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Greg Stafford - Jousting / Brian Lumley - Fiction
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Nice bunch of lads, eh? For those who survived their SATN check, these brave figures on the fire escape at the Studio are the lads of the Publications Department (ie, the office next door), namely Jim Bambra, Graeme Davis and Phil Gallagher. See what happens if you eat your greens and work on Warhammer? The one person you can’t see (he was thrown off the stairs and was last seen staggering in the car park) is young Michael Brunton, who is bound to end up as the nineteenth editor of this esteemed magazine; has had in the last three weeks. "Wot, annunver one?" you cry. Yes, well, I’m taking a small holiday to count the Poll returns (4500 and still rising!) and to help put some additional typography in Warhammer.

So, what has Miki inherited from the WD articles file? Well, next month, look out for a Dwarf that is even thicker than usual (surely not possible...), as we include a special preview pull-out of Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay, and then check out the main body of the mag for a special loony feature, or two, based on the following-up to The Colour of Magic. A surviving Protostark's Light Fantastic. If you haven't read the book yet, go out and get it because it's a hoot, and you'll never understand what we're gabbling about otherwise.

Just on the off-chance that some of you resist this blatant piece of commercialism, we'll give a few away as prizes.

Something else that has just struck us is that we're hurrying towards two anniversaries: 10 years of WD and WD/100. I mention it now so that you can remember the next half-dozen editors in case we forget to leave a note.

Paul Cockburn

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EDITOR: Paul Cockburn
CLONES IN SPACE

Roleplaying Adventure — Paranoia
West End Games £5.95

This, the latest Paranoia adventure, gives all loyal servants of the Computer the chance to discover the delights of going outside of Alpha Complex and outside the Outside. The title is a bit of a giveaway... Clones in Space gives you the chance to explosively decompress Commie Mutant Traitors, fight off Flying Saucers and indulge in all manner of space-faring excitement. If you have read this far, please report for termination. Thank you.

The adventure itself is 48 pages long and is set in Alpha Complex and a very high room — or at least, the elevator takes a very long time to get there. Before the main adventure starts, there is a solo section that duplicates the group action, to give referees a feel for the wonderful environment of space.

The clones are requested (by the Computer, you understand) to track down a traitor and eliminate her. Unfortunately, what appears to be a simple mission is complicated by the fact that the traitor has stolen an 'experimental elevator' (ie, a space shuttle) and left Alpha complex. The clones are therefore left with little choice but to pursue her - unhampered as they are by any real knowledge of space and its non-safety elements (OK, hazards). There is also the small matter of with replacement clones: the Computer has decided to send them all into space. This means that clones are available for immediate use, with no awkward wait while the Computer sends the 'elevator' up. It also means that each player has up to five Infra-red food-vat attendants in tow. This, in turn, means positions as the Infra-reds tend to get under foot...

Once in space the fun really starts, as the clones discover that something really big is going on, and the adventure culminates in a huge and extremely silly space battle against ludicrously inept all-conquering aliens.

Alert Paranoia GMs may have spotted a slight weakness in the plot — all the characters' clones are put into one extremely fragile basket. Most Paranoia GMs will, however, resist the resulting temptation to kill them all off at one go, if only so that the adventure lasts long enough for the GM to use all its best jokes.

The authors also missed a good bet for the ending of the adventure. Think of the possibilities for further... interesting encounters if the aliens follow the clones back to Alpha Complex!

Despite these niggles, Clones In Space is a fun adventure, and well worth adding to your collection if you run a Paranoia campaign. Thank you for your cooperation.

Fiona Lloyd

THE ENTERPRISE™ ENCOUNTER
STAR TREK: THE ADVENTURE GAME
Boardgames
West End Games £16.95 each

Spawned by the Star Trek phenomena, here are two surprisingly dissimilar games, especially so if you consider their physical similarities. Both are easy to learn and play, and both have the same sort of components: a 22" x 17" playing board, brief rules, die-cut counters (with accompanying plastic bags to store them in) and dice.

The Enterprise™ Encounter is the more basic of the two, a game relying on luck more than skill, and has its roots in a Star Trek episode, The Squire of Gothos, which featured a being called Trelane — a powerful infant of his race, given to certain eccentricities. In the game, the good old Enterprise has been sent on a mission by the Federation, but it is way-laid when it encounters four identical Klingon cruisers, ap-

GRIFFIN ISLAND

Campaign Scenario — RuneQuest
Avalon Hill £16.95

West End's
Ghost Toasties
A Delicious Novelty Treat
West End Games

GHOST TOASTIES
Roleplaying Adventure and GM’s Screen Ghostbusters
West End Games £6.95

This first Ghostbusters adventure is a package of a 24 page adventure (including four character sheets, usual strange player handouts) and a colourful, three panel GM’s screen. The adventure itself is heavily laden with awful puns, dreadful jokes, and a deep-seated distrust of cartoon advertising animals.

The plot of Ghost Toasties concerns the return of Hagost, an all-powerful South
American agricultural deity now linked to junk food), and his attempts to recapture a long-lost crystal containing his life force. Said crystal is now hidden in a packet of breakfast cereal somewhere in America. As Hagost gains power thousands of Americans are possessed and start to head for darkest Peru... Enter the heroic Ghostbusters, who have to penetrate Hagost’s pocket universe and deal with the various odd manifestations that they find there — many of which bear strong resonances to cartoon advertising animals.

Ultimately the PCs will encounter Hagost himself, who can be found under an enormous mound of breakfast cereal. It’s that sort of adventure. There is also a certain suspicious resemblance between Hagost and a certain advertising tiger.

The screen is a fairly normal three-fold card. The players’ side repeats information on character design and the fairly vague hints on ghostly powers from the original game. The GM’s side includes the commonly used sections of the rulebook, but the simplicity of the rules system the screen’s major function is hiding the GM’s maps and notes from inquisitive players. Overall, the screen is nice, if not essential. Played for giggles, this is a good package.

Fiona Lloyd
DECISION AT MIDNIGHT
A DOOMSDAY LIKE ANY OTHER

Roleplaying Adventure - STAR TREK RPG
FASA £4.95 each

These are the first two Star Trek scenarios I’ve had a real chance to look at, and frankly, I’m impressed by them. Standards of design and presentation are wonderful, and both pose real challenges to a group’s roleplaying abilities. They are both pleasurable to read, and the plots are presented clearly and concisely.

Decision at Midnight is the shorter of the two, at only 48 sides. Without wishing to give too much away, the characters are assigned to the USS Arkadelphia, a Loknar-class frigate, under the command of Captain Ian Vellacora. The Arkadelphia is soon sent to monitor the borders of a newly-founded Asparax Confederation, a group of planets between the Organian Neutral Zone and the Triangle. The Confederation is making heavy hints that it would welcome Klingon allies and their technological assistance. Vellacora is no lover of Klingons, and before long the situation has been pushed to the brink of disaster. War between the Klingons and the Federation is in the air. Can the players avert this horror?

The scenario includes some impressive features: deck plans of the Arkadelphia, dozens of NPCs, and a comprehensive section of notes designed to aid the gamemaster when running the scenario.

A Doomsday Like Any Other runs to 64 sides, and concerns the sudden landing-up of a routine patrol. The USS Fiji is surveying the frontier region between the Gorn and Romulan territories, with an eye out for Gorn and Romulan ships that may be in the area. The routine is broken when a distress call is received from a merchant vessel, the Pride O’Rigell, which has picked up an unwanted “companion” on its travels. Its roguish captain is also carrying a surprising cargo. Needless to say, an old Star Trek TV episode is the culprit for the basis of the plot, and buffles will doubtless be able to work it out from even the scant information that I have given.

Again, Doomsday gives more than just the scenario — more extensive gamemastering notes, lots of NPCs, and statistics for six vessels for use with the FASA Ship Combat System.

The only thing that irked me is that both scenarios provide ready-to-play situations with no alternate campaign entry points. Decision at Midnight provides suggestions for follow-ups from its end, but neither says anything about using the scenarios in an already-on-going campaign — alternative settings would be welcome for this reason.

Graham Staplehurst

Phil Frances

LORIEN & The Halls Of The Elven Smiths

Roleplaying Supplement — MERP/Rolemaster

Iron Crown Enterprises £4.95

Yet another great Middle-earth campaign supplement clunks out of the scriptorium of ICE in Virginia. It’s 62 pages long with a gleaming silver cover and an 8-page central colour insert giving layouts of places in Lorien, the city of Ost-in-Edhil, and maps east and west of the Misty Mountains. The text is densely packed and supported by fine Liz Danforth artwork and (as usual) some of the best plans and maps you’re likely to come across in any rolegame.

Despite the module’s title, by far the largest portion of this supplement is given over to the Second Age establishment of the Noldorian Elf, Celebrimbor. His city in Eregion where the Elven smiths created the Rings of Power, is detailed with splendid imagination, which doesn’t leave much room for a somewhat (in comparison) cursory glance at the Golden Wood.

The campaign supplement is constructed in much the same way as the recent examples from ICE. After a general guidelines section and introduction, the areas covered are briefly described. These encompass the lands known as Hollen and Lorien in the Third Age.

Following this there is a ‘cultural’ section discussing the different branches of the Eldar race and their origins, and giving preliminary details of the working of the Elven jewellers. This section is rather like that given in the Moria supplement, although dealing with a new set of artisans and working practices. More information, including a useful summary of special metals and magical substances is given later in the supplement. These guidelines will be of much use to GMS wishing to devise their own special and magical items.

Several characters of note are detailed for both areas: in Ost-in-Edhil there are Celebrimbor, Annatar (the disguised Sauron) and others; in Lorien dwell Galadriel and Celeborn. The organisation of societies is also described, and ICE have used a substantial, but credible, poetic license. The depth of these supplements continues to amaze and delight this reader for one, and cannot help but inspire wonderful adventures.

Stretching the imagination even further are the layouts and designs for Elven dwellings in the two realms. The concept of the city in Ost-in-Edhil, ‘a huge ship overlooking a long, westward-reaching lake’ seems fine, but the angularity and ‘modern’ appearance is somewhat off-putting. However, one realises that the other-worldliness of it becomes the intellectual High Elves.

The building designs are quite breathtaking in the final analysis. The expression of character and culture throughout the supplement, be it in terms of NPCs, descriptions of professions, dwellings and workplaces or interior furniture means that the whole world seems so much more real and alive to the senses. The game as it is presented here has a very good chance of achieving Tolkien’s own criterion for fantasy, that of ‘suspension of disbelief’.

Lorien is one of the finest roleplaying supplements I’ve seen, and is surely a must for all MERP players. Highly recommended to all lovers of fine roleplaying.

Graham Staplehurst
THRU THE BARBARIAN

The day started like any other... The teeming sidewalks of the big city held a million stories of love and hate, laughter and tears. And mine was just one of them...

"Lucy Hammer, private eye. That's me. The best in the business, I tell you. I once found a woman's lost cane! ...but I must say, it was a pretty good story, too."

"Why a doll? She was wearing an outfit that she just bought on and nobody missed, and she had a bow on her ears..."

"The guy had quite a sense of humor..."

"When she spoke, her voice was as sweet and soft as the dew on a spring meadow..."

"Cut the sex..."

"Something to do with her. She used to say, 'I'm not a dangerous customer..."

"She told me she was looking for a man..."

"Then she showed me a mugshot of the guy."

"At that moment I remembered the handle..."

"But she gently persuaded me to take the case..."

"I finally tracked the guy down to a seedy bar on the east side..."

"The next day the dame was back in my office..."

"Mr. Hammer, did you find her?"

"Yeah, I did. But something gave me the impression he wasn't interested in seeing me..."
For many gamers, nothing comes close to the thrill of face-to-face roleplay experiences. Formed and lost, organisations made and ruined, heroes come and go. All this, across the coffee-stained tables of your favourite GM.

Happy is the gamer who can claim to have a fixed circle of fellow players as friends. Play in the same group for any length of time, and you come to know each player’s idiosyncrasies. Most importantly, perhaps, you familiarise yourself with the style and standards of a regular GM. Once you know where your GM draws the lines, you can be fairly confident that each successive run will take you deeper into a familiar, gaming universe.

Players in such an enviable position, the idea of gaming postally might seem ridiculous in the extreme. Why bother with postal gaming when you can get the real thing for free? Postal is often seen as second best; an option only for those with no adequate face-to-face alternative, stuck in some Philistine wilderness of Monopoly® players and Trivial Pursuit® fanatics. But such is not the case.

There are thousands of postal gamers in Britain today who see their hobby not as a second choice, but as a valid form of roleplay in its own right, with its own, special rewards. It is in this spirit that I want to look at some of the features peculiar to postal gaming, and to offer advice to the prospective participant.

**Join the Clubs**

Now there’s postal gaming, and there’s postal gaming. You can have space-age or medieval adventure, wargame or diplomacy, or any number of combinations and permutations therein. There are games with a set number of turns and given objectives, and free-form games that run as long as there are enough players interested. But I’m going to stick to what I know. I shall be talking about play in a postal FRP campaign. The kind that runs indefinitely and which, though computers may be used to help with some things, is run by your traditional carbon-based life form (crude, but effective).

In commercially-run postal campaigns, we can be talking about several hundred players or more in a crowded universe. Not many private campaigns can claim to run quite so many player characters. In such a busy world, filled with blood-hungry barbarians and trigger-happy imps, there is unlikely to be any shortage of things to do.

Practical restrictions in face-to-face gaming often oblige players to stick with fairly compatible characters. But there is no such limit to who you want to be or what you want to do in a postal campaign. You are in a one-to-one correspondence with your GM, who you are paying to deliver what you want from a fantasy campaign. Exploit this to the full — be all you can be!

A word of caution however; while it makes commercial sense for the professional GM to please the customer, if you insist on making persistent, unreasonable demands, (“What do you mean, I can’t kill him? He’s only got ten guards!”), there’s nothing to stop them refunding your money and dropping you from their mailing list. After all, they have the interests of all their players to consider.

**Go it Alone**

If you don’t fancy gaming with a group of players who you might never meet in the flesh, you can always go it alone. Postal gaming offers scope for solo play which face-to-face campaigns are less likely to be able to accommodate. Even if you decide to avoid your fellow players, your character need not operate alone. You can still ally yourself with a powerful NPC, or work on your own terms with adventurers run by the GM. If the scenarios filling the pages of the newsletter do not interest you, pursue your own objectives. You might want to carve yourself a lonely niche in some desolate wilderness area. In time, you could come to play the incorruptible hermit to passing travellers, who might — or might not — help. Or if you prefer to make trouble instead of searching it out, you could set yourself up as a bandit. But then of course, you might attract the unwelcome attentions of your fellow players. In either case, if the GM is willing to cooperate, no one need ever know that you are, in fact, a player.

**Go Your Own Way**

For better or worse, most players want their name and deeds to become known. Few players go their own sweet way, careless of what others are doing around them. This is surely a good thing. Postal roleplay comes into its own when large numbers of characters are involved in a single scenario, possibly without even being fully aware of the extent of player involvement.

Even if you do choose to involve yourself in the schemes of other players, you still don’t have to follow mainstream gaming patterns. If, for example, you want to see how well a character can get out by purely non-violent means, then there’s nothing to stop you trying it. In postal campaigns, this is a perfectly practicable option. So whether you want to do the usual things, or experiment with possibilities not normally available in face-to-face gaming, it’s your choice. You call the tunes and, if they want to keep your custom, the GMs should dance accordingly.
Secrets and Strategies

In face-to-face gaming, a common problem for a player wishing to try something without the knowledge of the other players is to arrange it so that only the GM gets to know. When a note passes across the table, you can almost see the various characters tightening their purse-strings, edging back to the wall and sniffing at their food for traces of poison (regardless of the fact that the suspicions aroused in the real world have been illegitimately translated into the gaming world; but let that pass).

With postal gaming, the problem is curiously inverted. Players are hard put to discover if they are being betrayed until the blow is well nigh struck. In a postal campaign, you can never be sure that there are not messages going through the post that will seal your fate by another's hand. In this respect, the postal campaign acquires something of the tension of a Diplomacy game. It becomes that much more important to think ahead. Try to give your GM advice to cover every likely contingency and a few more besides in order to improve your chances of surviving.

Generally speaking, the more you put into your turnsheets, the more chance you have of achieving your objectives. Let me apply this point to combat.

From the player's point of view at least, the rules in postal FRP tend to be fairly simple. This avoids complicating the progress of the game any more than is necessary. Nevertheless, the complexity of rule systems such as Chivalry & Sorcery can be recreated in a postal campaign by the creativity of the player and GM. Combat resolution may seem a simple matter of the GM rolling one set of stats against another, but there's nothing to stop you trying to tip the scales in your favour. Give the GM copious details of any special tricks that you'd like to be considered on the relevant occasions. For example:

"My first blow will always be an attempt to end the fight before it gets started by going for a critical on my opponent's arm. If that fails, try to move myself into a position where my opponent has the sun in his eyes..."

...and so on. Though character stats may be the major determining factor in any combat, imaginative and detailed instructions could swing the battle your way. Check with your GM to see if such things are taken into account.

Sincerely Yours

Your fellow gamers don't have to remain faceless shadows. You might want to organise regular meetings for the players in a campaign, if the GMs do not already do so. There, you can get to know the people behind the characters with whom you've been making history. Plans can be discussed, alliances made or broken, as your socialising becomes an extension of the gaming environment. Of course if, say, you live in Edinburgh, while the meetings take place in London, then time and money may well rule out the possibility of your attendance. But you can always try contacting players living in your own area, or better still, get your own friends involved in the campaign. Entering a campaign as a regular can have distinct advantages. If you all cooperated, you would enjoy the safety of your numbers, and as a group, you could quickly become a force to be reckoned with.

Always remember that you are in a professionally run campaign. Since the GMs are running things on a commercial basis, they are likely to be easy on you when you make your first mistakes. They're hardly going to cut your own throat by coming down heavy on you at the first opportunity. Killing you off as soon as you put a foot wrong is bad for business. Without necessarily letting you get away with suicidal heroics then, they are not about to forget that you're a paying customer. If you do lose a character, some campaigns operate a karma system, so that long-standing players do not have to start right back at the bottom of the heap.

It is surely clear by now that postal FRP is a totally different experience to face-to-face gaming. Assertive players who prosper in the face-to-face set-up, might find that they have difficulties in a postal campaign. On the other hand, quiet players may find the postal format more to their taste. Postal gaming is an extension of and a complement to face-to-face roleplay. Each alternative has its own merits and drawbacks, but be sure and try both before judging between them.
Arthurian stories are full of encounters with knights who are waiting at a road crossing, ford, or bridge to joust with any and all comers. This duty is often self-imposed to gain the knight some glory. Sometimes it is imposed by a lady.

This set of tables is designed to make such duty easy for the players and characters to perform. Such activities might be done completely solo by a player during a year in which the character did not actively participate in the active campaign. Alternatively, a gamemaster can use these to determine which knights might be at a crossroads encountered during play.

Parts of the Pendragon game are necessary to use this system.

**STEP 1** Determine the type of road. The types of road will determine the amount of traffic, and hence the number of opponents. If one or both of the roads is a Roman Road, then use the Roman Road Encounter column. If both are paths, use the Path column. All others use the Road Encounter Column.

**STEP 2** Determine the number of encounters. Roll 1d20 each month to see how many opponents pass by.

**CROSSROADS ENCOUNTER TABLE**

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**STEP 3** Determine quality of knights. For each knight, roll 1d6 on this table.

| D6 Result | 1-2 Average | 3-4 Good | 5 Excellent | 6 Special, roll again. |

**SPECIAL OPPONENT TABLE**

| D6 Result | 1 Enemy Knight, roll again for quality |
| 2-3 Bandits (1d6+1) |
| 4 Saxton War party (1d6+1) |
| 5 Piet War party (1d6+2) |
| 6 Famous Knight, roll again. |

**FAMOUS KNIGHT TABLE**

These are the star Knights for each period. Most of their stats can be found in The Characters book, and for those that can not the player must substitute.

Roll 1d6 to find the foe, dependant on the phase.

| D6 Phase Two | 1 Balin le Savage |
| 2 Gwaine of Orkney |
| 3 Griflet le Fise de Dieu |
| 4 Marhaus of Ireland |
| 5 Tor le Pellinor of the Isles |
| 6 Tor le Fise Aries |

**Phase Three**

| 1 La Cote Mal-En-Taille |
| 2 Galeholt the Red Prince |
| 3 Lamorak de Galis |
| 4 Lancelot du Lac (younger) |
| 5 Palomides des Saracen |
| 6 Ywaine le Chevalier au Lion |

**Phase Four**

| 1 Bors de Ganis |
| 2 Gareth Beaumains |
| 3 Lancelot du Lac (older) |
| 4 Mordred of Orkney |
| 5 Percival de Galis |
| 6 Tristram de Lyonesse |

**Phase Five**

| 1 Bors de Ganis |
| 2 Gareth Beaumains |
| 3 Lancelot du Lac |
| 4 Mordred of Orkney |
| 5 Tristram de Lyonesse |
| 6 Urre of Hungary |

**Bandits**

Bandits will attack to capture the knight for ransom. If captured, they can be sold into serfdom (1L each). Use the stats from the back of The Character book.

**Saxon Raiders**

These foes will try to kill the knight. If captured, they can be sold into serfdom (1L each). Use the stats from the back of The Character book.

**Pict War Party**

These foes will try to kill the knight. If captured, they can be sold into serfdom (1L each). Use the stats from the back of The Character book.

**Enemy Knight**

This knight is, or will become, a personal foe of the jouster. He fights to capture for ransom. If your player character has no permanent foes then make up a name, or ask the gamemaster for one.

**STEP 4 FIGHT**

The solitaire player must make the Joust rolls for both his character and the opponent. Remember to keep track of wins and losses, and of Glory gained each time.

Each opponent is fought separately and successively. If the player character is wounded, captured, or loses all his horses then the rest of the month will be affected.

When healing, each week subtract five from the results of the D20 roll result. For instance, a character on a Roman Road rolls 13, thus expecting to fight 14 enemies that month. But if the first one wounds him to require 2 weeks healing the player must subtract 10 from his die roll, making a roll of 3. After recovery he would then have only 4 more opponents to fight. Remember that although the number given would be 5, he had already fought one.

Victorious jousters who release their opponents only for ransom will collect the money in 2d6 months. Characters may keep their defeated opponents’ horse, armour, and weapons if they wish, but will get a Selfish check. Returning them will get a Generous Check.
Jousting in Dungeons & Dragons

by Stephen Gardner

In medieval times, leisure took totally different forms from those that it does today. For the peasants, there were storytelling, dancing and cockfights; for the rulers, the rich and the propertied, there were nobler pursuits, such as falconry, poetry and jousting.

Jousting or tilting was an art. It is frequently mentioned in Arthurian legend, where there are frequent mentions of colourfull tournaments and almost every water crossing is guarded by a knight who challenges all comers. Jousting took skill, strength and dexterity; a knight had to know all about his armour, his horse and his lance. He had to be able to ride fluently and he had to know the best place to hit his opponent. Like professional sports today, jousting took talent, training and constant practice.

Armour for the jouster was made sensibly and economically, with convex surfaces to deflect blows, but there were still cracks and crevices on armour that could catch and hold a lance point. The best place was the crest of the helmit, a decorated metal ornament atop the helmet which was sure to hold a lance point, but not all knights wore them. Other places to hit were under the rim of the collar or the shoulder-piece. Such a blow was almost certain to lift a knight off his horse. Formal jousters were always fought in plastron — death or injury was a certainty otherwise.

The lance or spear was held in the right hand, its butch supported in the crook of the right elbow. It had to be strong, but length was also important. 12-14 feet was common. Greater than this meant that you could hit before your opponent, but the lance was unwieldy. If the lance was short, the situation was reversed.

The last factor was the horse. The jouster rode a cumbersome beast, strong enough to bear his weight, but still fearsome in a charge. He had to sit loosely in the saddle then, in the moment of impact, grip with his knees and throw his weight forward. Jousters rode at a full gallop and had to think about hitting rather than being hit. They positioned themselves to maximise the effect of their own blow rather than minimise the damage of their opponent's blow.

In a joust, the knights charged each other with shield to shield. Their were their shields on the left arm and passed on the left side. They had to direct their lances across the body, and therefore had to hit a quite small area: ie, the right side of the body or the helmet. His on the shield would often be deflected more often than not.

Considering these factors, the following are some rules suggestions for jousting in Dungeons & Dragons. The jousters' normal to hit score with lance is modified by his dexterity and the length of lance he chooses (normal modifications for high or low strength still apply):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dexterity Adjustment</th>
<th>10-14 no adjustment</th>
<th>15+16 +1</th>
<th>17+18 +2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lance</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Length</td>
<td>Adjustment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i</td>
<td>Up to 9 feet</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii</td>
<td>10-11 feet</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iii</td>
<td>12-14 feet</td>
<td>no adjustment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iv</td>
<td>15-16 feet</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>v</td>
<td>17-18 feet</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two jousters hurtle together. The one with the longest lance strikes first. If he rolls a number roll between his modified to hit score and his to hit score plus 4 (inclusive) he has hit his opponent, but not in a critical spot which will hold his lance point. He still has a chance of dislodging his opponent, however. A roll of five or more above the to hit roll means that the lance has lodged in the target's armour. When hit, a jouster can make an ability check on a D20, using the average of his STR andDEX (rounded up). This check is modified depending on the STR of the attacker. Compare the STR of the attacker with the average of the of the STR and DEX of his opponent. For each point advantage the former has over the latter, the defender suffers a penalty of +1 to the die roll on the ability check, and vice versa. For instance, knight A has an STR of 14, and his knight B whose average STR/DEX is 12; knight A has a two point advantage, so knight B's ability check is made at +2, meaning that he must roll (in effect) a 10 or less. A knight who is knocked from his horse in this manner does not take normal damage from the lance. In the event of a "critical" hit (a roll of five better than required), the defending knight suffers a much larger penalty. The attacking knight's level is added to 5 and the result is the penalty to the die roll on the ability check — and this is in addition to any of the penalties above. A "critical" hit of this type also inflicts normal damage with the lance. If the knight actually manages to stay on his horse, his opponents lance is shattered by the impact. For example, a knight with an average STR/DEX of 13 is critically hit by a 4th level opponent (STR 14); the die roll is modified by +4 +1 +1, rolling a 3 or less is required remain mounted!

Example: Consider a tilt between Sir Gaheris of Orkney and King Ban of Berwick. Gaheris is a 3rd level fighter with a 10 foot lance (+1 to hit), a DEX of 15 and a STR of 14. Ban is 5th level, DEX 13, STR 15 and uses a 13 foot lance. Both knights need to roll a 12 to hit AC2. They thunder together. Ban striking first. He manages to hit with a 13 - not a critical hit - but Gaheris must still make an ability check using the average STR/DEX (15). Ban's STR is also 15, so there are no modifiers. Gaheris rolls a 13 and manages to stay on his horse. Then he strikes, rolling an 8: his lance wavers above Ban's crest.

They turn for a second charge, and this time Ban rolls a 19! Gaheris has a very slight chance of remaining in the saddle (the die roll is modified by 5+4=10), but as he rolls an 11 he goes flying.

The Fall

An unseated knight literally goes flying. In Arthurian legend, a joust between Sir Launcelot and Sir Turquine sends both knights somersaulting through the air; both lances shatter and both horses sustain broken backs. Under all that armour, the least a knight can expect are bruises. Of course, if the contestants are jousting under exotic circumstances, such as on flying griffons, they will also take damage through falling to the ground.

A knight who takes a fall takes the normal damage from a lance if he was subject to a critical hit. Additionally, he should make a CON ability check to avoid more serious injury. If he fails, roll on the Injury Table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Injury Table (roll 1D10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Concussion, possible temporary loss of sight etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Serious unconsciousness for 3 hours to 5 days (GM's discretion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7 Fractured bones (DEX and STR minus 1-6 until healed), roll on sub-table below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-9 Dislocated joints (DEX minus 1-4 until healed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Broken bones (DEX, STR minus 1-6, CON minus 1-4 until healed), roll on sub-table below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bone Injuries Sub-table (roll 1D12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Minor, eg, wrist, ankle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 Leg(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Pelvis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Spine*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8 1-6 ribs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Skull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11 Arm(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Neck*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Possible death if broken; CON ability check to survive such an injury.

Obviously, it is difficult to define the exact effects of a fall as jarring as one at jousting. The above tables are intended as a loose guide only. The winner of a joust should be allowed to keep his opponent's horse and armour unless the contest was a "friendly" match. It ought to be possible for characters to make a good living travelling from one tournament to another, living on their winnings.

Jousting Terms

- **bur** broad ring on lance to protect hand
- **couch** lower lance for attack
- **fewer** rest for lance; fix lance in rest coat of armour
- **jesserante** herald, announcer
- **pulsivant** girth for horse

"White Dwarf" 11
You know, there are some people who think we make up all the letters on this page. But believe it or not, there really are people in this world who write in just to tell us things like this... 

N. C. Farrall, Asby, S. Humberside: I picked up the last four issues of the Dwarf from a friend, and what do I find? Revelations! You lot make The Bible an also-ran in that department. Forgive my fawning tones, but the new personnel at WD are a GOOD THING and the admission that WD is a house mag is out in the open at last - great! I bloom with superlatives at the interesting letters page, and I love the new lay out. The recent article on Psi-Judges for JDrp was fabbo too, the Traveller life-boat superb, and generally White Dwarf is now what it should be - an excellent mag! 

Glad you noticed! However, we aren't always perfect.

Christopher Tumlin, Selby Oak, Birmingham: There is a glaring error in Jerry's CoCo scenario Ghost Jackal Kill (WD 70): Isadora Turner driving from San Francisco to Los Angeles and back again and then 'spending the rest of the night in her hotel'. No mean feat, as it took me ten hours to drive the 458 miles from LA to San Francisco. The trip is at least a day each way, making it much harder for the investigators to follow Miss Turner out find out where she's been. I suggest Mr Davis uses an atlas in future.

Upon receiving Chris' letter we hit Graeme with a desk and demanded an immediate explanation, but all he could come up with was the following:

What can I say? Guilty as charged, m'did! I don't suppose feeble excuses about soused-up Model Ts will do me any good here, so probably the best thing would be to re-set the Brain House in San Francisco. Alternatively, Miss Collins could retire to the YWCA in Los Angeles after her abortive visit, although this would make shadowing her a much more difficult job.

Thanks Graeme. Oh, by the way, you're fired.

Kevin Jacklin, Emsworth, Hants: I am writing in response to Mr Peter Tamlyn's thought-provoking article Roleplaying For Everyone in WD80. He notes that the media have, in the past, only been interested in the Roleplaying Hobby because of its associations with occultism or the craziness of the players. Hence, before new players are to be attracted to the hobby, newspapers etc will have to take it a little more seriously.

Also, if more people are to be attracted to the hobby, the hobby media in the UK should make a start by taking a leaf out of the American hobby media's book and treat it as a 'grown up' pastime. All the UK magazines are displayed next to the children's comics in large newsagents, and the cover (and to some extent, the interior) resembles a comic. No wonder potential newcomers are put off! To give a for-instance, the reviews section in US magazines like Different Worlds devote a large amount of space to reviews. They do not have to do this, they could fill it with more advertisements. But to do so indicates that they think it is worthwhile their while explaining about a game in some detail - gamers appreciate this (it saves time in a games store), and newcomers will learn more easily about the hobby (no more 'preaching to the converted'). By providing a wide-ranging selection of reviews, the US magazines ensure an ever-widening range of games reach an ever-widening market.

As far as the future of roleplaying is concerned, I am a fan of the 'minimalist rules' school myself - less time for chart reading, more time for getting. I don't see why existing roleplaying gamers shouldn't be interested in new forms of the genre. Call of Cthulhu was released in 1981, and it took a long time before it reached its present popularity. The options in Gameshows are slightly limiting, but try it this way. The rules say that if all the players operate they might just be able to solve a mystery in one game day. With a referee, however, it is possible to replay the encounters, and by using a dummy clock to let the detectives roam San Francisco working to a real deadline (and leaving messages for each other at various locations). The argument that writing your own plot in How To Host A Murder applies equally to all rpgs in that you know something other players do not. If you roleplay properly that should not be a problem. To pay around £3 each for a pre-formatted entertaining isn't that expensive compared with many activities (although, I agree, pricy in game terms). If all current roleplayers don't find that type of game 'appealing', as Mr Tamlyn seems to think, there's a good chance it will not be reviewed in magazines like White Dwarf (since it caters for 'the bulk of the current roleplaying market'). A chicken and egg situation.

To sum up, the future of roleplaying is good if:

- new areas of roleplaying are found
- roleplaying media publicise and review these new areas in a serious manner
- current roleplayers are less blinkered in what they play.

Yes, a very interesting article indeed. More of this sort of thing, please.

You raise some interesting points yourself, which I'll try and briefly cover. Firstly, the attitude of the media towards roleplaying is hardly surprising when one considers the activities of the various live roleplaying groups and their ilk. If I was a reporter looking for a story I'd jump at the chance to cover a bunch of loonies who dress in silly costumes and hit each other with rubber swords. Serious newspapers and the colour supplements have given the hobby a fair coverage, but the tabloids won't go away just because we don't like them - if we don't want bad press we shouldn't encourage it by our irresponsible actions.

It is hard to act grown up when one is representing a hobby that covers an age range from 9 to 19 and beyond. To my mind, if we wish to attract more newcomers to our hobby we must make allowances for the fact that, initially at least, they will have no idea what we are talking about. Regular articles for beginners, ranging from overviews of popular systems to tips for making your first few games work properly, are what is needed, and I would argue that WD is exactly the place to print them. However, as readership have been very vocal in their dislike of material suited for beginners when it has been run in the past, we can suppose that a new set of articles, looking back at the DD range, for example, would meet with howls of complaint again.

Longer reviews of products seem solely designed to fill up space, in my humble opinion. While a long, detailed review is useful for a new roleplaying game or major supplement, it can hardly be justified for the latest ADD module or Battlechlese supplement, for example. If a new product is important enough to deserve heavy coverage we will often afford it a run in one of our feature articles anyway. I feel it is very unlikely that WD will substantially increase the space given to reviews in the near future.

Incidentally, we have no control of where WD is placed by a local shop. I once always puts it on the top shelf with the other so-called 'adult' magazines, though amongst the computer mags is also popular. If yours puts WDs in a peculiar place ask him why, he does so, and point out the shelf he'd sell more if he put them elsewhere!

I would hazard that roleplayers don't find the various Murder Mystery games to their taste because a) they are simplistic, b) they aren't funny, which is still the most popular media with roleplayers, and c) most 16-year-olds don't hold too many dinner parties. What Pete was saying is that these types of games are to be congratulated for bringing a modified form of interactive game to a new audience, who we should now be drawing in to our own hobby. How we manage to do this without offending our unbearably conservative readership, though, is another matter. It will be an uphill struggle, I fear - I mean, this is a typical WD reader...


P.S Please can I have your autograph (if he can write, that is).

No, I wouldn't have put my name on that either.
Wout Thielmans, Bruges, Belgium: Re the review of Lankhmar. My god, I've never been so angered by any purchase I've ever made in the 8 years of roleplaying! That lump of paper contains more typos than the entire output of TSR up to 1980! We are promised: encounter tables for Nehwon - not one table in sight. We are promised new spells and a magic-weak system - we get a grouping together of old Clerical and Magical spells and that's it. We are promised a lot of short scenarios with level indications - we get some 10 garbled 'plot ideas' and I scenario amounting to a third of a page with difficulties! The most ironic mistake is where we are promised stats for 2 (count em) new weapons, throwing axe and throwing dagger, and barely a paragraph later we only get the stats for one weapon. Add to this the fact that several lines are totally garbled and incomprehensible (try reading ghtiebl fgyte htyut??? - zayy for the characters to raise the money - see what I mean?) and you definitely do NOT have a professional module worth some C44-15! Over price we in Belgium have to pay for it.

No, Wait, tell us if you don't like something! I guess you should take TSR's advetisement with a pinch of salt in future, bur on the whole I must say that Lankhmar was an impressi	ive ten minutes work.

Robert Povey, Leek, Staffs: After reading Mike Goldsmith's letter (WD80) I felt compelled to put pen to paper. I ask 'Why shouldn't kids admire Judge Dredd?'

After all, we all need a hero to look up to in these times of moral corruption and ever increasing violence. Surely it's better for kids to admire a figure of law and order than one of corruption and crime?

Judge Spencer, Marple, Cheshire: Citizen Mike Goldsmith, you will place yourself under house arrest for the use of an illegal expressive word and the slamming of a Judge with the words 'He is a murdering swine' - he being Judge Dredd of Mega-City One. A Brit-Cit Judge will be calling on you promptly.

Tom Deakin, Llangennach Wells, Powys: As a dedicated devotee of Joe 'I am the Law' Dredd and now the RPG, I was pleased to see the article in WD80, Something Special. All my Judges now have at least two heads each! But there is, I think, one essential skill all Dredders should have that tutor Tyran missed, namely the 'Get out of a totally impossible situation because you've got to apply for 2000AD anew each week' skill.

This highly useful skill (involves at the GM's discretion) an extremely high percentage chance that in a totally impossible situation the PC Judge will be able to find some way out, usually with a feat of acrobatics, an improvised weapon or a passing H-Wagon!

One other thing. If you are going to play JDrp seriously you must be able to swear authentically, so I have compiled a small list of Dredd's better known vituperations: Droll (most common by far), Grud, Creep, Oh Moley, Spug It, Dirtwad, Punk, Dok, Oh Cromla and Stomm.

These add even more to the flavour of a scenario. Take a look at the following example: just for a change a Judge is arresting a juvenile.

Judge: You there citizen, move it, you're under arrest.
Juve: No way.
BLAM BLAM... Becomes: Judge: Drolk it! 'C'mere you dirtwad creep! You're under grudding arrest!!
Juve: Spug you, Judge!
BLAM BLAM... See?

Yes, er, thanks Tom, Couldn't you have sent a random table too?

Andrew Bell, St Austell, Cornwall: In WD80 I read an article by Martin Veart about development point allotment upon level advancement in MERP (Up and Coming). I am an avid supporter, nay, fan, of the Rolemaster system from which MERP was pirated. Like MERP, in Rolemaster a character is assumed to be first level after adolescence, skill development and apprenticeship. He then assigns the development points at level 1, the skills he wishes to develop during that level - whether they are skills already developed previously, or new ones.

For instance, if Grimmuts (to take Martin's example) wishes to develop a new (or old) skill in Broadsword, he must make a note of how many DPs he is going to pay in learning however many skill ranks that he wants to learn. If, during his level advancement, the GM notes that Grimmuts doesn't seem to much as buy a broadsword, let alone attempt to teach himself or get tuition in the weapon, the GM is fully justified in telling Grimmuts where to get off when he has his new skill ranks for which he paid his DPs.

By using this method of assigning DPs before starting a level, but gaining their benefit when one reaches the next level, it makes it impossible for Grimmuts to suddenly become handy at wielding a warhammer when he doesn't even know what one looks like!

Edmund Morgan, Sutton, Surrey: Martin Veart was right about one thing - his article was demoted ramblings. Unfortunately he made a few errors.

Although he asks us to look at 4.25 he has not read the basics! Five skill ranks in 2-handed in one level! Shurely stome mistake! It says in 3.6, A skill rank may be increased by one by using 1 DP. A skill rank may be increased by 2 by using a total of 3 DPs. A skill rank may not be increased by more than 2 ranks during the apprenticeship...

Aha, you say, this is for apprentices only! Look again, in 2.63, here it says, 'To develop a skill allocate development points to it. This process is identical to apprenticeship skill development.'

This means, quite simply, that most of Martin Veart's article is unnecessary. I do agree that spell lists cannot just materialise in the wilderness, but can be found in any large town or eleven settlement. Some spell lists can be found elsewhere; for example, in a human castle 5% chance of a bard list, ranger list or open essence list, and 10% chance of a chance/open canncelling list.

Graham Staplehurst, Putney, London: Some other misapprehensions revolve around the nature of the ranks, which are only 5% at first (at higher development) each is worth only 2%, then 1%. Secondly, giving them '10' notation is misleading, since they are not resolved on a % chance basis, but rather the total 'rank' (including bonuses, which Veart misnames 'values') is added to a percentile roll (itself open-ended) then referred to a table. A 5% jump in combat rating that is Offensive Bonus, might be worth an extra point or two of damage or an added critical grade. MERP does not offer the PC a crude, unthinking, performing an action, it uses a mixture of luck (die roll), character skill and player ingenuity to give a grading on the relative success or failure of an attempt.

In these terms, the basic learning jump of +30 in a skill which Veart complains of (from an unskilled -25 to +5 for the first 'rank' obtained) is a realistic interpretation of the learning process/curve, and one which is contiguous with the later decline in the rate of skill improvement. Perhaps the +30 jump seems a great deal to Veart; on the other hand it is wisely said 'a little knowledge is dangerous'. Even facing a measly orc, an OB of +5 with spear is little better than -25!

Jeremy Lowe, Chesterfield, Derbyshire: Congratulations on WD80, the best effort for over a year! The articles were all useful and interesting, and Things Ancient & Modern had that spark of originality vital for the nature of the hobby. The only let-down came in the comic strips - both Thrud & Gobbledigook were almost completely pathetic!

In response to Terry Kench (Letters, WD80), I would use resurrection and similar forms of Raise spells very sparingly indeed, for one good reason. Imagine the scene: a powerful character dies, and his soul begins the journey to the eagerly waiting God of Death (or perhaps just an easy path to the Ellitian Fields for an eternity of perfection) when suddenly he is dragged unceremoniously back and dumped into the body of a badger (or, if he's lucky, his own body) by some twerp who thinks he's helping out. If the character is vital to the campaign and did not want to die, a Raise Dead spell might be in order, but if not the risks in angering the God of Death would be worth it. As an alternative to this, you could allow other PCs to go off to the Underworld to rescue the characters from the clutches of Death before he is inextricably ensnared, as happened all the time in Greek mythology. This, if goes without saying, would be a very difficult and rare occurrence.

And finally, we couldn't leave you without a mention of that distressing damsel from across the ocean. The following people are some of the many who 'referred to' Laurette Miller in their letters this month:

Dave Dickins of Surrey, J Marshall of Grantham, Douglas Thomson of Aberdeen, Gavin D Coles of Orpington, MC Farrall of Scunthorpe, and K Jones of Cheltenham. We will, of course, be writing to all of their friends, who will no doubt be very interested to hear of what their offspring's little hobby really entails. Incidentally, if there are any more Laurette fans out there, can I suggest that instead of writing begging letters for pearls, autographs and measuring tapes you simply send us some money; if we get enough we'll fly the lady over for Games Day so you can take as many photos and measurements as you wish!

Letters edited by Marc Gascoigne
Marc Gascoigne edited by Paul Cockburn
Letterhead by Marcus L Rowland

"WHITE DWARF" 13
The Door Deliquesced

Eye-catching title, eh? For forty years SF writers have been attempting scene-setting lines as cleverly offhand as Heinlein's "The door dilated". Dropped casually into an early sentence of Beyond This Horizon, those three words pitchforked readers into a high-tech future where doors irises open (to £2.87) and this was such an everyday event that no comment was called for. Now it's 1986 and I'm at the sentence (given a paragraph of its own so I'll appreciate the cleverness) "The door deliquesced". Subsequent paragraphs explain that, yes this door really does melt down into a puddle, which you must be careful not to step in, since the liquid condenses back up into solidity and could lend a whole new meaning to getting your foot in the door. As Walt Willis once put it, "Cor, chase my Aunt Fanny round the pisewyons laboratory."

This conversation-stopper is from Samuel R. Delany's Stars In My Pocket Like Grains Of Sand (Grafton 464pp, £2.95). Delany's early books were full of poetry, brilliance and wild lack of discipline; twenty years on, little has changed. There's an admirable inventive far-future background: thousands of inhabited worlds, the information Web that links them, two major political/religious/philosophical factions (the Family and the Sygn), humans and aliens in multi-species extended marriages ... But also there are indigestible globs of exposition, with characters lecturing each other because Delany wants to lecture the reader. He also misplaces some of his heightened, poetic prose: "Tubes drained off the puce and fuchsia biles that, in a sort of antidigestive process, had, by their chemical actions, healed; had, by their tidal actions, exercised." This is how Delany wants to describe intensive care, fine, but the sentence is from the verbal report of a bureaucrat relating the patient's recovery, and (like many others) in that context it's unbelievable.

The story has a space-operative background (who destroyed the burnt-out planet?) and, at stage centre, a homosexual love affair (oh, those sensual descriptions of cabled muscles, flexible limbs). Nevertheless, mystery not romance is resolved, all that being kept for Book Two - fearfully titled The Splendour and Misery of Bodies, of Cities. Book One is brilliant, uneven, insufferable, an important piece of SF. I haven't even mentioned the agonizing far-future pronouns, whereby I would have to refer to your editor (or indeed anyone else) as "she", unless I fancied him...

Bob Shaw's The Ragged Astronauts (Gollancz 310pp, £9.95) is much more traditional fun, billed as the first of a trilogy - but you can trust this author, and Shaw enough the book has believable characters and satisfying beginning, middle and end. It turns on one of those marvelously daft notions which only SF can offer: realistic interplanetary travel by hot-air balloon. Planet Land is suffering a deadly ecological threat. People will be guessed aboard (by time by experienced fans), and escape plans call for balloon evacuation to the binary twin Overland. The airborne scenes are excellent, stirring my jaded sense of wonder. The celestial mechanics ... well, I spared the effort of putting on my physicist's hat and doing sums by a grandiose ploy which must have Newton developing high angular momentum in his grave. Pi, in this book, equals 3. Therefore the universe isn't ours, the gravitational constant is different, and physicists will kindly pipe down. Meanwhile Grafton have reissued an earlier Shaw favourite - The Palace of Eternity (221pp, £2.50), one of the few SF novels to achieve a successful blend of physics and metaphysics. Both recommended.

Once again Arthur C. Clarke has switched on his word processor and pressed the well-worn keys labelled FICTION and KEEPING ELEGIC TONE OF VOICE, to produce The Songs of Distant Earth (Grafton 182pp, £9.95) - previously seen as a 1957 short story and a 1979 film outline. In 1957, it was Girl Meets Spaceaman for a one-night stand as his ship drops by for water; a tearful parting, and he blasts off into the night. The liberated 1985 version is much the same, with more dialogue, better props (quantum space drive, another space elevator, terraforming), a fistful of added elements which are barely developed and serve only to dilute the story (intelligent lobsters, incidentaI tragedies, disruptive effects of the visiting ship on the girl's colony world), and the identical lack of appropriate emotion. Let's face it, Clarke's characters can only manage three emotions: intellectual hunger, sorrow for bygone glories (here a nova-zapped Earth), and awe in the face of the infinite. None is appropriate to a bittersweet love affair; with this vacuum at the book's core, the other bits don't fuse together but just lie there. Pity.

Frederik Pohl's Black Star Rising (Gollancz 282pp, £9.95) is brisker interstellar stuff with a vein of satire. The USA and USSR having zapped each other because Reagan's 'Star Wars' nonsense has precipitated War II (Pohl, you may gather, doesn't approve), China has moved in to administer the wrecked countries, instituting healthy, all-American practices like Mississippi paddy-fields and self-criticism sessions. Great embarrassment results when extraterrestrial invaders make the traditional demand to be taken to the President of the USA ... The alien 'erks', so eager to aid justice, take sides, and help us annihilate our planet, which may be intended as a satire on some superpower's foreign policy. Good-natured stuff with a few sharp points.

I liked Jack Vance's Lyonesse II: The Green Pearl (Grafton 360pp, £3.50) rather better than Volume I, perhaps because the fantasy action seems more coherent. Further quasi-medieval political manoeuvres, magical skulduggery, and ornately polished dialogue; grimmer than most Vance tales, but always enjoyable for its sheer style - Vance probably writes elegantly ironic and barbed shopping lists. At least one more sequel follows.

The Blackcollar by Timothy Zahn (Arrow 272pp, £1.95) is the latest 'venture novel' of zap-happy SF, and one of the series' better offerings. Blackcollars are not people who don't wash their necks, but super-guerillas made redundant by the fall of the Terran Empire. But there remains one slim chance! After a few too many pages of lasers, paralysis darts, nunchucks and shurikens, our heroes win fairly excitingly through. The conclusion has a touch of political realism which almost makes the whole farrago credible. Lightweight entertainment.

Michael Moorcock's peculiar brand of sword-and-sorcery is also lightweight, but with above-normal inanity in which we are some kind of surrealism, and a good line in doomed Byronic heroes. The Swords of Corum (Grafton 509pp, £9.55) is a hardback omnibus of the first three Corum books, finally remembered for the fantasy Realpolitik of its finale: not merely the Chaos mob but all the gods are liquidated, leaving the world a healthier place. Fundamentalists may cancel their subscriptions at this point ... The Crystal and the Amulet (Savoy £4.95 - nice to see you back, Savoy) is part two of James Caithorn's pictorial adaptation of the Hawkmoon 'Runestaff' tetralogy, a bit confusingly synoptic in places, but powerfully vibrant in some black-and-white. With gints of humour amid the horror, too, as witness the unfortunate slave suffering the consequences of playing Cal of Chialhu in the background of one sequence.

Reprints of books already reviewed: Kitteworld by Keith Roberts (Penguin 288pp, £2.95, excellent), The Man in the Tree by Damon Knight (Penguin 246pp, £2.95, good), Gilgamesh the King by Robert Silverberg (Pan 300pp, £2.95, pretty good) and Dragons of Autumn Twilight by a committee of hacks (Penguin 448pp, £2.95 - and I thought this one-time 'quality' publisher had hit rock bottom with Jack Chalker ...).

I realised in terror that the deadline was here, and ran for the exit. The door detumesced.
The Way Of The Warrior

Summer's the slow time for film releasing in Britain, while the companies pause to relax in the sun before launching the traditional blitzkrieg of the run-up to Christmas. This makes life a lot easier for the reviewers too; it gives us the chance to consider the fewer titles on offer in the detail they deserve, instead of wrapping them up in a couple of paragraphs and hurrying on to the next.

Some of you may remember I did that to Highlander (15) last time round, and I had a number of reservations about it. Since then I've had a chance to see the British release print, instead of the mutilated American version shown at the first preview, and I make no apologies for coming back to it now.

The British version is so much better, it's almost a different movie. Instead of a rambling quest scenario, lurching arbitrarily from one action set-piece to the next, the full version of Highlander is a subtle and tightly-plotted interplay of situation and character.

As you probably know by now, Christopher Lambert plays Connor McLeod, an immortal 16th Century warrior, in conflict with others of his parallel or direct enemy. The present is more than just a run-of-the-mill sword and sorcery quest in modern dress, though; the core of the film is how immortality affects people, and what it means specifically to Connor McLeod.

This puts an extraordinary burden on Lambert, since, in effect, the film only holds together as long as we believe in McLeod. That he succeeds so well is an eloquent testimony to his skill as an actor. His performance carries conviction throughout, whether radiating eager enthusiasm and his powers unfold under the tutelage of his mentor Ramirez, or, later, the weary detachment of a man nearly five centuries old.

Sean Connery is perfectly cast as the flamboyant and raffish Ramirez, as is Roxanne Hurt as the police scientist McLeod begins, reluctantly, to love. The other place in the lime light, though, unquestionably belongs to Clancy Brown as the Kurgan, an immortal berserker intent on killing McLeod. The two are presented as absolute opposites: McLeod clinging desperately to the things that still make him human, while the Kurgan, long since resigned to the fact that he isn't, has abandoned them entirely. Radiating barely-controlled menace, he takes an almost mischievous glee in the use of his powers.

The film gains a great deal from its complex narrative structure, in which events in the past parallel or directly affect those of the present. The transitions from one to the other are bold and imaginative, a characteristic of Russell Mulcahy's direction. Highlander is visually stunning, from the timeless grandeur of the Scottish landscape to the surreal, urban jungles of New York. The swordfights are terrific.

This time I've no doubts at all. See this film.

Another movie to deal with the way of the warrior, though this time rather more realistically, is The Karate Kid II (PG). Expected to hate this; sequels are usually nothing more than a limp and cynical attempt to cash in on the success of the original. But I was wrong. Instead of taking the easy way out, and wheeling the same old villains on for a second round, the script builds firmly and inventively on the themes of the first.

This time it's the sensei Miyagi (Pat Morita) who is faced with an implacable enemy dur-
A Scenario for Schizophrenic Roleplayers
by Graham Staplehurst

This is the second part of a two-part scenario, based on the works of the British fantasy/horror writer, Brian Lumley. In it, players can take on a dual persona: as adventurers from the land of Them'hdra, a mystical land from a time before memory, and as Investigators in 1920s Earth. As such, the game can be played as an Advanced Dungeons & Dragons adventure or as a Call of Cthulhu adventure, without any problem. The text that follows assumes that both systems will be run in parallel, with AD&D for the characters from the ancient world, and CoC for the '20s adventurers.

The scenario cannot be played without Part One, which appeared last issue. At the conclusion of the last installment, the adventurers from the '20s had travelled to the Chateau Casson, on an island near the coast of France, to interrupt a ceremony which would have spelled disaster for the world. As they did so, they felt a strange pulling sensation, and then passed into unconsciousness as they were swept across some cosmic distance to arrive in the Tower of the sorcerer, Teh Atht. Inexplicably, they have traded places with their ancient counter-parts, the adventurers from Them'hdra. For both groups, their story is only just beginning...

**M3 : TIME-TRAVEL-SICKNESS**

Although the modern characters disappear from the summoning chamber in the Chateau Casson, they are soon replaced — within a few seconds — by the ancient characters, who experience the same tugging at their chests as the Thromb recolls through Time and drags their strands with it.

The characters have been swapped in Timelayers: Players running both ancient and modern characters will have no problem in understanding what has happened; though they should not act as if their characters have a clear understanding of all that has occurred. Their ancient characters will have been snatched from the Tower of Teh Atht, and brought to the 'strange' lands of 20th Century Earth, though none of them can possibly understand this at first.

Where the players have been running only ancient characters, the GM should have Teh Atht describe the plans of the NPCs in the modern era, up until the time when they interrupt the ceremony. Suddenly, the characters feel that same unbearable pulling sensation as described above; they are swept along, as if borne by a river, and are then deposited in a strange chamber, with no idea of where — or when — they are.

The first problem facing the ancient characters is Mme Chalbert's enragéd coven. The witch herself has collapsed and is slumped against the wall, unconscious or dead. All members of the coven are insane through dealing with evil and iniquitous things so frequently, and rush the newly arrived characters, trying to overpower them (they have no weapons). If more than three of the coven are slain, the rest will try and flee, thus warning the guards (if there are any still around). The first four to get to the boathouse will use the motorboat to escape, the others may simply sly themselves into the sea in a lunatic attempt to escape the characters.

Nothing useful can be gained from any member of the coven, even if captured and somehow persuaded to talk — other than the fact that none of the ancient characters can speak an intelligible language (unless they have magical help). If the characters remain where they are after cleaning the island up, they will be temporarily safe, and if anyone goes to sleep, they can be contacted by Teh Atht sending dreams through the modern characters now in Them'hdra. Teh Atht can explain what he thinks has happened, but knows that he cannot hope to reverse the process as the forces involved were inconceivably great. However, he hopes that the sorcery of Myklykrion might help switch the characters back and return Time to its original state.

There is a problem however. Myklykrion is dead, and has been for thousands of years. All his magical knowledge, the greatest ever assembled in Them'hdra, was left in his impregnable tower-castle far to the north, on Tharamoon, the Mountain Island. Only those powerful enough to get through the many magical wards and guards that Myklykrion placed about the tower can gain the information concealed inside. This is where Teh Atht and the modern characters are off to. The ancient characters are instructed to undertake a journey as well, if possible. If Teh Atht succeeds in finding a spell to re-transpose the characters, he thinks that it will be much more likely to work if the two parties concerned were at the same point in Space, thus easing their translation through Time.

Since the millions of years that separate the two eras have also separated the continents of the world just as dramatically, neither the ancient nor the modern characters will have any idea where the modern-day site of Myklykrion's tower might be found. However, Teh Atht thinks there is just one possibility — the man who discovered his time capsule, Thelred Gustau. He knows from previous dream-contact with the modern characters that they discovered his name appended to an article on Them'hdra, and thinks that with the information in the capsule, Thelred should be able to locate the co-ordinates of the tower.

However, at this stage the ancient characters' problems are mainly (i) to get off the island and (ii) to survive in this startlingly different environment. If the coven members have not taken the boat in the boathouse, the characters could use it — if they can figure out how to operate the engine. There is also the question of costume and equipment, since the ancient characters will be wearing the same clothing as they were in Them'hdra, which may not be entirely appropriate to France in the present day. Similarly their equipment will be antiquated. Other factors to remember are their complete unfamiliarity with any technology, language and currency in Europe. There is plenty of equipment in and around the

WHITE DWARF 19
house, and also money (both English and French — though whether the PCs will recognize the paper currency is up to the GMI). Any treasure the characters have with them will be much inflated in value.

Within 3 days (faster if the characters are coping well and you want to speed up the action), the servants will return. With them will come a local policeman to check that everything is alright — strange lights were seen at the Chateau on the night of the ritual by the fisherman that pilots the boat.

If the modern characters had no boat of their own and the Chateau's boat is taken, the characters will have to wait until this party arrives and then try and steal the boat or force the fisherman to take them. Remember that characters have to eat and sleep during this adventure!

**Working Magic**

Because of this time's distance from their own era, characters will find spells have a chance of failing to work. This rule applies to all casters of magic spells other than Druids. For a spell to work, a caster must roll d% and get at least:

\[(11x\text{level of spell}) \div \text{level of caster}] \%

GMs may also wish to apply additional penalties to clerics whose deities have few or no worshippers in this time, such as disallowing the recuperation of any spells over 3rd level.

However, everyday inhabitants of Europe will all save as O-level humans, which may well mean that spells and equipment are working more often. It is unlikely that magic-users and illusionists will be holding their spell books when trans-temporated, but any other equipment normally carried with characters will have come with them. You may wish to let characters find a limited supply of spells in Mme Chalbert's spell books.

**A4: The Whiplash of Time**

The modern characters arrive at Teh' Ath't's Tower and are immediately taken by his servants to rooms to rest whilst he casts spells for their immediate protection from further Time disruptions. Each will wake up after 25-CON hours; if you are playing the Modern scenario only, this is a good time to send all the players out of the room and call them in one by one. Examining the first person to wake, if Teh' Ath't detects any signs or insanity or great loss of sanity, he will be able to cure, through magical and medical means, up to 1D10 SAN points immediately. He can also remove the effects of any 'temporary' insanity.

When all the characters have awoken, he will attempt to explain their predicament. This may, of course, cause a loss of SAN, particularly combined with their somewhat exotic surroundings — each character must make a SAN roll or lose 1D6 points. This will be regained when (1) the characters return to their own time, or (2) Teh' Ath't further explains they will need to make a perilous journey to the tower of a long-dead sorcerer in the hope that he left a spell which will help to return them and bring their ancestors back. The hole which they have torn through Time (however inadvertently) will be slowly healing up, and if it closes before the characters have swapped back, they will surely die — their ancestors, now in the future, cannot have descendants at the right time!

Fortunately, Teh' Ath't has been able to discover that Gorgos has been severely damaged by the backfiring of all the energy he put into the Ritual. This means that Teh' Ath't is free to go to Mylakhson's Tower and see the re-ordering of Time without fear for the safety of Kithon or Them'hdra, who he and he alone protects from the menace of the Thromb.

Before they can set out, Teh' Ath't will get the characters to transmit as much information as possible to their helpless ancestors stranded in the strange 20th Century. The latter are unable to speak the language (although Teh' Ath't naturally has spells which enable him to speak with the modern characters) and will have great difficulties using complicated devices and machinery.

The modern characters may also want to learn more about Them'hdra, the world, and its perils (see the Them'hdra section, last issue, p.28). They will discover for themselves that, in the same way that magic may not function in the 20th Century, so complicated pieces of equipment may not always work in Them'hdra. Anything about the general level of technology prevalent on the continent (pulleys, levers, wheels, simple steel) will only work if the character makes a Luck Roll. This must be made each time a use is attempted. For example, a gun might go off, then fail to fire, then work again. Apply penalties for very complicated things, such as watches. Additionally, equipment which is powered (eg, an electric lamp) may start drawing Magic Points from characters! Teh' Ath't will find suitable clothing for them.

**M4: Theldred Gustau**

The ancient characters will have learned of the whereabouts of the man who found Teh' Ath't's time capsule from the modern characters. Gustau's address means little to the ancient characters, but there should be a map in the Chateau somewhere, which will help them visualise where North Yorkshire is, at the very least.

How the characters decide to reach it is another matter. There is sufficient fuel in the motorboat's tanks to cross the Channel and get as far as Dover. There are also extra supplies in the boathouse if anyone looks, certainly enough to get them to Scarborough or Whitby under normal circumstances. They will also need food for the journey, though there is plenty in the kitchen, they will need to figure out how to use a tin opener.

If the characters are encountered by Europeans at any point, it is likely that they will be taken for foreigners, perhaps from the Far East, if they speak in their native Them'hdraan tongue. It would probably be useful to allow a magic-user in the party to find a spell equivalent to comprehend languages or tongues amongst Mme Chalbert's books of spells.

Should the characters kill anyone of the island, or be seen leaving the island where there are bodies to be discovered later by the police, they will be pursued by the police. However, without definite proof of their guilt, it is unlikely that detectives from one country (eg, France) would be able to continue their investigations in another. Give the characters the benefit of the doubt if they have been behaving sensibly and not wantonly slaughtering peasants.

One important factor in the characters' travels will be the weather, so make sure that you have some way of generating this realistically and judge its effects on their speed and any problems it might cause them. Also, you must determine beforehand whether any of the ancient characters have any useful relevant skills, such as boat-handling.

By far the safest way of getting to Gustau will be by going as far as possible by boat and then completing the journey on foot across the wind-swept Yorkshire Moors, out of sight of human habitation. Rosedale Abbey is a tiny village in a valley south of Rosedale Moor, between Wheedale Moor and Spaunton Moor. The closest town is Pickering, 8 miles to the south. If you like, you could have the characters encounter a lone farmer out shooting, or a werewolf — perhaps there is truth in the old legends....
Farmer - Human; F1; hp 9; AT 1; D fist 1-3 or shotgun; AI N; AC 9; Move 12; THACO 20; S15, I10, W8, D15, C15 (+1), Ch12; Size M; SA shotgun +2 shells.

The farmer, Mr. Hinchliffe, will shoot anyone acting in a 'shady' manner as he will assume that they are poaching. His shotgun is good at ranges up to 30' and fires as a magical wand for automatic 2d6 points of damage, or half if a saw vs wands is made.

Warewolf [IMM (p63)] - HD 4+3; hp 23; AT 1; D 2-8; Al CE; AC 5; Move 15; THACO 15; Int Ave; Size M; SA lycanthropy; SD shape change; silver or magic weapons to hit.

The werewolf will shadow the characters for an hour or so in human shape before deciding to attack one of the rear party members. It surprises on a 1-3 (d6) and if it manages to kill a person, it will change back to human form to carry them away as fast as it can. It will flee if 18 or more points of damage are done to it.

Once the ancient characters get to Theldred Gustau, they will need to convince him of both their origin and their plight. If they have thought to bring along anything magical with them, or can perform an act of magic, he will believe them. Also, showing an understanding of the written language used by Teh Ahtth should persuade him, as he has never shared its secrets with anyone. Naturally, talking to Gustau will be a major problem, but since he knows the written language and is a linguist anyway, he will try to understand them. Initially, the party could communicate with him on scraps of paper.

Once they have got over to Gustau that they need to discover the whereabouts of the site of Mylakhtron's tower, he will feverishly beatle away with his stack of Teh Ahtth's miniature tomes and a huge modern atlas. After a day and night of almost continuous study, including three hours at night outside studying the stars, he will be able to calculate the route. So he turns out to be in Norway, about 50 miles south of the Arctic Circle and close to the border with Sweden, outside a little town called Slottsvarden. Theldred Gustau will have to go into Scarborough to see if there is any easy way of making the trip. Characters may accompany him, but will have to think of an excuse for their presence.

A steamship leaves from Newcastle-upon-Tyne for Trondheim twice weekly, the 750-mile passage costing £18/10s each way. From there, they could hire a motor coach or perhaps (depending on the time of year), or catch the train to Oslo and merely have to make the last 45 miles of the 170 mile trip on their own. Slottsvarden is on a hillside overlooking the Faxevatten, a lake which separates Norway and Sweden. Gustau estimates that total expenses for the trip, including getting the ancient characters back, accommodation etc, will be around £700 per person. However, he only has £350 in savings (and can't mortgage the Hall as it is rented).

Adventurers, being what they are, will either have sufficient extra boon on them, or the equivalent in saleable items, or will be quite happy to arrange to relieve someone of their burdensome riches. Exactly how they go about it is up to the players — only note that Theldred Gustau will not help in the execution of any criminal act, although he will help plan. Possibilities are raiding a bank, holding up a train or rich person's car and so on. Let the players do exactly what they want at this stage and simply provide suitable opposition.

Once financing for the operation is arranged, Theldred Gustau will hit upon the next problem — getting into Norway. Naturally, none of the ancient characters have passports. Possibilities include the use of magic (eg, invisibility or charm), bribes to the ship's crew to smuggle them, or to port officials to let them in. Obtaining a passport might also be possible if birth certificates can be forged, or a clerk bribed.

Meanwhile, the characters must avoid being caught. Hopefully, they will avoid all contact with locals, so that no suspicions are aroused. Noisy parkers in the village will notice the large increase in food consumption at the Hall. A policeman might make an innocent courtesy call on Gustau and panic the characters. A cover story will have to be made up for their trip to Norway, since people are bound to be curious about a large party of foreigners. Finally, you might want to hassle the players even more by having mishaps occur, such as an accident which needs medical attention.

All through this time of preparation, the ancient characters will be in dream-contact with their modern counterparts with Teh Ahtth's assistance.

A5: A FLIGHT TO THE ICE

Teh Ahtth will arrange for himself and the modern characters to fly to Mylakhtron's tower as soon as the ancient characters have established its site on the 20th Century Earth. The sorcerer has a flying carpet capable of carrying 4 persons. If there are more than three investigators, other arrangements must be made for the others. He might have to risk travelling overland or by sea, or using a number of flying steeds, such as hippocriats. He might have some other magical items capable of transporting people through the air.

The flight or journey is not without the occasional diversion, naturally, for Tehm'n'hdra is a world of fantastic creatures as the ancient characters would have been able to tell them. Their voyage takes the modern characters around the fringes of the great Inner Sea, across the continent towards the Frostlands, and then along the edge of the glaciers that creep from the North Pole, to Kirisua, to far Tharasmoo, site of Mylakhtron's tower of old. Over the course of the journey, the modern characters may see things — or meet things — totally beyond their comprehension. You must run as many encounters as you see fit, including some that face the modern characters with NPCs in northern Tehm'n'hdra (see the Tehm'n'hdra section last issue for some background in which to base your ideas). Below are some simple encounters, each fraught with its own dangers. Use as many as you feel is appropriate.

Wyvern: A wyvern swoops out of the sky at the party and will attempt to grab one member in its jaws (roll randomly to see who it attacks, excluding Teh Ahtth). This creature is clumsy in the air and can therefore be avoided by careful flying after its initial attack, or driven off by hits causing more than half its hit points (ie, more than 15). If it manages to catch someone, by killing them with a single bite or rolling 90%+ to hit, it will dive straight to the ground and fly low to its cave.

Wyvern: STR 39 CON 20 SIZ 40 INT 5 POW 15 DEX 7 Hit Pts 30 Move 7 SAN Loss 1d6/nil Attacks - Bite 60% 1d10+2d6; Tail 60% 1d6+poison Armour - 10pt skin

An impaling hit with the bite attack means that the character has been caught by the Wyvern's jaws and suffers the damage bonus (2d6) each round until taken out. The Wyvern will fly off with them to its cave, flying low over the countryside to evade pursuit. An impaling hit with the tail attacks poison (level 18) which will cause death if the character fails a RR. The poison takes 1d6+4 rounds to take effect; a successful Treat Poison skill use allows it an extra save at the lower level.

Storm: The weather gets very dark and winds and clouds gather fiercely. A strong storm is blowing and the characters must either land and get under cover or attempt to ride it out. The storm will bring gale force winds and loss of rain. Characters who let themselves get soaked stand a good chance of catching cold and loss of strength and infection. One way of avoiding the storm if flying will be to get above the cloud layer.

Characters not strapped down whilst flying on something in the storm must roll under STR on 3d6 to avoid being blown off by a gust of wind. This roll should be made every half-hour, and there is a cumulative +1 penalty for each half-hour flying in heavy weather. Visibility will be severely limited as well, so it may not be noticed that someone has fallen off until later! Finally, there is a 5% chance that one character will be struck by a lightning bolt for 1d10x1d6 points of damage, halved if the character makes a save. If this would be enough to kill them, a roll under CON on 3d6 means that they survive the blast with 1 hit point.

Freezing Cold: Unless protected by special clothing, a raging fire or magical means, the characters each take 1d6 points of frostbite damage per hour they spend in this pocket of sub-zero air blown down from the arctic glaciers. Damage taken is doubled if the characters are skimpily clad or wet. Teh Ahtth is already magically protected against the cold and will not notice it; it is up the characters to ask him for similar protection. This will mean that they have to stop, as Teh Ahtth cannot cast spells whilst flying. You may wish to have some permanent effects of frostbite if a character takes more than half their total hits in cold damage, such as loss of toes, fingers, nose etc.

Giant Eagles: Two giant eagles are spotted circling overhead and screech at the party. If the travellers carry on in the same direction, they will pass into the eagles' nesting area and the eagles will attack until the party leaves it. If the adventurers deviate to one side or the other, the eagles will merely screech a bit more and see them off without attacking. The eagles are large and could knock a person off a flying carpet or even a steed. Note that the eagles are intelligent and may be friendly towards those who show concern for them. They can talk, but only their own language.

2 Giant Eagles: STR 30 CON 18 SIZ 24 INT 12 POW 15 DEX 20 Hit Pts 21 Move 5/12 Attacks - Bite 45% 1d8+1d6; Claws 45% 1d6+1d6 Armour - 2 pt feathers
Messenger-bat

A messenger-bat bearing good tidings arrives for Teh Aht. It has been sent by Ikrath Sarn (assuming he is still alive, if not then by one of Teh Aht’s apprentices keeping the Tower for him) to inform the White Sorcerer that Gorgos’ ruin appears to be complete. The backlash of the Beast Outside Time’s departure nearly slew the Thromb and the vast majority of Gorgos’ false priests left the Temple of the Secret Gods. The Temple was then ransacked by a mob of irate Pishishian citizens and burnt down. Gorgos is reported to have fled by some magical device.

A6: BLEAK HOUSE

Myalakhron’s Tower is a bleak pinnacle of greenish-black stone, thrusting out of the interior of the primary lake and ice of the region. Temperatures here vary between 0°C to -10°C during the day (possibly 5°C higher in the summer) and drop by around 20°C at night. There is an added wind chill factor of up to 30% dependant on the strength of the wind and its direction (strong and northerly winds being the worst).

The Tower proper is only about 25’ wide, but rises from a large rectangular base some 180’ deep and 120’ wide, around 30’ or 40’ high. There are no visible windows in the structure at all. The expansive building at the foot of the Tower is built of the same sort of rock, impervious to all natural and most magical attacks. There is a pair of huge bronze doors, uncorroded and engraved with the Elder Sign. Other signs and sigils are engraved all around the lower building. The Tower stands a massive 300’ tall, looming over even the huge glacier that towers in the valley behind.

Teh Aht must undertake a complex ritual to properly open the doors and clear many of the magical traps laid by Myalakhron eleven hundred years ago. This takes about three hours during which time Teh Aht must not be disturbed. You may wish to have the party keep occupied by a small pack of wolves:

**Wolves**

- **STR 13**
- **CON 11**
- **SIZ 11**
- **INT-**
- **POW 12**
- **DEX 13**
- **Hit Pts 13**
- **Move 12**
- **SAN Loss nil**
- **Armour: 1pt fur**
- **Skills:** Tracking (smell) 80%, Spot Hidden 60%

Adjust the number of wolves attacking to the numbers and strength of the party. The wolves will be frightened by gunfire or held at bay by fire. If they have been unsuccessful in attacking anyone after about 20 minutes, they will slink off. If any wolf is killed, the rest flee, howling loudly.

When Teh Aht has eventually got the doors open, the party will see a most imposing entrance hall, blazing with white walls, a golden yellow ceiling and a green floor that feels like freshly cut grass. Magic lights throng the air and the place is filled with some primalvuir heaven, a Paradise on Earth. The aura of the place is such that anyone who has lost SAN on this adventure will immediately regain 10% of the points lost (round fractions below ½ down). However, the lure of the room will also seduce any character failing a Luck Roll into wanting to remain there for ever and ever. Such characters will angrily resist attempts to lead them away, but will not resort to violence. They will also be immune to threats of violence against their person; however if such acts are carried out, they gain an extra Luck Roll to resist for each point of damage inflicted.

Once over this initial trap, Teh Aht will carefully lead the party through a maze-like series of corridors and rooms towards the centre of the building. There is no map for this area. Teh Aht will make sure he has tight control over the party and if any disobey his orders, you should invent some mechanical or magical trap to teach them a lesson: an illusionary beast which charges them down; an apparition calling for a SAN roll against a D10 loss; a drugged dart to slow the character down or put them unconscious; and so on.

All the corridors and rooms have a form of magical confusion over them which must be counteracted by Resistance Rolls against INT and POW whenever there is a choice of direction to proceed. The magic has a POW of 25. If one of the rolls fails, the character will not be able to remember which passage was chosen; if both fail, the character will be sure a different route was taken. Make up your own ideas for the areas passed through. Here are some examples:
- **a corridor** of checkerboard tiles lined with alveoles containing metal replicas of botanical specimens (flowers, plants, branches) stood in carved wooden frames.
- **a room** built like the inside of a beehive and smelling strongly of honey.
- **a hallway** with walls of beaten copper mirrors and dazzling amber inlay on a tan carpet floor, lined with ebony benches.
- **a chamber** with a mosaic in blue and green glass which at first sight looks like a pond of cool waters, spanned by a bridge of fine-spun yellow glass which is trapped to paralyse anyone stepping on it.
- **a room** with a huge circular table in it made of a greenish wood and set with all manner of unusual implements instead of knives and forks.

All the interior is lit and warmed by magic, making it very pleasant. No amount of magical direction finding or devices used by the characters will help them find their way if they succumb to the confusion. You may wish to have a party who persist in getting sidetracked split off from Teh Aht for a short while. If they remain where they are, he will be able to find them quite quickly; but if they wander off it might not be until something nasty has found them first!

It takes Teh Aht 1½ hours (at least) to find what he is looking for: the concealed staircase up to the interesting part of the building—the Tower proper, containing Myalakhron’s study and library. There are over 500 steps up the Tower to the first chamber. This is the first part of the library which occupies 3 floors, each a single room crammed with all manner of magical and sanguineous tomes. Teh Aht will momentarily go into delicious raptures until he remembers why he is here, whereupon he will start the search for the spell they seek.

At this point, sensitive characters (POW 14+) may get a shiver down their spine. Is it suddenly colder in here? They ask themselves; and Why do I feel all goose-pimply, like something namelessly horrible is creeping up on us? Teh Aht will be too involved in his search to pay any attention to such nonsense, of course, as he has had to put up with so much from the whimsy characters. He carries on rifling through shelves and making piles of books on the floor.

Fortunately Myalakhron was an organised chap for a wizard and it does not take Teh Aht too long to find just what he is looking for; or at least it wouldn’t if he could concentrate on the matter in hand and not get sidetracked by interesting spells for making perfect soufflés or turning glass into diamonds. If characters assist and watch him, he will actually get on a bit quicker. With a cry of delight, Teh Aht lifts aloft a tome of collected writings on anomalies in the library together with a spellbook written by the old wizard. In it there is a reference to a second book, in which Myalakhron wrote down a spell to put right just such a Time anomaly which an enemy of his had devised to trap him. In a couple of seconds, his keen eyes alight on the libram ... but then he goes pale as death....

In the doorway appears a bloated, misshaped figure with wrinkled black skin. Only in the vaguest sense could it be called humanoid. Its eyes are deepest black and its fingernails are long and curved. Yes, this is Gorgos, come to take his revenge on Teh Aht, a revenge as hideous as the creature that brings it. A twisted abomination of a grin appears on its lips as the tortured robes of black and yellow it wears are rent asunder to reveal a writhing mass of pierced tentacles which shoot and shiver towards everyone present, snatching monstrosely. Gorgos’ attack is described in full in the Characters section.

All present will suffer an attack from one limb until Teh Aht has avoided being hit for one round. A character can volunteer to try and protect Teh Aht, receiving two attacks. In his free round, Teh Aht casts a spell of protection over the whole party which Gorgos’ attacks cannot penetrate. Teh Aht will then have to leave the circle of protection to do battle with Gorgos, and as he does so, he gives the libram to the most magically-experienced character and tells them to get on with it while he distracts the monster without. The circle turns into an opaque sphere when he leaves.

The spell takes half an hour to set up. 40 minutes after Teh Aht leaves, the circle of protection suddenly disappears and the floor shakes as they see a large chunk of wall fly outwards as if blasted by some immense magical force. Vanishing through the hole in the wall is the White Sorcerer and his assailant. Outside a snowstorm has sprung up, making it impossible to discern what has happened to these two, who have fallen over 150’. As snow begins to drift into the ancient scriptorium, the characters must decide what to do next.

If they try and venture back down the Tower and back through the building to find Teh Aht, they will almost inevitably get lost. If they carry on with the spell to correct the Time anomaly, they have a 2% chance for each Magic Point expended plus 5% for each point of POW permanently sacrificed. The caster’s total spell means a roll of D10 SAN for each person involved, with no roll to avoid it. Meanwhile, the Tower has lost its warmth and if the characters just hang around, they will soon freeze, although there are plenty of shelves and even books (sacred! /e) to burn.

If the spell fails, Teh Aht will return and conduct the spell for them after a few hours rest, during which the characters must keep him warm. Any First Aid skills would be appreciated by the Sorcerer, who is torn and bloody from his battle with the Thromb. Teh Aht is automatically successful in casting the spell.

**M5: TO SLOTAVDEN**

By this time, ancient the characters are assumed to have set out for Norway. They can travel fairly inconspicuously to Newcastle as Theldred Gustav has a motor car, and they have hopefully arranged matters so that they can board the ship. Remember that they will need plenty of currency (kroner) to take them on to Slotavden, however they have decided to travel there. Fortunately, Gustav knows several Scandinavian languages.
The rail trip to Snoasa will be without occurrence unless the characters cause one. You may wish to create a number of situations where the players think that something dreadful is about to happen, but which are really quite innocent. Examples might be an inquisitive local official (railway, road police etc.), a suspicious man who seems to be following them, a thief who steals something belonging to the PCs and so on.

At Snoasa, the characters will have to book into a hotel and find some transport. The least expensive and most reliable way to travel is by reindeer sledge. The sledge can hold up to 12 passengers and luggage with a team of 8 reindeer pulling. Alternatively, a motorcoach is available for hire.

Sletvarden is a picturesque and unspoilt Norwegian village. Depending on the time of year, the pine forests may be resplendently green or heavily draped with snow. It has a very cozy inn with sufficient rooms to put up 8 guests; any more will have to share rather cramped quarters. The innkeeper will expect some sort of explanation of their business and may ask the local constabulary to keep an eye on the newcomers if they are strange in their behaviour or untowardly evasive in manner. Several of the villagers can manage some broken English, if the characters have bothered to learn any from Gustau.

Since the location of the Tower can be pinpointed no more accurately than the general vicinity of the village, there is no need for the adventurers to go any further, but if they want to explore the area, there should be no problems. They may well want to keep out and about as part of their cover — perhaps they are naturalists studying reindeer herd movements, or astronomers searching the northern skies for new comets and meteors.

Should anyone try and get in dream-contact with their descendents, they will get absolutely no response, a complete blankness. This may cause them to fear for Teh Atht (quite rightly), however, in a few hours the switch should take place. If anyone (for example, the local police or the innkeeper) is watching, this will cause great alarm, naturally. Theledr or the modern characters, now restored to their proper Time, will have to do some Fast Talking to get away, or simply ignore the locals and get out of Sletvarden as quickly as possible. Locals will probably be unwilling to pursue the matter further, but if the characters cause any damage or injury they might get into more serious trouble, even being met by a number of plain clothes policemen who will want to ask them some awkward questions. Anyone attempting to explain what has truly happened risks being locked up in a lunatic asylum! In fact, Theledr Gustau may have to help any characters who have gone temporarily insane (and who would blame them) in the transposition, since another SAN roll must be made.

There may also be problems for Gustau back in England if the ancient characters left any clues as to their whereabouts when they were committing any crimes. And if they sold any ancient artefacts to pay for the trip, their new owners will find them mysteriously vanished. I dare say that Theledr Gustau will want to write up their exciting adventures.

**A7 : LOOSE ENDS**

The ancient characters will arrive in the blasted library atop Mylakhron’s Tower. If Teh Atht was the one who completed the spell, all will be well; he will be able to lead them through the building to the temporary camp where the flying items/steeds (or whatever) are, and the characters can accompany him back to Klithn to recuperate. You may like to have them mount a raid on the remains of the Temple of the Secret Gods to recover their equipment, stolen by Gorgos’ priests at the start of the adventure.

If the modern characters complete the spell themselves successfully, the ancient characters will find that the magical explosion in the chamber they are transported to has damaged the structure of the Tower and it is beginning to crumble. If they try and escape down the stair, they will find that it is blocked with fallen masonry. Suddenly, the Tower starts to sway alarmingly and soon falls, crashing to ground and breaking up as it tumbles. The characters are flung from the Tower and land safely in scattered snowdrifts: perhaps that recent snowstorm wasn’t all bad! All the characters have to save vs DEX on 3d6 or lose half their remaining hit points in the fall, then they must save vs CON on 3d6+3 or be stunned for 10d6 minutes. Anyone stunned for more than half an hour will start taking cold damage from the freezing conditions at the rate of 1 point per minute.

The snowstorm itself has stopped, and so characters moving around should be able to see each other and help search for friends. After an hour, Teh Atht comes staggering into view, exhausted from his battle with Gorgos, which he has finally won - he hopes. If the characters are still there, they will see him immediately, and can help him. As soon as Teh Atht is recovered, they will be able to return to his own Tower.

The return journey will be peaceful and without incident, unless you think the players have had it really easy!

**CHARACTERS**

**Teh Atht**

There are no stats given for this NPC. Teh Atht is simply able to do whatever you as GM require him to do. The characters will not be able to harm him, neither can anything other than Gorgos. However, although he is in this scenario to help the sets of characters, don’t make him the universal escape clause.

Teh Atht is strongly devoted to Law as opposed to the Chaos represented in this scenario by the Chaluan Myths (the Thromb and the Beast Outside Time). The scenario notes give guidance on Teh Atht’s likely actions and how to play his character — you should treat him as the archetypal White Wizard. He will always use minimum force in any situation and give others the benefit of the doubt. He will also attempt to preserve lives, neutralising threats rather than destroying them.

**Gorgos**

This guy is nasty, mean and vicious. He’s a megalomaniac villain, an alien trying to dominate the entire Earth, who’s not too concerned if he pulls down the local space-time continuum in the attempt.

Gorgos is invulnerable to characters, be they Ancient or Modern. This covers eventualities like wishes in **AD&D** or attempts to summon something just as nasty to deal with him — this latter event is likely to produce a cataclysm which will inevitably kill all the characters and lead to the destruction of Time as the Beast can no longer find Gorgos. Allow Gorgos any and all magic and spells, and virtually unlimited magic points/potential when in the Temple. This is the source of his energies, and should be treated as the worst possible place the characters could be. For **AD&D** games, Gorgos will be psionic type VI, making him invulnerable to all psionic attacks and disciplines.

In appearance, Gorgos initially appears as a man with very dark skin and golden hooded robes which obscure much of his features. Seeing him thus incurs no SAN loss, but those who meet his eyes can be affected by his presence. In **AD&D** this works like an *awe* attack - see **Legends & Lore**; in CoC this would be a **POW** vs **POW** roll. The effect is simply to freeze somebody to the spot if the fail their roll.
At the end of the scenario, Gorgos' true Thromb nature is revealed to the Modern characters. Use the following stats for his attacks on the party which they suffer until Teh Atha can erect his magical defences:

**Gorgos**

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**DEX** 15  Hit Pts 75 (total 20) (per tentacle)  Move 6  SAN Loss 1D20/1D3

Attacks - many tentacles each 75% 2D10+2D6

Armour - 5 pt skin, 5pt/round regeneration

Gorgos' attack is described thus: "A black hairy stalk... stretched itself out... The end bloated out like some loathsome fungus, forming the spindly-legged likeness of an enormous spider... Pseudopods sprouted, became hooks of chitin, bony claws and pincers, all lashing toward (them)."

**Madame Louise Chalbert**

Mme Chalbert is unlikely to enter the scenario in an active capacity, unless the Modern characters are quick off the mark and get to the Chateau before the ceremony begins. She is a charming and elegant hostess who will not deny any connections with the occult, but will explain that she is only interested in "white magic" — mediums, fortune telling, faith healing and so on. If the characters attempt to persuade her to not continue with the ceremony, she will deny all knowledge of it, but secretly arrange for her contacts in the French government to harass them, possibly even arranging an accident.

She speaks perfect French and excellent English and can be disarmingly pleasant. However much the characters suspect her, they will be unable to persuade anyone else of her duplicitous nature. The whole scenario hangs on her starting the ceremony, so don't let anything happen to her beforehand! She is quite careful in her activities, and there will always be bodyguards or witnesses to prevent an assassination attempt.

**Mme Chalbert**

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**DEX** 15  APP 17  EDU 16  SAN nil

Attacks - dagger 40% 1D6, 22 automatic 35% 1D6

Skills - Archaeology 20%, Bargain 25%, Camouflage 30%, Climb 50%, Cthulhu Mythos 28%, Debate 40%, Dodge 35%, Drive Auto 45%, Fast Talk 60%, Hide 25%, History 35%, Listen 40%, Occult 80%, Oratory 20%, Psychology 25%, Read/Write English 60%, Read/Write French, Ride 40%, Sneak 35%, Speak English 75%, Speak French 90%, Spot Hidden 35%

Magic - 16 MP, Summon Nightgaunt, Bind Nightgaunt, Create Ghoul, Dread Curse of Azathoth, Shrivelling, Contact Deep Ones, Call Beast Outside Time.
I teh Aht of Kliud, having oftentimes conversed with my wizard ancestor, Mylakhrion of thanmoom (dead these eleven hundred years), now tell the tale of how that mighty mage was usurped by his apprentice, Exior K'mool. At least, history has always supposed that he was usurped.

The story begins some fifty-three years before Mylakhrion’s demise, at the fortress cell of Kromtho the old. The young sorceress was the then resident mage, an answerable only to the King himself. Humquass is no more, swept away by tides of time and war and Nature, but the legends live on.

Now in that day Humquass was a warrior city and its king, Morgath, was a warrior king; and the walls of the city were high and wide, with great towers where the soldiers were garrisoned; and the King’s territories extended to the south, even to the Hrossak border which Morgath would push back if he had his way. The King hungered for those southern lands and his warrior’s heart ached for a kingdom which would enclose not only Hrossa to the River Luhr, but Ylemis too. And Morgath would send ships across the Straits of Ylemis to annex even Shadarabarr, the island stronghold of savage black pirates.

As for Mylakhrion; he had served the King for fifteen years, since that time when first he came out of the west and across the mountains into Morgath’s fierce kingdom. Aye, and in his way Mylakhrion had been a faithful servant, though truth to tell there were those who wondered where he was.

For Mylakhrion’s palace was greater than the King’s — though far less populous — and where Morgath received common men, Mylakhrion would receive none at all. The mage’s familiar gave audience in his stead, speaking with Mylakhrion’s voice and in his manner, but any encounter of the sorcerer himself was a singularly rare thing. Indeed, the very sight of Mylakhrion abroad and active in the topmost turrets of his palatial tower — no less than the passing of comets across the sky or eclipses of the sun and moon — was almost invariably taken as portent of great wonders, and sometimes of dooms and disasters. And lesser magics seized upon such sightings, reading strange weirds into the wizard’s ways, what little-known of them.

One thing which was known for a certainty was Mylakhrion’s great age, not his actual age in years, but the fact that he was far older than any other living man. So thin as to be skeletal — with wrinkles to number against his years upon a skin of veined parchment pale as moonbeams — and with a long, tapering beard almost uniformly white, the wizard was ancient. Grandfathers could remember their grandfathers whispering of sorcerous deeds ascribed to his hand or word when they themselves were mere children; and it was known for a fact that a previous precursor of Mylakhrion’s, one Azata Leet, had recently died in Chilliage at an estimated age of one hundred and eleven years!

But in general the sorcerer’s astonishing longevity was not much mentioned. People were mindful of his magnitude — and of Morgath’s dependence upon him — and it was deemed neither good nor even wise to probe too deeply into the hows, whys and wherefores of his attainment to so great an age. For all that he was ancient, still the mage’s mind was brilliantly clear, his eyes unperturbed and his sorceries (benevolent or otherwise) marvellous and utterly unfathomable to adepts of lesser learning. Moreover, he might not take kindly to allegations of vampirism and the like, practised to extend to eternity his existence in the world of men.

And in their thinking and their muted whisperings, the wizard’s would-be compers came close to the truth; for in his long search for immortality Mylakhrion had indeed perfumed many morbid magics, though mercifully vampirism was not numbered amongst them. That is not to say he would not be a vampire if in that way he might prolong his life or regain his lost youth. But he knew all that he knew, and as far as vampires were far too restricted and their lives in constant danger from attendant perils. Besides which, they were not truly immortal, not as Mylakhrion desired to be. He wanted to live forever, not to be eternally undead — or if eternally, at least until the skink should find his heart.

On many occasions that master of magic had believed himself close to hitting upon the correct formula for immortality, that at least his feet were set upon the right path, but in the hour of his supposed triumph always he had been frustrated. He had prolonged his life far beyond the normal span, more infinitely, but still he had grown old and must eventually die. And in any case, who would wish to live forever in a defunct body?

Now, knowing that his years were narrowing down, his search was more desperate and his disappointments deeper as days passed into years and the solution drew no closer. Now, too, he saw how Humquass as an enemy while Morgath protected him and provided for his purely physical needs his demands upon him grew more and more tiresome and consumed far too much of his time. Of which he might not have a great deal left.

For being a warrior King and going often to war, Morgath was constantly in need of favourable forecasts for his battle plans. Too, he sought for dark omens against his enemies, and he was not less interested in their stars than in his own. What with prognostications and astrological readings, auguries and auspices, personal weirs and boodmen in general, Mylakhrion had not the time he required for his own all-important interests and darkening devotions.

Nor could the King’s business be kept waiting, for the Hrossaks and Ylemis had their wizards too, and Mylakhrion was required to turn aside the monstrous malevolence and outrageous ruses which these enemy magics were wont to cast against Humquass and its King. Black mantles of the Ylemis, a sorcerer of no mean prowess, was particularly pernicious; likewise Lozzer of the Hrossaks; and so it can be seen that Mylakhrion was hard put to attend his many duties, let alone pursue his own ambitions. And perhaps that would explain, too, Mylakhrion’s reasons for sticking so close to his apartments. Why, his duties were such as to make virtually a prisoner there!

And yet Mylakhrion had prospered under Morgath and so felt a certain gratitude toward him. Moreover, he liked the King for his intelligence. Aye, for intelligent kings were singularly rare to that day, particularly warrior-kings. And so the sorcerer felt he must not simply desert Morgath and leave him to the mercies of his equally-well entrenched neighbours; his frustration continued to grow within him.

Until the dawning of a certain idea...

Now among the city’s common wizards — real and assumed — there dwelled one Exior K’mool, a talented apprentice of Phaithor Ull before that mage rendered himself as green dust in an ill-conceived theanurgical experiment. A seer whose beatitudes showed promise despite the fact that as yet they remained undeveloped, essentially Exior was one-romantic. His dreams were prophetic and generally accurate.

And it came to pass that Exior dreamed a dream in which Mylakhrion took an apprentice to assist him in his sorceries, and Exior himself was the chosen one and rose to great power in Theemhda in the service of Morgath, King of Humquass. Upon awakening he remembered the dream and smiled wryly to himself, for he knew that such a vision had been born of wishful thinking and was in no way a portent of any real or foreseeable future. But then, a day or two later, Mylakhrion made it known that indeed he sought a young assistant...

Exior’s heart soared like a bird when first he heard this news; alas, for a little while only. For how could Exior — a ragged street-magician who sold charms and love potions for a living and divined the futile dreams of his penniless patrons for mere crumbs of bread — possibly apply for a position as apprentice to Mylakhrion the Mighty? The idea was preposterous! And so, however reluctantly, he put aside the notion and forced himself to consider his vision as purely coincidental to Mylakhrion’s requirements.

And as days passed into weeks so Mylakhrion gave audience to many young men who presented themselves as prospective employees. As usual, the interviews were carried out through his familiar (though many applicants got no farther than Mylakhrion’s gate) while the wizard, unseen by those aspirants who were actually allowed to pass into his palace, busied himself with more pressing matters in hidden rooms. In this way, many who might have impressed quite favourably confronted by a merely human interviewer — even by so awe-inspiring a man as Mylakhrion — found themselves completely overwhelmed in the presence of his familiar creatures; for these were three great bats whose faces were those of men!

Indeed, they had once been men, those fearsome familiars: wizards who had formed a sorcerous triad to crush Mylakhrion when he refused to join them. Unfortunately for them, their talents had been greater than all of theirs combined, hence their very treachery. That had been many years ago, however, before ever he came to Humquass, and Mylakhrion had all but forgotten the details of the thing. He trusted his familiar implicitly; and besides, they had only the faces of his old enemies.
Their minds were their own, or Mylakhrion's when he chose to use them as he now used them.

Finally, even when the older, failed magicians of Morgath's lands began to present themselves at Mylakhrion's gate, Exior K'mool dreamed again; and in his dream he saw his father and mother and the bats nodding to him in unison before bidding him enter. Mylakhrion's inner sanctuary where that Master of Mages was waiting to hand him his robe of apprenticeship. That was enough.

At dawn of the next day Exior dressed himself in his finest jacket and breeches — the ones with only a few minor repairs — and made his way tortuously through the mazy streets of Humquass to the walls of Mylakhrion's palace. There, at the great gate, he timorously took his place behind three others and waited ... but not for long. A small barred window opened in a door in the gate and each of the other aspirants was cursorily dismissed in his turn. Seeing this, Exior began to turn away, at which point a voice stopped him. It was the voice of the man whose face peered through the barred window, and it said:

"Young man, what is your name?"


"And do you seek employment with Mylakhrion?"

"I do," he answered, wondering at the echoing and sepulchral quality of the man's voice. "I desire to be ... to be the mage's apprentice."

"You seem uncertain."

"I am certain enough," said Exior, "but I wonder —"

"If you are worthy?"

"Perhaps."

"Your master likes humility in men," said the face at the window. "Aye, and honesty, too. Exior, K'mool."

The door in the gate opened soundlessly and Exior took a deep breath as he stepped over its sill. He expelled the air in a loud gasp as the door closed behind him and glanced about wide-eyed he was almost startled into flight at sight of the things he now saw. But where to flee? Where a moment before the sky had been blue and the sun warm, now, seen from this grey courtyard, the heavens were dark with rain clouds and a chill wind rifled the fur-covered body of... of the bat-thing whose man's face had spoken from the window in the gate!

"Do you fear Mylakhrion's familiar, Exior K'mool?" asked the great bat-thing, "or are you alarmed at the season here, which is ever different from that outside?"

"A little of both, sir, I fancy," replied Exior finally managed.

The bat-thing laughed a loud, lying laugh and flapped softly, "Fear not," it boomed, lowering in the air, "but follow behind me and you shall see what you shall see."

Exior gritted his teeth, but his fear behind him and strode after the creature across the wind swept courtyard to enter the palace proper: a stark and massive building of huge basaltic blocks with openings like black mouths which seemed to grin hideously. Following the flap of membranous wings, he mounted creaked stair of stone within a tower whose base must surely be as big as the tavern where Exior lodged; and soon, arriving at a landing, he found the familiar familiar waiting for him before an entrance whose arch was carved with all the signs of the zodiac. Now, as the creature hopped across the threshold, he followed into a vast room whose contents held him spellbound in a single instant of time.

Mylakhrion's familiar settled itself upon a high perch, where it hung upside down: the better to observe Exior's astonished reactions. After a little while it said: "And are my master's possessions of interest to you, young man?"

"Indeed they are!" the youth gasped, his jaw ajar and his eyes gazing in ghostly fascination all about the room. Why, if the contents of this single room were his, even Exior K'mool could be a mighty magician! For here were scattered all the appurtenances of Mylakhrion's acts, every son and description of occult apparatus. There were alchemist's accessories of monstrous man and shocking skeletons of things which never had been man: strangely shaped phials and bottles filled with quiescent or bubbling liquids of golden, green or dark hues: all of a usage utterly unknown to Exior; bagpipes made of ebony and ivory and the cured insectal sacks of dragons, whose musk was collected used in the propulsion of certain demons; shelf upon shelf of books bound in brown leathers and yellow skins, and at least one whose umbre bindings bore — Exior would swear it to — the purplish mothlings of tattoos!

Here too were miniatures spheres of alien worlds and moons, mapped out and inlaid with cryptic runes of gold and silver; and all slowly turning where they hung from the fretted ceiling on ropes of tiny cowries. And here repositories of power adorning the masonic walls and floor, glowing with the inner fire of the gemships from which they were constructed. And sigil-imbazoned scrolls of written upon a marble table, together with a silver-framed magnifier, an astrolobe, calipers and tiny bronze wheels that revolved in the room and resting alone upon a small stand of carved crystal, a great ball of clouded crystal.

The workshop of Theem'mhrida's greatest wizard, thought Exior — his entire library too, and all in this one room! But as if divining his very thoughts, the perch-hung chiropteran shook his head. "Nay, lad," the creature said, "for this is only one tenth of a tenth part of all my master's mysteries. I am his most trusted familiar, and yet there are rooms here which I have never entered, and other I would not even dare to seek out! Nay, this is merely his room of repose."

"And am I ... am I to see ... him?" Exior asked.

"If you are so fortunate to be chosen as his apprentice, certainly you shall see him. Daily. Perhaps too often! He shall instruct you thus and thus, and you shall do so and so. And if you are quick to learn, one day you may even grow mighty as Mylakhrion himself."

"I meant," said Exior, "am I to see him ... now?"

"That depends ..." the creature answered, and went on: "But now there are things I must ask you, Exior K'mool, and you shall answer truthfully to each and every question."

Exior nodded and Mylakhrion's familiar demon continued: "Good! Then answer me this: why do you seek this position?"

"I would study under the greatest mage in all the land," Exior answered at once. "Also my master would know how best to employ my own minor talents."

"And what are those talents?"

"Icily the future in dreams," said Exior. "Aye, and my dreams have never lied to me."

"Never!" The sepulchral tones of the bat-thing seemed toned with a certain skepticism.

"I have common dreams like any man; but there are special dreams, too, and when they come to me I can usually recognize them."

"And is that all you are, a dreamer?"

The blood began to burn in Exior's face, but he felt less humble than angry. "I also translate tongues, read runes and fathom crypts," he snapped. "My seer's oaks vary the meanings of even the most obscure languages, glyphs and cryptograms."

"Is that all?" The creature's voice was cold as deep, dark oceans of ice, drawing out the heat out of Exior in a moment.

"I ... I mix potent potions, and —"

"Love potions?" The bat-thing seemed almost to sneer.

Exior knew he was beaten. Furious, he turned on his heel to leave the room, the tower, Mylakhrion's palace, the whole ridiculous idea behind him — and found his way blocked by two more giant chiropterans. They did not speak but merely stood as statues in the arched entrance, their men's faces observing through speculative eyes Exior where he paused in confusion.

Finally, from behind the youth, the inverted one spoke again: "He who acts in haste often acts foolishly — and regrets at leisure. How do you answer that?"

Exior turned sharply upon his examiner. "He who accepts insults and taunts from his inferiors is an even bigger fool!" he boltly retorted.

The bat-thing righted itself upon its perch. "And do you consider Mylakhrion's favourite familiar your ... inferior?" Its voice was the merest whisper now — the hiss of a dry leaf blown across a graveyard slab — but its human eyes were bright, hard and unblinking.

"That face you wear," said Exior K'mool, his words coming cracked from a throat suddenly dry as dust, "once sat upon a man's shoulders. Fool I may be, but my stoic and talents are my own and I speak with my own voice. In short, I am still a man — and better a foolish man than some hybrid horror spawned of a wizard's — and there he broke off, for the three were laughing at him, baying dinningly where they faced him, their booming laughter echoing loudly in the great room.

Astonished, and because there seemed little else to do, Exior waited until they were done and the one on the perch once more addressed him. "Mylakhrion," the creature finally informed him with a strange smile, "likes humility and honesty in a man, so believe I do not mention a forfeit. He also likes a little spunkiness, on occasion — but not too much, for that might be mistaken for audacity. Forwardness and bold he will not suffer; but cowardice he abhor! You have done well, Exior K'mool — and now my master will see you."

And all three familiars nodded as one creature, just as Exior had seen it in his dream.

"Seer, be seated," said Mylakhrion, and the youth at once recognized his voice as being one and the same with that of the bat-thing.
As night drew on and the sun sank down behind the mountains, Exor smelled a great storm blowing up and hurriedly sought shelter. He tethered his yak just within the mouth of a small cave hidden in the lee of wind-carved crags, then carefully checked to ensure that there was no fire or man within. Gratefully, he worked and occasionally cursing, he lighted a fire in a hollow place and brewed himself a pot of tea.

Six months ago he had looked back from his tail-end position in an escorted caravan leaving Humqassa and smiled as he watched the walls of the city slowly merging into the southern horizon; since when he had not smiled a great deal, had faced dangers galore and covered thousands of miles in the performance of Mylakhron’s ‘unfashionable’ errands—which still slipped unperformed. Now Exor had reached the end of his ability to endure any more hardship, the end of his tether, and he ought also to have reached the end of his journey. But …

‘Oh west!’ Mylakhron had instructed him. ‘Cross the Eastern Peaks, pass between the Nameless Desert and the Mountains of Lohmi; follow the sun over wide and rolling plains to the foothills of the Great Circle Mountains, and there turn your feet northward. Keeping the foothills on your left hand, follow the edge of the plain and in the space of two days you will find a city lost in the desert sands.

‘At the signs of city’s ruins lying closest to the foothills, there you will spy the broken frag of one great tower; and in its base a door. Now listen carefully, Exor K’moor, for this is most important: deep beneath the tumbled tower, hidden in a catacomb with a vaulted door, within a vaulted door you will find a Great Book. It is locked and lies upon a pedestal of crypts. Bring me that book, Exor K’moor, and thereafter be known as Mylakhron’s apprentice.’

But know now, young man, that the dangers will be many and the way long and hard. … How, do you say?

Once more, like a fool, Exor had agreed, and shortly thereafter he joined a caravan bound for the mountains. Afar nearby, as the caravan leaved the car and struck out over the eastern range, cruising in a week. Another month took him to the Nameless Desert, and another saw him in the long grasses of the central plains. There his horse was bitten by an adder and he was obliged to proceed on foot. Two more months and autumn was drawing to a close and now along with winter the Great Circle Mountains loomed. Gradually, friendly Exor K’moor had recognized the bleak and wintry landscape as that seen from Mylakhron’s tower room, and the clouds which fled over south were those same clouds he had thought peculiar to the sky over the sorcerer’s palace. Obviously Mylakhron had speed on the way for him; why, then, had he failed to find the lost city?

That night, dreaming, the youth saw a great frag of stone rising from drifted sand and tumbled blocks. His dream was recurrent, but each time his slumbering spirit approached the visioned site while howling he would startle into wakefulness in his blanket, that or the cry of his frightened beast when it stood trembling in the lightning-illuminated door of the cave. Mercifully the storm’s direction was away from Exor’s refuge, for its fury was such that it moved a vast amount of sand and both man and beast might easily have been entombed.

As it was, rising cold, tired and hungry from his troubled and fistful slumbers, Exor saw that the storm had blown itself out; also that he had been presumpuous to doubt those directions given him by Mylakhron. For now, where great waves of sand had strained to the horizon, the scattered remains of a once mighty city lay uncovered to his bleary gaze. And not far off, within a stone’s throw, a certain shattered spire drew his eyes as a northstone draws a nail. Without doubt this was that tower of which Mylakhron had foretold, beneath which Exor would find the maze of caves and eventually the secret chamber and volume of ancient magic!

The youth fed himself and his beast as best he could; drank a little from his leather bottle and draped the yak’s nose and mouth, then walked the animal beneath winter morning skies at the base of the crumbling but still massive monument. Alas, jostled drifted against its base he would find no door; but above, almost within reach, Bellen blocks revealed a dark hole somewhat wider than his shoulders.

Now before proceeding any further, Exor made a pause and gave some thought to knowing what Mylakhron had told him. There might well be a ‘guard’; the ancient magician had warned, a spirit or demon set to watch over the secret room and its book: for the book contained such powerful magic that whosoever possessed it could make himself mighty above all men. It had belonged to a great sorcerer and necromancer, that book, but in a war of wizardry he had been obliged to flee the city in the desert and the book had been left behind. Even as he fled, the city was brought to a great ruin by his enemies, and thus it had remained to this day.

Unable to find words, Exor merely nodded.
That had all been more than five hundred years ago, however, and only recently through his own efforts, had Myl'khron discovered again the lost city and fathomed its ancient secrets. And by now the ‘guard’ had found himself stretched too thin to even begin to control the situation.

Well, perhaps; but nevertheless Exior frowned worriedly as he made torches, piled stones and finally climbed until he could squeeze in through the hole in the wall of the tower. Cobwebby gloom met his eyes, and dusty, spiralling steps that wound down into darkness. He took one last look out through the hole at the drear landscape of tumbled blocks and fallen, shattered pillars—a landscape which now seemed much more friendly than the gloomy bowels of this ages-old tower—lit the torch and commenced his descent.

Round and down he went, brushing aside or burning cobwebs out of his way; and tiny scurrying things moved aside for him, and dust trickled from ledges where the centuries had piled it; and only the gloom and the winding steps descending ever deeper into bowels of fetid earth. After what seemed an inordinately long time, Exior reached the bottom and found himself in a great cavern whose walls were honeycombed with tunnels and caves.

On guard against whatever might be lurking down here, he was making to see the greatest of these passages when a great rumbling roar froze him in his tracks. A belch of animal fury, the warning had issued from that very tunnel he had been on the point of entering. Trembling in every limb, Exior lighted a second torch and stuck it in the sandy floor, then drew his sword and waited for whatever it was that prowled these eerie excavations: doubtless ‘guard’ of which Myl'khron had forewarned.

In a little while the demon appeared and jerked forward on spindly legs into the central hall. Half-splinter, half-but that being, and twice as big as a man to boot. With curving fangs like white scythes, and eyes big as saucers, the thing loomed over Exior and glared down at him; and finally, with a voice that rumbled volubly and brimstone breath, it spoke:

“What do ye here, little man? This is a forbidden place. Begone!”

Exior shook his head in dumb defiance and held out his torch and sword before him. And finding his voice, he said: “I run an errand for my master, and you shall not stop me.”

“And what is the nature of your errand?” questioned the demon.

“To find a room and a runebook,” said Exior with many a gulp. “Also, to take that book back to my master.”

“I know room and book both!” the creature answered. “Aye, and guard them well. Wherefore is it plainly my duty to eat—yes, or would ye care to play a game with me?”

“A game?” replied Exior, who vastly preferred any alternative to being eaten.

“Ye shall have a choice,” the demon explained. “Go now and I shall do ye no harm, but if ye stay ye must play my game. If ye win the game ye may take the book and I at last may rest—but if ye lose...”

“Then...” Exior prompted, his heart in his mouth.

“Why, then shall ye eat!” answered the monster with a great coughing laugh.

“And what is the nature of this game?” asked Exior, wondering where to best to strike the beast to bring him down and whether he had the strength for such a stroke.

“I shall say ye a riddle,” the demon replied, “and ye must tell me its meaning.”

Now Exior’s mind grew alert as he readied it for the trial; for there never had been a riddle or rune whose meaning eluded him for long, and despite his great fear he could not refuse the demon’s challenge. “So be it,” he said, “let’s hear your riddle.”

“TI DNNMOC I... MOOR TERCES EHT O'T EM DAEI DNA, ERA YLLER UOY SA UOY EES EM TEL WM, EMAG EHT O YGNVA... EM MRAH TON YAM DNA NOISULLI ERA UOY... SESSEK EAEU RDUP DNA, NÖM ED UOY WONK !!”

To which Exior at once and excidedly replied, “My answer is: I know you demon, and your weaknesses. You are illusion and may not harm me. Having won the game, now let me see you as your really are, and lead me to the secret room. I promised!”

The demon gave a great cry of (relief, Exior suspected) and immediately shrunk down into the shape of a tiny lizard which wriggled away into the mouth of one of the tunnels. It paused to look back, whereupon Exior lighted a third torch and followed behind on a chance. In a little while the lizard led the way to a door of brass and squeezed beneath it. When Exior doved the door open on squeaking hinges, the tiny creature had disappeared.

The room was circular, domed and starkly bare; except for its pedestal of oak and the Great Book which lay upon it, thick with five long centuries and more. Quickly Exior crossed to the pedestal and laid his trembling hands upon the great, jewel-crusted cover. He blew away the dust and opened one rich leather

And he remembered what Myl'khron had told him: that in this book were the secrets of suns and moons, times past and times as yet unborn, and all the wonders of wizards dead and gone and the lore of darkling dimensions beyond the familiar there. Knowledge enough to make a man mighty above all other men. And Exior picked up the key and turned it protestingly in the ancient lock.

Then, as he began to lift the heavy cover—

Runes graven on the onyx pedestal caught his eye, and he let the cover fall back upon pages unseen. The glyphs were rare, obscure as the ages, and writ in a cypher to bedazzle the mind of any but a master cryptographer born. Such as Exior K’mool.

Brows drawn together in concentration, lips moving silently as they traced strange words, by the light of his fiery torch he read the runes. Then, lighting yet another torch better to see, he read them again—and snatched back his hand from where it rested upon the sorcerer’s book. For the message was very clear: that without certain protection the essence of any man brush or foolish enough to read the book would be torn from him, leaving him empty and foolish and bereft of mind, will and soul.

The protection, however, was comparatively simple: it was a moon-run, rare but well enough known to Exior; designed to propitiate the protective power of Mnouqah, God of the Moon and of Madness, known commonly as Gleeth. And now the young knew that indeed the book’s secrets were marvellous and monstrous, for Gleeth is a god who from his celestial seat sees and therefore knows all; and his moon-runes are correspondingly powerful.

Without hesitation Exior said the rune out loud, and when the echoes of his voice had died away he opened the forbidden volume to the first page. There, in rubric paragraphs yet glanced by the setting sun in tremulous trickle of time’s sands, the warning was repeated: that Gleeth’s protection be sought before reading. Since he had already availed himself of the necessary precaution, Exior turned the next page, which bore no signature but commenced straightway with words of baleful might, and with bated breath he began to read...

For long and long Exior read the book, and when his torches were finished he carried it up to the light, and for two days he read on and for two nights he sat and considered and did not sleep. He gave the patient yak his last crust, the last of his water, and on the morning of the third day closed the book and locked it. Then he stood up beside the ruined tower and looked all about at the dreary desert and the sand-stormed city.

His eyes were pale now and chill, with shadows beneath, which were dark above the pomatum of his cheeks. And his hair, no longer jet but grey; and his entire men-of that of an old man heavy burdened with wisdom and knowledge and sin, while yet his back was straight and his limbs young.

For an hour he stood thus, then turned to his yak. Alas, the poor beast lay dead and a vulture picked at its eye, which was torn by the bird’s beak. Angered, Exior said a word—a single word—and the vulture gave a startled cry and sprinted aloof, flailing lifelessness in the instant. And the yak shook its head, got to its feet and gazed upon its master. It gazed with one dim old yak’s eye, and one which was sharp and bright and that of a vulture.

Then Exior tied the book to his saddle and mounted himself upon his beast’s back, and so he left the Desert of Eli and made for home.

Three months and three weeks later, a stranger in a cowled cloak and riding upon a blinkered yak arrived at the gates of Humnqaspass beneath its weeding walls. Without any of the usual formalities (for which gross inefficiency he must later make bluster and only half-believel excus) the Commander of the Guard raised the gate and let the stranger in; and Exior—for such it was, as well you know—was straight to the palace of Myl’khron.

There the gate in the wall opened at his approach and he passed through without resistance, entering his beast in the wizard’s courtyard. And where beyond the city’s walls all was early spring and the trees budding and flowers burgeoning into bloom, here a most sombre out blazed down and the heat was stifling where lizards lapped atop white walled gardens of gardeners.

Exior paused not before this wonder nor even considered it, but entered the main tower where waited Myl’khron’s familiars. They gazed upon him, and he upon them; and then they bowed down low before him and let him pass. And so he mounted the heart of the stair, as he read Myl’khron in his lefty lair.
On this occasion, however, he had no need of ascending to so great a height, for Mylkhrion potted in his room of repose. There Exior found him, and there the mage gave him greeting of a sort.

"Ho, Exior K'mool! So, you are returned to me at last, and just as I began to suspect that some ill had befallen you. And do you bring me the fruits of your quest?"

Exior said nothing but merely stared at the master mage, observing him curiously and with mixed emotions through his changed eyes. He threw back his hood to show locks gray as Arctic oceans above a face almost pale as that of Mylkhrion himself. Then he approached a table and brushed its surface free from clutter, placing his linen-wrapped parcel centrally and untying its fastenings. And laying back the coverings he displayed the Great Book, and as Mylkhrion drew nigh he gave him the key.

Now the sorcerer's silver eyebrows rose a little; and without questioning Exior's silence or his strangely altered appearance, he took the key and turned back its jewelled-crust cover. Then—

Mylkhrion frowned and briefly raised eyebrows fell down lower again over suddenly narrowed eyes. He turned his gaze to Exior and gloomed upon him, saying:

"Youth, the first page is torn out! Do you see the broken edge, the riven vellum?"

And now, in a voice fully frosty as that of his master, Exior answered, "Aye, I have noted it."

"Hmph!" The enchanter seemed disgruntled and a little disappointed, but in another moment his curiosity returned. "So be it," he said, "for what to one leaf on the tree of all dark knowledge?"

Now during his journey home Exior had made a diabolical decision. As can be seen, he had determined to be done with Mylkhrion and so had torn out the book, the opening admission. He reasoned thus: that having passed the book he now had power to become mighty above all men, even above Mylkhrion himself. There would be no room for two such sorcerers in Humnpass, wherefore the greahtool must go. And what better instrument of an abrupt assassination than this fearful, ruin-recovered volume of morbids magicks?

Unsuspecting and unprotected, Mylkhrion would read, and the book would bind him in its spell, crush him, destroy him utterly. For if the power of the thing were such as to seize upon Exior's spirit, sap the colour from his hair and flesh and sear his very soul—and him protected—how then would the venerable Mylkhrion fare, all frail with age and weighted down with the burden of his unsought years?

Well, he had lived long enough, and his release would be a kindness of a sort. And anyway, the awakened Exior would make a poor apprentice, who possessed power at least the equal of his supposed master. So let Mylkhrion read and bid him farewell, and then announce to the city the presence of a new and still more powerful mage in the palace of the sorcerer.

Thus had Exior plotted and now he stood upon the threshold of his destiny, and the book was open and Mylkhrion sat before it at the table; and as that self-same necromancer began to read out loud, so Exior shuddered as were he dead and felt the furtive treads of ghouls on the soft earth above. An icy fist seemed clutched around his heart and a question burned in his brain. How then was he to throw this? A murderer most foul, Exior K'mool who once was a dreamer and trusted love positions to penanns'? Even as Mylkhrion's voice made its sepulchral booming and rolled the work's rare words, so Exior gave a little cry and started forward, at which the sorcerer looked up.

"Is this amiss, Exior?" There seemed a certain slyness in his question. "Do you hear to these marvels and monstrosities? Shall I read them to myself then, in silence?"

Exior shook his head. Was he afraid? Nay, for he had said again Gleen's mouth, and feared not. Not for himself. "Read on master," he answered; but there was a catch in his voice which he had believed extinct.

Mylkhrion nodded. "So be it," he said, his voice fallen to the nearest whisper. For a little while, in silence, the two gazed into each other's eyes, and those of the elder were narrowed now and very bright. Finally they fell once more to the written page.

And so that master of mages read on until he reached the bottom of certain leaf, and as his fingers went to turn the page Exior once more gave a start. He knew the revelations overleaf were such must surely snare any mortal, which blew out Mylkhrion's of his own admittance. And again that lighted upon Exior's heart as he knew himself for a traitor.

"Stop!" he cried as the page began to turn. "Look more, Mylkhrion! If you would save your sight, your mind, your very soul, be still... I fear I have deceived you..."

Slowly Mylkhrion looked up and smiled. Even Mylkhrion smiled! And it was a real smile, banishing much of his customary coldness as the morning sun fills the room from spring flowers. Exior saw that smile but did not understand; and Mylkhrion asked, "Do you fear me, Exior K'mool, or for yourself? For your conscience, perhaps?"

For both of us, if you will!" answered the other harshly. "Whichever way you would have it — only read no more. There is a protection, lacking which the book's blasphemies will blast you! The warning was writ on the first page, which I tore out...

"Oh!" Mylkhrion's smile diminished somewhat. Deliberately he turned the page, and when Exior made to snatch the book he held up a hand of caution.

"Peace, young man. Watch — and learn!" And without further pause he read the page to its end.

During the reading Exior saw shadows gather in the room as with the approach of night. There commenced a strange tremor and a muted thunder which had their sources in the air of the room itself. Crystals splintered and phials flew into fragments; fiery wreaths mottled shivered into shards and liquids boiled up and overflowed their crucibles; aye, and cracks appeared in the walls while dust and debris crumbled down from the ceiling, ere Mylkhrion was done. Then he closed the book and locked it up, and still was smiled. Nor was his mien changed at all, and the reading had done him no ill whatever.

"I. I. I."

"Be silent and listen," Mylkhrion commanded. "You have done well, Exior K'mool, as I suspected you would. And you will make a fitting mage for Morgath, given time. As for me — now I up and get me gone to Tharamno. And on that bleak and northern side I shall build me a tower, as in my wont, and there seek that immortality which ever confounds me. This palace here in Humnpass: it is yours. You have earned it, every last stone."

I have earned it! Exior was amazed. "But I am a traitor, and —"

"You were almost a traitor, Mylkhrion answered, "and that is the difference. You could not know that I have ever protected against dark forces, and that the book would have done me ill. Therefore, when you would have stopped me from reading, you showed mercy. Liked that quality in a man, Exior K'mool! And you have many qualities. Some humility, a deal of honesty, a little daring — and now, too, wisdom and mercy! All to the good young man, for without them you could never succeed."

"Moreover, your talents are of the sort Morgath needs above all others. Myself, I was never much of a one for such minor magicks and studied them not extensively. But you? You are a seer and read runes and portents. You reckon well the auspices and faithfully forecast the future. Aye, and the King will be well pleased with you."

Mylkhrion shook up and took hold of Exior's shoulders. "Tomorrow you meet him, Morgath the King, and the day after that I leave for Tharamno. How do you say to that?"

"But —"

"Enough!" Mylkhrion lifted his hand. "It is finished."

"But all of this, and Exior gazed all about, "mine? I cannot believe it! Will you take nothing with your nothing?"

Mylkhrion shook his head. "All yours — except I shall take my wand with me, and my familiar three. And the book..."


"No," Mylkhrion smiled again. "For I am that already. I will tell you why I take these things. My wand because it suits my hand, and my familiar because I am grown used to them. Their faces remind me of my youth, when I defeated them in a wizardry war. As for what I leave behind: these things were never really mine. They were gifted to me, or purchased them, or won them by use of my magic. They are all nothing. But the book — that is mine." His eyes gazed searchingly into the other's face.

And now Exior gasped and his own changing eyes went wide.

"Ah! I see the truth dawned on you at last," said Mylkhrion. "Your face grows gaunt with a great wonder, and your jaw falls open. Rightly so..." and he nodded. "You are of course correct, Exior K'mool, and now you know all. This rune book is an old friend of mine and I would never leave without it. Not unless my leaving was enforced. As happened to me once long ago in the Desert of Eli..."

"No, the book goes with me. For who can say when I shall have the time to write another?"
Welcome, Gamemaster, to White Dwarf's absolutely brilliant Paranoia adventure. Amongst the microcopic type crammed into the next six pages you will find many things to thrill you, including lots of spiffy random tables for rolling on, some absolutely unbelievable enemies to drive PCs up the wall, and of course lots of jokes about role-playing games! Won't this be fun? Needless to say, any Troubleshooter reading this far should report immediately to their nearest Termination centre and have a nice day.

Alright, you say, what's the scam? Well button your lip, bub, and I'll tell you a story... You know what High Programmers are like, don't you? Always fiddling about with their knobs and peeking and poking things. Recently, an irresistible high programmer brought some old files to the attention of the beloved Computer. The dusty old tapes gave some skimpy accounts of an Old Reckoning entertainment centre, known as ILM Sector to those few people who hadn't forgotten it long ago. The Computer has now remembered it again, and has noticed a distinct rise in electrical activity in the past few days. Rattling through logic circuits several million times as powerful as the human brain it has reached the only possible explanation for this - the Commies are hiding there! The Computer commands that a team of responsible Troubleshooters investigate the area and check whether the area is indeed infested with the little red fiends. The Computer would also like a map of this place, and of course there may well be some of that good old OR technology lying about, which the High Programmers would just love to get their hands on.

All well and good, you say. It's obviously one of those adventures where the Troubleshooters go off into the wild lands and participate in all sorts of wacky Old Reckoning encounters. And of course you'd be wrong. You see, ILM Sector was once part of the Fantasia Complex, the world centre for action amusements and live action role-playing (as well as being plenty of gaming jokes). For nearly two hundred years Fantasia has lain dormant, but just under a week ago a group known as the New World Explorers entered the complex and managed to activate its long-dead systems. Unfortunately they had no idea what they were doing, and in fact restarted the Fantasia central entertainments computer just in time to participate in the running of a scenario called Deadlyville - Town Of Undeath. You may now snigger to yourself at all the amusing possibilities for violent death this name conjures up for a few seconds...

MISSION ALERT

ATTENTION TROUBLESHOOTERS! AGAINCE AGAIN YOUR LOYALTY TO THE COMPUTER HAS BROUGHT YOU THE HONOUR OF BEING SELECTED FOR A MISSION OF GREAT IMPORTANCE!

YOU WILL ENTER ILM SECTOR. YOU WILL GATHER INFORMATION FOR THE COMPUTER. YOU WILL RETURN WITH VALUABLE OLD RECKONING TECHNOLOGY. PLEASE REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO THE TROUBLESHOOTER BRIEFING CHAMBER IN OWN SECTOR FOR YOUR BRIEFING. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

Give this to your players. Watch them get very excited at the prospect of all the fun they are about to have. Then give them their individual objectives. Six different objectives are given below, with additional details to allow you to fine tune them to existing characters from your own campaign (campaign? you run a campaign?).

MISSION OBJECTIVES

1. If you have two PCs in the same secret society: Inform one of them that his opposite number is suspected of passing information to a rival secret society. It is suggested that the traitor be terminated as soon as possible. (Of course, you could tell both players this, and maybe others will be taken out in the crossfire, which could be fun.)

2. If a PC is a member of the Romantics, Pro-Tech or a spy for another Alpha Complex then: Inform the player that the secret society sources have heard a rumour that ILM Sector is a treasure trove of Old Reckoning Technology. Bring back as much as you can and you'll go far!

3. If there is a member of Internal Security present: Tell the player that his superiors suspect the team to be infiltrated by a Commie spy! Of course, the uncovering and enthusiastic execution of a traitor or three will lead to a commendation.

4. Any members of PURGE, Frankenstein Destroyors or the Humanists can be told that ILM Sector is rumoured to hold surveillance equipment that could be useful to the computer. Under no circumstances should such vile machinery be allowed to enter Alpha Complex intact.

5. Warn one of the PCs (anyone will do but a good GM will pick the most paranoid) that both the Team Leader and his second in command are suspected Commies, Mutts and traitors. Any orders they give aren't worth zip, and should be treated with the utmost distrust.

6. Any Armed Forces member can be informed that Internal Security is hoping that this mission will fail. This'll then be used as propaganda by Internal Security when approaching the Computer for additional resources. This player must uphold the reputation of the Armed Forces at all cost.

Alright, referee, that's the secret part out of the way; now do your stuff!

THE BRIEFING

By now you should have chosen one of the PCs as Team Leader (alright, do it now then, and don't forget to adjust his security clearance accordingly while you're about it). The PCs can then come up with their own strategies. 

Chris-I: A well dressed CPU service group bureaucrat assigned the onerous task of getting a load of loud-mouthed Troubleshooters into ILM Sector and back. As you may have guessed, Chris-I hates Troubleshooters for all he's worth!

Gerry-G: A rather scruffy member of PLC, his task here is to impress upon the PCs that the Computer is being very generous with equipment for this mission. He goes on to say that as such kit is in short supply they really should be careful with it, please.

Louis-G: The R&D representative; he says very little, except that the team should expect the unexpected, that there is nothing to fear except for itself, and that he will send in time saving solution. Oh, and that R&D have got some really interesting equipment for you guys, which he'll show 'em in a minute.

Saul-G: He won't say much, but as a member of Power Services he won't get the chance to. Oh, but the PCs will find some really exciting and interesting power sources at ILM Sector. Honestly.

Once everyone has said their piece-piece, Louis-G suddenly and quite inexcusably accuses Power Services of trying to get access to Old Reckoning Technology before R&D, and a short but heated argument ensues, during which the team is forgotten. Anyone involved will be fried by one or the other of them. (Calling clone 2! Calling clone 2!)

When the debate finishes, and all bodies have been cleared away, Chris-I reads the mission alert to the Troubleshooters, and then starts a rather long speech praising the Computer's choice of the team. Suddenly though, he gets tough, asking the PCs questions about the alert and reminding them that screw-ups are a treasonable offense. Finally, and with a glint in his eye that the PCs won't notice, he implores them to please be careful.

Once Chris-I has finished, the other service group representatives ask for questions from the Troubleshooters. Of course, the team will have plenty to ask, won't they? Not that they'll get a straight answer out of this motley lot, of course. In fact, it might be a good idea to have the Computer and the briefing itself. After all, you don't want to spend precious vapourising time answering silly questions, do you? (You see, the Computer can be your friend as well!)

Once the silence has grown too embarrassing to bear, Gerry-G takes the Troubleshooters to PLC where they are issued with equipment for the mission ahead, under the bounteous generosity of the Computer.

EQUIPPING THE TEAM

Gerry-G takes charge of the outfitting personally; he doesn't want these schmucks running around in his nice labs unless he can see
From the air it looks like a single lozenge-shaped dome rising about 100 metres above the ground and covering an area of several square kilometres. The ground around it is flat - unnaturally so, perhaps - with signs of Old Reckoning roads crossing it, but these have always been nicked grey-green (we always nick to Alpha Complex). There are a great many cavernous entrances to the Sector, ringing the ground level of the structure, mostly surrounded by peculiar Old Reckoning writing, now much-faded and illegible.

Several helicopter pads are suspended about three quarters of the way up the walls; the flybot can land on one of these (though perhaps not without a problem or two). Depending on whether the team has trained through with the (unofficially-stated flight to the sector). The locations of the important entrances to ILM Sector are shown in Figure 1; please note that these are shown slightly out of scale (partly to make them clearer but mostly because our map artist is permanently drunk).

Extra-Special Highly Important Note: You are just about to let your players loose in ILM Sector. Never forget it is a very, very spooky place, being large, empty, silent and menacing. Turn on the tension; make your players feel Aliens and in a building that is familiar to the PCs - describe everything in terms of an Alpha Complex feature.

MAKING AN ENTRANCE

As we've said, there are two types of entrances to ILM Sector - helipads and ground level entrances. Read on and we'll tell you all about them.

HELIPADS: There are ten of these, each identical, and each arranged around the outer wall at a height of 65 metres. Figure 2 shows a cutaway through a typical helipad terminal. It is simply large and complete with camera (of course), dotted with rotating seats. A glass screen protects this grotto from the noise and blast of a landing helicopter. The large doors (1) are invariably locked. Steps lead down to cunningly-disguised items called elevators (2), which the team may have some trouble finding.

Note: The use of firearms to break through such doors will lead to the activation of ancient security and sprinkler systems, resulting in a deluge that will cheerfully soak all the Troubleshooters. A powerful foam spray will also be fired at the flybot; any PC unfortunate to be hit by the spray (your choice) will have to make a very difficult check against strength or be knocked off the landing pad (whereare spleens?).

After such diversions, the PCs can settle down to working out how the elevators work (check against engineering or technical services skill). When the elevator arrives, though, it will contain a securobot if they set off the sprinklers or if the elevator arrived after a failed skill roll; if not, why not stick one in anyway? Each elevator can hold six people or sizeable things, and will take its passengers straight down to ground level.

Securobot: Fantasia securobots are roughly man-sized cylinders which walk on stumpy legs and are equipped with a pair of powerful arms that are typically used to carry troublemakers away to 'The Cooler' (see later). All weaponry is mounted around the bot's waist, and include 2 stun guns and 2 tanglers, each with a 50% chance of hitting. (it may fire all weapons simultaneously at different targets. Good, eh?) You may assume that it is wearing plate armour.

GROUND LEVEL ENTRANCES: In their heyday, these would have been bustling high-tech chambers; today, though, they are dirty and unsalvageable. For details see Figure 3; of which this is the key:

1. A trip wire planted by the New World Explorers. Any PC entering or leaving via this route will have a chance of setting it off (at your discretion, as usual). The booby trap sets off is a simple one - there is a shrapnel bomb at either end. The blast area is a 4m wide strip between them; assume the damage it causes to be equal to 6 needlebase being fired at point-blank range.

2. Ticket dispensers. These do not work, but then again they look like very open confession booths to the PCs anyway, and it is quite conceivable that they will try and use them as such. There are around 65 of them, arranged in a circle.

3. Elevator, connecting to a helipad terminal (see earlier).

4. Large turnstiles, leading into a very wide corridor (the ubiquitous ring-road). Every last one is jammed - isn't that always the way? - and the PCs must clamber over them or destroy them to continue on their way.

5. Large video screens, which stretch from floor to ceiling. A very bright Troubleshooter may even recognise them for what they are.

Note: An observant Troubleshooter might notice some fresh footprints in the floor that have quite clearly not been made by the team. They lead all over the place, but mostly towards the strange rotary devices (the turnstiles, dum-dum!).

A PEACEFUL FLIGHT TO ILM

The Troubleshooters can now load up their flybot, and set off for ILM Sector. The bot's brain has been excised from the ILM Sector, but the team leader will still have to give it some flight instructions (or more likely order some poor sap to do it for him). If the PCs are unfamiliar with flybot operation you have chance of minutes fun, as suggested in the GM's Book. However, please try and be careful not to wipe out the entire party just yet. This would give your group a rather 'short' feel to it, which means you'll have to find another scenario to fill the next three hours. Stick to scaring them and save the real violent stuff for later, ok?

The flight to ILM Sector takes about an hour, with the flybot making its first approach to the complex at around 1700 hours. This gives the Troubleshooters about three hours before darkness falls. We suggest you get them inside as soon as possible, to avoid having to worry about them. It is a fine day for a picnic at the complexes. A big tent and a campfire should do. As night approaches, the team leader will have to make sure the PCs have enough blankets for the night. The flight is a short one, and the landing is a soft one; there's no need for them to worry about injury.
ROUND AND ROUND IN CIRCLES

Beyond the turnstiles, the Troubleshooters will find an open road and walkway, about 30m wide. Way above it is a high domed roof where orange and white lights flicker on and off (cue simple-minded Troubleshooters gawping upwards and going ‘Gee, look at the pretty lights!’). Strange, unidentifiable noises echo all around; Troubleshooters are advised to be on the alert.

This is the ring-road, the doughnut, that acts as a central core for all of Fantasia’s activity centres. Once upon a time, loud music and holographic displays would have thrilled crowds as they passed along to the central gaming areas. On the outer rim of the roadway there is a magnetically-levitated shuttle train. There may well be some carriages for the thing lying idle nearby (your choice). If the team elects to try out this new method of transport, there is a 100% chance of its malfunctioning. Once everyone has stepped aboard, the train automatically starts up, slowly accelerates up to its top speed of 40 km/h, and then cheerfully refuses to stop! PCs that do not jump off will find they have a long, repetitive journey ahead of them, as they circle the 2km track every three minutes.

Around the inner edge of the ringroad are the remains of various amusement and entertainment centres. These would once have included shops, restaurants and bars, all dotted with an alarming number of real action and video games. Almost everything here has been removed by thieves and scavengers, but if the team were to spend the next few days excavating they may well find some really exciting archaeological artefacts, such as squashed gum wrappers, dropped coins and the like. However, if you want to have some fun, allow them to grub around for a few minutes and then miraculously kick something in the dust. Then let them roll a D100 on the following Patent Old Reckoning Technology Dodgy Device Random Determination Table (“applied for!”):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Die roll</th>
<th>Object Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>A holochrome blade, consisting of a pommel with a stud on it. Press the button and a holographic image of either a sword or dagger is projected from the end of the blade. It has no effect on humans, though insect-brained Troubleshooters may believe they’ve been shot anyway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>A terrifying phantasmal image, produced by ancient hologram projectors, floats down the corridor. It shows a giant, black-eared creature in red trousers being attacked by an enormous rubbery dog-like being. The hologram may have been hidden from the inside of a ruined shop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>An infra-red laser gun, which looks like an incredibly ancient slugthrower. When fired, it makes one heck of a bang, but nothing comes out of it! It has no effect on humans.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As they wallow around the ringroad, the Troubleshooters may freely interact with the carefully developed and subtly pre-planned inhabitants of the Ring Road Random Encounter Table. Anytime you get bored, simply roll those dice and let ‘em have it! Keep the action flowing and let the PCs on their toes and they’ll never notice that you’re making it all up as you go along. However, as before you shouldn’t kill all of them – not just yet, anyway. All the stats for the NPC’s are assembled together in the NPC section at the end.

**Die Roll Encounter**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Die roll</th>
<th>Object Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>A single securibot of the ‘shoot first and ask questions later’ mentality whirls its way around the corner, guns blazing. It has the same stats as the earlier one itself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>A motley collection of scrubs glide around the bend and approach the PCs, attempting to clean everything in their path. What’s the betting they don’t get to do it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-43</td>
<td>A pack of 3D00 rats pour around the corner and charges straight at the PCs, squealing and shrieking. They will actually seem straight past the team and head for an exit (though the PCs won’t know this).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44-55</td>
<td>A single New World Explorer comes running out of the nearest ruined shop and takes a pot-shot at the PCs before running screaming down the corridor!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-70</td>
<td>Four New World Explorers carefully stage an ambush of the PCs from the inside of a ruined shop. And then run screaming down the corridor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-93</td>
<td>A pack of 3D01 rats pours round the corner and charges straight at the PCs, squealing and shrieking. They will actually seem straight past the team and head for an exit (though the PCs won’t know this).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE BIG ROOM

(AND WE MEAN BIG!!)

In Fantasia, there were large auditoriums that allow non-participants to view the game being played in the Central Gaming Area. These large halls (four in all) can be found at regular intervals along the ring-road; they also give access to the Central Gaming Area itself. Fortunately for you, their audio-visual systems seized up long ago, so the Troubleshooters will enter the Gaming Area without knowing what is ahead. See Figure 4 for the layout of one of the halls; this the key to the map:

1. Entrance
2. Aisles, which lead down past the rows of seats to the stage
3. Fire exits. All four are locked, of course. This should come as no surprise to the team, as every fire exit in Alpha Complex is locked at all times.

COMPUTER REAL ACTION SHOW

"WHITE OWL" 33
4. Seats. These are arranged in rows of eight, and they are in surprisingly good condition considering how long they've been here, though they are very dark and dusty.

5. The stage. This is about a metre above the sloping floor of the auditorium, and can be reached by means of the small stairs at either side. The left hand side of the stage is covered in dust and debris, where a part of the ceiling appears to have fallen in.

6. Left wing door, blocked by a large concrete block which falls from the ceiling sometime. It leads to a collection of dressing and equipment rooms, but the team ain't gonna go this way anyway so we're not going to detail them. Us, Lady?

7. A very large video screen, now cracked and shattered.

8. Steps down. These lead to the Central Gaming Area. Originally, the various stars of the game would introduce themselves to the audience from the stage, before descending the steps to begin play.

THE CENTRAL GAMING AREA

Encourage the team to descend the mysterious stairs from the stage. Be inventive in your method of doing this, or simply send a pack of securitybots in through the main door while they are on the stage. Be subtle.

At the bottom of the stairs there is a heavy steel door, standing slightly ajar. The combined strength of two Troubleshooters is needed to push it open, whereupon it will, of course, screech like all the demons of hell let loose. Beyond it, a dark metal corridor leads off for perhaps 150 metres, before ending in another solid door. This corridor has nothing especially deadly in it, but it echoes like hell. Every ten metres one of the investigators thinks he or she hears a voice or footsteps, and will have to stop the party and listen for them. The echoes die away, and there is complete silence... As soon as they start walking again, the same thing happens, and so on.

The door at the other end is smaller than the first, and needs only a push to open. Once everyone is through, the door screeches back into its frame and locks itself with an ominous creak which echoes away down the new corridor, which is narrow and apparently made of wood. The walls are wet and slimy and the air is pervaded by a terrible stench, obviously caused by the wet rot stuff which is dripping from the ceiling. Above the passageway (and unknown to the team) there is a large chemical tank which has been steadily leaking its contents for several decades. As a result, the air in this passageway is now poisonous. Treat damage done by the poison as equivalent to a weapon on Column 5 of the Damage Table; damage should be rolled for every round spent in the corridor, incidentally forty metres long.

At the far end of this noxious place, some shallow steps lead up out of the ground. As they approach they should realise that the sound of dripping water has not ceased - ahead of them is the sound of rushing water flagstones, punctuated by an occasional rumble of distant thunder. The Troubleshooters have arrived in Deadlyville (cue loud blast on organ - DEEDEE DEE! Deedle Deedle DEE DEE!!!)

DEADLYVILLE!!

The village of Deadlyville currently occupies all of the Central Gaming Area. All of its wooden houses are tall and decidedly Gothic, their darkened windows gazing emptily down like the baleful eyes of the dead on the rain-swept settlement. All, that is, except for one house, where an illuminated upper storey window glimmers down like a beacon through the storm. (Isn't this a truly great bit of writing? We bet you wish you could write Paranoia scenarios as good as this one! Ahem, back to the cliché-e-s-...) The steps from the passageway rise up out the open mouth of a grave, and the Troubleshooters find themselves in the centre of a graveyard, decorated with the traditional crosses, statues and headstones. A mist starts to descend, down into the cloying, heavy, silence, if anything, gets even quieter...

The thunder rumbles overhead, punctuated by brilliant flashes of forked lightning which flash across the sky with a light almost as bright as a Troubleshotter getting vapourised!

Through the mist, the Troubleshooters should just be able make out the grim shape of a small, spired church; through its stained glass windows an orange light flickers wanly. Sombre organ music floats down on the breeze. All of a sudden...

**Whining Gms Note:** We interrupt this dead exciting bit with an important message. Deadlyville is, 'like, HUGE! But since it's unlikely that the team will ever get beyond this graveyard we haven't drawn a map. Yes, we know, but there it is. Should the Troubleshooters get away with something unexpected you will have to partake of the time-honoured gaming ritual known as 'wdrawing it'. You should also hang your head in shame that the PCs have got one over on you, and should resolve to kill the bums at the first likely opportunity.

All of a sudden... something large and dark creeps up behind a Troubleshotter and taps him or her on the shoulder. On turning round, the poor little Alpha Complexer comes face to face with Count Dracula in all his undead glory. The Count lifts his night-black cloak and wails 'Woooaassshhh!' (you know, just like he does in 'Scooby Doo') and then tries to bite the PC on the neck. (See the NPCs section at the end for all his personal details.)

While this is happening, the large leathery Gargoyles swoops down from the roof of the church, talons spread wide, and attacks the Troubleshooters from the air.

After two rounds of unadulterated mayhem, frantic screaming and soiled underwear, the Werewolf and Frankensteins's Monster lumber out of the mist and join the fray...

This battle should give you endless seconds of fun as the PCs trip over gravestones in the dark, shoot one another, narrowly avoid the clutching grasps of the monsters only to run into another one, and so on. If you want to simulate this battle on the table-top, give each of your players a Troubleshotter figure, let them place it in its starting position, then make them put on blindfolds. This will realistically simulate fighting undead monsters in a mudy graveyard at midnight in thick mist during a thunderstorm (well, almost - try opening a window, screaming a lot and filling their shoes with mud to add to the realism if you wish, but don't blame us for the consequences).

When all the killing is over give the PCs a few minutes to regroup (let the players catch their breath, gulp down some liquid refreshment and tear up their old character sheets) then hit 'em with this...

THE FINAL CONFLICT

It all goes quiet in the graveyard. The mist begins to clear and the storm quiets a little. Slowly, though, it dawns on the Troubleshooters that there is another sound - a scratching and rasp- ing noise. Without any warning whatsoever, and with a coordination worthy of a Japanese synchronised swimming team, a horde of undead Zombies burst out of their graves. The horrific creatures pull themselves up out of the ground in groups of 5 to 10, and begin to lumber towards the Troubleshooters (they may rumble 'Blood! Blood!' at your discretion).

The Troubleshooters have two obvious choices. They can run for the sinister church with the flickering lights and sinister organ music and...
hope to find sanctuary (are you kidding?), or they can get out the way they came in - down the steps! Of course, if they choose the latter they'll get about halfway down the passage before they realize that the door locked itself. By this time the Zombies will have reached the open grave at the top of the steps, and all means of escape will be cut off. (The door, incidentally, has a armor equivalent to plate, and should be treated as a vehicle for damage effects. Blowing this door off will give the Zombies access to the whole of Fantasia, and they will pursue the Troubleshooters until their dying... er, until they fall apart.)

Of course, Troubleshooters who feel that the church is a safer bet are in for a big surprise.

**THE CHURCH**

As soon as they pull open the large oak doors of the church, the Troubleshooters find themselves confronted with 6 hairy men clad only in loincloths and huddled around a bonfire. They will, of course, take up their arms and attack immediately, making no distinction between the living and the undead. The Troubleshooters will find themselves caught in the crossfire between half a dozen New World Explorers and a horde of ravening Zombies, all intent on killing them!

While this ghastly scene of mayhem and bloodshed continues, let us look around this pleasant little church, as depicted in Figure 5. It's a rather small little place, sparsely decorated with a few statues and carvings, though many have been flung to the ground and are broken. 1) is the pair of heavy oak doors, bound with iron, which the team flung open when they arrived. 2) is the pew, covered with some strange brown organic substance that has been polished up to look like genuine plastic. At 3) we find the pew which would once have held an angelic choir. 4) is the altar, now just a bare stone block. And of course at 5) there is the bonfire, around which once sat six hairy loonies, who are at this moment killing the Troubleshooters...

**JUST IN CASE SOMEONE SURVIVES...**

And so we draw a veil over this sorry scene of death and carnage. But wait! you say, my Troubleshooters are so hot they survived all this and are at this moment heading back out into the viewing auditorium with the intention of fleeing the place; what shall I do? Well, GM, get after 'em. All those Zombies ain't gonna let 'em go, now are they? And there are bound to be some more of those kairy New World Explorers, and securibots, and many more. Play the escape from Fantasia as a frenetic chase sequence and we can guarantee your PCs will have fun, even while they are dying. Well, maybe.

**THE DEBRIEFING**

There is no debriefing. This adventure should not be survivable unless you've really screwed up your GMing. Any survivors who claim to have come from ILM Sector will, of course, be lying (they may even be Commie spies trying to infiltrate Alpha Complex) and they will, of course, be executed for treason.

But... in the very unlikely event that a Troubleshooter does get back to Alpha Complex with a worthwhile piece of Old Reckoning Technology, they may be merciful (ahh you'd never catch us being merciful). This is, of course, providing the player thinks up a good report for his Troubleshooter and hands over a piece of equipment that is both operational and of obvious practical use. You'll just have to grit your teeth and make a note to kill his Troubleshooter next time. That'll teach him.

**THE NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS**

**The New World Explorers**

These loonies are a large group of travelling adventurers, made up of renegade Troubleshooters from another Alpha Complex. Their experiences Outside have driven each and every one of them crazy, such that they are now a group of homicidal maniacs - a condition that the reactivation of ILM Sector has only served to worsen.

None of them wear any armour, because they have long since discarded all Alpha Complex clothing in favour of loincloths and bear-skins. However, the New World Explorers took with them all the weapons and survival equipment that they could. The result is that the PCs may well find a good selection of kit from the Other Equipment Table on their bodies.

During play you can assume that each New Worlder has the same abilities and skills:

- Strength: 16
- Endurance: 15
- Agility: 12
- Manual Dexterity: 15
- Chutzpah: 15
- Mechanical Aptitude: 15
- Moxie: 15
- Power Index: 15
- Believability Bonus: 15
- Repair Bonus: 15
- Comprehension Bonus: 10
- Aimed Weapon Bonus: 10
- Believe: 10
- Survival: 10
- Mounting: 10
- Mechanics: 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Attributes</th>
<th>Secondary Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strength: 15</td>
<td>Carrying Capacity: 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endurance: 10</td>
<td>Damage Bonus: +1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agility: 12</td>
<td>Macho Bonus: -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual Dexterity: 15</td>
<td>Melee Bonus: +3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chutzpah: 15</td>
<td>Aiming Weapon Bonus: +10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Aptitude:15</td>
<td>Comprehension Bonus: -3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Index: 15</td>
<td>Believability Bonus: +5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair Index: 15</td>
<td>Survival Bonus: +15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Skills**

- Basics (1)
- Hostile Environments (1)
- Melee Combat (2)
- Aimed Weapons (2)
- Knife (3)
- Projectile (3)
- Personal Development (1)

As mentioned earlier, the New World Explorers are all well armed; to decide what weapons they are using, roll a D100 on this table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Die Roll</th>
<th>Weapon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>Hand laser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-18</td>
<td>Laser rifle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-30</td>
<td>Energy pistol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>Grenade / rifle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>Slugthrower *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>Slugthrower (semi-automatic) *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-75</td>
<td>Bow &amp; arrows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-85</td>
<td>Sword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-90</td>
<td>Forked sword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-00</td>
<td>Club</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates you should also roll on the following table for the type of shells used in the weapon:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Die Roll</th>
<th>Shell Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-40</td>
<td>Solid slug</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-60</td>
<td>Dum-dum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80</td>
<td>HE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81-00</td>
<td>AP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bots of the Central Gaming Area

Most of the NPCs encountered will be robots. These fall into two separate categories - the securibots (see the text earlier) and the...
Central Gaming Area bots. All the bots in the latter category share a common humanoid design, although their external appearance may vary wildly. Their bot brains contain programs which allow each bot to play its role in the scenario in question. However, just like the author, these programs have been corrupted. The bots cannot now distinguish between fantasy and reality. Nothing new here, you may say, most of White Dwarf's readers are the same; but in this case it means that the bots are going to actively try following their programmed motivations, and kill every they come across! Each bot has the equivalent of padding armour protection, but their abilities are quite different.

**Count Dracula:** The archetypal vampire, tall, thin and dark-haired. He comes complete with fangs and flowing cape. Combat Skill - unarmed, bite 40%. The Count's fangs are treated as Column 6 weapons.

**The Gargoyle:** This ghastly thing flies on leathery wings (rocket assisted, of course), and attacks with terrible blunt stone talons. Combat Skill - talon 35%. Each counts as brass knuckles for damage purposes.

**Werewolf:** Large, hairy and with his mouth in a permanent snarl, old Wolfe is not a pleasant character. He leaps at his victims, attacking with claws and fangs. Combat Skill - claws/fangs 45%. They count as knives for damage purposes.

**Frankenstein's Monster:** This one is big and tough and likes stomping on pesky little Troubleshooters. You know what old Frankie looks like - just describe him so he sounds scary instead of cute! In combat he just pummels away with his two oversized fists. Combat Skill - unarmed, fists 40%. Treat his hands as clubs for determining damage.

**Zombies:** Dressed in rotting shrouds, their skin hanging away in clumps to reveal their bulging inner organs, the Zombies are truly revolting things. They appear in all shapes, sizes and colours, and are armed with a variety of interesting weapons. To decide what to arm each one with, roll a D100 on the Zombie Weapon Table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Die Roll</th>
<th>Weapon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-30</td>
<td>Club (piece of bone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-50</td>
<td>Sword (old, jagged and rusty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-70</td>
<td>Knife (old, rusted and jagged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71-00</td>
<td>A different Club (a rock)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Yeti:** Though not encountered in the Central Gaming Area, the Yeti is of the same design as the other bots. This beastie is large, white and furry. Its two piercing red eyes lock onto a victim and continue to stare at it until its attack is over. Combat Skill - unarmed, fists 40%. Treat its fists as brass knuckles when working out damage.

**APPENDICES**

**PC Security Levels:** This adventure has been designed ideally for use by a Troubleshooter team of clearances YELLOW, YELLOW plus ORANGE, or ORANGE. It is assumed that Team Leader will be temporarily promoted to GREEN. If you want to use it with a higher group of PCs, make the bad guys tougher too!

**The Cavally - Send In The Clones:** The Computer will only supply clones when the team is absolutely desperate for them - when losses stand at 50% or more. It will take between 3 and 4 hours for a new clone to get to ILM Sector, and may then spend some time searching for the others (though their trail of destruction may not be too hard to follow).

**The Cooler:** Fantasia has a good way of dealing with troubleshooters. The securoids apprehend the offenders and drag them off to lock in small cells, hidden in a labyrinthine maze of corridors full of securoids and locked doors. Troubleshooters who are taken to The Cooler will never get out alive. Better still, don't waste time - kill them where they stand!

**Future Missions To ILM Sector:** This sector is quite large, and the troubleshooters will only scratch at its surface during this adventure. Hidden within it are power generators, bot production and maintenance facilities, store rooms and maybe other Gaming Areas too. If your players really hated this adventure, how could you fail to send them back here at the earliest opportunity?

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Aight, hands up all those who spotted where we stole the ideas for this adventure from them?

A wide selection of horror movies and spoofs, especially The Rocky Horror Picture Show.

The Scooby Doo Show (a great favourite of the editors).

And Dream Park by Larry Niven and Steven Barnes. Thanks chaps, and sorry we ripped you off.

(This adventure was developed for White Dwarf by the ever-vigilant servant of The Computer, Marc Gascoigne.)
Chained in a small, darkened room by the editorial bullies until I agreed to do ‘Easy Metal’. No food for days, no water, just notepaper and chewed biros pushed under the door... So...

In The Beginning...

There is nothing worse than finding a flash line on a figure, so the first job is to clean off all the bits of excess metal - the flash lines and the odd lumps that get left on the casting. A sharp blade and modelling files are the best tools for this job. Be careful doing this, as painting figures is a lot harder with stubby, shortened finger-ends. Once this is done, the figure can be firmly fixed to a base, using some sort of epoxy resin or superglue.

If you want the figure to have a scenic base, this is probably the best time to do the modelling - because we don't want to get putty on the painted model, do we? Scenic bases are easy to construct using any commercial modelling putty (Milliput or Kneadable putty etc) There's no need to buy any special tools, as I find a compass point or a pin are sufficient. Simply stippling the putty with the point of the compass will give an effective grass finish.

An easier way of achieving a grass effect is to mix sand and flock powder with PVA glue and then spread the resulting mixture on the base. Allow this to dry and the base is finished. If you leave the base until the figure has been painted and varnished, you can simply paint the base with PVA glue and then pour flock powder over it. All you then have to do is shake off the excess. All of this means that you don't have to bother with painting the base. There are other methods, but these are the three that I use.

Lurking Just Beneath The Surface...

After the base is finished, I undercoat the figure - using a matt white carbody primer in most cases. On the other hand, if the figure is heavily armoured, it gets a coat of black undercoat, as this gives a better base colour armour.

Once this base is thoroughly dry, I put a wash of (usually brown) ink over the whole figure. This helps to pick out the fine detail.

Once all this lot has dried, the real job of painting begins. As far as paints go, I use a mixture of Citadel Acrylics and artists inks. A number 1 or 2 sized brush is ideal as well, because a good quality sable has as fine a point as a size 0 or 00, and it can hold more paint at one go.

This month: Colin Dixon

A man who gets to sit around all day at Games Workshop - and do nothing but paint figures!

Little did Colin Dixon realise that when he entered the Chaos Battle Banner competition in the Citadel Compendium that he would win... Modest little chap. Little did he know that - as a direct result of his winning - John Blanché would actually offer him a job... Little did he know that one day he would appear on the pages of White Dwarf — a magazine he reads every night before going to bed... In fact, Colin didn't know a great deal, except about figure painting, at which he is moderately brill. OK, quite brill. Colin is also worshipped by an obscure sect of Cthulhuoid entities. One of these statements may be a lie.

Fig 1: Converted C15 orcs flying MAG-ies Death Banner
Figs 2-10: Samples of Colin's great shield designs.
Fig 11: Manfred (Heroic Fighters) from Citadel's latest boxed set.
Fig 12: C17 Skeleton.
Fig 13 & 14: Sauron the Dark Lord & Gandalf Greyhame, two upcoming additions to the Middle-earth range.
Fig 15 & 16: New F5 Paladins.
Fig 17. One of this month's new C35 Chaos Warriors.
Fig 18: C23 Ogre Executioner (available next month).
Fig 19 & 20: Some of the variants of the new addition to the Citadel Plastics Range, The Skeleton Horde.
Fig 21: ADD 80 Minotaur-one of Colin's best paint jobs to date.
Fig 22: The Black Ace Orcs stand ready for battle.
Fig 23 & 24: The new Skeleton Regiment of Rekown & the renegade Bugman's Dwarf Ranger's, coming soon from the Citadel Forges.
Flesh, Flesh!

I always start a figure with the flesh. I prefer to start work on areas of shadow and gradually build up to the highlights. The paint is thinned right down when applied in many layers like this, and the colours are blended on the figures as I go on.

The eyes sockets are covered in a darker tone of whatever flesh tint I am using on the rest of the figure. The eyeball then gets painted white. Once dry (and this doesn't take long), a dot of black in the centre of the eye sees it finished - unless you have a steady enough hand to manage a highlight in the eye. Faces get finished with a little red on the lips and cheeks, and I find that a wash of blue ink under the eyes and around the chin gives a really haggard look.

Hair and fur are possibly the easiest and quickest things to paint. Paint the whole of the furry/hairy area with the shade that you want, then use a wash of a darker tone over it. When all this is dry, mix a little white into some of the original shade and dry brush this over the whole area.

Dedicated Follower of Fashion

The clothing on a figure always looks more interesting when it is brightened up a little. Stripes, checks and dots are all quick and easy to do with a little practice. Why not paint each trouser leg a different colour? Virtually anything goes.

When painting iron or steel armour and metal I use three colours: black, chainmail and silver. The whole of the area that needs to be "iron" gets painted black (which is why the black undercoat gets used on heavily armoured figures). These bits are then drybrushed with chainmail and given a highlighting with touches of silver. Rust - on orcs or undead figures, for example - is easy to do using a mixture of red and brown. Run a wash of this mix over the whole surface and it will collect around rivets and joints.

Steel is done in much the same sort of way, but with a little more silver. A little blue, if mixed in the final silver highlights, gives an interesting effect. Gold, bronze and copper are all done in the same way, but using brown and various shades of yellow to arrive at the final look.

Chaos, Death and... Washes of Ink?

Any colour - not just the logical ones - can be used in metals. This is especially good for Chaos armour. First paint the armour as though it were iron or steel. Then, using very thin washes of ink, gradually build up the other colours. Just make sure that each layer has dried before moving on to the next. If this is used on weapons, such as swords, it gives them a really magical look.

Now that the Chaos armour is done, why not stick on a couple of runes? Everything looks and feels better for a good rune. Or alternatively, why not paint metal armour without using metal paint?

All sorts of metal finishes can be easily achieved although I think that gold, copper and bronze look best. The techniques used can be the same as for flesh and cloth, but it is best to keep away from dull colours. Washes of ink over metal bases are my favourites, but this does take a long time to reach a good finish.

I like to spend quite a lot of time on the shield if the figure has one. If the centre boss is removed and the hole filled in (with something like Milliput), this provides a better painting surface - which you can really go to town on. If you are stuck for ideas, it might help to get hold of a few heraldry or fantasy art books. Again, shields always look good with a few runes on them, although my favourite design - and the one I use most - is the good old skull.

Bring On The Sticky Little Fingers

It only remains to paint the base. All finished. Or is it? Along comes your younger brother or a friend with two right hands and with sticky little fingers - and "Sorry, didn't mean to touch it..." Wipe away your tears and get the varnish out. Personally, I prefer matt varnish, but I always give the figures a coat of gloss first.

Right, that's it. Whatever the results, never give up. Happy Painting.
Democracy is wonderful, if somewhat slow. You might remember the reader's poll that was included in the last issue. A simple job, so we thought, to sit down and collate all the replies. Not so. After a little over a week, the returned forms are in a not-so-little pile of 2000 or so (the previous record on returns being a few under 900, apparently). There will now be a short delay in announcing the results while Paul sits down, takes off his shoes and socks, and gets counting. However, the high response - and no sign of stopping yet - means that, for once, the views of the bulk of the readership will come to the fore, rather than those of a highly motivated (and perhaps unrepresentative) minority. If you're reading this before 1st September, you still have time to get your vote sent in.

Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the Dark Land of Mordor... comes MERP II, with completely revised rules, new cover art and a revised format as a boxed set and/or a 128 page perfect bound book. I'd love to be able to tell you more, but ICE don't seem to be answering the phone at the moment.

However, Palladium do answer the phone. So far, the 'sleepers' of 1986 has to be Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles & Other Strangeness. It's proved to be staggeringly popular in a quiet sort of way, so all those people who bought it will be pleased to know that TMNT Adventures is out. This is a 48-page adventure specifically for the Ninja Turtles themselves, and it also features a 10 page comic strip, specially commissioned for the module. After that comes Road Hogs, an 'After the Bomb' type supplement for TMNT.

One of the big problems with Paranoia is the box. OK, so you can keep all the rules things in one convenient place, but it's simply not hard enough for use as a patent all-action paranoia-inducer - ie you can't hit the players with the box without it undergoing severe deformation.

Fortunately, the hardback edition of the Paranoia rules can save the day. It has all the same old rules that every Commie Mutant Traitor already ignores, but the hardback is (A) cheaper and (B) a lot more intimidating than the box. Just think, real role playing - as Internal Security ask some difficult little questions - need no longer take place solely in the mind... Further good news on the Paranoia front is that all the US adventure are to be reprinted in the UK (which saves hard earned credits) as back-to-back double adventures. Better still, news of the latest adventure is that it is to be Orc Busters. The subject matter? Paranoia meets D&D...

If you like driving (over other people), Car Wars Expansion Set 9 gives you a load more game maps to do it on - and Uncle Albert's 1936 Update gives you lots more ways of doing it. Scheduled for an October release in the States, Expansion Set 10 will include counters from nearly everywhere: Dueltrack, assorted earlier Expansion sets and anywhere else a Car Wars counter might be lurking. Speaking of autoduning, GURPS, the Steve Jackson Games' role-playing system, is due to link in with Car Wars through GURPS Autoduel: a book format rpg supplement and/or source pack for role-playing in the Car Wars future.

For all you fans of tentacled horrors and gibbering loothensomes, Spawn of Astathoth ($35.95) is the latest Call of Cthulhu (aeww, you guessed) adventure pack. This is another boxed mega-scenario ($15.95) from those wonderfully fevered people at Chaosium. Why is it that CoC always seems to bring out the best in game writers?

Yet more news of the 900. After Paul Cockburn told you all those fibbities about it actually being available, apparently the manufacturers are having some problems with the moulds. However, its non-availability has not stopped people sending in 300 tables.

Meanwhile, back at the GW ranch, the big rules round up continues. Strange, gibbery conversations can be heard echoing down the corridors: 'Who's got insanity?' and 'Where's the poison?'... not forgetting 'AAARRGGGH HHHHH!!!' WFRP is proceeding as planned, although the name has been changed to WFRP (pronounced WOOF-rup) - Warhammer Fantasy Role-Playing.

WFRP/WFRP is being produced by (in their own words) 'the cream of the Games Workshop intelligentsia,' and only now can it be revealed that the character generation system includes over 100 skills and 100 possible careers (is this a record of some kind?)? that there are eight different sorts of wizard, plus clerics, druids and nuns who can use different sorts of magic; that there are millions (I think they are exag Garnering a smidge with this bit) of new and slightly used (in Warhammer Battle) monsters; that there will be two campaigns - background packs and lots of module-sized adventures - released almost immediately, one by Paul Vernon and the other by Graeme Davis, Jim Bambra and Phil Gallagher; that the 100mph horses have been taken out of the game (boo!); and that the WARS/WFRP book will include 'The Oldenhaller Contract,' a starting adventure by Richard Hilliwall.

WFRP/WFRP is currently on schedule for a 1st November release date, and as this is being written its just starting to go to typesetting and production. Next month's White Dwarf will include a special WARS/WFRP supplement as a taster for the system.

And finally, briefly mention of Slaughter Margin, the next adventure for the Judge Dredd RPG. This is going to be a boxed set, including maps. Judges will once more get the chance to prove that they are warm, wonderful, compassionate upholders of the Law... or (probably) not.

And finally, finally, the winners of the Beauty and the Beast competition were Simon Ayres, Noel Bateman, Daniel Cardle, Jason Cockcroft and Andrew McIntyre who will already have received their copies of Chris Achilleos' latest book, Sirens.

Sirens is a book full of calliphargan (look it up) images, and very well done they are too. Chris Achilleos' work has grasped many a cover of White Dwarf in the past, as well as book covers on works by major authors such as Michael Moorcock. However, Achilleos may not be quite so well-known to Dwarf readers as the producer of film posters... Unlike the previous book, Beauty and the Beast, Sirens includes text by Nigel Sleep, detailing Achilleos' methods of working. Sirens is an interesting read and, if all else fails, you can sit back and admire the quality of the artwork...
Journeys in time

by Stephen Palmer

You might not think fiddling with time and role playing would go together too well, but with a little effort they can be made to work, giving many extra options for scenarios and characters. Time has not always been dealt with terribly well by fantasy and sf authors (with a notable and fascinating exception being Gene Wolfe), and not at all by many role-players. I think it is worth a little consideration by GMs, the advantages of a workable system being many. I have fiddled with time in my own campaign, and it is curious how the various consequences and ideas have now become an integral part of the campaign, sometimes coming up without me noticing, sometimes pointed out by the

Theoretically, it is possible to move forwards in time relative to the rest of humanity (or whatever is your reference point) due to the Einstein time-dilation effect, which occurs at speeds approaching that of light. Unfortunately, Einstein's theories do not permit the reverse operation. However, since relativity is not normally an important part of average campaign, we shall dispense with these minor points for the purposes of this article...
Concepts of Time

These ideas of time in a universe or world could be closely associated with the idea of paradox. A paradox, in the time sense, is something in which two or more events conflict and cannot be resolved, or some event in which is apparently impossible — such as being your own father.

Organic Concept

This idea depicts time as something which will itself react to changes in its state. A paradoxical event cannot be attempted somewhere in the normal run of things, time will react in some way so as to either nullify or counteract it. For example, if a man were to go back in time and try to do something which would change history, an apparent paradox when seen in his eyes, it would either be impossible, or be later counteracted as to restore normality. Thus Alfred Zipp, a time-traveller off to assassinate President Kennedy in 1961, failed.

The idea is nicely illustrated in The Hitch-Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy, when Ford realises that nothing he does on the Earth two million years before the Vogons destroy it will affect anything — he and Arthur have already experienced the future, and know it will happen.

The alternative to simple failure is that the paradoxical event does happen, but providing it is minor compared to the major historical events, it will be unrecognised. This type of universe would be different to the one above, since here minor paradoxes can exist. Major ones can not, or will be counteracted (see Major and Minor Events).

Both these types postulate a Universal Time Continuum (UTC), the normal flow of time, if you like. It is interesting to note that most people conceive of time as a river. Gene Roddenberry in The Book of the New Sun, saw it as a sea, with currents and other movements, and this can be a useful analogy and imagining aid.

Parallel Worlds

The cases above where paradoxes can exist lead to a fascinating idea, that of alternative universes. There are an infinite number of them, in which every possible path of history is followed. Each universe has its own unique UTC, but can only be entered by someone doing something temporally unnatural in their own universe which actually happened in another, parallel world.

This concept is very nicely illustrated by an episode of Star Trek called City on the Edge of Forever. Dr. McCoy, in a bout of drug induced insanity, jumps through a time-portal into the America of the 1930s. He there does something that changes the course of history relative to Kirk and the rest — the Enterprise disappears since in this non-universe it never existed. The landing party are stranded. Kirk and Spock go back to determine what McCoy did and try to stop it by appearing before he does — using the time portal again. It turns out that someone has to stop McCoy rescuing an influential social worker from death: if she lives America delays its entry into World War II and Nazi Germany develops the atomic bomb first, subsequently either capturing or destroying the world. Kirk does stop McCoy and they return to their own universe in the process. The parallel universe idea is only implied by this episode, not explicitly stated.

The parallel universe concept is very interesting in that it allows paradoxical events (which are always fascinating and a superb source of rpg ideas!) but also ways of stopping or reversing them. It assumes one true universe, that is experienced by the players' campaign. Apart from City being a beautifully written and moving story, there is one other interesting point — Kirk, just before he and Spock leave, tells the rest of the landing party that they too must go back and try to do the task, once they think sufficient time has passed (relative to them). There are a multitude of scenarios coming from that idea!

Robert Heinlein, in his Number of the Beast, introduced a similar and rather clever idea. A professor discovers there are three dimensions of time as well as space, which implies six to the power six to the power six universes — a very large number. Each is related to the normal universe (again there is a true or normal home universe) but they get more and more distorted and unusual as you move out along the six axes. Again, there is plenty of scope here for ideas — such as people of the other universes also having the means to travel them and go about their various businesses, nefarious or otherwise. In the book, the main characters had such a means, built into a futuristic car.

Foci

The Star Trek episode mentioned above combines another idea into its plot. The influential social worker who must die is a focal point in time, to which temporally moving persons or objects are drawn. This idea could work in a number of universe types — in the parallel universe concept, it would work just as in the Star Trek story, the characters being inevitably drawn to the point however they act. It would also work quite nicely in the major and minor event type below — here, all paradoxes involving these focal points would be major ones, and forbidden by the forces of time, but minor ones could be allowed. These wouldn’t involve the focal points at all, which are the fundamentally important events and persons of history. These are inviolate.

Major and Minor

Following from the organic concept and the idea of foci we can construct another idea. “World History” consists of major events — who after all has heard of Alfred Zipp, who went back in time and stole a few mint 1900 pennies for his collection? Extending this, we could have a universe where minor paradoxes can occur, but major ones cannot. Anything which would alter collective species or racial history, such as the death of a world leader, would be a major paradox, and the vast forces of time would stop it happening.

The Paradoxical Universe

The opposite to the organic universe is the paradoxical universe. Here, all historical events are only inviolate with respect to the working of the universe — paradoxes can and must happen so that history, according to someone at the end of time, is correct i.e. the paradoxes themselves are an integral part of history. Time-travellers would provide the paradoxes.

The Web Concept

This is a diffcult idea to sustain and use, but has interesting points. The UTC is infinite, and can be altered at will by anyone with such ability. History is not inviolate at all, and thus paradoxes are perfectly possible. History will thus depend only on people’s memories – it will be possible for two people to experience the same portion of history in completely different ways. This idea requires a rather free and easy campaign (temporally speaking) but has an option for conflict between opposing groups who want to order events in their own ways. In fact, any important part of the campaign could be changed and changed again many times, if the people involved were very persistent. They would have serial memories of all the re-runs, and the decisions that were made when undertaking them, but each re-run would have to completely cancel the previous one.

For example, suppose there are two time travelling opponents, Alfred Zipp and Jim Smith. These two fight a battle which Alf wins — but then Jim goes back and changes the outcome by using a sword and the UTC from that point on is
changed. Then Alf goes back with a pistol, and wins the fight. Jim escapes, but goes back with a laser cannon... and so on. Each man would have serial memories of the various re-runs, but according to some-one else, the result, and history from there on, would be according to the last re-run: Jim and the laser cannon.

One problem emerging from the web concept is that of meeting yourself if you go back in time. Why shouldn’t Jim meet himself fighting Alf when he goes back? The answer is to remove the old Jim from the UTC as soon as a new Jim enters; as the UTC is altered he can either re-live the future events he has in his memory, or live them a different way. As I said, this concept is very free and easy, and rather difficult to imagine in use. I think it would have to be used in a specifically time-orientated campaign, and probably not a very serious one...

The Seas of Time

A viable alternative to all of the above is to use either a self-consistent adaption of one, or any other interesting variation. There is a lot to be said for making a temporal system less cut-and-dried; this will give time-manipulation a more mysterious and sacred air, which is beneficial. It also leaves room for GMs to improvise events as they desire, within a framework of some sort. The Sea idea could be used here allowing temporally freed characters abilities or effects as necessary, rather than designating them all exactly right from the start. However, as I have said, it is wise to determine in advance the framework of a temporal system otherwise great confusion can result!

Travellers in Time

Most fantasy and sf authors allow their time-hopping characters extraordinary intelligence and truly remarkable memory. They have to remember vast tracts of history, relate to many different eras, and be conscious of virtually the entire continuum. Whilst a special being with time-related abilities should be able to do this, your average man such as Alfred Zipp, who accidentally discovers a time-machine or was born with special mental abilities should not — at least not initially. Alfred Zipp would, I think, be very confused, reacting somewhat imperfectly to his situation. It would take a lot of subjective time for him to sort out his memories; and as he would be unsure as to what was happening when he started out he might never fully understand. Having said that, confused or rather uncertain time-travellers do make superb NPCs, and many a plot can be hung thereon.

I have found two methods of involving PCs and time-travel in my own D&D campaign. One is never to allow the players to go back in time, apart from brief and cry controlled forays when they cannot, or don’t want to, do anything paradoxical. Travel into the future is fine however, presenting a lot less difficulty! The alternative, and this is very useful in a historical-type campaign, is to establish the players home time, and allow brief journeys back and forth from there, always returning to the same era. Careful design can ensure paradoxes are avoided. One of the most rewarding thing is that players are allowed to research and experience history without recourse to inaccurate half-remembered legends and dusty old scrolls, although these undoubtedly have their uses!

In the special being category, there are a number of interesting options. It could be that the vast impersonal forces of time, which might disallow or subtly reverse paradoxes, are personified by one or more special beings. It is their duty to exist in the UTC and keep or bring about normality. Alternatively, the beings could be part of the paradoxic universe, watching for the key historical figures to appear and then ferrying them back or forwards to perform their historical function.

Another possibility is that the whole of time itself is personified by one or more beings (time was often thought of like this, as in the Old Father Time figure of many mythos). These beings would thus allow or disallow events as they saw fit, shaping history as they desired. Though such figures would fit in the paradoxic universe, they are perfectly suited to the major/minor concept.

Abilities

Apart from time-travelling, with or without others, beings who have temporal abilities might have other powers — for example, the increase or decrease of the rate of time passing could be altered. Perhaps a friendly pigeon might help a D&D party raid a temple by slowing their subjective time-flow, maybe doubling the amount of time they have to do the job. This can be extended to allow super slow and haste effects. Timeslip is already available, but only to twentieth level MUrs, being the end-point of the slow effect. Another possibility is that rather than beings being transportable through time, only objects can be so treated. This gives rise to many interesting ideas, such as messages from the past or future, technological items coming down through time to end up as magic items or artifacts, and so on. It also limits the impact of time manipulation for GMs who don’t want to risk the full implications of beings travelling in time!

Another interesting possibility is the alternation of events by the deletion or insertion of chunks of time. Perhaps a part could complete a temple raid mission by the insertion of an extra hour into their subjective time continuum. Time deletion would work best in the parallel universe concept; each deletion meaning a new universe where the deleted events didn’t happen. Time insertion could work in most universe types.

Another ability is time navigation — the observation of events, normal or paradoxical, when analysing the UTC. This ability can be used in universes where time manipulation doesn’t exist — it is basically prophecy for future navigation, or scrying the past for the reverse. In temporally active universes, it is also a useful ability to possess!

Alternatively, the concept of personal time continuums (PTC) could be used. Every living being has a PTC, and these can be analysed by time navigators — simply telling your fortune! Each person, PTC beings at his birth, but ends at his natural death. PTCs are also useful aid in imagining the time insertion process. In the example above, the temple raid, each party members PTC would have an extra hour put in that nobody else had — thus, only in their memories did they seem to have had the extra hour. If they were not in the same position at the beginning and end of this hour, a person observing from the outside would see them disappear and then reappear instantly, “flicking” to the position they occupy at the end of the hour.

But PTCs do not necessarily have to be added to. Imagine the consequences of deleting the portion of a person’s PTC where a death (other than that by natural causes, which is right at the end of his PTC and inviolate) occurs, and pushing the cut ends together. Not only death, but injuries, diseases and a multitude of other events could be deleted and avoided...

Of course, anyone could become immortal by continuously inserting time into his PTC, but personally I wouldn’t accept this, certainly not for a PC! Death could be caused by the deletion of all but the beginning and end of the PTC — there is no possible way for the victim to retaliate I wouldn’t let happen!

I hope I have given some useful ideas here, but I would caution GMs (from my own experience) that it is wise to finalise their own concepts of time before trying any manipulation — otherwise things can get somewhat tangled!