

THE SKY IS FALLING!

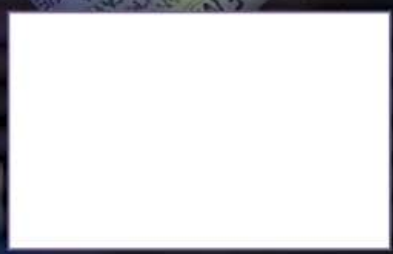
The year 2061 marks the return of Halley's Comet and the 50th anniversary of the Awakening—do you celebrate or run for cover? Each day brings a new surprise. Will you transform into a genetic changeling or fall prey to a doomsday cult? Will you be in Denver when the dragon runs amok or in Japan when the Ring of Fire deals death to the Empire? Will you fight toxic spirits in the Yucatán or run from the walking dead?

Year of the Comet shakes and stirs the world of Shadowrun, describing a series of events around which gamemasters and players can build entire adventures and campaigns. It details a new dragon, new spirits, and new genetic expressions that can affect your character.

Year of the Comet is intended for gamemasters and players of all experience levels.

For use with Shadowrun, Third Edition.™

Sample file



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YEAR OF THE COMET



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INTRODUCTION

Year of the Comet is a pressurized can of whoop-ass for the world of *Shadowrun*. This book contains a series of world-shaking events that will cause aftershocks for years to come. It describes the chaos and upheaval as Halley's Comet, the harbinger of change, pays the Earth a visit in 2061. The comet's flyby also coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the Awakening, that historic moment in 2011 when magic returned to the world, elves and dwarfs were born and the great dragons awoke from ages of slumber. Is the timing accidental, or does it point to a new stage of world history?

Year of the Comet provides gamemasters with numerous plot seeds to create adventures and campaigns anywhere in the world of *Shadowrun*. The information, plot hooks and storylines provided allow the gamemaster to craft a setting where the player characters can either plug directly into the events taking place or plunge into a spin-off scenario. Many of these plot seeds will blossom over time and in future *Shadowrun* books, constructing a story arc that players can relate to for years.

Year of the Comet is presented as a series of electronic documents posted by Captain Chaos, sysop of the vast Shadowland archive and data haven—the number one source for shadowrunners on what's going on in the world of *Shadowrun*. The documents are written by various characters, from hack journalists to shadowrunners to dragons, each with their own prejudices and points of view. Each piece is marked up with a running commentary by other runners who add to, revise and contradict the original post. These pieces of black information add innuendos, allegations, opinions, rumors, misconceptions, misinformation, lies and sometimes even the truth to the information presented. It is left up to the gamemaster to decide what information is correct and which is just filling, as appropriate to his or her game.

The first document, *Return of the Comet*, describes the hype, media furor and general mayhem that accompanies Halley's Comet. It also delves into the megacorporate probe race, a sensationalized and highly competitive contest to be the first to reach the comet with a space probe.

The next chapter, *SURGE*, describes a new wave of transformation that sweeps metahuman society. The changelings created by *SURGE* are unique, expressing their own particular genetic traits. This chapter explains how the world reacts to *SURGE*, first with fear and riots, then with cultural exploitation. It also describes several newly discovered paracritters.

Hysteria crawls around the murky underbelly of Halley's Comet—the cults and religious upheavals that occur as people's hatreds, desires and beliefs are inspired or altered by the comet's passing.

Ghost Stories tells of the "re-birth" of an old dragon, whom the media dubs Ghostwalker. The astral form of this dragon claws its way through the Dunkelzahn Rift, reclaims its body, then lays siege to Denver. The resulting political shift comes as a shock to many.

Like Mana From Heaven explores some of the magical disturbances that arise in conjunction with the comet. In addition to unusual fluctuations of mana and in astral space, the discovery of naturally-occurring orichalcum leads to a claim rush as corporations and prospectors seek to mine the highly valuable alchemical material. But the world is truly shaken by the arrival of the shedim, horrible new spirits that seize control of dead bodies, bringing them back to unlife.

Red Sunset, Red Sunrise explains how the eruption of the Ring of Fire brings disaster and chaos to Imperial Japan, leading to a power struggle that rocks the world. *California Uber Alles* describes a side effect of Japan's calamity, when a racist, rogue Japanese officer stages a coup and begins systematically seizing chunks of California.

A new offensive to clear the Yucatan rebels out of the jungles through chemical weaponry and brutal measures leads to a series of natural disasters, toxic zones and spirit warfare, described in *The Yucatan War*.

The *Aftershocks* chapter describes a few of the repercussions that the events above have on the rest of the world. From a Filipino revolt to a CAS-Aztlan border conflict to religious infighting, these events illustrate the significance of the changes enveloping the world.

The *Game Information* section instructs the gamemaster on how to put all of this information to use. It includes rules for characters affected by *SURGE*, details on the shedim and new paracritters and also adventure ideas.

A NEW AGE



Welcome to the new year, my friends. I hope your hangovers aren't as bad as mine. I should have stuck to the nano-energy drink and champagne mixes rather than the hard stuff.

This year certainly promises to be an interesting one—perhaps even a new beginning. The first news item in my inbox this morning tells me that the UN has officially declared 2061 to be the “Year of the Comet.” Massive celebrations are already being planned to commemorate the arrival of Halley’s Comet and the fiftieth anniversary of the Awakening. Many of you readers are already celebrating the new job offers arriving on your doorstep.

Something tells me we’re going to have a lot to talk about this year. If the guy I saw walking down the street wearing tinfoil on his head is any clue, things are going to get interesting. I’ve used this as an excuse to open up this new SIG. Maybe we’ll find some answers here.

“Why bother?” you say? I’ve heard the arguments. So what if the Awakening occurred fifty years ago. Fifty is just an arbitrary number, right? Maybe, chummer, maybe. But if there’s anything the Awakening and the return of magic taught us, it’s to expect the unexpected. As any magical theorist can tell you, perception is the key to magic. According to the files I’ve read, our willpower and our emotions have a strong impact upon the fluctuation of mana. So if all across the globe people fear, desire or simply expect something to happen simply based upon an arbitrary measurement, it just may.

Even more to the point is this comet business. You have to admit it’s quite a coincidence that this historical harbinger of upheaval and doom just happens to be cruising back by our planet at the same time as the big five-oh. Now we’re getting two doses of hype for the price of one.

I know some of you don’t believe in coincidence; some do. You either think the universe is yanking our collective chain, or we’re in for a wild ride.

Which begs the question: do we strap on our safety harnesses or crank down on the gas pedal? I think I’ll do both.

• Captain Chaos

Transmitted: 1 January 2061 at 15:23:23 (PST)