quick one found on a Blood War battlefield, or gated in by another Baatezu.

## More About Baatezu

I'm only presenting the GURPS conversions of a handful of the Baatezu here. For a lot more information about their character and nature, see the AD&D Planescape products. They are described primarily in the *Planescape Monstrous Compendium Appendix*. Another supplement entitled *Faces of Evil: The Fiends* is an interesting book, written largely "in character," that gives a lot of background about all the different sorts of fiends. Finally, the boxed set *Hellbound: The Blood War* has all sorts of information about the eternal struggle the Baatezu are locked in against the Tanar'ri.

## Lesser Baatezu: Erinyes

The Erinyes templates costs 917 points and consists of: *Baatezu* [376], *IQ*+2 [20], *HT*+2 [20], *PD* 2 [50], *DR* 3 [15], *DR* +10 (vs. nonmagical and non-silver weapons) [20], *Appearance (Beautiful)* [15], *Charm* [100], *Extra Fatigue/6* [18], *Telepathy/6* [30], *Winged Flight* [30], *Flight at DX* [2], *Telesend at IQ* [4], *Telereceive at IQ* [4], *Knack: Panic* [15], *Knack: See Invisible* [8], *Knack: Invisibility* [24], *Knack: Seeker* [10], *Knack: Create Fire* [6], *Knack: Great Shapeshifting* [100], *Summon Baatezu (1d+2 Spinagons on 10- or 1d-2 barbazu on 9-, 1/day)* [50].

Erinyes are the temptresses of Hell. Think Succubus, only as a Baatezu rather than as a Tanar'ri (or demon). Although they will frequently appear as very attractive humans (or members of other similar species), their natural form is that of a tall, beautiful woman with large feathered wings.

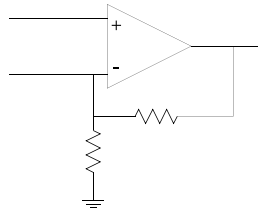
The PD and DR on the Erinyes is a magical protection rather than thick hide or any such. The Charm ability doesn't exactly match any GURPS ability; the closest is the Charm spell. This ability is modified from the Charm spell as follows:

- The duration is permanent until the subject dies, or until the Erinyes breaks the spell.
- It works out to a range of 10 without penalty.
- Resistance rolls are at -2.
- The Erinyes may only have a single subject charmed at one time.

Given the relative rarity of Erinyes, and the special position they hold in Baatezu hierarchy despite being lesser Baatezu, most Erinyes should be more competent than the base racial template would indicate. They should have improved abilities and skills more often than is the case with most other lesser Baatezu. A substantial quantity of Erinyes are probably Umana mages. In this case, they are able to use *either* their Mana tally or their fatigue to power their Knacks (but normally only their Mana store to power normal spells). This naturally gives them a huge advantage, and the GM may wish to decree that an Erinyes who is a Umana mage can only use her Mana store to power her knacks.



## Feedback #39



### Andrew Dawson

Shades of Grey sounds like fun. I'm still impressed that you can keep a handle on all of this.

I liked your material on regulating Psionic powers. It does a good job of adapting the GURPS rules for psionics to worlds where the assumptions are different, *without* creating a whole new system. Your modifications are relatively light, and feel very GURPSish, and seem like they would work well. It occurred to me that some of the modifications might work well with a pseudo-GURPS system that had a Will and Perception attribute in addition to the standard four.

RYCT me: yes, please do go ahead and use *Sleepers Awake* for a con game, or for anything else. I'd be flattered to think that somebody else might want to run this game!

### Arthur Shipkowski

I'm still thinking about that cow on skis, just so you know.

Your Random Magery was fun. I was thinking that it might work best in a "silly" campaign, but then I realized that I might want to use it if the PCs in my GURPS Planescape campaign ever make it to Limbo....

RAEBNC on the rest. (I'm gonna have to read GURPS Voodoo one of these days, great followup articles on it keep showing up in AotA.)

RYCT me, if you do write that Unix character generator, let me know!

### Brett Slocum

RAEBNC on most of it. I loved the Lorimyr map and Gazetteer! Like you, I really like maps. The map reminded me in some qualitative ways of my "next" fantasy world, some vague ideas for which are rattling around at the back of my head. In particular, lots of ocean with lots of island nations; sea travel is fun. It's probably no coincidence that this feature seems to resemble a map of Greece, and that I first read the *Odyssey* in school at the tender age of (I believe) 13.

### Michael David Jr.

Jonathan "Smith 'n" Wesson would make an interesting character in a real-world, no magery setting, with the one exception that he did originally come from the world described in his background. He's not really fully delusional, because he once *did* fight an undead scourge, but he is surely acting delusional being vigilant against it here.

RYCT me, I had seen *Event Horizon*, and was somewhat dissatisfied by the movie. It had promise as a mind-candy time-waster fun movie (i.e. take the sci out of sci-fi but still enjoy the movie), but it just got out of hand towards the end. It was not a conscious influence on *Sleepers Awake*, but it could very well have been an unconscious influence.

### Scott Paul Maykrantz

Do your TL13 campaign; it sounds like fun. First, though, move close to me and invite me to join it.

Thanks for the car article! I actually hoped to write a follow-up on it myself, but didn't have time. I hope I remember to do it for the next issue.

Quick Mass Combat is great. I gotta bookmark that. The rest of Bits and Pieces was, as usual, better than *Cats*.

**Lisa J. Steele**

The SABR rifle sounds positively science fictional; shows you what I know about real world weapons. It also sounds positively scary, but that's war for you. I shouldn't complain after raving about *GURPS Ogre* in my forward.

RYCT me, your approach to historical games sounds good. I would think that it would take talent to be able to produce a good one or two pages of background that both gets enough across, and is readable. Your technique of keeping names for suddenly created NPCs is one I use also, but I keep being too disorganized to remember to use it during a gaming session. My notes are always everywhere, buried under each other, and I'm already partially computerized (yes, I keep a laptop behind the GMs screen, I'm that pathetic).

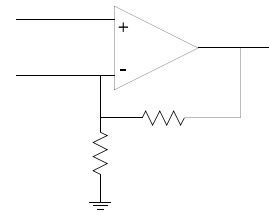
**Robert Gilson**

I too loved *Galaxy Quest*. I was impressed that they were able to do a very specific parody of *Star Trek* without having to resort to any in jokes that only a Trekkie would get. Anybody who has any idea what *Star Trek* is and what it means to our culture would be able to "get" the jokes.

RYCT me, if you use *Sleepers Awake* for anything, let me know how it goes! Next issue, I really ought to remember to publish the characters that my gaming group used when I ran the adventure (which happened *after* it was published in *AotA*).

RAEBNC on the *Space 1999* stuff; I fear that I just don't know enough about that show to really be able to comment intelligently on your conversion.

# Feedback #40



**Brett Sanger**

Welcome to the nuthouse! *Chaos Space* sounds interesting. Were player characters involved in the events of this universe all along the line? How long (in game time) did the campaign last, and was it the same characters all the way along? If things ever need shaking up, it might be interesting to reintroduce time travel of one sort or another to the campaign.

The reality as a virtual construction thing is something I've wanted to write a story about since I was in high school, but probably never will. (And, of course, it's already been done better than I think I could hope to do it; *The Matrix* was really about this, and I seem to remember seeing "brain in a box" articles in *Scientific American* many years ago.) Oddly enough, back then, one of my inspirations was *Flight Simulator II* on my Commodore 64.

I like the idea of having "overlays", where you can swap out some advantages and swap others in. To some extent, Chip Slots in *Ultra-Tech 2* give you this, but it's more natural in your *Cogito Ex Machina* setting.

**Volker Bach**

Welcome to the stately, sane, and ultimately dignified ensemble that is *AotA*. I hope that even with you here, I still manage to keep up the courage to submit historically based articles.... I don't know if I would have felt too stupid to submit my *Persian Wars* article a few issues back if I knew there was a real ancient historian on the rolls. (If you haven't seen that issue of *AotA*, let me know, and I can send you a Postscript file of that article.) Suffice to say that I, for one, am quite interested in ancient Greek roleplaying, even though I haven't done any of it.

Your *Bentham 4* is pretty impressively detailed. I

have to admit to having not had time to fully parse it, what with my putting this submission together at the last minute. I will hopefully try to comment more cogently on it next time. Have you read *Paths to Otherwhere* by James P. Hogan? It's a multiple universes novel where eventually the character discover what I describe as a "Hogan Utopia". It reminded me in some ways of Bentham 4.

### Tom Cron

Iron Dixie is a world which is interesting in that it has a steampunk setting as part of its history. I can see why Infinity Unlimited would be worried about it!

### Andrew Dawson

Pity that GURPS fizzled at the Blue Water Con. Re: Wolf, see my comment to Arthur on *GURPS Voodoo* from #39 one page back....

RYCT me, I've gone into something similar to a "work trance" as well, though I'd more describe it as a temporary obsession (since it passes after days or a week or so). This happens with other things as well.

Still RYCT me, I think I did miss the 5-point UB, which is a good idea for Fugue, but still the cost is very modest in comparison to (say) the price of the Haste and damage-absorbing kancks that would give you the same number of "additional actions" in a turn. Have you seen the *RPG Continuum*? It's a very interesting time travel RPG, which has provisions for "Gemini Incidents," something very much like your Fuguing.

### Arthur Shipkowski

Congrats on the wedding (which should have happened by now)! How did it go? Mine was absolutely great. It was outside in Minnesota, and one could not have asked for a nicer day. With nearly two months of baseline, I'm happy to report that being married is great.

I liked the familiar reciprocity article; it makes good sense from the familiar's point of view! Some of these are significant additional powers for the

mage; a familiar who can take your form is something which could be used to great advantage, for example.

I liked the speaking quirks. I've noticed that almost everybody else in my face-to-face gaming group is better than I at assuming a different voice when speaking in character. I'm too spoiled by having the ability to characterize with writing in PBEM games. As GM, I try to use different voices for different characters, but it seems that too often they come out as either the nasal voice, or the gratuitously deep voice. What I don't do, and really ought to do, is think ahead about how I'll speak in caharacter for each NPC, as I write the adventure.

RYCT me Re: PBEM gaming, I ought to write a bit about it for a future Ubiquitous Obilquity. Briefly, though, I bet that absolutely everyone who writes for AotA would be a great PBEM player. It appels to those who like writing; I would say that to some extent, PBEM gaming is to face-to-face gaming as writing is to improv acting. I'll try to remember to say more later.

### Lisa J. Steele

I see what you mention as both the advantages and disadvantages of listing family members. In terms of giving bonus xp, how about using them as bonus quirks? Myself, most of my PCs tend to be like everybody else's: de facto orphans. One PC I have in a PBEM game, though, does have a mother and a brother she interacts with every so often, even though they aren't technically allies or dependents. It does add some nice flavor to the character.

I've seen the same "blank stare" effect you mention. I've bene very anal retentive in the past, keeping not only a running summary of the game, but also a comprehensive list of names that the characters (if not the players) would remember. I think most of the players thought it was too anal retentive, and ignored it. For my current *GURPS Planescape* game, I'm just keeping the summary (which I do for my own sake as much as for the players' sake).

Re: Harry Potter, you are right that the magic is way too powerful to be in PCs hands. I can't help but expect that the RPG conversion that will come out of

## *Ubiquitous Obliquity #7*

WOTC is going to either be terrible, not capture the feel of the books at all, or both. There are some settings, Harry Potter being one of them, which work just so much better for stories than as a gaming setting. I would say that Indiana Jones is another such (though general “Pulp” or “Cliffhangers” is not). One key characteristic of each: the story is driven very much by the main characters. Star Trek does make a good setting for a game, because clearly there are lots of stories to be told that don’t depend on any particular set of characters.

### **Michael David Jr.**

I like the villains. Bonelord, with his tendency to bungle things, sounds like a great opportunity for seriously high-powered comic relief. (The ability to control others’ skeletons is quite a powerful one.)

### **Craig Roth**

My condolences on the emotional rollercoaster you’ve been through. I went through a much lesser version in college, but I think it embittered me on certain topics for many years thereafter. It is terrible to trust a person who turns out to have been lying to you all down the line. Getting the house out of the deal is a good deal, though. Cling to that... and get a cat or two. They’re obligatory, just read most of the “About the Author” sections in GURPS books.

You are right that your dungeon crawl wasn’t the standard dungeon crawl... too much plot and story associated with it. It sounds much more interesting, however. Don’t get me wrong, I’m very much one for the occasional cathartic true dungeon crawl, but you’ve put together an interesting world and background for an adventure there.

### **Scott Paul Maykrantz**

Thanks for the car enhancement; as I mentioned a couple of pages back, I hope to write a follow-up myself on your car article sometime soon.

The Kahn brothers are very interesting. They would make a good way to introduce “high weirdness” elements into a campaign that the players had previously believed was straightforward. The

introduction could be from something that they thought was normal all along.

The bodyguard templates were interesting. It makes sense, and I like the fact, that they aren’t just combat monsters. Somebody carelessly thinking about bodyguards might model them as such.

### **Brett Slocum**

Endowments are very interesting. No surprise that Dedications are well cared for in the Kingdoms of Rofehavan, if the endowments last only as long as the Dedications live. This feature would, I think, make the Dedicate a Dependant for the recipient of an endowment. The Dedicate is now weaker, and the recipient has a serious vested interest in the Dedicate staying in good health. One way to attack somebody with a lot of endowments would be to systematically wipe out his Dedications.

### **Robert Gilson**

I like your new format for character writeups. Enough whitespace that the thing is readable (unlike how I, standard GURPS, and almost everybody else does it), but not too much wasted space. The organization is logical, and I like the sidebar format for the nutshell description. A good way to quickly present fleshed out characters (who aren’t so fleshed out as to require pages and pages of textual description).

Angus McCavish is the character I’d want to play if you ever demo this when I’m nearby. Since I know zip about Castle Falkenstein, I’m a prime candidate for the demo.

Pity that nobody showed up for the demo; you weren’t the only one who mentioned something like that this issue. Is the sky falling?

It sounds like a several AotAers are involved in GURPS Traveller campaigns. It seems that that setting has really caught on for GURPS. (No surprise, given that its nostalgia and historical value is almost as much as it is for D&D.)