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THE
LEAGUE
OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN



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By Jason Vey

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Art: Varied and sundry (yet talented) photographers and camera people.

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Introduction

M: "Welcome to the League of Extraordinary Gentlemen"

The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen is a new film by 20th Century Fox, based upon a comic book conceived and written by Alan Moore. It presents an alternate view of late Victorian England, at the dawn of the industrial age, and is very much a "steam punk," or pulp genre story. In the setting that *LXG* is placed, the mythic figures of 18th-century literature have lives of their own, their supernatural abilities pumped up to almost superheroic levels. Needless to say, it is a natural fit for the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* roleplaying game.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of converting the *LXG* setting into a *Buffy* game is that there are few new Qualities to be introduced. Existing character type Qualities, such as vampire or Immortal (explored in the *Highlander* section of this netbook), need little to no modifications to use them properly. Keeping all that in mind, let's take a look at the League of Extraordinary Gentlemen (and women!)

The Setting

Quartermain: "Let the games begin."

Without writing a multi-volume treatise on the Victorian Age, it's impossible to go heavily into detail on the setting in which *LXG* takes place. The time period is the late 1800's, nearing the end of the Victorian Era and approaching the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. In terms of technology, it is almost a time of a second renaissance, with new and exciting inventions in the realm of communication, transportation, and weaponry on a daily basis. Those wishing to run this setting are highly encouraged to do some Internet and library research on the Victorian Era and the Industrial Revolution, particularly concerning the British Empire during this time period.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the *LXG* setting is that it is essentially a dark, Victorian superhero story. Alternate elements (at least in the comic) from our own reality include the ongoing construction of the Channel Bridge to connect Britain with mainland Europe, and the aforementioned reality of Gothic characters such as Dorian Gray and Mina Harker.

The core elements of *LXG* involve the maintenance of the British Empire in its waning days, and Directors seeking to run games in this setting should do so under the assumption that their characters can and possibly will manage to save the Empire, and that this alternate Victorian Age could lead to an alternate future where the Empire never collapses, and perhaps grows to rival or even better the post-WWII American and Soviet Empires. Indeed, what if the power of the British Empire expands so far and large that the Soviet Empire never arises in Eastern Europe or Asia? The possibilities for a game set in an age of industrial revolution, political expansion and imperialism are limitless: any number of factors could have resulted in an entirely different international structure in the late 1800's. The characters in this setting could well alter the future of their world, for better or worse.

The existence of fictional characters in the world of *LXG* is the most fun and intriguing aspect of the game. While players (as always) should be free to create their own, original Cast Members (and a Slayer and Watcher would fit marvelously into this setting), Directors should play up the fascination of creating souped-up versions of their favorite classical horror, fantasy, and adventure heroes. Since the game is designed to be superheroic in nature, it is also recommended that the heroes be created using the Experienced Hero template, and the villains be equally challenging. Remember that the heroes in *LXG* come into play sometime *following* the events for which they are famed—Mina Harker, for example, joins the league years after the events in Bram Stoker's novel have taken place; she has already been victimized by Dracula, and her husband is long since passed away. In this sense, even original characters should have extensive back stories describing the (usually epic) events that have formed them into the people they are.

The League itself is essentially a top-secret team of government-sponsored supernaturals who are dedicated to the preservation of the empire and the battle against evil. Thus, only the best, brightest, and most powerful are recruited: another reason for the use of the Experienced Hero template.

New and Modified Qualities and Drawbacks

Villain: "What are you?"

Dorian: "I'm complicated."

What follows is a selection of new and modified Qualities and Drawbacks for use with the LXG setting, including a Quality-based writeup for the League itself, using the rules from *The Magic Box*.

Adventurer (6 point Physical Quality)

Indiana Jones, Allan Quartermain, John Carter of Mars...men who lived for the thrill of the adrenaline rush that comes with hanging off a cliff, grappling for that loose branch that'll save their lives. Men who can fire two revolvers simultaneously as well as they can use a whip, sword, or knife. Rogues with hearts of gold who can take down a mob of angry savages, then sweep a rescued damsel off to a private rendezvous where they can do things that are quite improper in polite society. These are pulp heroes, adventurers by trade and by nature. Cast Members with this Quality gain +2 to any two physical attributes, 1 free rank each in Getting Medieval, Kung Fu, and Gun Fu, 2 free levels of Hard to Kill (and can purchase up to 5 more), and either Situational Awareness or Fast Reaction Time at no additional cost (choose one). However, they also suffer from the Reckless Drawback and the Adversary (various) Drawback worth 4 points (adventurers make enemies everywhere). In addition, Adventurers must choose either the Honorable (mild) Drawback or the Mental Problems (Cruelty, Mild) Drawback. They get no points for any of these Drawbacks.

Beast Form (10 or 12 point Supernatural Quality)

Due to a science experiment gone awry, a mutated virus in your system, or through other, more arcane means, you have a split personality...literally. Whenever angered, stressed, or otherwise negatively stimulated, you turn into something dark, sinister, and big. When changed, you are the physical manifestation of your basest, most bestial desires, suffering a -2 to Intelligence and Perception, -1 to Willpower, and possessed of an inhuman rage. You must make a Willpower (not doubled) roll at -2 to resist indulging these base urges (be they violent, sensual, or whatnot) whenever the opportunity arises. Only by succeeding in this check can the beast form be put away, and your normal face resumed. On the up side, the beast form does have its benefits. While changed, you receive +4 to Strength, +2 to Dexterity, +2 to Constitution, and +2 to Kung Fu. You also receive Increased Life Points (+20) and level 2 (Constitution per hour)

regeneration. Spending a Drama Point for Heroic Feat can stave off the change, or force a return to normal, "human" form, but spending a Drama Point for Righteous Fury always results in the change to beast form instead of the normal +5 to all actions, unless the Cast Member is already in beast form. It is possible to have an elixir that forces the change, rather than subject to negative stimuli, but such control makes this a 12-point Quality, rather than 10.



Deadeye (4 point Physical Quality)

Some people are just dead shots with guns. Be it because of training or just a natural, god-given knack with the weapon, there are people out there who can shoot a fly off of a milk jug at 500 yards. Those with the Deadeye Quality gain 2 free levels in Gun Fu, and a +1 bonus to all Aiming rolls when employing that Combat Maneuver. In addition, Deadeyes reduce penalties due to range by one range increment, to a minimum of 0, and gain an additional +2 to base damage inflicted with any firearm.

Immortal (10 to 14 point Supernatural Quality)

The Immortal Quality is largely unaltered from the one presented in the *Highlander* section of this Netbook, earlier, but LXG flavored immortals do not have Quickening. As such, they do not receive 1 level of the Quickening Focus Quality, and do not receive The Buzz. The Honorable (major) Quality may at the player and Director's discretion be replaced with another equivalent social Drawback (such as cruelty, for instance), and the



Adversary Drawback becomes "various" rather than "other Immortals." In addition, Immortals in this setting do not necessarily die when decapitated, and do suffer damage from all bullet, slashing, and stabbing damage attacks, but said damage does not double as in the case of normal mortals. Immortals gain level 3 (Con per turn) Regeneration. However, each Immortal has a weakness that must be stated when the Quality is taken. Immortals must keep their souls in a receptacle which somehow shows the signs of their aging, damage, and sins, rather than these elements appearing on the body. If the Immortal's weakness is destroyed, the Immortal takes on all of the negative effects that have built up in it. For many immortals, this means instant aging, damage, and probably death. This weakness modifies the Quality based upon how exploitable the weakness is. Easily exploitable weaknesses, such as a piece of jewelry that must be actively and openly worn by the immortal, reduce the cost of this Quality by 1 point. Weaknesses such as mildly hard-to-destroy substances that must be broken to kill the Immortal (a bronze carving of the Cast Member in an easy-to-find place, for instance) neither reduce nor increase the cost. Items such as rare portraits of the Cast Member that are locked securely in a vault behind a secret panel in a friend's mansion add +1 to +3 to the cost of the Quality at the Director's discretion, dependent on how difficult the item is to find and/or destroy. While it is obvious how the power works on sculptures and paintings that hold the soul of the Immortal, in the case of items of jewelry, the player and Director should also determine how exactly the item displays the age, wear, damage, and sins suffered and committed by the Cast Member.

League of Extraordinary Gentlemen (Organization Quality)

Type: Goal-Based

Source: Alan Moore's *LXG* comic, and the 20th-Century Fox motion picture

Number: A few dozen at most

Cost: 7-point Quality (aid other members -1; shared knowledge and training +1, code of honor -1, obey leaders -2, wealthy and powerful +2, extensive library +5, access to super science items +2)

The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen is a secret society formed directly under the auspices of the Queen of England and is led by the mysterious agent known only as M. The League exists primarily to combat evil, both mundane and otherworldly, and to preserve the integrity of the British Empire. The latter function is indeed far less important than the primary, and certain noted Americans have been known to possess membership in the league in support of the good that

the organization does. The library of the LXG contains all manner of information, from occult-based to mundane, and adds +2 to all rolls to research pretty much any subject. In addition, due to the wealth and power of the organization, all members add +1 to their Resources, and may not have a Resources score lower than 0 (this Quality "buys off" any existing Resources Drawback). **Suggested Prerequisites:** Experienced Hero; Supernatural or extraordinary abilities.



Vampire (16-point Quality)

Vampires in the LXG universe are quite different from those in the Buffyverse. They do not lose their souls when turned, and do not "dust" when staked. Rather, Vampirism is an incurable blood disease that grants spectacular abilities, but also brings with it a thirst for blood and a predatory instinct. Whenever presented with the opportunity to kill, LXG-vampires must succeed at a Willpower (doubled) roll not to indulge their predatory instincts. This includes when feeding (the need to feed is standard as per Buffy vampires). While vampires do not have to kill their victims, it is difficult to resist the urge, and Directors should apply appropriate penalties to the Willpower check based on the situation (a vampire killing someone who arouses strong base emotions, from lust to



hate, for instance, should suffer severe penalties, while a vampire who loves their vessel should perhaps receive a bonus). The more blood a vampire drinks at one time from a victim, the harder it gets to resist killing them (-1 for each round the vampire drinks). When staked, LXG-vampires are rendered unconscious

and paralyzed so long as the stake remains in their heart. In addition, stakes do not have to be made of wood; any

sharp object which pierces the heart will kill a vampire. Also, as long as they are staked, LXG-vampires will rot as though they were normal corpses (instantly, in the case of older vampires) except that their skeleton will never fade to dust from staking. However, if the stake is removed, the vampire regenerates as normal and may rise again when Life Points reach half their maximum total. Vampires gain Level 3 (Con per turn) Regeneration. Fire, holy water and items, and decapitation still will kill an LXG vampire permanently. Sunlight, however, is not fatal. Rather, an LXG vampire during the daytime loses all of their extraordinary powers, save their physical bonuses. Regeneration is reduced to 1 point per level of Constitution, per hour, and they are vulnerable to normal slash/stab attacks (can be killed). LXG-vamps suffer standard damage from slashing and stabbing weapons, but damage does not double as in the case of normal mortals. In addition, LXG Vampires gain the special ability of sonar, which allows them to see in total darkness, mist, and fog, but which is fouled by loud sounds and smoke. LXG vampires gain a claw attack inflicting Strength x2 slash/stab damage, and a bite attack inflicting Strength slash/stab damage. All vampires in LXG gain a special type of shape shifting, which allows them to transform into a swarm of bats. This swarm must be a cloud, and all bats in the swarm must remain within 10 feet of the center. Vampires in bat-swarm shape take 1/5 damage from all physical attacks, and can make claw and bite (blood drinking) attacks as normal by engulfing a victim (only one at a time, than you very much), but doing so is tiring. If engaging in combat or other strenuous activity, Vampires may remain in swarm shape for 1 round per point of Constitution level. Each round thereafter, the vampire must make a Constitution (doubled) roll at a cumulative -2 penalty or change back to human form and be stunned for 1 round. If forced back to human form, the vampire may not become a bat swarm again that night. Alternately, Directors may simply wish to award these vampires the power of Shape Shifting as presented in the *BtVS Core Rulebook* on page 165; expanded rules for the various forms are presented in *Monster Smackdown*, but LXG vampiric shape shifting is not sorcery-based. Rather, it is a natural (or preternatural) ability of the vampiric form. Otherwise, this Quality is unaltered from the one shown in the *BtVS Core Rulebook*.

Superscience. Gadgeteering. and Other Odds and Ends

Quartermain: "Four days to reach Venice? It can't be done."

Nemo: "Leave that to me."

The rules above are by no means comprehensive (this is, after all, an Internet sourcebook and not an official game). However, the idea of Gadgeteering needs to be addressed in a Gothic Steampunk setting such as this. For such rules, the Superscience guidelines in *The Magic Box* can be used, or players and Directors can consult the *All Flesh Must Be Eaten™* sourcebook, *Pulp Zombies*, which has detailed rules for gadgeteers. Always keep in mind that in 1899, superscience involves things like automatic rifles, submarines, and automobiles, which we take for granted in this century.



For characters like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Directors and players who own the *Witchcraft* source book, *The Mystery Codex*, may wish to use the rules for Disciplines of the Flesh, as presented in *The Magic Box*, and perhaps apply a 3-point Drawback called Uncontrolled Metamorphosis. Such a Drawback would require a Willpower (not doubled) roll to avoid making an Anguish roll for changing whenever subjected to stressful stimuli (the old "Don't make me angry. You wouldn't like me when I'm angry" effect). If Disciplines of the Flesh are

used, it is recommended that you do not use the "Beast Form" Quality presented herein.

In addition, ownership of *The Magic Box* sourcebook is almost a foregone conclusion for adequate play in a Victorian Gothic setting, as they provide expanded sorcery, and new Qualities and Drawbacks (such as Invisibility) that would vastly enhance play. Further, the "Pulp Zombies" and "Enter: the Zombie" sourcebooks for *All Flesh Must Be Eaten* would be incredibly useful for those Directors and Players who are looking for an even more colorful world setting.

Afterword

Quartermain: "The game is on"

There you have it! Guidelines for play in the world of the *League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. We are not providing full character statistics here, for fear of getting into too much copyright infringement, but the guidelines herein should allow players to easily create their own versions of legendary Gothic and Pulp heroes for play in a fascinating world.