

ELIJAH

POSTED BY: WINTERHAWK

VITAL STATS: ELIJAH

Age: 46 **Height:** 1.79 m
Weight: 82 kg **Hair:** Brown
Eyes: Green **Gender:** Male
Metatype: Human **Awakened:** Yes
 (Hermetic mage)

Elijah is a problem. He's intelligent, professorial, well-mannered, but if you get him on the wrong line of conversation he'll bring up theories that make Plan 9 look mainstream. Then, when you're willing to write him off as some sort of nutjob who has been sheltered in academia too long to remember what the actual world really looks like, he'll explain to you the evidence for the theories he's supporting, he'll lay it all out for you until you see the logic of what he's saying, and you'll get to a point where you believe that either he really is on to something or he has a powerful gift for infecting people with his own insanity. Then you'll notice that as far-out as his theories may be, the man himself is careful in his actions, avoiding chasing a wild theory to an irrational end. So you ask yourself, if he's so careful and logical in what he does, just how far off base can his theories be?

Maybe you solve the problem of Elijah by figuring that he spends most of his time locked up in some ivory tower somewhere, that he's got a bunch of theories that sound great in the isolated chamber where he works, but they'd melt in the heat of reality. Just like the man himself, you think. He doesn't look like much. Glasses, thinning hair, a frame that seems like it's threatening to get paunchy. What can he know about the way things really work on the streets?

Allow me to give you a piece of advice. Never, ever have thoughts like that when Elijah is on the other side of an operation from you. Underestimate him, even for a second, and you'll give him all the space he needs to call up spirits that are perfectly attuned to the task he chooses for them, and he'll set them on you in a fashion that makes you long for the peace and calm of a class V hurricane.

- Are you speaking from sad experience here?
- Butch

- Not direct experience, no. I've known about Elijah long enough to not underestimate him if I should ever be opposite him, but I've been lucky enough—and careful enough—to not put myself in that situation. I've had some acquaintances who made this mistake, though, including one who had the earth surge beneath his feet just as he was attempting to cast a spell, sending him flat on his back and looking straight up at a spirit that looked like something Hieronymus Bosch would have painted while tripping

on mescaline. The thing came at him with tentacles that didn't care one whit for the niceties of Euclidean geometry, and when they made contact the mage was about as together and alert as someone who hasn't slept in ten days. He survived—Elijah doesn't go for unnecessary kills—but he dreams of that spirit almost every night.


- Winterhawk

Elijah probably could have gotten himself a tenure-track in any decent university thamaturgical program if that's what he wanted, but he's much happier with the life of the itinerant professor, explorer, and freelancer. He has contacts in all of the big magic-oriented organizations—Draco, Atlantean, MCT, Apep—though his relationship with Aztechnology seems to have soured lately. I don't know if there's anything more to it than that he's seen clear evidence of the kind of magic they're into and decided that it's best to keep his distance.

- There's a little more to it, from what I hear. A mage he worked with a couple of times recently sold out to the Big A, hoping to slide into the comfortable life of a wage mage. Instead of getting into peaceful and calm research, though, he found himself on the frontlines of the Az-Am war, charged with developing new defensive spells to hold off Amazonian magic. He was dropped into a war zone without being fully prepped about what he was facing, and the first time he saw battle, some geek-the-mage-first types targeted him and offed him. From Elijah's perspective, his friend was so poorly supported that he was essentially set up to fail. He trusts Aztechnology even less than most of us.
- Marcos

If you try to get Elijah to talk about his earliest days, he'll usually tell you that they don't matter much. Often this means a runner is hiding some dark secret or something that they don't want you to look into, but in Elijah's case he's right. He was raised by a couple of corp drones, got noticed for his magical talent, received the proper education, and then went out to make his way in the world. The pivotal moment that helped set him on his current path didn't occur until he was out of college, when he was in his mid-20s.

As is proper anyone who is that old, Elijah was not interested in spending all his time locked in classrooms and offices. As often as he could, he hooked up with expeditions to investigate at sites of power, places with high background counts, or locations with notable spirit activity, and that (along with spirits) has become his area of expertise. On one such expedition, he set off to visit the German city of Karlsruhe, which is notable for a number of reasons, including the fact that it has been gradually reverting to the way it looked in the 1500s, and no one is quite sure how and why this is happening. Elijah was entranced by the city, and he fell immediately into studying its odd, overly planned layout. He wasn't breaking any new ground when he noted the connection between the “spokes” of the city's primary roads and the location of mystical sites across the world, but once he opened himself up

A man with glasses, wearing a dark tuxedo with a white shirt and a dark vest, stands in the center. He is holding a cigar in his right hand. Behind him are two large, purple, tentacle-like creatures with multiple limbs and mouths. The background is a light blue wall with horizontal lines. The man's shadow is cast on the wall behind him. The creatures' shadows are also cast on the wall.

to this odd fact, he started learning strange information from spirits that he contacted there. Perhaps the most surprising piece of information revealed to him involved Heinrich Rudolf Hertz's discovery of electromagnetic waves in the city back in the 19th century. According to the information he was gathering from spirits, Hertz was greatly assisted in his research by the layout of the city, as well as by forces of a magical nature behind the scenes pushing him in the right direction.

- Oh, good. It's the old "science was really magic all along!" argument. I love it every time it pops up.
- Snopes
- I've never made that claim. Hertz's research had to have solid scientific underpinnings—if it didn't, all of the work that resulted from it would be far more difficult to accomplish. I do not personally believe that electromagnetic waves are tied into Earth's mana field, as I have heard some people say. Rather, what I discovered in that visit to Karlsruhe was that there were powerful magic forces who wanted electromagnetic radiation discovered, and who wanted humans to harness its power. That started me on a long quest to see how humanity has been pushed and prodded in certain directions, and it has been a fruitful inquiry. The question I have yet to answer is the same one that always seems to bedevil this type of research—I may have some idea who is doing what, but it is difficult to determine why they are doing it, and toward what goal they are working.
- Elijah

In this work, Elijah had to become skilled at more than just summoning spirits and getting them to carry out a task. He had to learn how to extract information from them. This is an incredibly tricky task, as spirits are often inveterate deceivers, to the point where they often deceive themselves. It is quite possible, for example, to summon up a spirit who will tell you he is the ghost of Heinrich Rudolf Hertz, and who will present a convincing appearance and offer all the right details. You may even cast an analyze truth spell on the spirit and get nothing, because the spirit firmly believes that it is telling you the truth. None of this, however, means that the spirit is really what it claims to be. Elijah has learned that spirit research must be an exhaustive process to be effective, casting a wide net over spirit presences in the region and questioning them in detailed fashion in an effort to edge toward the truth.

One of the tricks of this business is the same as it is in any information-gathering task—tracking down and getting access to the individual spirits with the best information. As much as Elijah would like to uncover the secret history of the Sixth World, there are powerful forces, right up to the great dragon level, dedicated to keeping that information hidden. These powers are quite good at sequestering spirits, binding them to people in their service, and then sending their servants and the spirits into some isolated area with plenty of foci to keep the spirit confined and assist in rebinding it if necessary.

- You can also keep a spirit confined with a mana barrier, of course, and some groups, notable the Atlantean Foundation, are quite fond of dumping a spirit-encased barrier at the bottom of the ocean. Assuming you've got a mage who can sustain the spell, and who can maintain line-of-sight long enough to get the spell where you want it to go, this isn't a terrible solution. But where one spirit goes, another can follow, which means that there's always the risk of the barrier being dispelled when there is no one around to keep an eye on things. For good security, you need people, spirits, or both to keep a constant eye on things.
- Frosty

Elijah had one notable exploit in this area of work while tracking one particular spirit to the Lost Mine of Abo-denbo. After making his way through the Asamando ghouls population and past the village's collection of mages, Elijah found himself in cramped quarters, exploring a vault more than five hundred meters down into the heart of the mountain. The guardians were ferocious, unleashing magical attacks on anyone they didn't recognize, and Elijah had considerable trouble advancing. He retreated, and spent days designing a strategy that recognized the fact that any attack he planned did not need to be confined by the rock walls that were hemming in many of the guardians.

When it finally came, the attack he led was built on misdirection. After a quick burst by spirits into the chamber where the target spirit was confined, Elijah's immaterial army focused its efforts on the chamber's guardians. He was able to keep them from communicating with each other, so none of the guardians were aware of how the others were faring. They also weren't aware of how often they each were calling on the services of the bound spirit to help them in their struggle.

After a crazed battle that left most of the lost mine collapsed and saw Elijah himself covered in rubble, kept alive only by a physical barrier spell that prevented the rocks from crushing him, the guardians made a miscalculation and called upon the last service of the bound spirit. Once that job was done, the spirit vanished with a shriek of triumph, stunning the guardians. Their surprise quickly turned to rage, and they commenced a search for Elijah's aura in all that rock so they could make him pay for what he did. What they saw was that all of the spirits he had summoned (or at least, the ones still on the field of battle) had amassed themselves around Elijah, and if guardians wanted to get to Elijah in the middle of his fortress of rubble, they would have to go through that army first. After a few failed attempts to dispel Elijah's physical barrier, they fled, knowing it was best to get far away before their masters found out what had happened, because they certainly had far worse things in store for the guardians than did Elijah.

- So did Elijah eventually track down that spirit? What did it tell him?
- Jimmy No
- Question one: Yes, I did. He was grateful for me freeing him, though spirit gratitude is often not equivalent to human gratitude. Question two: If I didn't reveal that information to the board of directors of the Draco Foundation, what makes you think I'm going to tell you?
- Elijah

Perhaps Elijah's greatest weakness is also the source of a considerable amount of his strength. His passion for knowledge has pushed him to develop his skills to their current level, but that passion can sometimes—rarely, but still—overwhelm his logic. Once he knows, or even believes firmly, that there is an important piece of knowledge that is obtainable and waiting for him, it is nearly impossible to dissuade him from going after him. The need to know whatever secret he has gotten wind of can be overpowering, and can make him ignore the rigorous logic he applies to most aspects of his work. If I wanted to manipulate Elijah, that's how I'd get my hooks in.

- Thanks for the heads-up, Winterhawk. Anyway, I believe that having a passion for knowledge as a flaw is far more beneficial than many runners' supposed strengths.
- Elijah
- Say, Winterhawk, when discussing weaknesses, looks like you forgot to mention that he's kind of got an ego.
- Pistons
- Of course he does. He's a mage, isn't he?
- Slamm-O!

ELIJAH

B	A	R	S	C	I	L	W	M	Edg	Ess	Init	IP
4	3	5	3	4	5	7	5	8	6	6	10	1

Condition Monitor Boxes (P/S): 10/11

Armor (B/I): 5/3

Skills: Conjuring skill group 6, Dodge 2, Etiquette (Spirits) 3 (+2), First Aid 3, Instruction 3, Leadership 3, Medicine 2, Navigation 2, Perception 4, Pistols 2, Sorcery skill group 5, Survival 3

Knowledge Skills: Archeology 3, Architecture 2, Folk Music (Native American) 3 (+2), Magic Artifacts 5, Magic Groups 4, Magic History 5, Metaphysics 3, Philosophy 3, English N, Japanese 2, French 3, Mandarin 2, Portuguese 3, Spanish 4, Russian 2

Qualities: Exceptional Attribute (Logic), Focused Concentration, Magician, Mentor Spirit

Initiate Level: 3

Metamagics: Centering, geomancy, quickening

Gear: Commlink [Transys Avalon w/ Novatech Navi, Response 4, Signal 4, Firewall 3, System 3], flashlight, fountain pen (spell-casting focus (manipulation spells) Rating 4), glasses [Rating 4, flare compensation, image link, low light, smartlink], GPS, 5 x magnesium torch, medkit, Mortimer of London (suit jacket, trousers, and shirt), 20m myomeric rope, rabbit's foot (summoning focus, Rating 5), respirator (Rating 4), survival kit

Weapons:

Hammerli 620s [Light pistol, DV 4P, AP —, SA, RC 1, 6(c)]

Mentor Spirit:

Snake [+2 to Detection Spells, +2 to Binding Tests; -1 die for Combat spells]

Bound Spirits:

Spirit of air (Force 5, 2 services, 2 x spirits of earth (Force 3, 2 services each), 2 x spirits of man (Force 3, 3 services each)