

Border Town

Setting: Modern

Location: Texas border town of Corazon. Corazon, known as Corazon del Diablo on the streets, is a midsize city that mainly exists as a crossroads between the United States and Mexico. It also has more than its share of crime and poverty.

Genre: Guns & Action/Contemporary Horror/Comedy

Feel: Cinematic action, darkness & humor

Themes: Corruption, cleaning up the streets, and kicking the ass of darkness.

Character Types: ATF agents, border patrol officers, police detectives, vigilantes, conspiracy theorists, UFO nuts, militia whackos, criminals, paranormal investigators, skeptics, assorted other kooks and weirdoes.

Suggested Viewing:

Bubba Ho-Tep: The perfect mix of comedy, camp horror, and Bruce Campbell as an 80-year-old Elvis kicking mummy ass. An ancient Egyptian mummy is stalking the residents of a West Texas nursing home, and it's up to Elvis and an elderly - and black - JFK to stop him. Along with *The Mummy*, one of the primary influences on the world of Border Town. High strangeness.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer (TV series): Joss Whedon's cult series descends into teenage angst at times, but it remains one of the best blends of contemporary horror, action, humor, and humanity around, mostly managing to find an effective balance between all of those.

Dresden Files (TV series and novels): The TV series plays out much like a lesser version of *Forever Knight* or *Angel* as a supernatural detective show, but the novels are (reportedly) much better. It fits the tropes of Border Town, though (at least as the campaign goes on and the characters gain some experience in dealing with the strange), with the police finding a baffling case and calling in a specialist in the weird to dig into it (and not believing any supernatural explanations, either).

Gargoyles (TV series): Animated fantasy/science fiction about a group of medieval gargoyles awakened in modern Manhattan. Although

most Border Town characters will be normal humans, the feel of the series, with its mixture of whimsy and truly dark parts (name another American animated series in which one of the heroes nearly dies from a gunshot wound) and its focus on family relationships, fits nicely. That, and it has mythological gods, giant robots, Shakespeare, the Illuminati, ghosts, mad scientists, werpanthers, aliens, mutants, cyborgs, New York cops, gargoyles, and a certain immortal Scotsman coexisting in a world that actually makes sense.

Ghostbusters (and *Ghostbusters 2*): The original and best, and one of the most influential works in modern science fiction/horror; combines moments of hilarity with scared-shitless panic. Few player characters will have the kind of gear the Ghostbusters do, though.

Gunsmith Cats (OAV): A typical American action movie - except animated. The perfect anime for those who don't like anime. Guns, fast cars, and action - with comedy and fan service. No supernatural elements, but Rally and her ditzzy explosives-obsessed sidekick Minnie May are perfect fits for Border Town characters.

Men in Black (and *Men in Black 2*): Primarily included here because of Department 7 (and the kooks at Star Watch), Jay and Kay could easily be Border Town characters with the agency, charged with hunting down the weird while keeping the public from getting wind of the truth.

The Mummy (and *The Mummy Returns*): Fast-paced action-horror; two-fisted heroes do battle with evil with a clever quip on their lips. And guns. Lots of guns. Transplant the O'Connell clan into the early 21st century and they'd fit right in, in Corazon.

*It's alcohol and nicotine,
And every day's like Halloween.
It's a muy loco world we're livin' in.
It's broken dreams and shady deals,
Red-hot cars and cold blue steel.
And every night temptation comes around.
-Charlie Daniels, "Across the Line"*

"I'll be damned if I let some foreign, graffiti-writin', soul-suckin', son of a bitch in an oversized cowboy hat and boots take my friends' souls and shit 'em down the visitors' toilet!"

-Elvis, Bubba Ho-Tep

No one's safe on the streets of a border town. Guns, drugs and money change hands every day, and corruption is only as far away as the nearest bribe. Illegal immigrants, drug lords, and dirty cops fill the city. Even the ones who claim to be good guys face grave temptations.

But the gang-bangers, crime lords and prostitutes aren't the only predators on the streets of Corazon. Unknown, ancient horrors stalk criminal, victim, and bystander alike. The supernatural not only exists, but it has made the border town its home and hunting ground.

Your heroes, armed with guns, fast cars and their wits, are going to light a candle against the darkness. But be wary - the streets of Corazon del Diablo can claim not only your life, but your soul as well. There are many things out there that the human mind was not meant to comprehend.

Corazon Del Diablo

We got scalawags, we got queens in drag, we got pushers, pimps, and punks

*We got Crips and Bloods, we got dykes and studs
We've got junkies, thieves, and drunks.*

-Charlie Daniels Band, "Ain't No Law in California"

Corazon, despite its nickname, was once a pleasant city to live in. With a population of around 200,000, it is still a busy border crossing and transportation hub. Unfortunately, the city has been heading into a state of recession, and has been caught in the middle of the debate surrounding immigration. The crime rate and poverty are both rising, along with corruption in the police force. Most of the city's inhabitants are working class, primarily in the transportation and manufacturing fields.

Alcazar Heights: One of Corazon's more affluent neighborhoods, Alcazar Heights lies outside the city proper. Its residents have vehemently resisted the city's annexation attempts, preferring to remain in the county. Most of the Heights' inhabitants moved there to escape the problems of Corazon's rising crime rate.

Lockhart District: Known to the police as "The Lockdown", Lockhart District is the city's manufacturing center. West of Magistrianos,

the Lockdown often suffers as its neighbor's violence bleeds over. The district is also home to several shut down factories and warehouses now used as hideouts and stopovers for the city's drug trade.

Los Quintos: Near Corazon's downtown district, Los Quintos is one of the city's older sections. It has become something of a trendy hangout for Corazon's twenty-somethings and counter-culture crowd, filled with nightclubs and quirky local shops selling everything from vintage clothing to body piercings. A rash of unexplained and gruesome murders has made many people nervous about entering Los Quintos after dark.

Magistrianos District: This neighborhood on the south side is known for being one of Corazon's roughest. Home to several low-income housing projects, the Magistrianos district is rife with drugs, prostitution, and gang violence between the city's African-American and Latino populations. Until recently, Magistrianos was firmly Los Borrachos turf, but the recent rise of Los Locos has seen a wave of shootings of both members and bystanders as the two gangs slug it out. Anarchy and hopelessness are the order of the day here.

Midtown: Just south of downtown, Midtown has been the focus of several "urban renewal" projects. These include several new apartment buildings and condominiums, as well as shopping centers. A small slice of normal suburbia in the center of urban weirdness and mayhem, Midtown may just be the strangest part of town.

Skyline District: In the center of downtown, Skyline is the city's corporate heart, home to the local headquarters of several international conglomerates. Skyline, as its name implies, includes most of Corazon's tallest and newest buildings.

Powers That Be

*I was walking to the kitchen for some Golden
Grahams*

*When I accidentally stepped into an alternate dimension.
And soon I was abducted by some aliens from space who kinda looked like Jamie Farr.
They sucked out my internal organs and they took some Polaroids and said I was a darn good sport.
- "Weird" Al Yankovic, "Everything You Know Is Wrong"*

The streets of Corazon are home to numerous factions vying for control of the underworld, or just trying to get by. Most are just mundane criminals out to make an illegal buck, but others are more than they appear to be, serving as fronts for supernatural predators or occult conspiracies. Some aren't even secret at all.

Border Patrol: Under the jurisdiction of the Department of Homeland Security, Corazon's border patrol office has unfriendly relations with the local police. With the recent initiative to beef up border security, the border patrol has been accepting any warm bodies they can get, and as a result, most of the agents in Corazon that aren't corrupt are notoriously incompetent.

Corazon Police: Corazon's police department is underfunded, outgunned and rife with corruption. The majority of officers are basically good folks who aren't paid enough to do a job that nobody wants. Corruption, police brutality and bribery are rising in the force, as even good people have a hard time staying straight under the conditions they're in.

Department-7: Like the Illuminati, this government agency doesn't exist. Everybody knows that the government isn't in the business of hunting monsters, chasing aliens, or breaking up weird cults, and certainly doesn't have an agency dedicated to doing that sort of thing.

The Genucci Family: The Genuccis are a minor mob family based in Las Vegas. The Genucci family is rumored to run an underground casino or gambling den somewhere in the city, but mostly they seem to be involved in the occasional bit of racketeering or money laundering for their relatives in Sin City. No one is really sure why the Mafia would be interested in Corazon.

The Illuminati: The Illuminati does not exist. Really. Nothing to see here, move along. This isn't the conspiracy you're looking for. Ignore the eye and pyramid on your dollar bills. Adam Weishaupt never existed, and George Washington wasn't a Freemason.

Los Borrachos Rojos: A primarily Hispanic street gang affiliated with the Latin-American Kings, Los Borrachos has been a power on the streets of Corazon for two decades. Currently, the Red Drunks control most of the drug trade across the Rio Grande into the city. Aside from dealing drugs, they are better known for their clowning around and wild parties than they are for outright violence and murder. In some neighborhoods, a few Borrachos even act as vigilantes, helping to keep the "ordinary" criminals in line.

Los Locos: The Locos are a rising power on the streets. Affiliated with the national Vice Lords gang, Los Locos have made a few inroads into Corazon's underworld, or so the rumors say, anyway. Until now, the primarily black Vice Lords have been hated by the city's poor Hispanics. No one knows how or why they are gaining influence in Corazon, which is Los Borrachos' turf. Unlike the Borrachos, Los Locos are known for being brutal and violent; many are outright sadists.

The Skeptics' Society: A group dedicated to the rational investigation of all claims paranormal, the Skeptics' Society doesn't believe in magic, UFOs, the Loch Ness Monster, the theory of Atlantis, recovered memories, Kirlean photography, psychic abilities, recovered memories, or anything else involved in the parapsychologist or UFO hunter's trades. Their monthly newsletter, *The Rational America*, firmly debunks claims of faith healing, cryptids, psychic abilities, Scientology, and dozens of other frauds. The Society has a small office in Corazon, mainly to keep the local Star Watch members honest. Like the Star Watchers, the local Skeptics are mostly volunteers with actual day jobs that don't involve disproving the weird.

Star Watch: Known as a group of nut jobs who believe they were abducted and anal probed by aliens, Star Watch publishes one of the most widely read journals of UFOlogy. Most

issues of their newsletter are filled with badly written accounts of abductions, flying saucer landings, and close encounters of the stupid kind. From speculation on the nature of the chupacabra (a creature left by the Greys to test mankind's problem-solving abilities, one article claims) to the latest in hypnotherapy to recover lost memories, Star Watch reports it all. Their Corazon office has around 15 people on staff, most of them volunteers. Their most fascinating cases involve the nearby "Marfa lights", sightings of possible cryptids in the desert, and some "men in black" reports in the city itself.

Texas Roughnecks Militia: Typical of the paranoid survivalist movement found throughout the west, the Roughnecks are a diverse group of anti-tax advocates, religious fundamentalists, rabid Second Amendment supporters, and rugged individualists. Founded in 1990 by the Reverend Billy Ray Weston, the current membership of the Roughnecks hovers around 50 to 60 members. The militia maintains two "camps" in Texas. The first compound is about 10 miles outside of Corazon's city limits; the second is near the town of Marfa, somewhat further north. The Roughnecks' activities - aside from not paying taxes and collecting illegal assault weapons - are limited to spreading tracts about the encroachment of government on civil liberties and (ironically enough) maintaining what amounts to a freelance patrol of Corazon's stretch of the border with Mexico, in order to help keep America safe. In general, the Roughnecks are just a group of misguided nuts genuinely trying to do what they think is best for the country, and not really a group of dangerous right-wing terrorists. The fact that they have a lot of guns doesn't really bother anyone - in Texas, even the mayor's manicurist owns a gun.

Contrasts and Juxtaposition

*Are you gonna be a man and stand up tall,
Or turn your back and say "to hell with it all"?
-Charlie Daniels, "Across the Line"*

*"Even a big bitch cockroach like you should know - never, never fuck with the King."
-Elvis, Bubba Ho-Tep*

*"The corrupt are the first to believe that somebody else can be corrupted. And it's not impossible. None of us are perfect. That's why we need protection, even from ourselves, sometimes."
-Elisa, "Protection" (Gargoyles)*

The Border Town setting involves contrasting themes. Each half of these pairs serves to highlight the other. In contradiction, there is truth.

- **Horror and Comedy:** I didn't list *Bubba Ho-Tep* and *Ghostbusters* as influences for nothing. Horrific elements seem even more horrific when interspersed with humor. Likewise, tossing in a genuine fright between jokes keeps comedy from becoming stale or insipid. Of course, this doesn't mean that Border Town characters are comedic - they generally take themselves very seriously, and the situations they get into are serious. Some of the humor, in fact, comes from the fact that some characters (like conspiracy theorists) take themselves very, *very* seriously.
- **Corruption and Redemption:** On Corazon's streets, a person is constantly exposed to evil - 99% of it the plain old human kind that you find in any city's red-light district. That wears away at anyone. Over time, even the most determined hero can become corrupted. Not necessarily drawn into supernatural evil (although that does happen, especially in this setting), but the ordinary sort that happens when you lose your connection to humanity. However, the opposite can also happen: redemption. "Monsters" can develop a conscience. They can discover or refuse to give up their own humanity (or be "gifted" with its return, ala *Angel*). There's still hope for even the darkest soul to look for forgiveness.
- **Pragmatism and Taking a Stand:** No one is perfect. Not every problem has a perfect solution. Sometimes finding a solution that *works* counts for more. Sometimes you run, and sometimes you have to cut deals. Other times, you have to make a stand against darkness and step up

to the plate against evil. Knowing which time is which can make all the difference.

- **Sending Up Both Sides:** As you can probably tell from the overview of Corazon's factions (specifically, Star Watch and the Skeptics' Society), the Border Town setting involves tongue-in-cheek send-ups of both gullible whackos who believe every paranormal claim (no matter how ludicrous) and overly rational, science-minded skeptics. In this setting, the people most likely to believe in the paranormal almost always get things completely wrong. Meanwhile, the paranormal does exist, but the nonbelievers steadfastly refuse to acknowledge it (despite evidence to the contrary). In the middle are the player characters, who have to walk the line between open-mindedness and cynicism.

Rules of the Game

*"Come and get it, you undead sack of shit."
-Elvis, Bubba Ho-Tep*

The core of the game system is *d20 Modern*, with the alignments from *D&D*, plus other elements pulled from sourcebooks.

- Characters start at 5th level.
- Human characters only, with the exception of the occasional monster character (subject to approval).
- Characters have moral & ethical alignments per *D&D*, as *d20 Modern's* system of allegiances is too vague. Alignment will rarely have an actual game effect, but serves as a useful yardstick and guideline for a character's behavior.
- All of the advanced classes from *d20 Modern*, including the Telepath and Battle Mind, are available.
- The Spiritualist and Gangster advanced classes from *d20 Past* are allowed, as are most of the classes from *Urban Arcana* and *Dark Matter* (subject to approval).
- Characters can choose occupations, feats and spells/powers from the core book, *Urban Arcana*, and *Dark Matter* (subject to approval).

Character Roles

These are some of the more common character concepts in the Border Town setting. Characters aren't restricted to these professions, of course. In general, the party should be restricted to only one or two characters who begin play "in the know" about the supernatural. These include the general concepts of Department-7 Agent, Clergy, Parapsychologist/Occultist, and Renegade Monster. Other concepts, like the Conspiracy Theorist, may *think* they know something about the supernatural and/or paranormal, but probably don't actually know much. As for the rest...they don't know anything, and are in for a crash course in high strangeness.

Border Patrol: Like the police, the border patrol office in Corazon is something of the front line against the horrors of the night. Although the local border patrol is even more corrupt than the police department, player characters should be - at least mostly - clean. Like police officers, the typical border patrol officer is a Tough/Strong or Tough/Dedicated hero. Wilderness feats like Guide and Track are more common among the border patrol than anywhere else.

Bounty Hunter: Unlike the stereotype from *Star Wars*, modern bounty hunters are closer to private detectives than mercenaries for hire. They only go after specific individuals who have skipped bail - ones assigned by the bounty hunter's boss, a bail bondsman. Their legal authority is both more expansive and more limited than that of the police. Like police, most bounty hunters are Tough/Strong heroes, with a smattering of Fast to aid in gunplay. The Gunslinger and Shadow Hunter advanced classes are especially appropriate, depending on the character's focus.

Clergy/Priest: When confronted by the supernatural, the first reaction of many people is to seek comfort in religion. Clergy are often the ones offering comfort to victims, and so also - just occasionally - end up hunting the horrors of the night. Although lacking the "big picture" view of a parapsychologist, a clergyman's faith provides both shield and sword. In Corazon, people are balanced evenly between Catholic (in the city's Hispanic population) and various flavors of Protestantism, with a leavening of fire-and-brimstone fundamentalists among the latter. Most folks have

the same respect for a man of God no matter what language he prays in. Most clergy are Dedicated/Charismatic heroes, with most religious monster hunters having a level or two of the Acolyte or Mystic advanced classes (divine spellcasters, roughly equivalent to *D&D's* cleric and favored soul, respectively).

Conspiracy Theorist: The modern world spawns its share of whackos who believe every urban legend and story told on *Coast to Coast A.M.* A conspiracy theorist is a dedicated disciple of Art Bell, always ready with an unnecessarily complicated explanation for anything. These paranoid individuals generally fall on one extreme or the other of the political spectrum, but their temperament remains much the same. However, in the world of Border Town, urban legends have a grain of truth, and a conspiracy theorist can find himself in the middle of more strangeness than he bargained for. Most conspiracy theorists are Smart heroes, with the occasional Dedicated for the more stable individuals (a low Wisdom score is more common, however). Unlike a parapsychologist or other real scholar of the occult, a conspiracy theorist is unlikely to have the Knowledge (Arcane Lore) skill. Occasionally a conspiracy theorist comes in other flavors, such as militia members (typically Strong or Tough).

Criminal: Like the police, most criminals spend much of their time on the street, and that sometimes brings them into contact with things they'd be better off not knowing. From gang-bangers going up against a creature that's eating their posse, to thieves unwittingly stealing cursed relics, to hookers trying to eliminate the succubus in competition down the street, Corazon's less savory crowd has their own fight against the supernatural. Presumably, player character criminals will be on the better end of the spectrum, with alignments in the neutral range. Their class depends on the type of criminal activity they are involved in. Most street punks will be Tough/Strong heroes, while con artists will be Charismatic, and thieves Fast/Smart. The Gangster and Street Warrior advanced classes (from *d20 Past* and *Urban Arcana*, respectively) are also appropriate.

Debunker/Skeptic: There are those who firmly believe that scientific inquiry will prove that such things as psychic powers, magic, vampires, demons, gods, UFOs, and what-have-you simply don't exist. These people commonly call themselves skeptics,

and dedicate their lives to the rational questioning of reality. Much like the conspiracy theorist will often believe any screwball theory (no matter how contradictory or nonsensical), a debunker will most often refuse to believe in anything paranormal, even when it happens right in front of him. It is his mission to use scientific methods and rational thought to find the truth. Of course, this doesn't include doing things like hiding or destroying evidence - the skeptic always wants a scientific explanation, and scientific explanations always account for all of the observed phenomena. A typical debunker will be a Smart or Dedicated hero, often with the Field Scientist advanced class or something else similarly science-oriented. A skeptic should *never* (unless their attitude changes radically during the game) take levels in spellcasting or psychic classes (because obviously magic and psychic powers don't really exist).

Department-7 Agent: While (obviously) it is not widely known, the federal government does maintain an agency dedicated to both fighting the paranormal and preventing the public from finding out about it. Known as the Paranormal Investigation Bureau (PIB), or more commonly, Department-7, this agency trains personnel pulled from the FBI, ATF, and other groups to recognize and destroy otherworldly creatures. Its Project Prometheus represents the cutting edge in modern research into the occult, experimenting in finding supernaturals' weaknesses, inducing psychic abilities in humans, the use of "non-technological warfare" (i.e. magic), and other things sure to scare the pants off of the public should the project be exposed. There are even rumors that Prometheus scientists are working on reverse-engineering alien technology. Most Department-7 agents have "day jobs" working for other enforcement branches that serve as cover stories (see the Federal Agent type below for suggestions - the FBI and ATF are most common) Most Department-7 field agents are Dedicated heroes, often with levels in Strong or Fast, as well as possible levels of Psionic Agent, Telepath, or Battle Mind. Prometheus researchers are commonly Smart/Dedicated, with levels in the Occultist, Field Scientist, or Field Occultist (*Dark Matter*) classes. Unlike the Parapsychologist/Occultist type below, a researcher with Prometheus will rarely be a Mage or another arcane class, and probably shouldn't take a class with divine spells.

Federal Agent: Aside from the police department and border patrol (which is run by the Department of Homeland Security), Corazon is also home to offices for several other federal enforcement agencies. Unlike Department-7 listed above, these agencies are not charged with investigating anything weird, but often end up doing it anyway. Most agents with the Paranormal Investigation Bureau have a cover role with one or more of these groups that they use to avoid arousing suspicion. Like police characters, federal agents are likely to be Dedicated heroes, with other classes depending on the agent's particular style. The Investigator advanced class is a good choice. Federal enforcement agencies likely to get involved include:

- **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives:** Usually abbreviated ATF or BATF, this agency is responsible for the investigation and prevention of federal offenses involving the unlawful use, manufacture, and possession of firearms and explosives, as well as acts of arson and bombings, and illegal trafficking of alcohol and tobacco products. The ATF also handles licensing for the sale, possession, and transportation of firearms, ammunition, and explosives in interstate commerce. Many of the ATF's activities are carried out in conjunction with task forces made up of state and local law enforcement.
- **Criminal Investigation Division of the Internal Revenue Service:** The IRS CID is charged with investigating criminal violations of the Internal Revenue Code and related financial crimes. Their job is to uphold the tax system. While other federal agencies also have investigative jurisdiction for money laundering and some bank secrecy act violations, the IRS is the only federal agency that can investigate violations of the Internal Revenue Code. Don't laugh - these are the guys who put Al Capone in jail.
- **Drug Enforcement Administration:** The DEA is the federal police force that enforces the Controlled Substances Act of 1970. Not only is the DEA the lead agency for domestic enforcement of federal drug laws (sharing jurisdiction with the Federal Bureau of Investigation), but it also has sole responsibility for coordinating and pursuing U.S. drug investigations abroad, including

inside Mexico, just across Corazon's border. They often work hand-in-hand with the ATF.

- **U.S. Marshals Service:** The oldest federal law enforcement agency in the United States, the U.S. Marshals Service holds the broadest authority of all federal law enforcement agencies. The USMS is the enforcement arm of the federal courts, protecting and ensuring the effective operation of the judicial system. The Marshals Service is responsible for apprehending wanted fugitives, providing protection for the federal judiciary, transporting federal prisoners, protecting endangered federal witnesses and managing assets seized from criminal enterprises. The United States Marshals also execute all lawful writs, processes, and orders issued under the authority of the United States, and can command "all necessary assistance" to carry out their duties. In this role, U.S. Marshals have the power to enlist any willing civilians (but not soldiers) as deputies (in other words, to form a posse).

Mystic/Mage: Magic and psychic abilities are a real force in the world, and there are a few people in the world with the talent to use them. It's not uncommon for those with such abilities, whether they be psionics, magic spells, or more subtle talents, to use them to enhance their professions, from private investigators to mechanics. Many students of the arcane choose not to reveal their talents to the public – there are many groups in the world who use mystic abilities to maintain their power, and they don't take kindly to the marks being told that magic exists. Coming out of the closet as a wizard is likely to end up with you being eaten by a shambling monstrosity summoned from some infernal dimension.

Parapsychologist/Occultist: A dedicated student of the occult, a parapsychologist is welcome in almost any group. To them, scientific inquiry, not wild stories, is the way to defeat the supernatural. A parapsychologist always weighs the evidence carefully, and is much more skeptical than conspiracy theorists and other kooks. Unlike the true whackos, a parapsychologist has actual knowledge of the arcane. Most parapsychologists will be Smart/Dedicated heroes, with levels in the Occultist or Spiritualist advanced classes, allowing limited access to arcane or divine spells. Other variants on

this theme include *Dresden Files*-style street mages (with the Mage or Techno Mage classes - the equivalents of a *D&D* wizard), focusing on arcane power and spellcasting, or true monster hunters (usually a combination of Strong and Dedicated or Tough, most with the Shadow Slayer advanced class), dedicated to physically fighting the supernatural (also see the Mystic/Mage role, above).

Police: From detectives on the trail of serial killers to street cops investigating weird happenings on their beats, the police of Corazon are on the front lines of high strangeness. Presumably, player character cops will not be the (in Corazon) more common corrupt variety. The role of a police officer balances the two areas of expertise needed in the Border Town setting: investigation and combat. Most police detectives will be Dedicated/Strong or Smart/Dedicated heroes, while beat cops are typically Tough/Strong or Tough/Dedicated. The Investigator and Gunslinger advanced classes are especially appropriate, as is the Street Warrior from *Urban Arcana*.

Renegade Monsters: Sometimes even monsters have a conscience. A demon can develop empathy for humans and be exiled to Earth. A vampire or werewolf can refuse to turn away from their own humanity. And very rarely, these monsters turn on their former comrades and begin stalking them. Most of these reformed monsters will form alliances with humans because they don't trust their own kith and kin. Specific monster types will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Lycanthropes (both afflicted and natural), half-fiends, and tieflings are the easiest to integrate, due to their relatively humanoid appearance and reasonable ECLs. A renegade monster's alignment should be at least neutral (or possibly lawful evil, under some circumstances), if not better. It is recommended that a monster character start off as neutral with the goal of becoming good.

Teenagers: Maybe it's because of *Buffy*, or maybe it's because of 80s creature-stomping horror movies like *The Monster Squad*, but by whatever means, teenage characters are a staple of the heroic horror genre. For better or worse, the young and irresponsible crowd are likely to find themselves being stalked by the supernatural. Classes will vary, of course, depending on the character. The typical geek is most likely to be a Smart Hero, while the quarterback of the football team would be Strong or

Tough, and the class clown Charismatic. Advanced classes aren't recommended for this character concept, as they imply a focus on one career that high-school students are unlikely to have. Japanese schoolgirls need not apply, as Border Town isn't *that* kind of horror (no naughty tentacles).

Texas Ranger: "One riot, one Ranger." Or that's the way the story goes, anyway. In reality, Texas Rangers often require more help than Chuck Norris ever needed (and they don't fly around with jet packs, either). Based in Austin, the Rangers are a statewide enforcement and paramilitary agency that deals with crimes ranging from murder to political corruption. Working under the Texas Department of Public Safety, the Rangers have participated in some of the state's most notorious criminal cases. However, despite their pulp-novel mystique, on an everyday basis the Texas Rangers act much like any other state bureau of investigation. Like police and other law enforcement types, a Texas Ranger will typically be Dedicated/Strong, with appropriate combat-based advanced classes.