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The time's they're a changing... and so is White Dwarf.
And part of this process is experimentation with what goes in Dwarf and the way it is presented. The 16-page adventure format, for example, allows us to put more material in than you might suppose - more than two smaller adventures put together, in fact. There's nearly as much in a WD 16-pager as in an ordinary 'module' you find sitting on a game shop shelves!
The 16-page RuneQuest adventure was a big hit - even with people who don't play RQ. The positive response to the RuneQuest adventure (even from non-RQers) has persuaded us that this size of feature is an idea worth carrying forward; not every issue, of course (well, not just yet), but on a regular basis.
These (and the other extras that Dwarf will be including in future) are going to make the next year quite interesting.

And besides all that, the 10th birthday issue is coming up as well!
This Dwarf, however, is special because we welcome a refugee and interloper from Warlock: Derek the Troll!
I think you'll find this lovely little... erm... thingie from Lew Stringer a more-than-worthily addition. From now on, he'll alternate with Gobbledigook (see page 59 for more details!).
Now, I suppose, we need is somebody to write a 16-page Derek adventure with pull-out extra bits...

Mike Brunton

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ISBN 0265-9712
rules to a sophisticated fantasy game which has been tried, tested and revised over the years.

The rules in this hardback comprise the core elements of the RuneQuest Third Edition. RuneQuest III has been stripped down almost to basics, leaving a detailed and proven system behind. This is more complicated than the system used for Call of Cthulhu, placing more emphasis on combat and character generation, but it is recognisably the same game.

The game utilises an effective skill system making it possible to carry out all manner of tasks. Skills relating to combat are obviously important, but there are lots of skills which make possible a wide range of non-combat actions. Characters can fast talk, orate, speak other languages and call upon all sorts of agility, knowledge and manipulation skills. Progression is handled in a simple and logical fashion, characters gain increased proficiency by using their skills successfully in stressful situations, such as picking a lock while being chased by the town guards or persuading those very same guards that you're not the one they're looking for. After the adventure is over, characters get the chance to improve any skills successfully used. Characters who dedicate themselves to training can also increase their proficiency.

The magic system is easy to use and has three types of magic - spirit, divine and sorcery. The system fits in well and it is possible for any character to learn and use magic.

Character generation is involved, but it is clearly explained and easily grasped. A character's background, whether from a Primitive, Nomad, Barbarian or Civilised culture affects his or her starting weapon skills. Personal characteristics directly affect a character's starting skills and are used frequently in play to determine a character's chance of success.

This version of RuneQuest, however, lacks a proper GM's section and therefore may not be ideal for anyone who has never played a roleplaying game before. Experienced gamers will have no problem in designing and running their own adventures, but beginners are left high and dry, which is a pity.

There are a few irritations with this edition: on a couple of occasions mention is made to sections of the rules which are just not in this version. The game works well without these sections, but being told to look for them is annoying and leaves you thinking that it is incomplete. A more thorough proofreading would have picked up these problems and left a much slicker product.

RQIII will mean different things to different people. Beginners should perhaps leave it until they are familiar with a more introductory system. Owners of RuneQuest II will find it useful as a cheap means of converting to RQIII rules. Experienced players of other games will find much in RuneQuest to recommend it and at £8.95 it is superb value and well worth getting even if you never intend to actually play it.

Peter Green
For quite a few years now various people at GW have been muttered about the rumors of a new sourcebook for Call of Cthulhu. Nothing ever seemed to come of the idea, though, and the more everyone talked about it the less likely it seemed it would ever happen. Well, to everyone's surprise, then, to suddenly see an ad for Green & Pleasant Land in last month's issue.

The content of the first half of this packed 80-page softback is pretty much what you'd expect - source material covering just about every aspect of life in Britain in the 1920s. There are expansions to the Cthulhu character generation rules covering British characters, including the innovative new idea of war experience and its resultant effects on a person's SANITY! There is a large and well-informed piece on occult activities at the time, and the expected timeline of important events, mysterious happenings and the like, though I did notice that one of the great disasters of the day was apparently Bradman scoring some phenomenal amount at the time the sections cover expected things like prices and money.

Lords of Middle-earth (LOME) is described as a 'Fantasy Character Compendium'. In this way it is a bit like book of monsters or characters such as TSR put out for AD&D or Mayfair for DC Heroes.

The basic idea of the LOME volumes is to provide, in handy reference form, a large batch of medium-high (and beyond) level characters. The characters are drawn, in the first place, from the works of JRR Tolkien, particularly The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings. Others have been added from the campaign supplements which ICE have published to date, such as Lorien and Ardor.

The result is an impressive volume. The production standards are very high, with a colourful McBride cover and numerous Liz Danforth interior illustrations. This first volume of LOME includes 'The Immortals' - Elves, Maiar and Valar. Anyone familiar with Tolkien's work will recognise the latter, the universe of Middle-earth, being of immense natural power who shaped the land and history of Tolkien's world. A thorough, almost archaeological, (including excerpts from Harrod's catalogue), vehicles, weapons, gentleman's clubs, train routes, notable personalities of the time, and so on.

Most of the detail in this section could probably be found by a lot of diligent searching through a well-stocked library, but it's very useful to have it all in one place. I couldn't spot any glaring inaccuracies in the information on Cthulhu By Gaslight, and the occasional humorous interlude (such as the Mummerset primer for keeper's who want to speak like an authentic yokel) provide a lively balance to the more mundane matters of things. The writing is good, and Dwarf readers should recognise many of the names that compiler Pete Tamlyn has gathered to assemble the pack.

The second half of the pack provides three first-class adventures which seem designed specifically to take the investigators all over the country. Death In The Post features just that - a campaign of threatening letters to prominent people which encourages our heroes to journey around the country to try to warn their intended recipients before it's too late. The Horror of the Glen takes the characters to Scotland for a spine-chilling murder investigation, in which anyone reaching the conclusion that 'the butcher did it' won't live to see the dawn! And finally, the adventure I shall be inflictimg on my poor players first, Shadows Over Darkbank, wherein a boating holiday takes a decidedly sinister turn in an old canal tunnel. All three are well-written and imaginative, and will prove to be popular with keepers and investigators alike.

Add to this a short story by British Mythos writer Brian Lumley, which serves to further set the scene (another good idea, Mr Tamlyn), and you've got an incredibly useful and important package. Although it's a bit of a cliché, it's probably true that no Cthulhu referee can afford to be without this supplement.

Robert Neville

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The authors have done a good job of interpreting powers and abilities of the very major characters, especially given the limitations of MERP. Many of them appear to have been made up for individual characters, such as Ulmo's 'tele-moving' power and Tulkas' ability to 'Laugh' and cause opponents to die of fright! There is, however, a strange pursuit of pointless stats: who cares that Manwe has a +250 Skinning bonus? The book is well structured. It starts off with the most powerful group, the Valar, then goes on to cover the Maiar and the greater Eldar (Elves), detailing each section in alphabetical order. Following these is a section on some 'lesser' elves and then a final look at some of the Great Enemies, including Sauron.

The sections each start with an overview of things associated with the race covered. These notes are very useful and well constructed. The most notable characters also have extensive notes (Sauron has four pages). And in addition to this, you also get remarks on how to deploy high level characters in your game.

There is no doubt that this book is very useful. It will be of less use if you've already got a lot of the MERP packages, since the Valar and the Maiar are unlikely to make many appearances, but for those who are interested in Tolkien's world and are running (or want to run) a campaign there, LOME is excellent source material.

Two modules for AD&D characters of levels 8-10, both with a distinctive setting and atmosphere, but of very different quality.

Two modules for AD&D characters of levels 8-10, both with a distinctive setting and atmosphere, but of very different quality.

**Day of Al'akbar** invites the PCs to save Arabian lands from a red plague by retrieving a magical artefact. This involves a few token (and both pointless and silly) wilderness encounters, dungeon-crawling in a sewer, tomb-robbing, detective work in a desert town, and the (probable) big shoot-out in the Sultan's palace.

Two modules for AD&D characters of levels 8-10, both with a distinctive setting and atmosphere, but of very different quality.

The town map included in the package is moderately useful, and the Arabian environment is persuasively detailed, but this is an uninspired effort. There are some niggling errors in the text, NPC's who are more noticeable for their numbers than their believability, and some really tiresome things like an elaborately trapped room with the key to getting through it encoded in intranslatable doggerel verses on the door. Must we still suffer this kind of thing?

The only noteworthy thing about this pedestrian effort is Jeff Essley's scexplotation cover. Note to TSR: sales of soft porn mags are in sharp decline, so can we have less of this offensiveness please?

**Ravenloft II: The House on Gryphon Hill** is an altogether superior effort, a strong sequel to *Ravenloft* (and *Ravenloft* is playable alone or as a sequel to *Ravenloft*). Straf von Zavorich is back, but he's not quite the same... I can't say much more without spoiling the strong plot and numerous surprises.

Structural elements from *Ravenloft* are used here once again - variable NPC goals, variable locations for key objects and the like - so that *Gryphon Hill* will play differently each time it is used. But the old tricks are given new twist. The old gypsy card-reader from *Ravenloft* is a mesmerist in *Ravenloft*, for example. And this is no simple re-run. The plotline is very complex, PC/NPC interactions are much more important in *Ravenloft*, and key events are used to keep the action going and direct the adventure.

There are one or two quibbles: some of the allegedly minor encounters are rather over-the-top, reminiscent of the infamous wandering monster tables from *Ravenloft* (2-36 nights!), and it's a lot of work for the GM. Forget the 'Read through this and be familiar with it before you run it...' spiel, you'll need to go through this at least three times. But then, this is a module with twin Keeping-aids (note that *Ravenloft* is a lot better value than *Ravenloft* with more pages and a much better fold-out section), and the effort is well worth it. Lots of monsters, plenty of roleplaying, lots of offstage action, items and crucial information to be gathered, and topped off with an excellent ending. What more could you ask? Excellent, highly recommended.

Carl Sargent

**WHITE DWARF** 3
WYRDWORLD 1: WINTERSFARNE
Generic FRP Adventure
Strange Acorn Games
£5.50

Wintersfarne is the first in a series of fantasy role-playing adventures produced independently by Strange Acorn Games of Weybridge, Surrey. Physically, it is a 32-page A4 booklet in a card cover, typeset on a word-processor with computer-drawn maps. It is designed to be systemless, but there are notes on using Wintersfarne with AD&D, RuneQuest and Rolemaster/MERP. An imaginative referee should be able to use it with any system. Overall, the production quality is good, with the standards that might be expected of a quality fanzine; the type is legible, the computer-drawn maps are plain but functional, and the interior art is quite reasonable - indeed, many 'professional' publications do a lot worse.

The plot concerns itself with the prosperous island and market town of Wintersfarne. Castle have been vanishing, and so have the people set to guard them. Is it rustlers or bandits? Has the long-dead wizard returned to haunt his tower? Actually, the rationale behind the events is novel and interesting, and the adventure is based on thought and role-playing rather than mindless mayhem. It needs careful preparation - the more so because it is systemless, and the system-related notes at the back are rather sketchy - but should be well worth the effort.

Wintersfarne is an interesting adventure, and will be enjoyed by a players who prefer thought, investigation and roleplaying to hack and slay. Other points in its favor include the fact that the island and town are re-usable as a setting. Points against it are the dependence on a monster from a very early issue of WD (although this can be found in The Best of White Dwarf Articles I and is very well-used), the amount of preparation required, and the price, which is dictated by the size of the operation. On the whole, though, this is worth looking at if you want a change from dungeon-bashing, monster-pulping adventures.

Within their limitations Strange Acorn Games have done very well. The two in the series, Woldesley and West Haven, will be worth looking out for if they maintain the standards set by Wintersfarne.

Graeme Davis

TROLLS OF THE MISTY MOUNTAINS
MERP Adventure
Iron Crown Enterprises
£3.95

Trolls is the third in ICE's series of ready-to-run adventure modules for MERP. Like the others, it employs a standard format of three adventures linked by area, and of increasing difficulty. There is an introduction and a selection of 15 pre-generated characters which can be used either by the players or as NPCs and hirelings. The introduction also gives an overview of the martial elements in the region, some of which are involved in the following adventures. One big problem immediately sprang to my mind here: nowhere does it say exactly where this area lies, and there are no points of reference to other adventure/campaign modules as has happened before.

The three adventures are all static, but linked by the idea of a group of adventurers hired to clear a passage through a wood ready for a road-building team to follow, so that two strategic towns can be linked. For each adventure there are descriptions of NPCs (quite full, with notes on outlook, personality, motivation and so on), well-mapped and specified locations, and finally notes on the tasks involved and encounters which the GM can introduce. The maps, although well-drawn, are lacking in keys and labelling, making it a bit difficult to work out where different locations are.

The first adventure is relatively simple (aimed at beginning level characters) involving the titular trolls, with one or two interesting twists. The second adventure is somewhat more involved with more meat for the players to get their teeth into (erm... I thought that was what the trolls were meant to do...) and some interesting characters. The third adventure is the big 'set piece' finale. The player characters must be strong and lucky enough to survive the descent into Maes Fiao in search of long-lost treasure; there are sinister lurkers in the gorges.

Although the adventures are quite good, there is something missing in this pack. Occasionally the language and ideas get somewhat childish (without the spirit of their inspiration, The Hobbit, whose trolls are both dangerous and humorous); and there is something perhaps less than original in its basis. Although useful for a GM without time to produce their own adventures, the module slips a little from the excellent standards previously set by ICE.

Graham Stapleton

MEKTION & ROADSTRIKER
Robot Wargame/RPG & Vehicle Supplement
Talsorian Games £9.95 (Mektion) & £5.95 (Roadstriker)

For all you anime fans in Dwarfland, heere's Mektion! Anime is what the Japanese call their giant robot cartoons, yet uninitiated. Toppling skyscrapers under its armoured feet, it advances across the desk, 11 inches tall and 100 pages of gleaming metallic destruction raising deadly weapons, ready to obliterate the helpless reviewer...

It's all done in the best possible taste, this Mektion - nice and easy to read, with a streak of humour running all the way through. We get straight on to the drawing board, and a section on Mek design that shows us how to build a huge Robot just like in the cartoons. Nothing complicated here - your pilot starts off with a budget of 40 construction points and a warehouse full of interesting bits and can let his imagination run amok (within certain limits). All Meks have a Torso, Limbs come in pairs etc. For you power hungry dictators, the limit of constructions points may be set at whatever you prefer.

The game can be used as a means of staging Mek-combat if you wish, and it provides a simple but adequate combat system that reflects the screen action very well. Initiative, my usual gripe, is worked out before the fighting begins, based on the weight of your Mek (light ones act before heavier ones), and there's the option of adding a d10 to your side's Reaction speeds. Most weapons do a set number of Kills in damage (Meks have some many Hit Points that it's easier to work in Kills - 1 Kill = 10 Hits); exceptions are melee combat and Grappling, in which respectively damage is multiplied or extractions are available. Smartly done overall.

The roleplaying section deals with character creation (for which you can resort to a system of tables and die rolls if lazy or plain uninspired), occupations, a couple of handfuls of skills, roleplaying combat rules (man-to-man and expansions of Mektion-Mek), personal improvement and the like. The books rounds out with a sourcebook for Algol (the authors' own world), and a very simple scenario.

Roadstriker expands the rules on multiform Meks, specifically vehicles, and reminds one a great deal of Car Wars in flavour. The historical transformables on Algol is studied, and the players get the chance to join the Mecha Police in a more involved scenario, Arcadian Deathride - which kicks off in an episode entitled 'My Anime Vice'. Like I said, the best possible taste.

In all, a most worthwhile effort - not as slick as FASA's Mechwarrior or Battletech, but admirably simple and flexible.

Phil Frances
Bad Dreams
I rolled the dice and looked up the Critical Hits table, under Spine. Your review
smashes brutally through the book's spine and ploughs on to carve a jagged smoking
tail of destruction from pages 17 to 231. The shattered volume lies sunned at your
feet, its future sales potential pumping uselessly forth from the severed arteries.
This effort to make my prose more tasteful comes courtesy of Paul Cockburn and a
freebie copy of Warghammer, but I don't think I've mastered it yet.
Publishers currently love raw-horror novels thick with severed arteries, steaming
entrails, and mutilated parts of the body which your editor won't let me mention:
numbingly over-the-top stuff which leaves no room for the spider touch of fear. Ramsey
Campbell's The Hungry Moon (Century 293pp £9.95) is very different, full of that
dim uncertain moonlight where terrors breed. It has unnervingly realistic roots, beginning
with a moorland village taken over by the sort of fundamentalists who frighten me:
authoritarian, intolerant, glib Biblical answers for everything, and no time for that soppy
New Testament stuff about love and charity. (These are the people who want to burn your
D&D kit, folks.)
As a few sympathetic characters struggle in the tightening web of paranoia, the stage
is set for a different brand of darkness to creep in from the margins. A particularly ungratifying
Ancient Evil, with a taste for evangelists and full awareness of the possibilities of the nearby
missile base... Even at his most apocalyptic, Campbell understates the horror and
leaves your imagination to work, as in the epigraph: "...to see the moon, to feed her
as she must be fed, and never to look upon her feeding." Definitely a book to make you
draw the curtains and turn up the central heating.

Cheer up with Terry Pratchett's Equal
Rites (Gollancz 200pp £9.95), his third
screw and dotty (but never, the author insists, wacky or zany) fantasy from the
Discworld. Although much has been said in WD, this time, an intermittently
serious plot underlines the comic exuberance. A wizard passes on his staff and talent, as is
traditional, to the (seven plus one)th son of a (twice four)th family. Even there's a
tiny error in sex, and the young heroine finds herself equipped for a profession which has
approximately as many vacancies for females as the Presidency of the USA. Her quest for
equal rights at Unseen University produces plenty of funny one-liners, plus comic-horrible
scenes with the Things from the 1966 Dimensions, as described in the
fictional Necrotelecom or Liber Page and White Church. 'The whole thing had
a self-assembled look, as if the owner had heard about anatomy but couldn't quite get
to grips with the idea.' Good fun.

Robert Sheckley reissues keep turning up: a new novel comes as a surprise. Victim
Prime (Methuen 203pp £9.95) is a straight though sometimes tongue-in-cheek SF adventure,
recycling Sheckley's favourite satirical theme of the Cretan instead of combat the death.
By 2092 the world has fallen apart in a depressingly low-key way; our slow slide
to extinction is enlivened only by bread-and-circuses spectacles like the Hunt - 'Killer'
played for keeps in a holiday resort. It moves well enough, but despite ingenious plots
and counterplots has a touch of staleressness:
Sheckley imitating Sheckley. ('Poor fellow,'
goes the gossip in the Reviewers' Club.

Douglas Adams Syndrome, y'know...)
The Greenhill classic reprints keep coming:
Tourmaline's Time Cheques by F
Anstey (Greenhill 173pp £8.95) is the most
interesting yet. I was boggled to note that this
light-hearted fantasy of time-slips and
paradoxes first appeared in 1885, ten years
before Wells' Time Machine. During a
long sea voyage, Tourmaline gets the chance
to deposit his boring shipboard hours in a
Time Bank, to earn interest and be reclaimed
when needed. When he cashes his time cheques
he lives the hours he's banked, not in
the right order: shipboard romances
and scandals are hopelessly shuffled, and Anstey
can only resolve things by a hoary literary device
which appears in large print on this
page. Otherwise, it's still fun. Planetoid 127
by Edgar Wallace (Greenhill 148pp £8.95) is
more for specialist collectors: a rare SF
venture by the doyen of back thrillers. Prof.
Colson communicates via 'sound-strainer
with Earth's sister planet, hidden on the other
side of the Sun (oh dear), and makes financial
killings because stock market events
there are 'echoed' here three days later, except
sometimes...

Short Circuit (Sphere 186pp £2.50) is
the book of the film by 'Colin Wedgecock'
(said to be an SF author whose real name
you would know). The gimmick is an
unstoppable, laser-toting, missile-killing robot which
as a result of the traditional Frankensteinian
lightning bold 'comes alive' and decides that
disassembling robots, or people, is a bad
thing. Its new, self-programmed response to
enemy attack is 'Run away, hide, telephone
police!' I haven't seen the film, but the

novelization is taut and funny: ultimate
weapons which fancy themselves at disco
dancing are OK by me.

John Tully's NatFact 7 (Magnet 208pp
£1.75) is another with critical things to say
about politics. Its next-century Britain, not
too unbelievable or nightmarish, features
sharper distinctions than ever before between winners ('Qualified Citizens') and losers
('Nuts' on permanent national service). Dissent bubbles over at Natfact 7, part open
prison and part assembly line, with a familiar cast of undercover revolutionaries, fanatics,
infiltrators and one ideologically unsound
sceptic (about everything) who's the most
appealing character. Following the old
arguments about the justifiability of violence
and ultimate worth of revolution, all ends in
a state of realistic confusion with just a tiny
gain for the forces of good... and Tully
instructs you to think of your own moral,
Punchy and hard-hitting for 'young adult' SF,
but a little too slick for its own good.

Though not keen on T E D Klein's inter
meatable horror novel, I liked his Dark Gods
(Pan 259pp £2.50) - four stories at just the traditional length for flesh
creeper yarns about the accursed blind
things which inhabit New York's sewers but
never clearly seen, or the fugitive
which looks like a black man in scuba gear and
is closing in on an old literary acquaintance
of H P Lovecraft's. The atmosphere
of urban sleaze works well as with Ramsey
Campbell, the suave but sharp-witted
man from existing nervousness about (say)
the parts of town where you wouldn't walk after
dark. Low Pavement, for example, in
terror- haunted Nottingham.

Does anyone remember when Roger
Zelazny was a hot new author who could do
no wrong? The 1973 collection The Doors of
His Face, the Lamps of His Mouth
(Methuen 211pp £2.50) brings it all back,
with the famous title story and 14 more.
Some are jokes or trivia, and a few personal
favourites are omitted ('The Graveyard
Heart,' 'For a Breath I Tarry'), but there are
enough goodies here to prove this author had
more in his type than a SF novel.

Chris Drumrn runs the smallest of small
presses out in Iowa, producing neat and
cheap booklets which are doomed to be
sought-after collectors' editions: stories,
excerpts, memories, the latest is a
tiny literary autobiography from Nebula
winner Richard Wilson: Adventures in the
Space Trade Plus A Richard Wilson
Checklist (Drumrn 36pp £2, from Chris
Drumrn Books, PO Box 445, Pek City,
Iowa 50226, USA). That's a post-free price
(the John Sladek booklet Love Among the
Xoids is only $11). If you can locate a
couple of dollar bills in the first place.

And while I'm at it, don't forget Britain's
SF magazine Interzone (£6/year to 124
Osborne Road, Brighton, BN1 6LU) and
Conspiracy '87, the World SF Convention making its once-a-decade visit to these
unAmerican shores: a week of desperate SF fun in Brighton on and around the August
bank holiday (£25 to PO Box 43, Cambridge,
CB1 3JU... or SAE for details).

(roll another 1d6 and consulted the
table, 'The White Dwarf' section slip slices
blurringly through your pitiful ego defences
to smash with maximum impact on your
forebrain, splattering through unprotected
grey matter and coating the surroundings up
to a distance of 10' with a thick spray of
despair.' Oh, I shall never learn the subtleties
of this.)
Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay
The View from the Design Studio

Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay. Where to start... At the beginning, we suppose, with a set of Warhammer Fantasy Battle rules. WFRP was originally conceived as a supplement for Warhammer Fantasy Battle, rather than a game in its own right. Richard Halliwell and Rick Priestley, two of the leading lights of Warhammer Fantasy Battle, set to work on it, but it grew and grew until it became obvious that WFRP would have to be a game in its own right.

It was at some time after this that GW moved to Nottingham, and events elsewhere began to affect things. The establishment of the Games Workshop Design Studio provided Graeme Davis with a 'proper' job after four years of writing for anyone who would have it, and Phil, Jim and Paul Cockburn arrived in quick succession from somewhere else. Jim, Phil and Graeme set to work on WFRP straight away, hacking lumps out, putting in lumps in, and generally making sure that it's own mother wouldn't recognise it by the time they finished. And so it was, that fateful November day, when Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay first crawled into the van autumn light...

So that's about how it happened (certain sections of this history have been compiled under the regulations governing the State of Emergency) - but how did WFRP get to be the way it is? Are you sitting comfortably? Then we'll begin...

The Old World
We decided from the start that WFRP had to have a world of its own. Without its own background, it would be just another fantasy rpg, and since the game itself relies so much on atmosphere (the term 'grubby fantasy' has been coined, to contrast with the 'shiny fantasy' which previously dominated roleplaying), the world is highly necessary in order to convey that atmosphere. The world of WFRP had already been developing, in a general sort of way, and it seemed only logical to set the two games in the same world. So that's the broad outline of the world map settled, as well as a few placenames.

The next question to be answered was the level of technology. Most fantasy rpgs go for a stock Dark Age to High Medieval Mallory-Arthurian type of setting, but we thought that setting a slightly higher level of technology - late Medieval-early Renaissance - offered more possibilities, as well as a different and more satisfying atmosphere.

Finally, we decided that the culture - in the Old World at least - should have some basic similarities with Earth at the same level of technology. This was intended to make the world more accessible to players. A completely fantastic world - like the Glorantha of RuneQuest, for example - is an interesting setting, but because it is unfamiliar to the neophyte player, the player will not know things about the world which the character might be expected to know. We turned to history for our inspiration so that even novice players will have some idea of what the world is like.

A late Medieval setting is also well-suited to what we considered to be one of the main themes of the game - the rot of Chaos spreading from within. The Renaissance - particularly in north-west Europe - saw the first stirrings of the anti-witch hysteria which reached its fullest flowering in the following century. The Spanish Inquisition was in full cry, noblemen and others in many parts of Europe were experimenting with alchemy, and many other things were happening which could be used to add to the flavour of a fantasy world. Of course, these things could theoretically happen at any level of technology or stage of history, but coupled with the late Medieval level of technology they make for a particularly interesting world. It was for these reasons that the Old World was the first area to be developed as an adventuring background, although in time it is intended to cover most if not all parts of the Warhammer world, probably starting with Lustria.

Chaos
The Moorcockian concept of Chaos Gods, each with their own followers dedicated to the overthrow of reason and sanity also appealed to us. For one thing, it was an established part of the Warhammer Fantasy Battle background, and it also provided an instantly identifiable source of opponents for player characters. As well as the ravaging hordes pouring out of the Chaos Wastes, there are secret cults within Human society, which can provide the basis for detective-type adventures, and pockets of Beastmen and mutants living as brigands in the extensive forests of the Old World, which can be used in more traditional hack-and-slay exercises. In addition to Chaos, there is the full complement of evil races - particularly the Goblins and their kin which are so popular among Warhammer Fantasy Battle players - allowing a greater choice of adventure types and locations.

Good and Evil
Some fantasy rpgs - notably D&D/AD&D - draw very clear black-and-white distinctions between good and evil, and this was something we wanted to avoid. Although WFRP does use an alignment system, which is regarded as an outdated concept by many gamers, it is not an integral part of the game; rather it is there for people who want to use it, and others can ignore it if they prefer. We were very conscious of the fact that for some people, WFRP would be the first roleplaying game they had bought, and the alignment system is a useful first step for building up the personality of a character. We tried, throughout the rulebook, to present all the information and mechanisms which would be required by the most exacting rule-follower, while making it clear throughout that the GM is free to expand, change or even ignore sections of the rules which he/she doesn't feel fit his/her particular players and style of play.

The Careers System
It was decided from the start that WFRP would have a career system which avoided the usual Fighter/Cleric/Magic User/Thief stereotypes of D&D/AD&D, but which offered more in the way of colour and variety than the generalised 'Adventurer' of RuneQuest. The careers system was intended to convey the colour and variety of the Old World, and to help personalise characters, avoiding the state of affairs where one rth level Fighter is pretty much like another. Also, the careers system makes it easier for the GM to design NPCs - instead of everybody being a level 0 Fighter, as in AD&D, the GM can generate an NPC Rat Catcher or Grave Robber or whatever. We also tried to include different and interesting careers for the nonhuman PC races - Elves, Dwarfs and Halfings - to give them a little more personality than they have in some games, without overloading them with special abilities which make it a waste of time playing a Human character. For reasons of space, it was not possible to do this as thoroughly as we would have liked, but we hope in the future to develop this concept further. Trappings are included in basic careers to make character generation quicker and simpler, avoiding the need to spend half an hour poring over an equipment price list before the game proper can start, and for the same reason pregenerated characters are included in The Oldenhaller Contract and in each installment of The Enemy Within campaign, so that play can begin immediately if desired.
OPEN BOX EXTRA

power, but they change and corrupt those who follow them.

Character Advancement
A common situation in career-based roleplaying games is the abstraction of training and skill increases; we tried to handle this in WFRP in such a way that it can be handled on an abstract level by those who want more detail - this approach is used in Death on the Reik and other instalments of The Enemy Within campaign.

Also, we favoured the idea of gradual improvement rather than gaining a whole batch of increases on crossing an arbitrary experience threshold, hence the notion of gaining skills and characteristic advances one at a time while pursuing a career. The career system also means that most characters must be earning a living between adventures, and may even use their careers to infiltrate guilds and other organisations during the course of an investigative adventure.

Skills
From an early stage, we were presented with the choice of a percentage-based skill system, as in the RuneQuest family of games, or one-and-for-all skills, which was the system we chose. We made this choice for the sake of simplicity and ease of play; rather than keeping track of individual scores in dozens of skills, a player needs only to list the skills and tell the GM when the character has a skill which will modify one of the characteristic tests on which the game is based. The characteristic test is the prime mechanic of the game, underlying everything else, and hopefully making play fast and simple while allowing great flexibility.

The Bestiary
Obviously, we had to include all the races and monsters which are listed in Warhammer Fantasy Battle as being present in the Old World, and we added a few more monster cards for which we have to thank Citadel Journal reader Ian Harding, Fimir and Zoats - to give the game a little extra. We hope to add a few more in time, but we want to avoid the over-proliferation of monsters as has happened with D&D and AD&D.

The Oldenhaller Contract
It was decided that the contract that the rulebook should contain an adventure, allowing play to start almost immediately. The first section of the adventure was written in numbered paragraphs, like a gamemaster's guide, to make it easier for an inexperienced GM to run, and once the GM had got the hang of things, the second part was set out in the more traditional area description style. We felt it was important to make the first adventure as easy as possible for an inexperienced GM to run successfully - after all, if a GM has trouble with the first adventure, what's the motivation to bother with any more?

The Enemy Within
Having decided what we wanted in the game, we then turned to the first few adventure packs. We decided to run a campaign rather than a series of one-off adventures, since this would give us the opportunity to develop a strong, world-shaking storyline and do full justice to the background. We decided that the adventure packs would be more than just adventures - each one would contain a mini-supplement, to expand the campaign background and to ensure that the adventure pack's usefulness would outline its playing time. Thus, The Enemy Within has expanded background information on the history and political structure of the Empire, Shadowen, and the small medium-sized town which can be re-used as an adventure setting, and Death on the Reik has a section of expanded rules dealing with boats and river travel.

The Enemy Within campaign is set in the Empire, an area with many similarities to late Mediaeval Germany, because this is the area which excited us most when we were developing the world background for the rulebook, and because it best suited the kind of storyline we wanted to write - what better place for gothic adventures than a gothic nation. The storyline is constructed so that the adventures can be played on their own, although they will be more enjoyable if played as a sequence, and builds from traces of isolated nests of Chaos cultists to a shattering climax as the adventurers fight to save the Empire itself. All the time, things are happening in other places which may affect the adventurers later on - there's a 'real' world out there, and life goes on and events take place even when the adventurers aren't there.

As with The Oldenhaller Contract, we included pregenerated characters to cut down the set-up time, and we will be putting these characters in all the adventures in the campaign - suitably developed as the campaign goes on, of course. But that doesn't mean that you can't use your own characters - they are only there for convenience.

We also intend to include a poster-size map in every adventure pack - The Enemy Within has a map of the western half of The Empire, Shadowen has a colour map of the town, and Death on the Reik has a map of the castle where the climax of the adventure takes place. We know that people like colour maps, and we feel that they add something to the adventure pack as a whole, helping to bring the world to life.

Jim Bambra, Graeme Davis, Phil Gallagher, Rick Priestly, and Richard Hallwell
DEREK the TROLL

BEHOLD THE HUNTER! MUSCLES RIPPING... WEAPON GLEAMING... ENVIED BY MANY AND FEARED BY ALL!

HE IS KNOWN AS... THE TROLLSLAYER! (...BUT ACTUALLY HIS NAME IS JULIAN.)

A TROLL! PREPARE TO DIE!

MY QUARRY IS NEARBY.
I CAN SENSE IT!

OORR!

WARRIOR MAGAZINE R.I.P.

'ERE, CANT WE TALK ABOUT THIS?

GAK!

BLIMEY!

BLOO!

THUD!

KNOCKED STONE DEAD BY ME BAD BREFF, EH? MUST BE THE COWMAT AN' ONION SANDIES WOT I AD LAST NIGHT! I COULD CASH IN ON THIS?

TODAY IN THE ARENA

CONTEST OF CHAMPIONS

MIGHTY WARRIORS!

BLOODY BEASTS FROM BEYOND!

FANCY YOUR CHANCES?

BIG CASH PRIZES!

ALL O'YOUL WALLIES CLEAR THE ARENA 'COS DEREK THE TROLL'S GONNA WIN THIS CONTEST!

YOU? NO CHANCE! WAAH!

COR! WOFTA STINK!

GO ON, YER OLD GOAT—SEND IN YER FIESTIEST CREATURE!

I COULD KNOCK A DRAGON DEAD AT FIFTY PAGES WIV THIS BREFF, I'LL ENTER!

CHAMPION OR NOT, DEREK'S CERTAINLY NOT TO BE SNIFFED AT!

-- THE NOSELESS NIGHTMARE FROM THE NETHERWORLD!

N.N. NOSELESS!

SNEAKY BAD BREATH BUT TO NO AVAL.

BRAH!

BLEAAGHH!
A solitary figure slowly walks its way across an empty land, with it like the only hope for the future of a dying race.

For a thousand years the old ones had ruled this land, a kind and gentle race, their shambling existence beautiful, their being intelligence...

It was the mystical rituals of the old ones that had kept the world in a balance of peace and harmony with itself since the beginning of time...

But now their power is waning... The only thing that can save them from certain extinction is a magical crystal whose powers would ensure that the old ones would flourish for another thousand years...

The crystal was the beacon of the thinker on his long, treacherous journey across the deserts, plains and mountains of this fabled land.

Oh wow man! I'm getting some pretty heavy vibes off these two dudes over there!

What a summer! I'll have to shave fast, they're already too hairy!

Hal, save! I've got the elder!

Yes!
Zombies in Call of Cthulhu
by Marcus L. Rowland

One of the horrors facing anyone who investigates the Cthulhu Mythos is the discovery that many apparently absurd legends are true. One example is the tale of the zombie, an undead human obeying the will of the conjurer who resurrected it. Zombies feature in the legends of many cultures, but are shrouded in so many myths that the truth is extremely hard to find. This problem is compounded by the fact that there are several distinct types of zombie, each showing different features and possessing different strengths and vulnerabilities, and furthermore that there is a form of insanity which induces zombie-like behaviour.

'DEATH' IN LIFE - THE HISTORICAL ZOMBIE

There are many tales of men and women becoming zombies by enchantment, passing from life to living death with little warning. Such creatures are slack-featured, emotionless, move slowly, and seem incapable of understanding anything beyond the most simple instructions. Their masters (usually powerful medicine men) use them for farming and simple labouring tasks where their slow reactions and clumsiness will not be a handicap, and may become immensely rich on the profits of zombie labour. Sometimes, but only very rarely, such zombies will apparently recover and escape from their masters, though their recovery may never be complete.

This form of zombie isn’t dangerous in itself, but is a frightening warning of the power of the controlling sorcerer. The population of the surrounding area know that they can also be turned into zombies, and will rarely dream of defying the magician. Some isolated areas may be completely dominated by such zombies, though most of the population will remain normal since they are better able to serve their master in this form. For example, a gang of ten or so zombies would probably be led by a normal human, human followers of a zombie lord are much more dangerous than the zombies themselves; many gain wealth and status from their master’s power over zombies, and will fight to protect their position.

Keeper’s Notes

This form of zombie is well-documented, with several real cases scientifically explained. Natural poisons are capable of inducing a prolonged state in which the victim effectively has no will. Given a sufficiently large dose the victim will never recover. Synthetic drugs with similar effects, and therapies to counter some of these poisons, were discovered in the 1970s and 1980s, but some of these drugs are still extremely obscure. In a 1920s campaign the cause and treatment of this condition will be a complete mystery; in any campaign the cause may be something very different, a genuine manifestation of magic or the Cthulhu Mythos.

The mechanism of this form of zombie ‘recruitment’ is fairly simple. Servants of the zombie master find a suitable victim and slip an initial dose of the poison into food or drink. It may also be delivered by poisoned arrow or dart, as a cloud of inhaled dust, or by more conventional injection. This initial dose leaves the victim docile and suggestible, ready to follow the recruiters to their master. Later the victim is given a larger dose under conditions designed to heighten suggestibility. For example, the victim might be taken to a prolonged religious ceremony, and fed the drug at intervals during the ritual. By participating in chants and rhythmic movements the victim falls deeper under the control of the magician.

If the process is primarily chemical this ceremonial element is not an essential part of the process; it simply helps to ‘program’ the zombie for its role as a living automaton. ‘Scientific’ zombie masters may simply use hypnotism or other forms of conditioning instead. If control is enforced magically the ceremony is vital, used to gather power to suppress the victim’s will. The initial drug dose is simply used to keep the victim in a trance state until the spell can be cast. In either case occasional reinforcement of the treatment may be needed to keep the victim’s will suppressed, but this will be at intervals of weeks or months. Sometimes the effect will be truly permanent, only reversible by powerful drugs or magic.

Living ‘zombies’ have no initiative, and will continue actions (eg, filling a tub from a well) until directed to perform a new activity. They won’t try to obey orders in ways that leave them at an advantage, or twist them to find loopholes in instructions. They can’t explain their conditions; usually they can’t talk at all.

Game Mechanics

Each form of living zombification takes place in two stages, the first being a dose of poison. This initial dose is a 2d6 + 2 potency poison against CON. It takes effect after 1d4 rounds. If the poison overcomes CON then POW is effectively lost to it; the system has no free will, and will obey any instruction. DEX is also reduced by 1d6. If the poison fails to overcome CON, POW is reduced by half the potency of the poison; the victim becomes more suggestible, and must roll against 5 + POW to resist orders, again losing 1d6 DEX. Both effects last 1d3 + 1 hours; when the poison wears off the victim regains a point of POW per 2d4 minutes, but is still ill and sluggish for at least 20–Con hours after it wears off. DEX won’t be recovered without several hours’ sleep. An immediate and successful attempt to Treat Poison halves POW and DEX losses.

Occasionally recruitment begins with a magical attack, which drains POW and leaves the victim vulnerable to suggestion, rather than poisoning. In such cases the magician should match magic points against the victim; if the victim has some magic points left, the victim can be obeyed until the magician releases the spell, at the cost of a magic point an hour. This is comparatively rare, since it brings the magician into direct contact with the victim and has no effect if the spell fails.

If zombification is primarily chemical, the ritual which follows involves repeated doses of a more powerful drug, once every 5 + 1d6 minutes. The drug is a potency 1d8 poison, each dose reducing POW by 1d4 and DEX by 1d4, halved if the poison is resisted. Zombie masters who are experienced with these drugs can continue the ritual until the victim’s personal will is completely suppressed (POW drops to 1), and won’t be fooled by attempts to fake zombification. As a by-product of the loss of POW all magic points are lost.

For the equivalent magical ritual the magician must use personal magic points to overcome the victim’s magic points. Once successful, the magician and accomplices can install magic points against the victim. During a 3d6 minute period of preparation each participant in the ritual is required to donate up to three magic points to the spell caster. Each time the victim’s magic points are overcome the victim loses 1d4 POW and 1d2 DEX. The procedure is repeated at intervals of 3d6 minutes until the victim is reduced to 1 POW. Again, all magic points are lost. Magic points are lost. Magicians using spells of this type lose 1d4 SAN on the first casting, none thereafter.

Once either treatment is complete there is a period of 2d10 + 10 days in which no POW can be regained. After this there is a cumulative 1% per day chance (to a maximum of 20%) of player characters...
regaining 1 POW, NPCs will rarely recover unaided. Once POW begins to return, the victim can attempt to disobey orders or escape, only one attempt can be made per day, on a roll against 5xPOW. Naturally, zombie masters are alert for signs of returning willpower, and will repeat the treatment as often as seems necessary. Magic using zombie masters may even be able to cast it at long range, though the number of magic points used to suppress POW should be doubled.

Optional Rule: If the victim doesn't escape or doesn't cease to exist is a cumulative 1% chance per week (after the first month) of permanent brain damage, removing a point of POW and 1d2 INT. Once this occurs the keeper should continue to roll for damage each week, but should not increase the chance of damage. Damage continues until POW and INT are reduced to 1.

If living zombies are rescued they can be treated medically or by psychotherapy; either approach requires difficult and lengthy work to have any effect, especially in a 1920s campaign. Use the normal rules for psychotherapy and institutional disasters.

Victims of either form of living zombification lose 2d6 SAN during the zombification ritual (or 1d3 SAN if a SAN roll is made), and will remember everything experienced during the period without willpower. This means that any encounters with Cthuloid creatures and other horrors have their cumulative SAN effect when zombification ends! However, the delay will do something to cushion the blow of such experiences, and all such SAN losses should be halved.

Unseen encounters with this type of zombie may cause the loss of 1d2 SAN, no loss if a SAN roll is made. This effect is applied even to loved ones or friends in this form may cause the loss of 1d6 SAN (1 point if a SAN roll is successful). If the effect is caused by a loved one or a friend in this form may cause the loss of 1d6 SAN (1 point if a SAN roll is successful), recovered if the victim can be rescued and cured. Statistics for such zombies are the same as those for any normal human, with the exception that POW is effectively reduced to zero, INT and EDU can't be used, and DEX is greatly reduced. Such zombies can't fight, and are more to be pitied than feared in themselves. If attacked they take normal damage, and can't dodge or parry.

‘LIFE’ IN DEATH - THE TRADITIONAL ZOMBIE

The traditional zombie is a genuine manifestation of the supernatural, a dead man or woman brought back to a semblance of life by sorcery. It's often assumed that the sorcerer responsible for such effects must always be evil; however, some neutral or benign magicians may also have mastered this process, though it's unlikely that this can be accomplished without some loss of SAN. Magicians who try to master this ability will probably drift towards evil, becoming involved in more and more dangerous spells and the terrifying horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos. The most damaging aspect of this spell is that it's apparently most successful with recently deceased corpses; the magician is thus drawn to become involved in graverobbing and other ghoulish activities, and ultimately to ritual murder.

Superficially the traditional zombie resembles the living 'zombies' described above, and it's easy to confuse the two. However, the traditional zombie is permanently dead; if the spell which animates it is removed it will instantly 'die' and cannot be animated again. There are many variant forms, some hardly recognisable as zombies; if sufficient power is put into the spell the zombie will seem normal, so that even observers may think that it's still alive.

Although the preparation of a zombie usually begins with a corpse, it's possible to begin with a living human who is murdered in the course of the zombification process. Such ritual murders are said to aid the magic, and magicians controlling many zombies of this type will almost certainly use this form of 'recruitment'.

Many legends suggest means of killing zombies of this type; the most common involves the use of salt, but there is little real evidence to support this. With the first incantation, the zombie will probably be dead on an individual basis, experimenting to find the best answer.

Keeper's Notes

Zombies of this type will probably be found under much the same circumstances as the living 'zombies' described above, and both types may occasionally be found together. If the zombies are reanimated natural deaths there's a slim chance that they may be ruled by a neutral or benign magician; however, it's more likely that those encountered in the course of Call of Cthulhu will have been created violently.

Zombie 'recruitment' for this type of ritual follows much the same procedure as described above. Usually it's more convenient to commit murder at a prepared site, rather than to kill victims during an abduction. Techniques of poisoning and abduction are used. The follow-up ceremony, though, is very different. The victim is ritually prepared then murdered (usually by slashing an artery), drained of blood, and converted to a zombie before rigor mortis sets in. Usually some form of embalming or preservative treatment is used to keep the corpse from deteriorating, in more primitive cultures this step is skipped and the corpse will soon decay, rotting and crawling with maggots and releasing a choking odour of death.

Zombies of this class are permanently dead, and require little or no 'maintenance', though the magician may occasionally need to cast a spell to maintain animation. Some magicians become quite attached to their zombie servants, buying them new clothing and sewing back any parts that fall off. Such magicians are usually insane.

Zombies may also be created by a form of resurrection, but this is more difficult and rarely produces a satisfactory servant. It's generally carried out only by 'white' magicians and those who aren't prepared to commit murder.

Game Mechanics

The most common form of traditional zombie is described in the Call of Cthulhu Sourcebook for the 1920s (p50 in first and second edition copies, p121 in the hardcover edition). The distinctive features of these creatures are enhanced strength and resistance to damage.

Preliminary recruitment follows the same pattern described above, with the victim's POW and SAN reduced in half.

The zombification ceremony consists of three stages, the first being summoning of magical energy as described above. Once the magician has some magical points in hand the ritual murder begins; the magician or an acolyte cuts an artery, and the victim begins to bleed to death. Leaving the body every 1d5 minutes. As blood is lost, the magician makes successive attempts to pit magic points against the victim's POW, at intervals of 1d6 minutes. If this attempt is unsuccessful the victim dies without being converted to a zombie, or if the attempt succeeds the body remains in the body after death, keeping it alive.

At this stage the magician must establish control. The zombie will still have INT, though the last vestiges of consciousness will fade in INT x 1d6 minutes. The magician must establish that he (or she) is the master, pitting magic points against the victim's single point of POW. This is a relatively easy process, but may require several attempts (at intervals of 2d5 minutes) to succeed. Victims 'rescued' during this part of the ceremony will believe that they are still alive, and may join in to fight the magician. If the magician is killed or driven off without establishing control the zombie will eventually lose all INT and run amok.

Once control is complete the zombie can be treated to prevent decay; usually this involves keeping in a chemical bath or use of a minor spell to keep the body fresh. Generally this procedure is left to underlings while the magician recovers from the ritual. If the magician wants the zombie to look more human, additional magic points must be expended; for example, an additional 5 points might give the zombie some vaguely human expression in its face, though not much.

The only alternative to violent zombification is the use of a variant of the Resurrection spell described in the Call of Cthulhu rules. For this spell the body need not be destroyed, but will be reactivated in the state in which it died, and the body is anything more than a mindless zombie. The spell costs 1d10 SAN on first casting, 1d3 SAN per casting thereafter, and 1d6 magic points per casting, plus a point for each day the body has been dead.

Although omitted from the Call of Cthulhu rules, encounters with this type of zombie should affect SAN; 1d2 on first encounter with an obvious zombie (unless...
a SAN roll is made), a 1d2 SAN loss (SAN roll negate) if an apparent human is positively identified as a zombie. Finding a friend or loved one converted to a zombie should cost 1d6 SAN.

REANIMATION

In this scientific equivalent of zombification, the scientist uses arcane chemical and electrical processes to restore a semblance of life to a corpse. It is then reanimated. Often the creature formed will be very like the traditional zombie described above, and scientists may feel that they have successfully created or restored life. However, it seems more likely that such scientists are unconsciously using magic to sustain life after death, with many of the trappings of scientific resurrection (towering machines with flashing lights, elaborate chemical baths, and powerful electrical discharges) simply acting to focus the scientist’s will and magical points. The behaviour traditionally associated with such experimentation consists of a period of research, followed by frenzied laboratory work, building up to a climax which eventually leaves the scientist tired and drained; it is possible that the scientist feels drained because he or she has unconsciously performed a powerful feat of magic.

Reanimators are often forced to associate with grave robbers or resort to murder to ensure a supply of fresh corpses, and their research will often lead to more intimate and eventually self-destructive contact with the Cthulhu Mythos. It often seems as though some destructive creature (possibly Nyarlathotep) delights in granting these reanimators enough knowledge to ensure partial success, which leads them to dabble on the fringes of the Mythos. The creatures they create are rarely controllable, and are frequently the cause of the scientists’ destruction.

Keeper’s Information

Reanimation is an extremely complex procedure requiring years of research and study. Scientists wishing to perfect the process should have a minimum total of 200% skill in three or more relevant sciences, for example, Chemistry, Pharmacy, and Zoology. Given these minimum qualifications, such scientists must spend at least fifty percent of their waking time in studies and research work. For each six-month period in which this course of study is followed, the scientist should make a Library Use roll. If successful the scientist gains 1d6% knowledge in a new skill, Reanimation, and must make a SAN roll or lose 1d2 SAN. Certain rare books may be used to enhance this ability, in the same way that Mythos books can improve Cthulhu Mythos knowledge, with an increased chance of SAN loss. For example, Herbert West’s research notes might give 15% Reanimation knowledge, if a successful Reanimation skill roll was made, but the reader would lose 2d6 SAN (1d5 SAN if a SAN roll was made). Often books containing Reanimation lore will also touch upon the Cthulhu Mythos, with consequent additional SAN loss. The exact nature of such works is left to the keeper.

Reanimation research also tends to be extremely expensive; as scientists learn more they will try to assemble more elaborate laboratory equipment, and junk old and discredited technology. Scientists involved in this research should expect to spend approximately $500 ($100 at 20s rates) for each 1% of Reanimation knowledge, in equipment and materials, plus a minimum of $500 plus (50 x Reanimation rating) dollars per year in supplies, maintenance, and other expenses. For example, a professor with 50% Reanimation knowledge would have spent $25,000 ($5,000) on equipment and other permanent facilities, over the course of several years, and would have running expenses of around $5,000 ($600) per year. On a professor’s wages this could easily be a severe problem; devising a suitable grant application and cover story may be the hardest part of the reanimation research.

Reanimation experiments may be attempted at any stage of a reanimator’s career, with the chance of success equivalent to Reanimation skill. Usually only one attempt is possible in any given six-month period, the rest of the time is spent on small scale animal experiments, and in attempts to get hold of the components (such as freshly-deceased human corpses) needed for the work. Successful reanimation experiments don’t necessarily lead to the creation of a complete zombie. In the early stages they are more likely to produce useful information which adds 1d1 to Reanimation knowledge for the next round of research and experimentation, and costs 1d6 Magic Points and 1d5 SAN (1 SAN if a SAN roll is made).

The keeper should decide if these experiments will ever be allowed to succeed, and determine the consequences of success. Usually a reanimated corpse will resemble the ‘traditional’ zombie described above, though in some cases it will seem to have a genuine personality. Such cases may, however, be caused by possession, as described below. In either case removal of the magic or possessing spirit which keeps the body animated will result in instant and permanent death. SAN effects are as the ‘traditional’ zombie.

POSSSESSION

Sometimes a corpse may be animated by the spirit of another being. The motives of such interlopers can vary from malevolence to curiosity, often they are totally alien. The sophistication of their imitation of human life varies with the intelligence and power of the invading spirit. In some cases the resulting creature is little more than a zombie, in others the invading presence is so powerful that there is no easy way of spotting the deception. Powerful sorcerers (and possibly scientific reanimators) may be able to capture such entities and use them to animate their zombies; if so, they will usually be programmed to obey their ‘creators’ commands.

In some cases these creatures may be responsible for the deaths of their host bodies, as part of some sinister (or wholly incomprehensible) plan requiring their presence on Earth. If the possessing spirit is driven out the body will remain dead; in cases of possession of a living body the host
personality remains present but is dormant until the intruder is driven out.

**Keeper’s Information**

Possession of a corpse will occur if a human is killed under circumstances favourable to the invading entity involved; for example, someone killed in a temple sacred to Cthugha might be invaded by a Fire Vampire. In general, possession is only possible where the invading personality isn’t firmly tied to a physical body. In the above example, a Fire Vampire is essentially a shifting formless cloud of gas whose composition will continually change, and the controlling essence will be a very small part of the cloud. The Great Race of Yith may occasionally use this method, when their telepathic time travel ‘tunes in’ to someone as they are killed, this would be a very rare occurrence, since there is evidence that the Great Race have servants who research the lifeline of their human hosts before invading them.

Directed possession (summoning a Myths creature and directing it to occupy a corpse) requires knowledge of the appropriate Summoning and Binding spells, and a ritual comparable to the creation of the traditional zombie described above. In this case there is no need to drain blood or suppress the victim’s POW; the victim is simply killed as soon as the summoning is successful, and the summoned spirit takes control of the fresh corpse. For this technique the body needs to be as fresh and intact as possible, and the masters of this technique have perfected the art of preventing attacks which leave easily repairable damage. In many cases these involve use of the Martial Arts skill described in *Masks of Nyarlathotep*. Other possible methods include drowning, freezing, or suffocation, though the first two would be very inappropriate for a Fire Vampire!

Although the invading spirit is bound to the host corpse, it isn’t necessarily under the control of the magician or scientist who summons it; it may be necessary to perform another binding ritual to keep the zombie under control.

Zombies created by this technique will have the INT, POW, and HP of the invading spirit, and the STR, CON, and SIZ of the host corpse. The invading spirit has full knowledge of all spells, and may have powers related to those of the invading spirit. For example, a human corpse possessed by a Fire Vampire spirit might have the power of pyrokinesis, causing fires without physical contact.

Zombies created by possession are probably the most dangerous type. Luckily they rarely make loyal servants, though it’s possible that such a zombie might be created at the instigation of the invading spirit, as part of some complex plan of destruction.

Another form of possession is mind swapping, used by the Great Race of Yith and some other creatures. In this form the personalities from two bodies are swapped. Usually this is permanent, though sometimes it’s possible to swap back. Some powerful magicians can transfer their own personalities this way, swapping bodies with a younger host to achieve a form of immortality. Usually a prerequisite is a ritual or drug to suppress the victim’s POW; exact details are beyond the scope of this article.

**PARASITISM**

Sometimes a corpse may be reanimated by an invading disease or parasite which is capable of reactivating the body. Such reanimated corpses are usually ‘programmed’ for stereotyped behaviour which will help spread the infection, such as the murder of uninfected humans. This type of infection may also be controlled by a sufficiently resourceful magician or scientist, and the disease might thus be used to kill victims and convert them directly into zombies.

**Keeper’s Information**

Infection is most effective in isolated areas with poor communication; in such areas the disease may go a firm hold before anyone realises what is happening. The disease will usually be vulnerable to some natural or synthetic cure, such as modern antibiotics; there’s no need for the keeper to make such a cure easy to find. If the disease is cured the patient dies, since the infection only affects dead tissues. Infection may cause the host body to become unnaturally strong, much like the traditional zombie described above.

**AUTOMATISM**

One final cause of zombie-like behaviour is automatism, a form of insanity in which the mind ‘switches off’, leaving the body repetitively performing some simple action. Usually these actions have some relevance to the events which caused the insanity; a victim might go through the motions of drawing and firing a gun, raising the hands to ward off an attacker, and so on. Such automatons can often be made to perform different activities, such as sweeping a floor or polishing a table. Once a pattern of movement is established it will be continued indefinitely, even if circumstances change; for example, sweeping movements would be continued even if the broom was taken away. Sometimes automatism is associated with phobias and other forms of insanity.

**Keeper’s Information**

‘Automatons’ can be made to perform actions by moving their hands and pushing them through the correct sequence. After a few repetitions the movements will continue spontaneously. Victims of automatism can sometimes be cured by psychotherapy, using the normal rules for treatment and institutional disasters.

In general, automatism is a fairly random effect of insanity; it’s unlikely that a zombie work force of the type described above could be recruited by driving victims insane in this way. However, it’s possible that some Mythos creatures may be able to induce this effect deliberately. It’s also possible that genuine zombies might be disguised as automatons; for example, as inmates of an asylum run by Cultists. Automatism is a particularly appropriate form of insanity for anyone driven insane by seeing zombies or witnessing a zombification ritual.
The first Beastman has a large bovine head and tough scaly skin (2 AP on each part of its body). It is also subject to frenzy. It adds 1 to all damage it inflicts and subtracts 1 from each wound it receives. When the attack begins it lets out a bellowing shriek and charges into combat, oblivious for its own safety. It is armed with a sword and fights until slain or incapacitated.

The other Beastman is long, dog-like legs (M 6). It presents a mockery of human form, with a tall emaciated body surmounted by an oversized dog's head. The creature uses no weapons, attacking with its sharp teeth.

**4 CHAOS MUTANTS**

Two of the mutants are armed with daggers, and the other two with clubs.

The four mutants resemble normal humans, but each bears some mark of Chaos. One has eyeballs which bob around its head rather than eyes, another has two tentacles which sprout from its hands. The remaining two mutants are covered in thick fur which provides them with 1 AP on their bodies and arms.

**MOVING ON**

Whether they are attacked or not, the adventurers are able to make reasonable progress for about half an hour. After that the road is so badly waterlogged or the river so dangerously swollen that travel is reduced to a crawl. On the river strong cross winds and floating debris make it very hazardous to continue. Ride, Drive Cart or River Lore tests are required to avoid a mishap of some sort. Road travellers find their horses slipping in the mud and going lame or vehicles becoming bogged down in the mire. River vessels are swept out of control and crash into the bank. With the heavy rain and the threat of mutant attacks, it should be obvious to the adventurers that they are in a bad situation.

**THE HOODED MAN INN**

Suddenly lightning illuminates a building in the middle distance. Once the lightning has pinpointed its position,
lights can be seen burning in the windows. This is the Hooded Man, a coaching/riverside inn, a welcome sight to any weathered traveller, especially on such a foul night.

The main gates are closed and securely locked. Knocking at the gates brings no response, leaving the adventurers the choice of climbing over the wall or finding another means of entry. Fortunately, access is possible from the nearby ferry where a pathway leads to the inn itself.

**THE FERRY**

This is a small building next to the river bank. The ferry itself consists of a raft which can be winched across the river by means of ropes. When the ferry is not in use, these ropes lie below the surface of the water. The raft is on the adventurers’ side of the river, but any attempts to winch it across to the other side are futile as the ropes have been cut.

If they check out the ferry building, the adventurers find that the door is open and there are signs of a struggle inside. The building’s furniture is overturned and there is no sign of a ferry keeper. A close search turns up a bag containing 13 6s, 42 shillings and 15 pennies. A trail of fresh blood leads from the door; any character examining this who succeeds in an Int test realises that a body has been dragged out of the building. However, no sign of a trail can be found outside thanks to the heavy rain and the mud.

**THE INN**

The Hooded Man is a small inn along a road that crosses the river here at the ferry. It is similar to the one in the Warhammer Rule book, but is not as grand. See WFRP p.328 for basic details regarding inns.

At one time the inn’s site was a meeting place for cultists, but they were driven from the area over a hundred years ago. However, the authorities failed to find a secret shrine to the Chaos God Tzeentch which was hidden under the cellar. Since then the inn’s history has been forgotten by all but the Whirlers in the Dark, a Chaos cult worshipping Tzeentch. Unknown to the current landlord, the ruins of the Chaos shrine are still there.

Tonight the Hooded Man has been successfully attacked by a group of mutants working with Hans Jinkerst, a Chaos cultist. He has been sent to the area by the Whirlers in the Dark to reconsecrate the shrine. Disguised as a Roadwarden, Hans entered the inn and at an opportune moment slipped kuts (a sleep-inducing drug, see below) into the evening’s food. Once the inn’s staff and visitors fell asleep - or were too drowsy to resist - he opened the main gates for the mutants.

All has gone well for the mutants. The inn and the adjacent ferry were quickly captured and the defenders were overcome. The survivors are now locked in the cellar, awaiting the moment when they will be sacrificed to Tzeentch. Hans and the mutants are now celebrating their victory and preparing for a ceremony to summon the shrine’s guardian. The mutants are, however, unprepared for any visitors, and they are surprised by the adventurers’ appearance. Their initial reaction is to masquerade as the inn’s inhabitants and wait for an opportunity to offer the the adventurers a drugged meal.

**HANS JINKERST - CULTISTS**

Hans is a Charlatan and a master of deception. He can easily carry off his part of a Roadwarden. Unfortunately for him, however, his uniform has a bloodstain at the

base of his back where the original owner was stabbled. If this is noticed by the adventurers (a successful Observe test is required by someone in a position to notice it) Hans maintains that it happened earlier this evening when he was attacked by two bandits. On no account will he allow anyone to examine his ‘wound’ beneath.

**Equipment**

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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Sword</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Mail Shirt (1 AP on body)</td>
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<td>34 GC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>A glass phial containing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimic</td>
<td>18 doses of kurts (see below)</td>
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<td>Palm Object</td>
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<td>Public Speaking</td>
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**THE MUTANTS**

All of the mutants have the following profile, although they have individual mutations. Should a fight start they have access to swords and clubs, or they carry them at all times.

**Grat** initially in the stables eating the remains of the stable boy. If he is still alive, he joins the other mutants during the ceremony to summon the shrine’s guardian. He has suckers on the ends of his spider-like legs which allow him to cling to any surface with ease.

**Otto** the ‘landlord’ is fat to such an extreme degree that he is as wide as he is tall. He seems to roll along rather than walk, but he is passable as a human being. Because he has no other noticeable mutation - and all landlords are a bit on the portly side - Otto adopts the role of landlord when the adventurers arrive.

**Fagor** can pass for a normal human, as his bulging eyes are unusual, but not unknown, among men. He is in the cellar or the bar room when the adventurers arrive at the Hooded Man.

**Wilhem** is the most repulsive and grotesque of all the mutants. He doesn’t have a proper face, merely a skull. As a result, anyone viewing Wilhem for the first time must make a Cool test or become subject to fear (see WFRP p.69).

**Outer Wall** - The inn is surrounded by a 12-foot high wooden wall. The main gate is locked and barred from the inside, the smaller gate leading to the ferry is, however, open.

**The Stables** - Approaching the stables, the adventurers will be aware that the horses are restless. Loud neighs and kicks can be heard coming from the stables.

**Grat**, one of the mutants (see below for statistics), is in the hayloft. He is feasting on the body of one of the stable boys and will not hear the adventurers approach. He notices their presence as soon as the door is opened.

The six horses in the stables are terrified by Grat’s presence and flee from the stables as soon as the door is opened. A character making a successful Animal Care test will be able to prevent this happening, but any other character runs the risk of being trampled by the leading horse. A successful I test allows the character to leap out of the way. Anyone who is trampled takes one S 3 hit in
the leg (modified by Toughness and armour) as the horses escape into the yard. The horses can only be persuaded or forced to re-enter the stables if they are calmed and lead by a character with Animal Care skill.

As soon as he is aware that somebody else is in the stables, Grat climbs onto the roof and hides on the other side of the roof ridge. Characters climbing into the hayloft find the damp corpse of the stable boy. He has been killed by a sword blow to the head and his right arm bears the marks of Grat’s teeth.

Water is dripping from the trapdoor leading up to the roof, and the ladder beneath is wet and smeared with blood. Once the trapdoor is open the adventurers are greeted by torrential rain. This has made the roof very slippery and anyone venturing onto it must make a successful Dex test or slip. A successful I test allows a character who has slipped to catch hold of the edge of the trapdoor and not slide off the roof (which results in falling 5 yards) to the ground below.

If Grat is discovered up on the roof (by a successful Observe test), he will fight until slain. His suckers allow him to move about on the roof with no danger of falling off. If the adventurers leave the stables without discovering him, Grat returns to his feast until summoned by Otto (see below).

The Coach House - The door to this building is locked (CR 50). Inside there is a coach belonging to Cartak Lines of Altador. This coach arrived before the mutants attacked. Its passengers and crew were drugged and are now either dead or tied up in the cellar.

The Inn & Bar Room - The main door to the Hooded Man is blocked and the curtains are drawn. Sounds of merriment can be heard coming from inside, giving the impression that all is well. As soon as there is a knock at the door, however, the laughter dies away and there are sounds of movement (scraping chairs and the like). After a minute or so the bolts are drawn and the door opens by a horrendously fat character. This is Otto, one of the mutants, who is masquerading as the landlord.

Otto is surprised to see the adventurers, as he believed the inn to be secure against outsiders. Making an ill-concealed attempt to hide his surprise, Otto invites the adventurers into the bar room. A fire burns in the fireplace and sits next to it is Hans, dressed in his (stolen) Roadwarden’s uniform.

A loud thump directs all eyes to the back of the bar where a man with protuberant eyes appears and begins to mop up something on the floor. This is Fagor, who has come up from the cellar to mop up the blood from the floor. Unless the adventurers go to have a look at what he is doing, he finishes after a few minutes and then takes his bloodstained mop and bucket into the kitchen.

Otto the ‘landlord’ is nervous about the adventurers’ presence (given what is to happen later) and this shows in his mannerisms. He constantly fidgets the bottom of his apron, twisting and turning it with suppressed tension. He attempts to send the adventurers on their way as quickly as possible by claiming that the inn is full. Otto makes no effort to make the adventurers feel welcome. He has a coach party in residence, who have just retired for the night, and he “wants no ‘gentlemen’ of the adventurers’ kind tonight, thank you.”

If the adventurers insist on staying (unless they wish to die at the hands of whatever lurks in the forest), Otto eventually (and grudgingly) allows them to do so. He continues to behave ungraciously - any drinks, for example, are served in unwashed tankards.

Eventually Otto heads into the kitchen with a muttered “I suppose you want feeding as well…” He is actually leaving to organise the rest of the mutants, while Hans keeps the adventurers occupied.

Hans, in his guise as a Roadwarden, questions the adventurers in an attempt to find out who and what they are. Hans asks his questions in his ‘official’ capacity, using the excuse that he believes the adventurers to be bandits. If the adventurers mention the ferry, Hans claims it was attacked (and the ferryman carried off) by bandits. This, he explains is why the inn is so securely locked.

He also manages to imply that the adventurers are in league with these same (non-existent) bandits: “I think your sudden appearance has unnerved the landlord. Mind you, he could be wrong. Who else would be out on a night such as this?” Hans is clever enough not to press this line of argument too far, and he seems to be satisfied by any reasonable story the adventurers care to tell him.

If the adventurers mention the mutant in the stables, Hans is surprised. He believes all the mutants to be hiding in the inn. He appears surprised when told of the body: “The landlord assured me that the stable boy had run off. No one bothered checking for him up there. Well, he can wait till morning to be buried.”

If the adventurers mention either the body or Grat to Otto he looks very worried and shocked. His real fear, however, is that the adventurers have uncovered the mutants’ business here. He changes the subject and looks to Hans to bail him out.

Once Hans is sure that the adventurers have no official connections, he excuses himself and goes into the kitchen. Adventurers who state they are watching Hans as he leaves will notice his ‘wound’ and the bloodstain with a successful Observe test.

By now the adventurers should be suspicious and be trying to find out what is going on. A character stood at the bar can overhear Hans and Otto in the kitchen.

“Don’t panic, Otto. They are only travellers. Zeenrich will be pleased to have their souls as well. Use the kurts in their food and we’ll deal with them later.” Hans then
passes Otto the phial containing the kurtz. After this Otto has the phial in his possession.

If Hans hears anyone attempting to sneak into the kitchen he comes back into the bar. He closes the door into the kitchen with an air of finality, making it very awkward for anyone to push past without a very good reason.

A short while later Otto returns bearing bowls of hot stew. Each bowl contains two doses of kurtz. Characters have a base 10% chance of noticing the drug in the food. This 10% is averaged with a character's Int to see if they notice its taste in the food. Characters with Cook skill have a 10% bonus to their chance of noticing the drug.

**KURTS**

Kurtz is a drug made from the Gortsiefe plant. It begins to take effect after half an hour. One dose induces drowsiness; two doses cause unconsciousness (WFRP p82). Characters may overcome its effects by making successful Toughness tests (+2) for each dose they consume.

**GOOD NIGHT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

After the adventurers have finished eating, but before the kurtz takes effect, Otto offers to show the adventurers to the common room upstairs. He claims that the other rooms are occupied by the coach party.

The hallway is wet and uncarpeted, although a close inspection reveals that used to be a carpet here - bits of cloth still cling to the walls in the floor. The carpet has been removed and the floor mopped by Fagor to remove bloodstains.

The common room is dirty and the bedding is soiled. If the adventurers comment on this, Otto is unsympathetic as this is "the best he can do."

From the common room the adventurers can hear the horses in the stable if Grat is still present...

**The Bedrooms** - There are only four bedrooms upstairs and all the doors are locked (CR 20). The landlord's room and two of the bedrooms are empty and unremarkable. However, the two beds in one room are bloodstained and the bedclothes are scattered about the room. The beds' occupants were obviously stabbed and then dragged from their beds. Trailing stains lead out through the door, but disappear at the sill.

**The Kitchen** - The kitchen is obviously designed for the inn's halfing cook. Fagor is in here unless the ceremony (see below) is in progress. The bucket used by him when mopping up the various bloodstains is also in here. The bucket is still full of blood-tainted water.

The door leading to the yard is unlocked.

**The Cellar** - The cellar contains barrels of beer and bottles of wines and spirits. There is a trail of blood stains on the floor (unless Fagor has had the wit to mop them up as well - this depends on how much help the players are getting in working out what is going on) which leads to the loose paving slab. This has been lifted to give access to the hidden shrine built below the level of the cellar. Depending on the circumstances, the slab is either raised or lowered. When the adventurers first arrive, it is closed, but it will be opened during the ceremony. The closed slab may be discovered with a successful Observe test or by following the bloodstains.

**The Shrine** - The real landlord, his wife, two servants and one of the coachmen are still alive, although they are tightly bound in the shrine. They are still suffering from the effects of the doses of kurtz they were given earlier in the evening. The bodies of the mutants' other victims are heaped in one corner: a coachman, his three artisan passengers and the inn's halfing cook.

A magical, two-foot-high statue of Tzeentch stands in the middle of the shrine in the centre of a strange moving pattern. The pattern constantly shifts between a symbol of Chaos and an octagon.

The statue is made from a greenish stone which seems to flow and move when observed. Any character observing this and the shifting floor pattern must make a WP test or receive D6 insanity points. The image of Tzeentch can be smashed (it has T 5 and W 5). However, unless it is destroyed in a single round the shrine's guardian demon appears to defend the statue. Once the demon is destroyed, the statue can be broken easily and the lines on the floor will fade and vanish.

Against the wall is a locked (CR 20) wooden box containing 212 GC, 365 shillings and 26 pennies. A successful search of the room reveals a loose stone behind which is hidden a pouch containing a potion of strength (WFRP, p186).

The mutant Wilhem will be in here either participating in the ceremony or lurking at the foot of the stairs.

**THE CEREMONY**

Shortly after the Otto has shown the adventurers to their room the doses of kurtz begin to take effect. Half an hour after the drug should have taken effect (the mutants know when this should be) Otto collects Grat from the stables. Anyone looking out of the common room window at this time sees Otto going out to stable and returning with a mutant (if Grat is still alive).

Hans and the mutants assemble in the cellar to conduct a ceremony using the magical energy of the statue to summon a demon. Shortly afterwards the ceremony begins, and faint, discordant chanting fills the inn. This continues for half an hour, while Hans ritually sacrifices two humans as the summoning requires.
As the ceremony begins Fagor sneaks up to the adventurers' room and listens at the door. Characters not suffering from the effects of kurts who make a successful Listen test hear him approach the door. If Fagor becomes suspicious that the adventurers are not unconscious or, for example, the common room door is open, he returns to the cellar and warns the other mutants who close the trapdoor and continue the ceremony. If given the opportunity, Fagor hides somewhere in the inn and attempts to attack a lone adventurer from behind.

If all appears well, he immediately returns to the cellar and joins the other mutants in the chant.

Unless the adventurers intervene in the ceremony the statue transforms into a demon. It appears as a nine-foot-tall, green, spindly human with a long neck and a hideous, oversized head. Any creature under 10' tall viewing it must test against Cool or become rooted to the spot with fear (see WFRP p68). Unfortunately for Hans, he is unaware of the ritual to bind the demon and it immediately attacks him and the mutants. The demon is set upon slaying all it sees and pursues any fleeing characters after first slaying anybody near it.

The demon attacks by biting and raking with its claws. Once it leaves the shrine it becomes subject to instability (see WFRP p215), although it is entirely stable within the shrine. For every 100 yards that the demon moves away from the shrine, subtract 1 from the instability die roll (treat rolls of less than 1 as 1).

- **THE ROADWARDENS** -

As dawn breaks, a party of four Roadwardens approach the Hooded Man. Their reaction to the adventurers or anyone else depends on putting the worst possible interpretation on the scene they find. Unless, for example, the adventurers can produce mutant bodies or captives - or some other proof of what really happened - the Roadwardens choose to believe that the adventurers were mixed up in whatever has been going on. At the very least, charges of murdering the landlord and the others are likely to be preferred, along with any other charges that solve open cases in the Roadwardens' patrol area.

Even if they are convinced of the adventurers' innocence, the matter of what has occurred at the inn still has to be cleared up. The Roadwardens expect and insist that the adventurers accompany them to the nearest town so that the whole affair can be dealt with in a proper manner.
4 ROADWARDENS

Skills
Ride - Horse

Possessions
Crossbow and ammunition
Sword
Mail Shirt (1 AP on body)
Shield (1 AP on all)
Helmet (1 AP on head)
Horse
Saddle and Harness
Rope - 10 yards

REWARDS

The following experience points should be awarded at the end of the adventure:

- 40-70 points each for good roleplaying;
- 30 points each for dealing with the mutants;
- 50 points each for destroying the statue/demon;
- 20 points each for dealing with the Roadwardens' suspicions.

Jim Bambra
Introduction

This adventure is suitable for intermediate or higher level characters. It is set in the area covered by ICE's Southern Mirkwood campaign supplement, or alternatively the Dogolad and the Dead Marshes adventure pack. To play this adventure straight off you will require the MERP rulebook and Southern Mirkwood or Dogolad; otherwise you will need to spend a little while adapting it for your own campaign.

The adventure is organised into two sections. The first includes this introduction and notes, along with The Plot, a selection of helpful and misleading events under the heading Rumours, and the statistics for principal NPCs and creatures to be encountered (this is to be found at the end of the adventure). The second section comprises five essays giving background information on the different elements of the plotline. You may also find these useful in their own right as additions to the MERP supplements if you regularly play MERP. Owing to its freeform nature, you are advised to be very familiar with the plot before attempting to run this adventure.

Quotations

Quotations in the text are from The Lord of the Rings (Vol. II, Book 3, Ch. 4, and Vol. III, Appendix F) and The Silmarillion (Quenta Silmarillion, Ch. 1 and 2). The original inspiration for the scenario came from the tale of Aldarion and Fërendis in Unfinished Tales. All these works are by J.R.R. Tolkien.

The Plot

Taurefantó does not follow a straight course of action. Events take place, but it is up to the characters to react to them and influence the course of future events. In the following section there are guidelines for suggested activities at each stage, but you are at liberty to adapt these as you see fit to suit the style of adventure you and your players prefer.

Outline

A group of Entwives (the Nolónerofar), from the lost female branch of the ancient race of Onodrim, have returned to their former home in northwest Middle-earth in a great land-going ship called the Taurefantó. They have with them a 'magic item' which they hope will cure their blighted gardens of the curse that Sauron laid on them, but they need time to transfer it into the ground. Assistance from the descendants of the wild men to whom they taught the art of agriculture should be able to give them the time they need.

1. The Arrival of Taurefantó

The great vessel may arrive 'before' the adventure proper starts. The characters get to hear of it from gossip in a village or town they are resting in, or from some NPCs they encounter during or after their last adventure. Such a wonder will surely be a talking point for many miles around. Alternatively, you may have the adventure start with the characters themselves witnessing the arrival of the vessel late one afternoon.

The Taurefantó settles somewhere on the Talath Harroch in Dor Rúnen, south of Mirkwood and east of the Emyn Muil. The exact site is left to you, but it will be in a remote and desolate area at the edge of the Brown Lands. This is the limit for easy travel with the Yavannen (the spirits moving the vessel); to push them further might harm them. Settlements in the area (but not close by - the Nolónerofar have deliberately kept out of the way of human habitation) include Gondorean outposts, Astria camp sites and outlying Gramuz villages and farms.

2. Initial Reactions

The Taurefantó lays quiet for some days. Characters in the area may pick up tales concerning the vessel; these are covered in the Rumours section. Select these randomly or choose them to suit appropriate actions of the characters. This is a good time for the characters to investigate the vessel, to seek advice elsewhere, make plans and so on. Hopefully, they will end up very confused and none the wiser, unless they have been exceedingly clever or lucky.

During this time, some of the Nolónerofar leave the vessel secretly to seek out the leaders of the Urukayn cults in the vicinity; around this time Sauron learns something of the nature of the vessel and if the player characters are being noticeably interested in it, Thendrik is sent to try to recruit them.

At the end of this period a council of the Urukayn priests is held. Although not secret, it is strictly guarded and very hard to infiltrate. At the council, a Unadía called Singolóte addresses the priest and seeks their aid in planting the Rune of Power in the Brown Lands to make them flourish again. All the priests are tremendously excited about the meeting with one of the ancient Mistresses and her scheme, but then start bickering about where the Valquetta-i-Olvar should be planted. Many desire it for the benefit of their own regions, and no easy compromise can be found. The debate goes on for a few days, and ends with perhaps half of the priests walking out. The rest agree to assist in the transferal of the Word of Power to a spot in the centre of the Brown Lands.

3. Taurefantó's Last Journey

Singolóte instructs the Urukayn priests to organise some ceremonies to help bless the Rune, and a procession to lead the vessel to the designated site. The latter is necessary to alleviate the effects of Sauron's curse on the Yavannen, which might otherwise be corrupted or destroyed. The procession will need protection and might be attacked by either a small body of low-level evil troops (orcs, uruk-hai, hill trolls, Easterlings) or one of the Del-Dûrimbó. Alternatively, Thendrik might persuade the characters to attack the Urukayn.

Eventually, despite harassment, the Taurefantó reaches the site. There it settles right down into the earth, so that the level of Belodeck is the same as the ground outside.

4. Transplanting the Valquetta-i-Olvar

The Nolónerofar then enlist the aid of the Urukayn in transplanting the Word of Power. The sides of the vessel are partially dismantled and, with the Nolónerofar keeping up a continual chanting song, the people of the Earth Cult protect the vessel and the ground around it while the Yavannen first charm the soil and then move the plant matrix in situ from the vessel to the prepared ground. This takes 24 hours (or more), and presents the best opportunity for an attack by evil forces (or the player characters, if they are still being duped by Thendrik). Note that Sauron has not had sufficient time to prepare a full-scale assault on the site, so is merely sending available agents.

5. Jivétel (Q: The End of it All)

In the end, all the Nolónerofar's work and effort is doomed to yield but little result, thanks to the fathomless depths of Sauron's malice. The Dark Lord's last agent suddenly appears on the scene, or reveals himself/herself, producing
the Morgon-i-Ancalagon. After a brief soliloquy in typical arch-villain style, they speak the words of command and the power of the Morgon blast the Valquette-i-Olar. There is nothing that the characters can do except save themselves (unless you want to be very generous and the players are extremely sharp), the Enadai will seek to save the Runing by crouching the blast and expending their own life-force. This results in their inevitable demise but may save a portion of the Word of Power and/or the characters. The perpetrator is either destroyed in the explosion unless you wish them to escape by the player characters. Whatever power remains in the Valquette-i-Olar is insufficient to counteract the inimical effects of the curse laid by Sauron aeons earlier. The Rune fades and is forgotten over the tale of years, and Taurindoleturiuovaromandovenenmarch crumbles into nothingness, the secret of its construction gone.

**RUMOURS**

Any of these 'random events' may be used at any point in stage 2 of the plot. They can also be used to introduce Thendrik to the players, by characters; they might hear the story at the same time, or may even be the teller of the tale. He will always seek to put the blackest interpretation on any event, and it is seen as a great concern for the welfare of the adjacent societies, trying to enlist the sympathy and active support of the characters. The encounters are presented as the basis for a tale to be related to the characters by someone (this might be second-, third- or even fourth-hand, of course), with additional and more accurate information available to adventurers at the scene.

**A. Singing**

Faint singing is heard emanating from the unearthly vessel, gentle and rhythmic, yet somehow strange and mysterious. Differing interpretations could be put on the music, since no words can be distinguished. At times, the repetitive sounds could even be said to be sinister - perhaps they form part of some unknown ritual...

If the PCs are present: Closer to, the singing resembles more the sounds of nature in the open air; it lies somewhere between birdsong, the humming of busy insects and the rustle of leaves in trees on a windy day. If anyone listening knows Quenya to rank 4 or better, they might 'imagine' that the sound is of a strange chord, singing in some exotic dialect of Quenya from years past; however, no sense may be made of it.

**B. The Wake**

Small springs have started welling in the path of the vessel and in the area where it is located. Plants are flourishing there - some might say quite unnaturally. However, this strange wake demonstrates quite plainly that the vessel came out of the East.

If the PCs are present: Closer investigation of the plants and springs shows that the water is very pure but both poisonous plants and herbs are growing amongst the usual plants of the region; for example: Bright Blue Eyes, Splayfoot Goodwort, Multifana and Silmanna (see Southern Mirkwood p53 and MERP p85).

**C. Evil Corpses**

The bodies of half a dozen orcs and a troll are found close to the vessel. The bodies are severely mutilated, even to the extent of being 'shredded'. Their weapons are splintered and broken, their armours torn and useless. There are no signs of the evil ones' opponents. Some may interpret this as a sign that the vessel is the home of good creatures who have defended themselves successfully; others may think the orcs came from the vessel and, having been severely punished, their bodies were thrown from it.

If the PCs are present: A Very Hard (-30) Tracking Roll will reveal that the orcs came from the south, went right up to the vessel, and then were returning south before being set upon and killed. Five successful Tracking Rolls are necessary to trail the orcs back to the secret entrance to Dol Guldur in the Emyn Muil. There are no signs of opponents, even with Absolute Success on the roll. All the corpses are rather slightly dirtier than usual (even for orcs and trolls). This is because they were killed in a 'churning' (see Núlënorvar).

**D. Odd Couple**

Two corpses are found close to the nearest human habitation, apparently dumped there. One is a middle-aged man, the other a younger woman. Both are moderately well dressed, although the clothes are ruined. Both died from crushing blows or perhaps a bad fall. Neither is known to anyone hereabouts.

If the PCs are present: The characters cannot identify them either. Careful examination of their possessions may suggest that they were thieves.

**GM:** These are indeed a pair of Gondorian thieves who investigated the vessel too closely and were slain after attacking the Emyn Muil.

**E. Flying Tonight**

A giant creature is seen in the vicinity of the vessel, flying across the face of the moon. It is vaguely bat-like, being black with membranous flapping wings. Any of the following attributes may be given to it by the tale-teller: it was mounted by a rider clad in squashes of black; it was a fearsome beast but without a rider; it had glowing red eyes; it had a halo of glowing flame; it bore a man clad in white wielding a sword of gold; it was really a black eagle with the sign of the Eye on the underside of its wings.

If the PCs are present: Successful Perception Rolls may give additional information as appropriate for either Faroth Morchaint or Vlagger; note that if you repeat this encounter (perhaps once as a story and another time as a witnessed event), you should confuse the characters by using the other Dúrín's the second time. Any Perception Roll will be at a significant penalty due to the darkness and distance involved.

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**ABBREVIATIONS USED IN MERP**

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F. Crazed Priest
One of the Urdakyn priests performs a blood sacrifice near the vessel, to
honour the Earth Mothers’ return. Some telling this story will go on to say
how the sky turned black and thunder rolled in from the hills as if they were
in agony; others might also maliciously add that the priest was aided by an
invisible creature from the vessel (though how this was divined is not revealed).

If the PCs are present: The priest is gripped in a violent passion, and sacrifices
a pair of goats on a makeshift altar. He is obviously mad if approached. After
his ritual, he faints but there is little effect; that night, however, there is a terrific
thunderstorm. Magical divination or weather-reading skills will determine
that the storm is natural. It will not be possible for the characters to reach the
priest before he completes the ritual. The priest is scruffily dressed and one
of the itinerant Urdakyn priests occasionally met.

G. Shadows at Night
One night, the side of the vessel opens and ‘something’ comes out. A number
of shadowy forms are seen; these are of indeterminate height, size and even
shape. Some will maintain that they are wraiths or wraiths or some other malefic
undead creature come to poison the land and slay their children; others think
they must be ancient spirits from Aman lost on a voyage through the Three
Worlds.

If the PCs are present: Even the best Perception Roll yields no more
information. The forms glide over the earth and, since the night is so dark,
they soon disappear from view. They do leave tracks which can be seen in the
morning, but half a mile from the vessel they diverge and can no longer be
followed. The tracks are unlike anything anyone in the party has seen before.

Taurëlinde Tauruvafan Törandovenëmbar
Taurëlinde Tauruvafan Törandovenëmbar, an Entish Quenya word which loosely
means wood-singing-big wooden-whale-wandering-wood-home, is a huge
wooden vessel built by the Nölenorolvale to transport their own version of the
Valquette-i-Olvor to the Brown Lands and heal them of the curse with which
Sauron afflicted them. It is known as the Taurëlinde for brevity’s sake.

The vessel vaguely resembles a vast ship like the Ark. It has no masts as such,
although two posts support a massive canopy of some sort which entirely drapes
the top of the vessel. When first sighted, it will probably appear much closer
than it really is, since it is built on such a huge scale. From prow to stern it
is at least 300 yards long, and its bulk towers more than 200 feet into the air.
Close to it has a wrecked appearance, covered in living plants which may be
seaweed or vines, encrust with algae, mosses and lichens. The hull is dark
grey and brown, built of an unidentifiable wood, or possibly stone,
while the canopy is sallow, tinged with green and brown

When the vessel moves it seems to glide through the earth, propelled by nothing
more than the urge of the soil. The great furrow it drags closes over behind
it, leaving only a wake of rapidly growing wild plants which flower the next
day, creating a narrow swath of blue and red across the green grasslands of
the Plain of Rhovanion.

The ship has been built by the Enadai known as the Nölenorolvale. Its
construction and method of propulsion are beyond the divination of mortals,
and even the Elves. Within the vessel is a marvel to match any currently in
northwest Middle-earth: the Valquette-i-Olvor. Myriad beams of light spill
down from concealed portals in the sides of the hull onto a rich bed of soil
spread across the Belowdeck. Here thrives a complex community which,
through its inner bonding and correspondence with the Word of Power invoked
by Yavanna, channels the power of the Song of Creation itself. There are jail
shrubs and spreading bushes, grasses and creepers, lofty, slender reeds and
palms, vibrant undergrowth and layer upon layer of leafy vegetation. Birds
fly and sing amongst the plant life, small mammals push through the fallen
leaves and chew on roots, insects dart from flower to flower, worms and termites
turn the soil, even microbes flourish in the humus.

As well as light, the matrix of plants needs water, and this is supplied by the
canopy over the Upperdeck. An integral part of the Word of Power is a prolific
species of silkworm (S. menstruino), and the Enadai collect the silk from these
silkworms to maintain the canopy. Every dawn dew forms on the underside
of the canopy and rivulets trickle and run down to vats and pools on the
Belowdeck. In this way only purified and benign waters feed the Valquette-
i-Olvor.

If the Belowdeck is an apparently chaotic jungle of plants and wildlife, dappled
with golden beams and misty vapours, the Upperdeck is a more orderly place.
The Nölenorolvale have their living space here, amid grassy and mossy lawns
edged with delicate flowering plants. Only a shallow layer of soil covers this
deck, but it has been ‘landscaped’ with boulders and shrubs. An even light
permeates the canopy, which is occasionally rolled right back. Round holes
lead down to the Belowdeck, living ladders of woven ivy stretching over one
hundred feet into the greenery.

A community of some twenty-eight Nölenorolvale, of widely differing types,
dwell on the vessel. All have some knowledge of the Valquette-i-Olvor and
and can use its Power on the vessel or in the vicinity. When they venture further
abroad, however, they will be without the protection of the Yavannan while
in the Brown Lands, until the Valquette-i-Olvor has been transplanted and given
time to work against Sauron’s mortal curse.

The Nölenorolvale are careful to hide their presence on board from any prying
eyes. They are especially watchful for Sauron’s agents; they know they cannot
hope to escape his attention but realise that caution and discretion will make
the success of their mission much more probable. Their leader, a stern, dark
green hooded Enada with flakes of bright golden eyebrows and tresses like a
flowering broom, is the commanding Cárithrith. She is the guiding spirit of
the expedition, and inspires some of the more diffident Enadai.
Despite their precautions, careful observers will be able to see shadowy shapes moving behind the canopy with a successful Perception Roll. However, even someone capable of flying close to the vessel’s Upperdeck will see no more than this. Anyone coming close to the vessel will be discouraged; the Nôlënorolvar will summon the Havnen by singing and seek to disturb those present. First they simply cause the ground to shake and shudder, then seek to drive the intruders back. If this fails, two or three Enadai silently come through secret portals in the side of the vessel and cause the Churning of the Soil.

If you wish to have alternative explanations for the provenance of the vessel, local sources may offer any of the following:

1. The vessel is a Ship of the Dead. Part of the Phrazon’s ‘Golden Fleet’ sent to invade Westernesse at the end of the Second Age, the ship was doomed rather than sunk in the cataclysm that swallowed Númenor. Since that dreadful day, the ship has sailed the seas and lands of the world, manned by an uncaried and undead crew, cursed to wander eternally that men should never forget the folly of the King.

2. The vessel is a ship of elven design, manufactured from magical wood that can fly or float or traverse the land. It has come from beyond Rhînien, passing undetected through uninhabited wastes on a secret mission to challenge the Necromancer in Dol Guldur. The ship has weapons of great strength to blast the tower to rubble and destroy the evil lurking therein.

3. The vessel is a Corsair raider gripped by a cyclone and whirled through the atmosphere high above the face of Arda until it came crashing down here, dismasted and beached miles from the sea. It has been possessed by orcs or some other race of evil creatures who are planning to launch an attack from it at the behest of their foul Master.

4. The vessel is the creation of the Weimriders, born to thousands of a new tribe of sorcerers from the far East, out to dominate the region and claim it for their own. These barbaric worshippers of the Dark Lord have perverted the trees and rocks and all other aspects of Nature, binding them to their will and purpose to create this Ark to carry them so many leagues. Soon a hellish horde will burst forth in a black tide and sweep all before them.

**Nôlënorolvar**

The Nôlënorolvar are a select branch of the Enadai, known to Common Men as the Entwives. It is with them that this story has grown; it is their ideas that have been nurtured and blossomed, and the Taurelindeliturguarandarandoenëmbor is the fruit of their labours. We will start by recounting their history, such as it is known to us.

Professor Tolkien described the Ents as being “the most ancient people surviving in the Third Age”. In his translation of the Red Book of Westmar, he relates a conversation shared by the Hobbits of the Shire and Peregrine with Fangorn the Ent which gave us, until recently, all the extant information regarding the Entwives.

“The Ents gave their love to things that they met in the world… loved the great trees, and the wild woods, and the slopes of the high hills; and they drank of the mountain streams, and ate only such fruit as the trees let fall in their path… But the Entwives gave their minds to the lesser trees, and to the meadows in the sunshine beyond the feet of the forests; and they saw the sloe in the thicket, and the wild apple and the cherries flowering in spring, and the green herbs in the waterland in summer, and the seedling grasses in the autumn fields… The Entwives ordered them to grow according to their wishes, and bear leaf and fruit to their liking… So the Entwives made gardens to live in…

“When the Darkness came the Entwives crossed the Great River, and made new gardens, and tilled new fields. After the Darkness was overthrown the land of the Entwives blossomed richly, and their fields were full of corn. Many men learned the crafts of the Entwives and honoured them greatly; but we were only a legend to them, a secret in the heart of the forest.

“Long ago… we crossed the Anduin and came to their land; but we found a desert: it was all burned and uprooted, for war had passed over it. But the Entwives were not there. Long we called, and long we searched…”

The Ents never discovered whence the Entwives had departed after the desecration of the Brown Lands by Sauron, and there are none surviving in Middle-earth save the oldest Ents who can still remember what the Entwives looked like. Fangorn described a Unada thus:

“Fintrethil — very far she was in my eyes, though little like the Edmundiel of old… Hair parted by the sun to the hue of ripe corn and cheeks like red apples.”

An ancient vellum written in old Quenya by the Noldor poet Kistore describes an encounter with a small group of Enadai during his travels to the East:

“One stood swaying like a stand of harvested wheat, with a flared golden head and a slender body which bent gracefully with the rustling wind; another was green and sturdy and somehow leafy, like a water plantain, her pink-centred boughs and variegated veins like a delicate treacly of lace, and surrounding her was a hazy cloud of scent; the third and fourth were quite similar — tall and erect, a deep green with magnificent plumes of creamy white on their crests. These sisters resembled the great grasses of the savannah and the pampas…

“Their motion was swift and fluid, like the wind rippling across a field in May. And yet something seemed to move with them below the ground; there was a tremor, like standing upon the skin of a taunt drum, and a thrill passed one by. Did the earth crease and move them, as the waves of the wide ocean move banks of seaweed? I do not know. Only — I fancied that perhaps they are like unto the islands of ice I have seen in Northern Seas and Helcaraxë, whose bulk lies hidden from sight beneath the water.”

He later states:

“The Enadai have grown much less like the Onodrim we know in Middle-earth. They have become closer to the plants they love; the plants of the water margins and the hedgerows, and most of all the cultivated plants of the field and the orchard. Too, they have grown closer to the soil and the creatures that move and dwell in it.

“Just as the Onodrim are Shepherds and Masters of the Trees, so their departed and estranged spouses may be thought Farmers and Mistresses of the Soil. The Onodrim on occasion can speak to the Huorns, the spirits of the trees, awakening them and causing the wood to move. The Enadai sing to the Yavannen, the quiescent spirits of the earth. When the Yavannen hear the song of the Enadai, they rise up and obey their bidding. The Yavannen can inhabit the earth and the soil, or the myriad plants that grow close to it, or even the creatures and animals that live in the soil. Some Yavannen have an affinity for water and slip through streams and pools, unseen and felt only as a passing eddy or current. It is with the aid of the Yavannen that the Enadai work their magic green touch upon the land.”
The rest of the story we must piece together for ourselves. We know Sauron wove terrible necromancies of drought and desiccation and poisoned the lands used by the Enadai south of the Greenwood. No mere incursion of warping bands could have made the land so desolate that the Entwives could not restore it. Being unable to heal their gardens, they chose exile in the East, where an untamed continent stretched before them unlike the troubled northwest of Endor.

Before they departed, however, their interaction with the men of the region was deep enough to become a permanent legacy. Today there are still priests of the Uerdaykin in Rhovanion, men and women who worship in the Cult of the Earth and Growing Things. In the mind of man, the memory of the benign Mistresses who taught them the skills of tilling, sowing and reaping has been much altered, so that the Enadai are remembered as goddesses with vast and wondrous powers, who still live hidden amongst the plants and rocks, in the soil and the waters; spirits who bring down the rain and clear the skies that the sun might shine.

Most of the Enadai's powers come from their association with the Yavannen. The latter were spirit creatures who existed partially in this world and also in another, in the same manner as the Maiar or undead. They were forced to depart the Brown Lands because Sauron's magic caused any Yavannen tarrying there to expire. Now the Noldorinovar feel that they can return and counteract the Dark Lord's essence with the Valquettia-i-Ovar.

Like Enta, the Entwives vary greatly in appearance and many other aspects. Statistics for these creatures are therefore given in general terms only.

A Unada is typically 15th to 25th level, with around 100 hits. Their smaller size and less robust stature makes them more vulnerable to attacks and they similarly fear fire. Their defence is roughly equivalent to Chain, with a DB of 40 to 60. They can employ (but will only do so in dire circumstances) either a Grapple or Crush attack, with an OB of 90+. They are either large or huge creatures, many being able to physically draw themselves up to a greater height (and reach) than at first perceived.

A Unada can use her song to call on the Yavannen when in trouble. A gentle humming will set the ground moving for 30 feet around her, or for 10 feet around a point up to 100 yards distant. These movements will be felt as an Unbalancing attack with an OB of up to 50. Alternatively, the Yavannen can 'infest' plants making them move and grab opponents in the same area. Small creatures will be held fast, larger ones having their movement reduced by 25%, 50% or 75%. Huge creatures will be unaffected. These songs need at least 1 minute to take effect, and the longer they go on for, the greater the possible effect. Other forms of attack are possible, such as Tripping or Snaring.

However, the most fearsome power of the Yavannen under the power of the Enadai is that of Churning the Soil. All animal and plant life is sucked down below the soil by the spirits and buried there while being ground and shredded by stones, tiny animals and unkneeding roots. All motionless creatures sink 12" each round while in the affected area (up to the maximum depth of the soil). If a creature can move, it sinks 1" less for each 10" of movement it has. Being attacked in this way is terrifying, and anyone witnessing it will also be afflicted with Fear. Death shortly follows burial, and even if rescued those who have been submerged may have earth blocking their nostrils and mouth. Anyone surviving burial must make a 10th level LR, with a penalty equal to the amount of damage they took; those failing are afflicted with a mortal fear of bare earth, roots and so on. This phobia will stay with them for 360x10 years unless cured (needs Mental Cures spell).

The Enadai have a +25 to saves against spells of Channelling and have 1-2 x level Power Points from that realm to use in plant-affecting, weather-affecting and protection spells. A Unada is Extremely Hard (-30) to spot if there are any reasonable size plants in the area. They leave little or no trail and move very fast.

Individual Yavannen may be anything from 1st through to 10th level, and are only affected by magic. They will have 55-400 hits, with no 'armour'. They are immune to fire and many other effects; if attacked with a magic weapon they will have an effective DB of 60-75.

Notable Enadai:

There are two notable Enadai on the vessel with whom the characters may come into contact during the course of the adventure. These are Cānirithá, the leader of the Noldorinovar, and Singoláté, a Unada who addresses the council of Uerdaykin priests.

Cānirithá (Q: Commanding Anger) is a stern and determined Entwiwe who nevertheless cares deeply about the fate of the Free Peoples in northwest Endor. She sees the mission as benefiting not only the Enadai but also all the inhabitants of the region. But most importantly for her is the possibility of rejoining the Onodrin, and seeking out her long lost love. Although very good at organising her fellows, Enadai, Cānirithá is not very adept at speaking with men or similar races. She does have a beautiful singing voice, and generally leads the chants to call the Yavannen. Cānirith appears as dark green and somewhat prickly at first, but when she sings she reveals a lighter and softer side.

Singoláté (Q: Many Flowers) is somewhat younger than her leader, and had greater dealings with men in the time before the Enadai left the Brown Lands. She is much happier than any of the other Noldorinovar at speaking with men, and therefore she has volunteered to risk visiting the priest's council. Singoláté looks rather leafy and bushy, and speaks in a rather jolly tone. In colouring she is veined with pink striations giving her a delicate appearance; however she is still exceedingly strong and very tough. Her appealing voice gives her a +25 bonus for Influencing men.

valquettia-i-ovar

In the Beginning of Days, Yavanna Kementsirí of the Aratur was charged with the ordering of things that grow upon the face of Arda. She it was that caused plants and trees to sprout and flourish and blossom when first the Two Lamps were lit and shone upon the soil. And when the dark came, so we are told, "Yavanna... was unwilling to forsake the lands, for all things that grow are dear to her... Therefore... she would come at times and heal the hurts of Melkor."

Later, when Yavanna learnt of Ilvatar's plan that the ohar, the whole realm of plants, should be open to any abuse from his children, she grieved for them and went to Marwé. "King of Arda," she said, "all my works are dear to me. Shall nothing that I have devised be free from the dominion of others?" Marwé answered her, saying, "When the Children awake, then the thought of Yavanna will awake also, and it will summon spirits from afar, and they will go among the kelvar and the ohar, and some will dwell therein, and their just anger shall be feared."

Yavanna's protection of the plant world led her to establish a number of sanctuaries where there would reside great powers for healing harm inflicted by evil upon her creations. She took tremendous pains to devise a way of concealing both the power and its source, so that it could be neither discovered nor afflicted by Melkor or any other who should take his side in the eternal struggle. Her solution was the creation of a living Word of Power; an herbaceous manifestation of one of the phrases of the Song Ainulindale.

Deep in the heart of the vast continent of Endor, also known as Middle-earth, Yavanna Kementsirí, spouse of Aúiel, once rested following strife with Morgoth. In their battles, the Aratur had discovered just how monstrously Morgoth had been able to pervert their creations, turning them into hideous mutations. To prevent more interference with her beloved plants here, Yavanna made a garden, setting the Word of Power once more into the ground as a matrix of living and growing things, both of kelvar and ohar.
This matrix was virtually indestructible and even capable of reproducing itself in smaller and modified versions. It preserved the spirit of Yavanna's purpose and her energy in order to ensure Morgoth and his minions could not savor the beauty she had envisaged and helped to fashion. This was one of the safeguards Eru-I dbohvat had allowed her along with the Onodrtrim. When the Enluiti migrated eastwards they encountered the Valquetta-i-Olar, this garden of wonderful beauty and power.

Naturally enough, the rune of plants held great fascination for some of the Enluiti and they agreed to help tend and study the garden. These dedicated creatures grew even wiser in the ways of Yavanna and became known as the Nölenorvorok. Although with time their numbers dwindled, in much the same way as those of the Enluiti they left behind, they each grew in stature. All remembered the terrible desolation and harsh tact of the soil that had driven them out of their homeland and they yearned to return. Some eventually came to understand something of the nature of the Word that grew about them, and perceived that they might be able to use its power to combat Sauron's lingering malignancy that blighted the plains of Southern Rhovanion.

The Valquetta-i-Olar has thus been duplicated on the Tolliëndiléuvar, a brand-sword from the site of the Enluiti's ancient dwelling places in the Brown Lands.

Odel-Qurimbe

(Q: Dread Host of Night.) There are several overt and covert opponents sent by Sauron (the Necromancer) to investigate the vessel and then to thwart the Nölenorvorok's aim. Use them at the appropriate times, ignoring any that are unsuitable (too weak or too powerful) for the adventuring party.

Babbed & Grattar

These are two a pair of Olog-hai from Dol Guldur, vicious black tarts armed with spiked clubs. They have been sent to try to capture one of the inhabitants of the vessel, something which they should surely be large enough and dangerous enough to do, unless the denizens are powerful indeed. Babbed is the brighter of the two while Grattar is keen-sighted for a troll and somewhat less in stature. They will seek to kill anyone associating themselves with the vessel if they cannot capture them easily. Each carries a quantity of rope and twine, and a net set with little metal hooks. They also have a flask each of the orichalc revivifying cordial, several large sacks, a small quantity of treasure (gold jewellery, carved bone and ivory, chunks of semi-precious crystal etc) carried in bell pouches, and a selection of iron knives, wickedly barbed and honed to a fine edge.

Faroth Mochrait (S: Shadow Huntress)

Faroth is a half-elven scout with a peculiar upbringing and background. Her mother was a Sindarin enchantress seduced by one of the evil Mannish kings of Sauron who had chosen to become his servants of the Ring. The product of this unholy alliance was brought up by an amoral mother and a father dwindling into undead servitude as a Ring-servant. She now serves the Dark Lord as well, as a spy and agent, and as an assassin.

Faroth has many peculiar skills and abilities, including a well-developed empathy with her pet Great Bat, Daeramé (S: Dark Wings). She is talented in the magical realm of Essence, and has been entrusted with an Eye Amulet to boost her powers. This amulet is of a strange alloy metal and precious stone like tiger's eye which glows luminously when its power is drawn on; to be used it has to be placed to the forehead. Its use also allows the Dark Lord access to her thoughts and perceptions. She also (naturals) knows the use of poison and carries Asgurah, Blade Hemlock and Jegg. Other offensive abilities include her Morgul-knife, the dreaded blade which can send a victim into the shadow world of wraiths, and a magical gold ring shaped like the body and head of a black dragon which can shoot a Darkbolt three times a day. Typically, Faroth likes to fly silently and swoop upon a victim, using poisoned blowdarts from a distance (or sometimes a composite bow), and either a scimitar or the Morgul-knife close to Daeramé can attack with her when commanded.

Vilagaur (S: Sky-werewolf)

This servant of Sauron is a kindred spirit of Faroth Mochrait, and yet a far more deadly original. For Vilagaur is a true vampires, a fearsome creature with legendary magical abilities, being shrouded in her own race's secrecy and night-time life. Little is known of vampires, and all of it bad. Whence they came, only Morgoth and his chief servants might guess.

Vilagaur has innate magical skills owing to her supernatural origin. These include talons capable of tearing through even metal armour, great speed and agility, power over darkness and in dark places, and resistance to normal weapons. Most importantly, she can assume a giant bat-like form and fly through the night with total silence and deadliness. Additionally, she owns a magic cloak which lends more magical powers including concealment, protection and movement.

Faroth Mochrait and Vilagaur do not operate together; the purpose of having two similar opponents in this adventure is to confuse the players. Should they learn the identity of one, have them encounter the other next time to throw them off and ruin any plans they might have prepared. Both have similar aims, of course. One or other appears whenever there's an opportunity for sabotaging the Entwives' plans, or any activities that the player characters are undertaking on their behalf. Both take extreme pains never to be caught or slain, though they don't mind risking a little harm. They are also sensible in their use of magic and won't overstretch themselves. Both these foes are dangerous and should be used with careful restraint against lower level parties.

Thendrik

Thendrik is another agent of the Dark, but does not serve Sauron directly. He is employed by one of the cults of dark priests who worship the images of Morgoth and Sauron as the black Lords of Night. He is a Ranger of the plains, a Gramuz Northman from central Rhovanion. He appears fair and pleasant of character, only revealing his darker side in unintentional slips - and these very infrequently. He is known to many of the villages in the area as a tough man sometimes distant and cool, but respectable. Strangely enough, if anyone is pressed, no one can ascribe to him any noble or even useful deed, but neither are there any evil tales of him.

He dresses in traditional dull brown and green linen clothes and wears a steel and brass scale mail shirt. He has hair of a sandy colour and the healthy look of the outdoors; his eyes are blue and he sports a trimmed beard and moustache. He wears a well-worn broadsword and carries a bundle of four light spears, suitable for throwing or using in the hand. He also has an unusual ivory knife in a stained bone sheath, and around his neck is a silver chain pendant set with a small ruby. All these items are magical; the sheath can cast Tracking twice per day and the ruby is a x2 PP multiplier. Thendrik himself knows some magic spells.

Thendrik will seek the aid of the characters, professing to be concerned about the suborning of some of the local religions by the forces of evil. The arrival of the Dark Ship (as he insists on calling it) is a sign that some great evil is about to be released, a spell or ritual that might permanently blight all the lands and forests east of the Anduin. He will attempt to persuade the characters to launch an attack on the Dark Ship, or, failing that, to attack the Nölenorvorok when they start the transplanting of the Valquetta-i-Olar.

Morgon-i-Anicalagon (S: The Black Stone of Ancalagon)

The Black Stone is a very potent magical item dating back to the days of the First Age when Morgoth fought the Elves in Beleriand. The Stone is a magically-bound breath of fire from the arch-Dagon Ancalagon the Black, the mightiest Dragon ever to roam Middle-earth. It resembles a rough chunk of coal or volcanic rock, pitted and scarred. By chanting a certain verse, the power locked within the Stone bursts forth, unleashing a torrent of all-consuming fire which spews for 150 yards in every direction. Anything other than a servant of the Secret Fire or a wielder of the flame of Anor will be reduced to ashes instantaneously on contact with the blast: alternatively you could treat it as a +200 Fire Ball attack, with repeated heat criticals every round until the area is left.

Vilagaur has innate magical skills owing to her supernatural origin. These include talons capable of tearing through even metal armour,
One of the Del-Dúrimbê possesses the Morgan - the one surviving at the end of the adventure, so that it can be released and destroy the Valquetta-i-Olar, even if this means death or destruction for the carrier. Only if all the opponents have been removed will the Word of Power be set in place. This is necessary for the historical continuity of the works of Tolkien, since the Brown Lands do not regenerate before the Fourth Age (if then).

Other Encounters

You may wish to instigate other encounters which will cause problems for the characters; for wild beasts see Table 8.42 in "Southern Mirkwood; for human encounters use Brigands and Bandits, Gondorean patrols and so on from the same source. Remember that the arrival of the Tauroglovi is rather frightening, occurrence, and many animals and people will have fled the area in mortal fear. This means that a low level party has a good chance of getting involved without having to worry about dangerous Wilderlander encounters.

Uerdakyn

The Uerdakyn is the Cult of the Earth, a Northman religion established by the elders of certain Northman tribes after the departure of the Eduadai from their homelands, to explain the origins of agricultural techniques. The Cult is loosely organised, tolerating individual priests to establish themselves rather than having a formal hierarchy. Precedence is only established by the vulnerability of the priest (or priestess) and their popular acclaim. Since both men and women work the fields, orchards and pastures, both take holy orders.

The religion is based on a series of festivals through the year. At the end of winter there is the Turning of the Soil, then in Spring come the Festival of Sowing and the Celebration of Blossom. In high Summer the Festival of Warm Winds ushers in the change in the weather on the plains which ripens the crops and can sometimes bring drought. At the close of Summer is the greatest of all celebrations, Harvest Home, when great matters are settled, men and women are betrothed, and so on. Towards the end of Autumn is Winter Warding and in mid-winter is Tulaide. The Winter Warding is a festival of bonfires and processions through the fields with blazing torches to keep the cold, dark spirits at bay.

Communities where the Uerdakyn is observed rely on the ritual blessings of crops and festivals through the year to support them. They believe in a general deity of Nature, an aspect of Yavanna Kementári. More particularly, they believe that she is served by an unspecified number of Earth Mothers (their concept of the Eduadai) who will look after - in a spiritual sense - the fields, hedges, homes and pasturelands of the worshippers. These spirits are revered with prayer (ritual chants at daybreak and eventide, ie, before and after the day's work) and offerings of produce and other gifts.

Although the spirits are not actually present, of course, priests and priestesses are able to channel Power from the Valar. The concentration of Power in certain places over the years has instilled them with a Power of their own, resulting in holy springs, wells, stones, groves and even individual trees. Most priests are settled and attached to one such site; others are itinerant and act as wandering preachers. Some specialise in activities such as healing (rare), helping crops and livestock, and there are a few soothsayers, sages, hermits and so on.

Uerdakyn animists have access to spell lists specific to their practice, namely in the area of nature and agriculture. You may wish to invent new lists for them in addition to those listed below from the MERP rulebook:

- Animal Mastery
- Direct Channelling
- Nature's Lore
- Plant Mastery
- Protections
- Purifications
- Spell Defence
- Surface Ways

The priests and priestesses are recognisable by their yellow and green garb, typically long cloaks and undergarments, trimmed with flowers and leaves appropriate to the time of year, or (for the more established priests) jewelled imitations. They usually go bareheaded, winding plants into their hair and even braiding and plaiting flowering creepers like ground elder or goldbine amongst their tresses. They wield quarterstaves and spears, and some use shortbows. They do not hunt, mainly surviving on donations of food, firewood and skins from the Cult members. Their strength is greatest when close to their chosen place of Power; the exact nature of any special abilities associated with such places is up to you to decide.

Two Uerdakyn Priests

Caldheir is a pleasant man from a small Gramuz village associated with the holy spring named Aerialiscurn (Rh: Spring of Light Water). The water from the spring is high in mineral content and slightly effervescent. Caldheir serves his community dutifully and is both respected and liked. He is now 52 and will go to attend the council of the Uerdakyn addressed by the Unada. Initially, he will be in favour of the Valquetta-i-Olar being planted in current Gramuz territory, but will eventually join the group favouring the resurrection of the Brown Lands.

Caldheir owns a magic staff and has special powers connected with Aerialiscern. In the vicinity of the spring, he has x2 PP and an additional 48PP which can be used to cast spells from the Spring Waters spell list:

1. Water Production 1
2. Water Production 2
3. Area Protection II
4. Waterwall
5. Water Bolt (100')

He can also cast these spells away from the spring by paying half the normal PP cost and using a quartz-pint of Aerialiscern water per PP used. Caldheir also has the skill of herblore which acts a bonus to finding and using herbs in the wild.

Estrigell is a more eccentric priest. He is an aged (67), itinerant Uerdakyn animist given over much to preaching and berating the Gramuz villagers he comes across. At times, his religious fervour gets the better of him and he goes rather mad. You can have the characters encounter Estrigell as the teller of one of the rumours, or as the crazed priest of Rumour F. He has a special resistance ability giving him +10 RR vs Essence magic. He possesses two magic items: a belt of woven leather thongs dyed green and stitched with garnets which gives +5 bonus to Base Spells and Directed Spells, and adds 5PP to the wearer's total; and a gold ring carved with the symbol of a hammer which can cast a spell of stunning twice per day.

Estrigell is intended to be a nuisance to the player characters, a source of misinformation and annoyance. He is loud and unco-operative at all times, and argues with them, chiding them if they are non-believers and render little help. He may be useful if the characters beg him for assistance and put up with his perorations for a little while. He scorns gifts other than food or useful clothing and items.

statistics

<table>
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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>PP</th>
<th>HITS</th>
<th>AT</th>
<th>DB</th>
<th>MELEE OB</th>
<th>MISSILE OB</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
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<tr>
<td>NÖLENOROVAR</td>
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<td>Enadai</td>
<td>15-25</td>
<td>15-50</td>
<td>c.100</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>40-60</td>
<td>90+Gr/Cr</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Entwives; Large-Huge</td>
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<td>Cániróth</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>121</td>
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<td>55</td>
<td>100HGr</td>
<td>100HCr</td>
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<td>Singalitó</td>
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<td>90LCr</td>
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<td>Caldheir</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40ps*</td>
<td>10sb</td>
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("ps" means "pass"

36 WHITE DWARF
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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
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<th>HITS</th>
<th>AT</th>
<th>DB</th>
<th>MELEE OB</th>
<th>MISSILE OB</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Protections (5), Nature’s Lore (5), Plant Mastery (5), Purifications (5), Spring Waters (5)</strong>; Westron (5), Gramuik (5), Éothrik (3), Bethuir (2), Logathig (2); MM +0, Herblore +50, Perception +45, Public Speaking +45, Use Items +40, Swim +35, Stalk/Hide +30, Ride +30, Read Runes +25, Leadership/Influence +20, Directed Spells +15, Base Spells +10; <strong>Quartersstaff</strong> +10 OB and <em>detect water within 180</em>.</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>SL</td>
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<td>30sp</td>
<td>25sp</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Del-Dûrimbê</strong></td>
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<td>Bablad</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>CH</td>
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<td>170cl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grattar</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>CH</td>
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<td>162cl</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Fathomchuint</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9+12</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>79kn*</td>
<td>64sc</td>
<td>*Morgul-knife; **Poisoned Half-elf Scout; S(66, Ag96, Co50, Ig90, Br59, Pr78, Ap96);</td>
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<td>Essence Hand (5), Spirit Mastery (5), Spell Ways (5); Sindarin (5), Westron (5), Morbeth (5), Quenya (2); Empathy with Great Bats; MM +15, Perception +81, Stalk/Hide +75, Use Poison +65, Ride +49, Track +44, Flying +40 (+65 with Daeramé), Leadership/Influence +5;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daeramé</td>
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<td>61</td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50MBi</td>
<td>75MBi/60MCl</td>
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<td>Vampire; Large, Spd VF*, 5 Spell Lists (% 10); *without magic cloak she is DB 40 and Spd FA.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vilagaur</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>65*</td>
<td>100HCl</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thendrik</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12*</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>SL/+S</td>
<td>25/40</td>
<td>77kn**</td>
<td>62sp</td>
<td>* x2 PP mult; ** +10 ivory knife; Gramuz Ranger; S(90, Ag91, Co92, Ig39, Br83, Pr32, Ap35;</td>
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<td>Nature’s Guises (6), Surface Ways (5), Spell Defences (5); Westron (5), Gramuik (5), Morbeth (4), Éothrik (3); Sindarin (3); MM +5, Stalk/Hide +62, Ride +58, Perception +52, Track +48*, Climb +48, Swim +38, Acting +25, Ambush +15.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
An adventure for Paranoia, committed by citizen 'Pete' TAMLY-NNN

THE TREASON OF SBR SECTOR

- Everyone in Alpha Complex is Happy. The Computer says so. Can you doubt The Computer?
- Besides, the Computer kindly ensures that all citizens’ food is carefully laced with chemical additives to keep them Happy. This is an example of the kindness and wisdom of The Computer.
- However, the evil Commies are forever seeking ways in which to make citizens of Alpha Complex Unhappy. Being Unhappy is Treason. It is a sign that you have succumbed to Communist Propaganda.
- The whole of SBR Sector is currently Unhappy. Our Troubleshooters’ mission is to root out the Commie Traitors responsible for this sabotage and terminate them.
- The citizens of SBR Sector are aware that their Unhappiness is Treason, but many of them are so Unhappy that they have presented themselves for voluntary termination. The Computer realises that so many citizens cannot have become Unhappy by coincidence. Commie sabotage must be responsible. The Computer has mercifully granted a stay of execution for the citizens of SBR Sector.
- The citizens of SBR Sector should not be Unhappy. If they are it must be because the Commies have put Unhappiness drugs in their food. Interestingly, three citizens in SBR Sector are completely unaffected by the Unhappiness. They are the Director of the Food Vats, citizen Mal-B-ING-3, and his two chief technicians, Di-G-EST-2 and Botan-G-ULPS. One of these must be the traitor.
- Sector SBR has been sealed off for Security Reasons.

NOTHING IS EVER SO OBVIOUS

The Computer’s conclusions are quite logical given the data it has, but they could not be further from the truth. Well, what did you expect?

What has actually happened is that the R&D unit in neighbouring NTM Sector has been testing a strange antique weapon found on a recent expedition to the Outside. This ‘Emotional Control Ray’ is designed to demoralise enemy troops. The R&D men, in accordance with established Alpha Complex safety procedures concerning horrifically dangerous arcane weapons, turned it on SBR Sector to see how it worked. Unfortunately it succeeded beyond their wildest dreams and proved quite uncontrollable. Instead of affecting a small group of Infrared workers as was intended, it actually caused severe depression in almost everyone in the sector. The three Food Vat technicians escaped because they happened to be out of the sector at a meeting when the ray was fired.

The R&D men on the project are well aware of what they have done and are
desperately trying to cover up and (unusually for them) make amends. They are counting on this to make the machine fire a Happiness Ray, the effects of which will be felt by the Troubleshooters during their investigation, though they probably won't be very Happy about the results. Doesn't this sound fun already?

Meanwhile there is considerable consternation in SBR Sector. Mal-B, Di-G and Boeing know that they are likely to be made scapegoats and are doing everything they can to rectify matters. Unfortunately, this isn't very much. The only thing they can think of is to massively increase the dose of the Happiness drugs in the food of the people of SBR Sector. (For the benefit of Acute Paranoia junkies who are sticklers for rules and other such useless items, they are increasing Visomorpain doses and adding lots of Gelgernine. The rest of us, of course, will make up the effects as we go along, as usual.) Mal & Co are wise enough to keep some undocured food back for themselves even SBR Sector will get the new doses shortly.

But there's one of those really wonderful complications that make the life of the average Troubleshooter such fun. Can you guess? Yes, that’s right - there are quite a few other people around who missed out on the 'Traveller's' deal. The Happy Face will not only give them as possible traitors yet because they haven't come to its attention. However, because of the new drugs they are about to become DELEERIOUSLY HAPPY. Of course, as the sector is sealed off, the Troubleshooters will be unable to get out without good reason. Unless they can find a safe source of food, they too will become DELEERIOUSLY HAPPY. This may hamper their investigations a little, though probably no more than usual. This will be fun. But not for them.

TRUSTTHECOMPUTERTRUSTTHECOMPUTERTRUSTTHECOMPUTER

**A PAIR OF BRIEFINGS**

As usual, the Troubleshooters will be summoned individually to their mission via messages from their friend and yours, The Computer. The general alert message is reproduced below, the player having put together with an extra message for the team leader and briefings for the Troubleshooters from their Secret Societies and Service Groups. Internal Security have asked us to remind all GMs that the damaging of The Computer’s property (to wit, valuable copies of White Dwarf) in any way is Treason and will be punished in the usual horrendously painful way. Those wishing to photocopy such items should first present form ISFOD-1221-sgx/jc-SEMICOM-s reproduced elsewhere in this publication, to the appropriate authorities.

The Troubleshooters will need to be briefed about their mission be someone of high security clearance. The character Peter-I from the previous adventure in the Paranoia rulebook will do for this role, although you are welcome to create your own briefing group if you wish. Peter-I will, as usual, be assisted by Ness-Y, the Internal Security man. For the purposes of this adventure it is also necessary to have a technical expert on food production and a witness to the current state of SBR Sector. The recommended characters are as follows:

- **Floyd-O** is the food technology expert from PL&C. He is very enthusiastic about the quality of Alpha Complex food, but he won't tell the Troubleshooters anything about what goes into it because they don't have high enough security clearances. Floyd is a real, gen-u-ine maniac; that much should already have been obvious to anyone who has experienced Alpha Complex food.

- **Neil-R** is a PL&C technician from SBR sector. Like most of his colleagues he is Deeply Depressed. Like, a real bummer, man. We mean, really the pits. Oh wow, is he unhappy! He doesn't really want to be stuck some tedious briefing answering boring questions when he could be being terminated instead. Yes, he's that unhappy.

Peter-I explains the basic situation to the Troubleshooters, adding little to the information that The Computer has already given them. Forgotten Alex. He says that the trouble began about an hour after the breakfast cycle (it is now two hours after breakfast) and shows no sign of improving. He does not pass on The Computer’s comments about Mal-B and his colleagues; this information is cleared for the Troubleshooter leader only. Peter-I, of course, take the leader aside and discuss this with him. That will give the rest of the team something to worry about, which should be encouraged at every opportunity (no point calling the game Paranoia if everyone has a really good time, now is there?).

Once the Troubleshooters have satisfied themselves that they can get no more out of Neil-R (or Peter-I has got bored with the pointless interrogation and ordered them to get a move on or he’ll terminate the mission), they head off to their local PL&C depot for some equipment. As usual, the depot staff are anything but helpful. A number of sales assistants on the fresh food counter of any supermarket, they shuffle around slowly but determinedly preparing things, cleaning things, filling in forms and rearranging shelves, seemingly oblivious to the fact that someone is trying to get served. When the team do finally one of them to pay attention he immediately says that he is not qualified to deal with their enquiry and suggests they “fetch the boss”. This takes at least 15 minutes as the staff have to stop for a cup of coffee before returning to the counter under the new regulations imposed by the Computer not five minutes previously.

Eventually, however, the Troubleshooters will get issued with their equipment. They may start to feel, at last, that they are getting somewhere. How wrong could they be? Here’s what they get:

- **1 Multicorder I** with the following programs: Recorder, Bot Damage Analysis, Lie detector
- **1 Com I communicator per Troubleshooter
- **1 Model V Docbot** (ie, a Docbot with Medical Skill 7)
- **1 Jackobot 350** with the following specialty skills: Tach (1), Robotics (2), Robot Operation (3), Operate Docbot (6), Robot Maintenance (3), Maintain Docbot (6), Maintain Jackobot (6), Industrial Engineering (2), Industrial Engineering (5), Chemical Engineering (5), Vehicles (1, Vehicle Operation and Repair (2), Autocar Operation & Repair (5).

All requests for extra weaponry will be denied. After all, the Troubleshooters are hardly going anywhere dangerous, are they? Also note that no one will ever consider how much the Troubleshooters beg. Regulations say that food can only be supplied to Troubleshooters who are going to be outside Alpha Complex during meal times.

The Troubleshooters are then directed to R&D where they are to collect an experimental Food Generation System. This is for use in analysing the food being prepared in SBR Sector. Sadistic GMs may devise some additional, fearsomely bizarre experimental equipment with which to hinder the Troubleshooters. Go on, do it. You know your players will love you for it.

Thus equipped, the Troubleshooters are ferried by autocar to the entrance of SBR Sector and unceremoniously shoved inside. There is no immediate danger (surprise), as the inhabitants of SBR Sector are all too Depressed to do anything much. All the bots encountered in SBR will be similar in attitude to Neil-R. They will have names like Art-R-DNT and say things like, ‘Troubleshooters, eh? This is it then, we’re all going to be terminated.’ The bots have also been affected by the Unhappiness Ray, but the symptoms are less obvious (eg, they worry constantly about their parts being about to wear out). The fact that the bots are unhappy should alert the Troubleshooters to the fact that The Computer’s theory has a few holes in it, so it should not be made too obvious, although it can be great fun watching Troubleshooter players freak out to find that their parts are OK: ‘OK Transbot JUG-R-NORT-5, let’s see you try those faulty brakes...’

After a good deal of frustrating interrogation, during the course of which you get to do lots of really impressive impersonations of people who have completely lost the will to live (just remember the story of your players at the end of your last session), the Troubleshooters should be allowed to find someone sufficiently alive to guide them to the office of the Food Vat controllers.

**THE PRIME SUSPECTS**

The three senior technicians mentioned in the team leader’s briefing are high on The Computer’s list of possible suspects. Furthermore, they know far more about how the Food Vats are run than anyone else in the sector.
Mal-B-ING is a very competent politician. As a Programs Group member he has quickly risen through the ranks to this prestigious office. He knows nothing whatsoever about food technology, of course, and his technicians can often run rings round him on this score. Nevertheless, he is quite capable of getting his way by shrewdness and cunning. He will go after his enemies to get the blame for his mistakes. So G and Boltan-G can't quite understand how this happens.

Mal-B is nervous of the presence of the Troubleshooters and would prefer to delay them until the heavy doses of Happiness drugs take effect, whereupon he hopes they will go away. If they prove too clever he will try to get rid of them, but he is fairly sure that they will be typically incompetent and, if left to their own devices, will get rid of themselves. You agree? We somehow thought you might...

Di-G-EST is a devout member of Corpore Metal and as such is firmly of the opinion that the job of food preparation could be done much better by robots. In fact she is dead right, but if robots did all the work what would there be left for all those dumb infrareds to do? So G would be quite happy to see the entire sector terminated and replaced by robot workers and is not very good at hiding this fact. She is too naive to realise that this is making her the most likely scapegoat.

If the Troubleshooters humour her ideas she will be quite happy to assist them. Because of this, she is the best potential ally that the Troubleshooters have. She is also the person they are most likely to shoot first.

Boltan-G-ULP is a Humanist. He has his suspicions concerning Di-G's allegiance but cannot prove them. He sees the crisis as an ideal opportunity to get rid of her. To this end he will make use of the Troubleshooters, but the more they play the role of loyal servants of The Computer, the more he will come to regard them with contempt. He certainly won't help them get food, no matter what.

In order to get the Troubleshooters busily occupied, Mal-B suggests that they go the Food Vats and interview the technicians responsible for the monitoring of levels of biochemical supplements in the food. These are Fanny-O and her assistant, Jonny-R. The other two think this is a great idea too, so the Troubleshooters are bound to get really suspicious at this point, but it really would be a good idea if they went, if only because that's the next bit of the adventure. Linear plots? Us? How dare you!

The Food Vats are, as you might have imagined, giant metal tubs full of squishy and gloop and yellow gunk that leaps and plops about with disgusting abandon. Every so often a harrassed-looking infrared in heavily stained and singed overalls rushes up to one of the vats and slaps an overactive bit back with a large stick. This stuff is, erm, lively.

Fanny-O-CDK is overbearingly proud of her skill at food preparation and will tell you that she has no opportunity to inform the Troubleshooters of this, using her accomplished (and highly convenient) Oratory skills (65%) if necessary. Nevertheless she is obviously Depressed as she moans ceaselessly about how her efforts are not appreciated by the culinary philistines of Alpha Complex. This is always the case, and she knows it, but at the moment it seems to be affecting her even more than usual. This morning may cause her to give away clues as to her Romantics membership (the odd reference to the legendary master-chefs, Ronald MacDonald and J Wellington Wimpys, for example). However, you should do your best to keep Fanny-O alive for the moment as you may need her to point the Troubleshooters in the right direction later in the adventure.

Jonny-R-CDK is very quiet and submissive, like a sad-eyed spaniel who knows the treaty chunks have run out. He gets ordered around by Fanny-O as if he were an Infrared, spending most of his time stirring beakers of chemicals and cleaning spoons for Fanny-O who is very fastidious about kitchen hygiene. Jonny-R is probably the only person in SBR Sector whose personality has not changed in the slightest as a result of the Unhappiness Ray.

Needless to say, Fanny-O will be deeply insulted by any suggestion that she has been lax or incompetent at her job. Indeed, she takes this as further evidence of the lack of taste of the typical Alpha Complex citizen and redoubles her Oratory efforts, reharranging passing groups of Infrarecs if the Troubleshooters seem unaffected. This will undoubtedly make a few people's trigger fingers very itchy, but they can't vapourize her there and then, because suddenly...

THE END IS NIGH

Just when the Troubleshooters start to think that if they want to see any shooting they'd better start it themselves, beginning with Fanny-O, a little light entertainment bursts onto the scene. A group of Purgists from SBR, being Very Depressed Indeed, have come to the inevitable conclusion that The Computer has decided to terminate their entire sector (which may not be too far from the truth). Knowing that they are even more doomed than usual, they have decided to go out in a blaze of glory, destroying as much as they can on the way. As obvious servants of The Computer, the Troubleshooters are prime targets for early elimination. Heh! Heh! Heh! Oh, sorry, but we like this bit.

The Purgists are identified only by their nicknames. Their real names are not important, and in any case they will not answer to them even if the Troubleshooters could find out what they were (also we got bored with thinking up yet more silly names for a bunch of turkeys who are only going to be so much dead algae before the end of the next paragraph). Their tactics are not particu-

cularly intelligent, even for cannon-fodder; they will shoot back at whoever shot at them last, and will happily smash up machinery if no suitable target presents itself in any particular round. However, although a few in number, they are much better armed than the Troubleshooters, who will need their wits about them. Any weaponry they manage to capture intact will serve them well in good stead later in the adventure.

The area in which the fight takes place is the Food Vats production line. This takes the form of a giant conveyor belt taking huge vats of glutinous-looking (ie, squelchy) guunge from one end of a very long room to the other. At various stages along the route there are large tanks of ingredients hung from the ceiling which pump
additional slop into the moving vats, and enormous whiskers which plunge into the revolting material and mix it all together. All this sticky, gooey stuff is likely to get spread everywhere by the effects of sporadic laser fire. The overall atmosphere of the battle should be something like a custard pie fight where the pies are 20 feet across and the worst shade of pinky-green bleaasagghy imaginable. When they are finished the vats should look like someone inflated and burst a two-tonne octopus in a confined space. (If you are using miniatures for your game you may care to simulate this for the enjoyment of your players. All you need is a good size octopus and a bicycle pump. Simply insert the, oh, what? You want us to get back to the storyline? Oh, alright then, but it's your loss.)

**Captain Crush:** Yellow laser rifle (39%); 10 grenades (45%); yellow reflect armour; hand-to-hand (25%).

**Crazy Axe:** Battle axe (53%); hand-to-hand (48%); no armour; damage bonus +1; macho bonus -2.

**Napalm Nick:** Orange laser pistol (47%); Slugthrower with 10 Napalm rounds (47%); hand-to-hand (28%); orange/green reflect armour.

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**MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE OFFICE**

While the Troubleshooters have been busy 'interrogating' Fanny-O and Jonny-R (if that's what you call it), Mal-B and his assistants have been busy finalising the details of the Happiness drugs that they are going to add to the food. They now need to get the Troubleshooters away from the vats so their plan can be put into operation. Mal-B is counting on the fact that, having interviewed Fanny-O when she was ignorant of what was going on, they won’t want to come back for a second dose when there is a danger of her revealing his scheme to them.

Fanny-O also wants to get the Troubleshooters out of her hair, and out of her ruined vats. She is livid about the mess that the fight with the Purgists has caused (and about the state of the poor unfortunate octopus) and will take out her frustration on the privilege. This should (hopefully) mean (at least some of the) Troubleshooters whom she immediately reports to Mal-B via a comlink. Mal-B grasps the opportunity and demands that the (remaining) Troubleshooters return to his office to explain themselves. If by some mishap Fanny-O has suffered premature termination you will have to work out your own scheme for getting the Troubleshooters back to the office. No, we’re sorry, stop snivelling. If you can’t even do that we’ve no sympathy for you.

The interview with Mal-B is fairly short and not nearly as difficult as he made out over the comlink. After all, Mal-B knows he is a prime suspect and doesn’t want to upset the Troubleshooters too much, and D-Q-G and Boltan-G are far too busy sniping at each other (not literally! Well, if you insist...). Furthermore, the meeting is interrupted before he can much more than sneer, ‘So, we meet again, friend...

**Boltan-G-ULP**

Troubleshooters', a worker who insists on talking to the team.

**Alum-R-MRT-6** is a Tech Services worker who was in SBR Sector fetching a broken-down Transbot when the Unhappiness Ray was fired. Furthermore, he hasn’t eaten anything in the sector for the simple reason that his mutant power is Matter-Eating and he prefers the taste of metal to organic food. He has demanded to see the Troubleshooters because, in his Depressed state, he has decided to confess his power in the hope of being terminated. Although he has very useful information, the Troubleshooters will have to work out the implications of his confession for themselves.

Mal-B is happy to let the Troubleshooters go off with this crackpot before finding out what he actually has to say. He wants to keep them occupied for a while so he can get some drugged food prepared ready for them to eat. Alum-R provides an ideal and lengthy distraction, not least because he has a peculiar way of... talking about... demands he... leave an inexplicable three second silence before... using any verb. Once they have finished he directs D-Q-G and Boltan-G to arrange some lunch for the hardworking Troubleshooters. It is then up to them to play the two technicians off against each other in the hope of getting a safe meal. You shouldn’t deliberately force the Troubleshooters to accept drugged food, of course, but if they are foolish enough to accept it when offered...

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**ATTENTION TROUBLESHOOTERS.** A dangerous mutant with the highly treasonous ability of Machine Empathy has confessed his power at a booth in the residential area of SBR Sector. Unfortunately the traitor has refused to report for termination. It is imperative that this highly dangerous Traitor is Eliminated. You will proceed with this task AT ONCE, and without further delay. Failure to comply with this order will result in Immediate Termination.

Bright Troubleshooters will quickly realise that The Computer is very frightened of citizens with Machine Empathy powers (whatever they are). You should read the above in a panic-stricken tone which gradually gets more high-pitched and more hysterical towards the end. GMs who enjoy ham acting may wish to put on a tinny voice and scream 'Ex-terminate Him!' while wildly waving their extendable plungers at the end of the messaga.

**Citizen Jerry-B-ULT-1** has been very unlucky. He has managed to keep his dangerous power a secret for a long time and has risen high in both the CPU and Corpore Metal. Thanks to his robot friends he was even aware of the fact that SBR Sector was bathed in mysterious radiation earlier in the day. However, in his newly Depressed state he has taken this as an indication that he and his robots are out of favour with The Computer. In an attempt to get back into The Computer's good books he confessed his power. Of course, since The Computer is his friend, he was ordered to present himself for termination, the result of which was that he stormed off in a sulk muttering, 'The Computer doesn't love me anymore'. He has since convinced several robots of The Computer's infidelity and they are now preparing to make a final stand.
Jerry-B has at his disposal 2 Guardbots, a Model III Docbot and 4 Scrubots. He also has a Mk II Multicorder programmed with Recorder, Bot Damage Analysis, Radioactivity, Infrared and Radio/Radar.

**Guardbot:** 2 sonic pistols (50%); 2 stun guns (50%); aangler (50%); Kevlar armour.

**Scrubot:** 4 brooms which act as truncheons (40%); plate armour.

**Jerry-B:** Laser rifle (50%) with a ROYGB barrel and matching reflex armour; 10 grenades (40%).

**Docbot** will tend to Jerry-B while he is still alive, after which it will try to operate on anyone who attacked him - treat as force sword attack (45%). It has no armour.

All of the bots will need reprogramming to remove the effects of Jerry-B's power.

Following the Guardbots' advice, Jerry-B has holed up in his apartment. The only entrances are through the front door or via a window 15 storeys up. Access to the door is via a corridor which is long enough to ensure that Jerry and the Guardbots get two good shots from cover at anyone blatantly rushing up it. There are no doorways in which to shelter for 50m, and the corridor is painted bright blue. You should remind the Troubleshooters that simply stepping into that corridor is a treasonous offence, and if they delay give them a sharp verbal prod from the ever-vigilant and somewhat hysterical Computer.

Anyone entering the apartment will immediately be mobbed by the Scrubots while Jerry-B and the Guardbots retreat to the doorways to the kitchen (1 Guardbot) and bedroom (Jerry-B and second Guardbot) and continue to pepper the invaders from cover. The Docbot stays in the bedroom.

If the Troubleshooters survive this, err, encounter they will be able to examine Jerry-B’s Multicorder which is running Radioactivity as a permanent background task in case of further bombardments. Troubleshooters who have had the brains to talk to their enemy may even have discovered why this is being done, or they may get the information from surviving bots. Assuming that they are neither dead nor fast asleep the team should be getting an inkling of what is going on. It is therefore necessary to provide some more distractions for them. Well, we can't let them think they're getting somewhere, can we now? The next thing you know they'll be wanting to run their own adventures with you as a Troubleshooter, and then where will you be?

**LET'S KILL EVERYBODY!!**

Having finished dealing with Jerry-B, the Troubleshooters will doubtless be keen to get back on the job. Unfortunately the effects of the new drugs in SBR Sector's lunch are now beginning to be felt...

There are some citizens of SBR Sector who missed out on the Unhappiness Ray and are therefore getting DELICIOUSLY HAPPY. As luck would have it, most of them seem to be Death Leopard members, yeah! Now they are pretty Happy folks most of the time, and being more Happy just makes them more happy-go-lucky, yeah! Anyone for a quick spot of random destruction? Yeah! Let's start with that group of Troubleshooters. YEAH!!

As the Troubleshooters leave the remains of the apartment block where Jerry lived and make their way across a crowded plaza full of nervous Infrareads, a warning explosion sounds above their heads. The infamous Capitol Hill Mob are about to go out with a BANG, a CRUMP and a BUDDA-BUDDA-BUDDA!

The Mob just happened (isn't it funny the way things always 'just happen' in Alpha Complex) to be having a group meeting this morning in their secret lair inside a transbot's container. This shielded them from the effects of the Unhappiness Ray. Now they are high on Happiness and determined to kill everything that moves, as well as quite a few things that don't move too. They've dragged out every weapon they can lay their hands on and are not going to waste a single piece of ammunition.

The leaders of the gang, Tricky Dicky, Henry, Spire and AI, are perched on balconies around the Plaza where they can get a good field of fire. Tricky Dicky is the Mob's leader. Henry is the brains of the group, and Spire and AI are high grade thugs. All four will try their best to outdo the others in spectacular acts of destruction. Like the Purgists, they will answer only to their society nicknames.

The more lowly members, 8 'worms' and 5 'persons', are about to mix it on the floor of the plaza. They don't really care who they shoot at, but are likely to give preference to anyone who shoots back.

The plaza is, as mentioned above, packed with Infrareads. These meandering plot devices are here to serve a number of important dramatic functions: a) they get in the way of everything the Troubleshooters try to do; b) they ensure that every time a shot is fired someone, somewhere gets killed; c) some of them are needed for the next section; and d) they make life impossible for those boring stick-in-the-muds who insist on trying to run Paranoia combat with figures and floorplans. Gah! We 'stes 'em, don't we my preshus? Ahem.

**Tricky Dicky**: Green laser pistol (38%); Cone rifle (43%) with 20 HE slugs; 10 grenades (35%); hand-to-hand (35%); ROYGB reflex armour.

**Henry**: Yellow laser pistol (26%); Energy Pistol (26%); Tangle (26%); hand-to-hand (31%); yellow reflex armour; weapon maintenance (47%).

**Spire**: Red laser pistol (55%); hand-to-hand (23%); red reflex armour; Electrocoshock mutant power.

**AI**: Red laser pistol (42%); Flamethrower (42%); hand-to-hand (25%); red reflex armour.

**Person**: Red laser pistol (30%); knife (35%); hand-to-hand (30%).

**Worm**: Truncheon (30%); knife (30%); hand-to-hand (25%).

**HAPPINESS RAINS**

Eventually R&D in NTM Sector manage to get their Happiness Ray working and fire it at SBR Sector. As luck would have it, this happens just as the Troubleshooters finish dealing with the Capitol Hill Mob. The result is yet more of that truly wonderful stuff - chaos. Everyone who fails an Insanity Check suddenly becomes DELICIOUSLY HAPPY (if they weren't that far gone already, in which case they'll probably die of Happiness, smilling themselves to death).

Now then, remember all those Infrareads wandering around the plaza? Did any of them survive? What are they going to do now? Use your warped imagination! Have them dash up to Troubleshooters, drag them out of their seats and try to get them to dance. How about having a huge conga round the plaza? If you've got sound effects and backing music for your game, play them a few of those awful songs written for use in discos in Torremolinos at a mind-wiping volume. All the Infrareads who join in with 'Y Viva Alpha Complex' and 'Hold a Commie in the air, stick a Tac-nuke up your nose, buy a Jumbobot and then...' Be insistently, grindingly, exocruciatingly cheerful. Yes, even more cheerful than you'll be when
you order everyone's termination at the end of the adventure (if not sooner).

Of course, everyone else in SBR Sector is DELIRIOUSLY HAPPY as well. They're not going to stand by and let the Infrarecs and Troubleshooters have all the fun. They come rushing out of their factories, shops and offices to join in. Everyone wants to have a really wonderful party. They have names like Steve-R-ITE, Mike-R-EED and Ken-Y-EVT, and behave accordingly (pass the sick-bag freely amongst your ailing players). Some of them might have weapons. Some of them might even let a few off by accident, or mistake them for firecrackers and make lots of pretty lights for everyone to enjoy.

And we mustn't forget the bots, must we? Yes, it's time to put on your silly vocal again and to roll out a whole collection of really cranky personality modules. Would you believe a barbot called Brux-4-SBYH? Or a scrubbot called Grouch-O Mk X? The Troubleshooters should have just made Insanity Checks. It's up to you to make sure the players know what their characters are going through, so let your hair down and be really nauseating just for once.

Unfortunately for the R&D men, the Happiness Ray also causes a lot of vibration, and those Troubleshooters who are still sane (you mean there are some? Surely not?) will have little trouble pinpointing the source. All they have to do now is get safely out of SBR Sector (not an easy job with all those loonies about), get into the NTM Sector R&D section and prove their point (without getting killed by the R&D men). A nice, routine little job.

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**THE NIGHT THEY RAIDED PL&C**

By now the Troubleshooters should have quite an impressive collection of hardware looted from the various maniacs they have disposed of along the way. (If they had enough brains to collect better weaponry as they came across it they are probably all dead by now. However, if they are going to get into NTM R&D (and out again) alive they will need a lot more than they have got.)

Fortunately, everyone in SBR Sector is now totally whacked and happy to give out all sorts of pretty pressies to people who ask for them. Is there a PL&C depot about? Does it have any weapons in stock? You betcha!

Of course, novice Paranoia players are unlikely to think of anything subtle like this and will probably be happy to get out of SBR Sector with their lives. Novice GMs who still haven't learnt how to be properly sadistic may like to have some PL&C guy wander into the plaza giving out free drugs (like Thymoglandin, Benetradin and Dymorphomin) as a hint. If your pals don't get that one we suggest you let them get back to something more their level, like trying to lick their ears or glueing dogs to ceilings or something.

In PL&C the Troubleshooters can find the following goodies:

- 2 Cone Rifles with 30 ECM and 10 dumdum slugs each
- 1 hand flamethrower
- 10 HE slugs
- 1 Slackthower with 10 HE slugs
- 1 Force Sword
- 1 Gauss Gun
- 1 Plasma Generator

Of course, faced with all this super weaponry, they couldn't perhaps be persuaded to turn it on each other, could they? After all, only one person can have the Plasma Generator at once. Also, if the R&D representative in the group is still alive he'd better do something pretty quickly; it's unlikely that his colleagues will be so trusting as to take him with them. OK, OK, we know that an average Troubleshooter group will have wiped itself out twice over by now, but we World Famous Game Designers have our delusions of artistic grandeur, and it seemed somehow appropriate that this should be the point in the plot where all the in-fighting started in earnest. That it actually happened ninety seconds into the adventure is neither here nor there, so stop moaning and get on with the game. (Sometimes we don't know why we bother...)
equipment issue office. This is a largish room with a clear area at the front for demonstrating new devices and several racks of assorted junk towards the back. Right at the back are two doors, one leading to the director's office and the other to the research lab. Several R&D technicians armed with the latest in bizarre equipment are hiding behind the racks ready to ambush anyone who makes it that far. They are assisted by 3 experimental combat bots.

**Spect-O-MTR** carries a semi-automatic slugthrower (55%) for which he has 5 rounds of a new hallucinogenic gas. Anyone caught in the gas cloud must make a 2d10 Endurance check. Failure means the victim starts seeing everyone as demons and must roll at random to see who he fires at for each of the next 5 rounds. When the gas shells are used up they revert to AP rounds. He wears orange reflex armour.

**Bunsen-B-RNR** has 3 Dirt Gas grenades (40%). These are just like normal grenades except that whenever they hit they cause a loud bang with a gas cloud instead of the effect of any reflex armour. Icky! Once he has used these he resorts to a blue laser rifle (55%). He wears ROYGB reflex armour.

**Uran-Y-UMM** is wearing a variant of the Waldo/Mechano exo-skeleton. This gives him a damage bonus of +3 and acts as combat armour. He fights hand-to-hand (47%) with a giant bench top as a club (2 strength level). This is a table compared to an ordinary club). The exo-skeleton has a 10% malfunction chance. When it goes wrong it really goes wrong, though, and in accordance with the basic rule of Paranoia the silliest most dangerous thing you can think of happens immediately.

**Gamma-R-AVE** uses a highly experimental Model HPL Radflamer (35%). This acts like a traditional firethrower except that the target is bathed in a mysterious green radiance which turns whatever it touches into a hideous, putrescent ooze (use the hit location table to find which part of the target's body melts away). Yuck, this is a nasty one. Gamma-R has been entrusted with this awesome device because it has a 20% malfunction rate and is likely to blow up in his face, whereupon it catches everyone within 5m in its 'unearthly glow'.

**Combat:** 2 Energy Blasters (65%); 2 Neurowhips (75%); laminated combat armour.

And so to the labs where our intrepid heroes (well, lucky survivors) come face to face with the director of R&D for NTM sector, Brian-I-ACK. He has only one weapon, but it is huge. No, make that gigantic. There is lots of it, too, and it has all sorts of vicious looking barrels and projections on it. It is, in fact, the machine that fires the Emotion Control Ray, but the Troubleshooters aren't about to know that (they'd only worry if they did). You should explain this terrifying-looking machine to the players in graphic detail, ending with the simple statement that it is pointing straight at them, that there is nowhere to run, and that Brian-I has his finger on a big, red button.

Brian-I is bluffing, of course. The Emotion Control Ray Generator takes hours to set up and fire, and without his colleagues (who are all back at the table) he couldn't fire it anyway. However, if the Troubleshooters show any sign of hesitation he will launch into an explanation as to how he is standing behind a mighty Penta-armor Field Generator, a machine capable of destroying the whole of Alpha Complex if fired. Now, he doesn't want to destroy the whole place any more than the Troubleshooters do, but they do seem to be out of options, so they'll just take a seat over there perhaps they can talk terms.

If the Troubleshooters are daft enough to comply with this ridiculous request Brian-I will kick a button and send them all falling into a vat of concentrated acid. Finis.

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## Regenerated Troubleshooters

### Bottel-O-BEA-2 (Mission Leader)

**Primary Attributes:** STR 9; END 16; AGI 9; DEX 5; MOX 9; CHU 18; MEC 13; POW 13

**Secondary Attributes:** Car 25; Dam 0; Mac -1; Mel -2%; AW -10%; Com -2%; Bel +17%; Rep +4%

**Service Group:** HPD&MC

**Specialty:** Mystics (rank 2)

**Mutant Power:** Mental Block

**Skills:** Basics 1 (20%), Aimed Weapons 2 (15%), Lasers 3 (20%), Melee 2 (23%), Knives 3 (28%), Personal Development 1 (20%), Leadership 2 (25%), Motivation 3 (30%); Hostile Environments 1 (20%); Old Folding 2 (23%); Primitive Warfare 2 (23%); Primitive Melee 3 (28%)

**Extra Equipment:** Reflex armour and laser barrel are Red/Orange

**Secret Society Mission Information**

Understandably the Mystics are very interested in the possibility of a mind-altering drug that can affect an entire sector. If the Computer's theory is correct, you must identify this drug and bring sample of it back for the Society to study.

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The Society also has evidence of intense Armed Forces interest in the goings on in SBR Sector. High level pressure has resulted in an Armed Forces operating being assigned to your group. Keep a close eye on him.

**Service Group Mission Information**

Don't be ridiculous; since when did HPD&MC know anything about what is really going on?

### Unda-R-EST-1

**Primary Attributes:** STR 13; END 18; AGI 9; DEX 10; MOX 4; CHU 14; MEC 20; POW 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Car 30; Dam 0; Mac -1; Mel -2%; AW -1%; Com -20%; Bel +7%; Rep +20%

**Service Group:** Technical Services

**Secret Society Mission Information**

Corpo Metal has discovered that the Computer insists the source of the treason in SBR is to be a senior technician in the sector's Food Vats. Corpo Metal has a valued operative amongst these technicians. She is working hard to promote the further mechanisation of food production. Your mission is to make sure that this valuable colleague is not convicted of treason during the investigation.

**Service Group Mission Information**

Swiz-R-DL1 claims to be from Technical Services but you've never heard of him. Therefore it seems he is a spy of some sort, probably from Internal Security. Be very wary of him.

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### Styko-R-OCK-1

**Primary Attributes:** STR 16; END 13; AGI 15; DEX 8 (14); MOX 16; CHU 8; MEC 6; POW 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Car 45; Dam +1; Mac 0; Mel +10%; AW +7%; Com +7%; Bel +5%; Rep +10%

**Service Group:** Armed Services

**Secret Society:** Death Leopard (rank 1)

**Mutant Power:** Superpowerer

**Skills:** Basics 1 (20%), Aimed Weapons 2 (24%), Weapon Maintenance 2 (50%), Technical Services 1 (20%), Robotics 2 (45%), Robot Maintenance 3 (65%)

**Secret Society Mission Information**

Corpo Metal has discovered that the Computer suspects the source of the treason in SBR to be a senior technician in the
Note: Styko has confessed his mutant power. He knew that Armed Forces would be happy to keep him. Besides, it gives him a good excuse to kill people when they pick on him for being a mutie and having a yellow streak down his

**Secret Society Mission Information**

Hey! A mission, and traitors to execute! GREAT!! Let's go kill people! Wouldn't it be funny if we executed all the wrong people (hehe hehe). Then the Commies might pull this stunt again and we could get to kill more people! Yeah!!

By the way, look out for the famous Capitol Hill Mob. They're based in SBR and they may take the opportunity of all this trouble to pull something spectacular.

**Service Group Mission Information**

Armed Forces has received information that almost the entire population of SBR Sector has committed treasonous acts. This seems like a marvellous opportunity to launch a punitive expedition and test out a few new control tactics. You must make sure that the Troubleshooters' report recommends such a solution to the problem.

Interestingly R&D have been very keen to knock such a move on Armed Forces' part. There will be a R&D operative in your group. Watch him closely.

**Swiz-R-OLL-1**

**Primary Attributes:** STR 12; END 17; AGI 13; DEX 10; MOX 10; CHU 8; MEC 13; POW 15 **Secondary Attributes:** Car 25; Dam +1; Mac 1; Mel +5%; AW -1%; Com -1%; Bel -5%; Rep +4% **Service Group:** Internal Security **Secret Society:** First Church of Christ Computer Programmer (rank 1) **Mutant Power:** Telepathic Projection **Skills:** Basics 1 (20%), Melee 2 (30%), Aimed Weapons 2 (24%), Lasers 3 (28%), Special Services 2 (24%)

**Rowland-R-ATT-1**

**Primary Attributes:** STR 15; END 10; AGI 12; DEX 12; MOX 17; CHU 14; MEC 9; POW 9 **Secondary Attributes:** Car 40; Dam +1; Mac 0; Mel +3%; AW +3%; Com +12%; Bel +7%; Rep +16% **Service Group:** Production, Logistics and Commissary **Secret Society:** Sierra Club (rank 1) **Mutant Power:** Advanced Smell **Skills:** Basics 1 (20%), Aimed Weapons 2 (28%), Special Services 2 (37%), Hostile Environments 1 (20%), Survival 1 (28%), Technical Services 1 (20%), Engineering 2 (26%), Chemical 3 (31%)

**Secret Society Mission Information**

We have reason to believe that one of the Tech Services operatives on the mission is a Corporal Metel member. The Sierra Club would like you to uncover him and arrange for his termination.

**Service Group Mission Information**

The Computer believes that the strange behaviour in SBR is due to drugs placed in the sector's food supply. Food production is one of PL&C's major responsibilities. It would be exceedingly embarrassing for the Service Group if it were proved that badly prepared or treasonously doctored food is responsible for the goings on in SBR. You must do your best to ensure that the blame is firmly laid elsewhere.

**Terra-R-ISM-1**

**Primary Attributes:** STR 9; END 10 (14); AGI 20; DEX 4; MOX 11; CHU 14; MEC 18; POW 13 **Secondary Attributes:** Car 25; Dam 0; Mac -1; Mel +22%; AW -15%; Com +11%; Bel +7%; Rep +15% **Service Group:** Research & Development **Secret Society:** Pro-Tech (rank 1) **Mutant Power:** Superior Endurance **Skills:** Basics 1 (20%), Aimed Weapons 2 (10%), Weapon Maintenance 2 (40%), Technical Services 1 (20%), Engineering 2 (26%), Chemical 3 (31%)

**Secret Society Mission Information**

Sorry, we haven't got a clue what is going on. Keep your eyes and ears open and report back. In particular find out what technology, if any, was responsible for all this trouble and get us the specifications.

**Other Information**

You have a very important mission to perform for your Service Group. You cannot be told why, but it is absolutely imperative that this matter be played down. Everything will be put right within a day. Stall and delay the group until then. Once everyone in SBR Sector is happy again you can find some scapegoat to pin the trouble on. At all costs don't let Armed Services move into the area in force.
Hello folks. Lots of letters this month, but most of them seem to be on much the same thing. I think we'd better get this Price of Freedom debate out of the way first.

Alan Reid, Seaford: While very few would expect the scenario of The Price of Freedom to be literally about to come true (Open Box, WD86), this does not mean the game is 'sheer fantasy' or 'tongue in cheek' and therefore as unremarkable and harmless as D&D, Traveller or RuneQuest. No. Only does the game's fantasy make judgements about real societies and real politics, but these judgements form the whole basis of the game.

Your reviewer cheerfully mentions that the game mainly involves killing of 'commoners', these might be members of an alien species fit only to be killed in this game, but in reality the millions of people who might call themselves, or might be called, communists are human beings, and promotes a casual disregard for human life and lends itself to the justification of all manner of repression, torture and massacre in the real world, by effectively branding anyone who might come within a certain range of political views as sub-human.

You may reply that the game is really tongue-in-cheek; if so, it is not very detectable from the advertising.

Tim Child, Merton Park, London: As a roleplayer I find letters of complaint about the ethics of games such as The Price of Freedom and Twilight 2000 incomprehensible. Surely a great deal of the fun of roleplaying is playing a character different from your own. Not all PCs possess the morals of their player.

Having both read Price and talked to its author, Greg Costikyan, I still find myself rather disturbed by its premises and assumptions. Sure, it's a game where people take on personas, like actors, but I don't happen to like the characters they are forced to adopt. I personally feel it is a fantasy game, but a very unpleasant one. Obviously, some of our correspondents disagree. We've had quite a few lugubrious letters defending both sides of the argument, but there is one very interesting common point which they all seem to share, and it is this: regardless of whether the game is fantasy or a disguised political statement, you'd have to be very, very stupid to spend your money actually buying The Price of Freedom. The designer of the game is limited to that he wrote the game purely and simply to make money, to prey on the gullibility of right-thinking American gamers, and I say good luck to him. If people really want to buy the game that's their loss. Those of you who now want to write very long letters on the ethics of exploiting stupid gamers can send them to Ste Dillon, c/o Adventurer magazine...

Simon Watts, Standish, Wigan: In WD85, Allan Miles discussed the logic (or rather the illogic) behind races and classes in AD&D. This reminded me of a theory which I evolved during the height of AD&D playing in these lands, which seemed to explain elven MUs. The main benefit of the elf (and half-elf) class-wise is that they can operate as Fighter/Magic-users, which combine magic with armour. As you know, normal spells cannot be cast by someone wearing armour. Therefore, we can assume that elves have their own type of magic, usable by those with elf blood, which allows the wearing of armour and the casting of MU spells, but which is limited in power - the level limit. Naturally this magic is usually favoured by half-elves also. If this theory is adopted, then it naturally implies that single classed MU elves should be permitted to wear armour. This addition probably would make little difference at higher levels, where a cunning mage will have acquired enough magical protections not to need armour, but would aid the survival of elven MUs at lower levels.

I must admit the idea of giving the various races different types of magic has always appealed to me, though I would be inclined to take things on a stage by giving each race access to unique magical powers appropriate to their natural habitat (elves have lost their elven-type spells, dwarves gain direction finding & rock-working powers, and so on). I find that I get bored with the similarities between so many characters in games like D&D: why should every MU have the same spell and every fighter use the same type of sword - people are far more individual than that.

Your second point, though, seems to benefit the elven MU while immediately disadvantaging every other spell-caster. Why would anyone bother playing a human MU if an elven one can receive the same powers - and wear armour too? Keeping MUs alive through the lower levels is indeed very difficult, but I'm not so sure your suggestion is the right one. How do other people keep their wizards alive?

Gosh - a serious letter about a game eh? We'll soon put a stop to that, with the return of this letters page's favourite subject - itself!

Richard Bourke, Ealing, London: I write with some trepidation. Both the reason for this fear and the subject I write on is your practice of adding comments after your letters.

These letters result from (mostly) considerable effort and WD staffers, more used to seeing themselves in print, may not realise how much your opinions for public reaction. It is much harder when there is the likelihood of it being appended by an editorial joke.

This has made the letters column quite painful reading. It's not the letters, which you select quite well - whether it is old-timers vs. newcomers, sexism, or the perfidy of the Games Workshop management. Of course you have to select letters, but that is the end of a periodical's responsibility. Just put a notice saying "Opinions expressed in this column are not necessarily..." - for the rest, leave the page to your readers.

To finish, a personal note to whoever it is adding these comments. Please, resist the temptation to fire off a one-liner after this one.

I hope you don't find this comment offensive. The reasons such comments exist are manifold. Firstly, some letters ask questions, and we are happy to answer them in print if we feel that they are of interest to other readers too. Secondly, the editorial team do have opinions of their own, not all of them negative, and we believe they are interesting enough to pass on. Furthermore, on the rare occasion when we are jokey or insulting there is usually a very good reason. Humour is a good interlude between more serious subjects, and gives a nice balance to a column. Which does not include trivial letters about figure balancing and all the rest. Besides, negative comments and put-downs often come as responses from readers, as well as from the editorial staff, so stopping our column totally would stop the criticism you claim is keeping some people from writing to us, if indeed it is. Needless to say, we do want everyone who has something to say about this thrilling hobby we enjoy to write to us.

Tony Hough, Luton, Beds: Has anyone else noticed that there appears to be an anomaly in the vehicle speeds given in the Judge Dredd rpg? Let me give you an example:

The Lawmaster bike
Full speed: 570 kph
Max speed: 480 metres/round
Accel rate: 80 m/r
Stop speed: 120 m/r

One round equals about 10 seconds. Therefore 6 rounds is 1 minute; 6x60 rounds is 1 hour. So the maximum speed should be 480 x 360 metres per hour, which is 172,800 mph, or 172.8 kph. You may agree that 172.8 kph is actually not very fast. It's nowhere near the full speed of 570 kph. Is this the fastest a 22nd Century bike can do? Of course, a skilled Judge can take this up to 570 kph. Where does this figure come from? Have I cocked it up, or have you?

Neither, really. The maximum speed of 570 kph comes from the comic strip, and is explained in the rules as the maximum attainable speed given a clear, straight, level road and lots of time. In the mayhem of combat there is no way that anyone could control a bike going at that speed and fire a gun or kick a fleeing perp. Therefore Max Speed is only used in a round sequence which is only ever used in combat, and represents the maximum safe speed a Judge can drive at while taking part in the fight. OK? However, I must admit that bits of the driving section in Judge Dredd are a bit of a mess, and should really have been sorted out a bit better than they were before the game went to print. To rectify this matter
slightly there is a set of advanced driving rules among the articles in The Judge Dredd Roleplaying Companion, which will hopefully be released this summer. And while we're on Dredd...

Iain Atkken, Clydebank, Glasgow: I would like to know what all of this Dredd fuss is about - too much being published for the game in WD? Who do these people think they are? I seriously doubt that they would complain about more being published about a game that they own themselves! They'd all be too bloody pleased.

I feel that I must also congratulate you on A Day In The Life by Hugh Tynan. Fabulous, brilliant and amazing don't sum it up. It was the best JD adventure I've seen, even better than theailed Judgement Day.

Linton Porteous, By Muir-of-Ord, Ross-shire: I think I can offer an explanation to Graham Broadstreet's gripe (WD85) about too much JD material. The JD Game is a Games Workshop products and as such the White Dwarf team must have been very concerned with its sales. So, after waiting until quite a lot of people had bought it in the months following its release, they began to promote sales by producing month after month of JD articles. Of course I could be wrong and the real reason for such a large input of JD material could just be the fact that they realised what an absorbingly brilliant and well-produced game it is!

Paul Hodgkinson, Tonge Fold, Bolton: Jon Qualite's RuneQuest adventure (WD85) was well presented, interesting and quite atmospheric. I don't actually play the game, but A Tale To Tell could persuade me to. The length of the adventure, I thought, was not excessive, as any reduction in size may have detracted from the overall quality.

As to the magazine looking like a 'RuneQuest Issue' or a 'Judge Dredd Issue', only so much can fit into a magazine, and concentrating on mainly one or two games an issue, perhaps does more for the game, than attempting to squeeze in too many. Of course, some variety is essential, and WD seems to me to get the right balance pretty consistently. This format probably does more for your magazine too, as each issue has its own 'character' rather than just another assorted collection of themes.

Well, I'm glad someone likes something we print! The sequel to Hugh's Dredd adventure, A Night In The Death, will be in the next issue. Personally, I can't make out what all the fuss is either. I mean, there hasn't been an adventure for the game for at least two issues now; Paranoia and Chulhu material appears with about the same regularity; and now that the game is available at a sensible price, it seems RuneQuest will start reappearing at about the same rate too. Linton is right - sales have determined the inclusion of JD material - the game is the second bestselling rpg, so there is obviously one or two people who possess copies.

As far as the mix of games goes, well, the last five issues have had articles on between five and eight different games in every issue, including all those games we apparently never, ever cover like Traveller, Star Trek and Bushido. We've very glad the giant-sized adventure was popular with some of our readers. Dredd will be doing adventures of this size again. There are also some tentative plans to actually include a complete game, in several parts, to pull out and collect. Add to these all the celebration coming for issue 90 (our tenth anniversary, you know) and the future's gonna be fun.

David Knott, Rayleigh, Essex: I got Paranoia for Christmas (lucky me!) and found that, as well as being one hell of a good game, it produced some thoughts about roleplaying in general. I think Paranoia will be regarded in three different ways: as pure fun (farce, satire, bang-you're-dead, whatever), with contempt (trivial, juvenile, making a mockery of rules, anarchy, blasphemy, heresy), and liberation. There's a bit melodramatic, but to a certain extent it's true. I can't speak for everyone, but I enjoy roleplaying for the imagination, escapism, humour and the magic it brings out in people.

I agree that some sort of rules framework is necessary to hang all the above qualities on. However, I can't bear it when the rules take over, turning it all into some small-scale combat simulation-cum-maths problem. A short distance into a game of Paranoia and the message starts to get through. But, to maintain your ideas to be handed to you, if you refuse to cope with situation not covered by the rules, if you don't use your imagination - you're going to die. Freely.

It's a strange lesson to learn from Paranoia, but it's a valid one - trust the GM (the GM is your friend!). If they're good at their job they'll enjoy themselves, live or die, win or lose. If the situation's a bit strange, rejoice in your GM's imagination and don't freeze up because the latest Plane Shifter's Guide doesn't cover it! One of the younger players I originally saw with the game played with my group recently. Everyone else let themselves go and had fun, but he kept on protesting, "You can't do that! This is Paranoia!" and quoting rules. I can't stand to see roleplaying shackled like that.

I agree completely, and I would expect more than a few fellow gamers to do too. The rules-laws themselves that you can completely ruin everyone's fun, because they haven't fully grasped what a roleplaying game is. Sure, in Monopoly you follow the rules, because if you did anything drastic the game wouldn't go on. Even in that game people have their variants with lotteries, multiple hotels and so on. In a roleplaying game the rules should only be there to add a framework to the simulation of life, and not be modified quite a bit with absolutely no effect on the game. In just about every roleplaying game there's ever been there has been a note somewhere which says "You are at liberty to change or ignore any single part of these rules if you feel they can be done better another way." Yet still we see the spectacle of these boring kiliyis dragging down and ruining games with their pedantry. I'm sure you will write in and tell us what you think about rules lawyers: perhaps some self-proclaimed rules lawyers will even write in and explain why they do it!

Howard Reilly, Suffolk: I thought the recent AD&D adventure Shadow Magic (WD84) was an entertaining and original piece of work. It had a good beginning, and a useful ending, with plenty of room for lengthening into a small campaign. But, as with all WD's adventures, I won't use it. Because, as with all AD&D's, particularly, both players' and GM's eyes scan its hallowed pages. Imagine:

GM: "Parazaine asks you to kill off some bugbears, because he's afraid they will steal his eggs."

Smartalec player: "Aha! I've read this adventure in White Dwarf! Parazaine really wants a book that's in those caves. There's a nabassa and a cleric, and a charmed fighter, and a..."

The DM groans as a whole carefully-planned gaming session goes out the window, and pulls all his hair out.

I know what you mean, for this is one the bugbear problems with roleplaying with new monsters, and the like, within the hallowed pages of this greatest of games magazines. How do you stop players reading the adventures before you play 'em? Change the names and maps layout a bit? Run them through the dungeon backwards? Try and make them roleplay properly - if they can pretend a dungeon they've memorized from the Dwarf is completely new to their character they deserve all the EPs for the roleplaying you can give 'em! I don't think there's any real way of stopping players reading the magazine (it'd be disastrous to our sales) - unless you know different, of course!

And finally, here's some pretentious person showing off his knowledge of art:

Vincent Trewarthwaite, Windsor: White Dwarf's reputation for being the epitome of originality suddenly plummeted in my eyes, when I saw the November cover. This is entitled 'Baron Heinrich von Torrichhelm, Master of the Imperial Order of Knight's Panther'. I would say that this was heavily influenced (to put it kindly) by Gericault's 'Officer of the Chasseurs a Cheval'. Anyway, I can honestly say that I much prefer Gericault's painting!

Well spotted, Vincent (he included a photo of Gericault's original but space prevents... etc). What Vincent didn't point out was that Gericault actually nicked the pose of the horse from a painting by Gros, who stole it from a sculpture by... It's a tradition in painting to borrow classic poses, and John Blanche (the artist of our cover) was simply paying homage to the fine original painting. It's something he does a lot, actually - you should see his version of Jacques Louis David's "Rape of the Sabine Women!"

And on that wholesome note let's close the page for another month. There, and I wasn't even rude to those pokers in the ticks with the rubber swords, was I?

Letters ed: Marc Gascoigne
Work in Progress

You might not know it, but the GW Design Studio is currently just about the biggest and busiest place in the games world. There's more being planned and designed inside the four walls where White Dwarf comes from than at any other games company. Coo. So all those designers who occasionally chatter up the W & O offices have to be doing something. Well, maybe.

What follows is a sort of sneak preview of what the GW design studio is doing. We'll try to update reports on what's very new and the 'how and why' of design in every issue. Watch this space...

Warhammer Army Lists - After a frenzied, super-human January slog, the Army Lists are nearing their first edit. It looks like the package will feature the latest rules for Warhammer Battle games: new types of formations, manoeuvres and the roles of heroes and magicians.

There's going to be a list for each of the most popular Warhammer armies. This will break down into a section detailing profiles, new troops and any special rules they use, along with an easy-to-use list from which players can select armies of 1-2000 points. This usually works out at about 100 figures or so for a typical force.

All this means a new depth of detail for each army, listing the numbers of troops which can be used, their armour and their leaders as well as any allies or mercenaries.

Richard Halliwell

Rogue Trooper - YEEECHAA!! Suck on this, Norty! Dakdakadakadakka...

Yes, the Rogue Trooper boardgame is coming along nicely. This, the second of GW's boardgames based on characters from 2000AD is due out in April, and is bang on schedule. Each Player controls a Rogue Genetic Infantryman on the battle-scarred world of Nu-Earth, encountering Nort forces and interesting companions while searching for clues to the Trooper's identity. Once the Trooper is unstaked, the GIs chase him from Milli-contrac across Nu-Earth until he is killed.

Among the unique features of this game are the Bio-Chip rules, whereby a player GI who is killed here, what with a Bio-Chip sitting in another player's rifle, helmet or backpack, and the two form a team for the rest of the game. This is going to be a must for all fans of the Rogue Trooper comic strip, and also (we hope) an enjoyable and highly playable SF boardgame in its own right.

Graeme Davis

Death on the Reik - The epic campaign begun in The Enemy Within and developed in Shadows Over Bogenhafen is now gathering pace. Death on the Reik will follow a similar format to its predecessor, in that the idea is to provide both adventure material and genuine supplementary information that GMs will want to hang onto long after the campaign itself has reached its conclusion.

The aim is to allow the players a good deal of freedom of movement, and so there are bonus combat rules, encounter tables, and lists of small 'cameo' adventures which the GM can use as and when he or she wants. Of course, there's also going to be a map running through the whole thing - and a really exciting, gothic-horror climax in the Hammer House of Horror tradition.

Work progresses as well as anything can around here, what with people interrupting you to write bits for White Dwarf...

Phil Gallagher

Warhammer 40,000/Rogue Trader - Imagine a darkened cell whose sparse furnishing are wormed and dusty, whose unevenly flagged floor is sticky with little pools of saliva, whose sole occupant slumps indifferently upon a cluttered desk. Escape is an impossible dream, food a luxury earned only by fulfilling quotas other men would think impossible.

Like now, the final word of a huge tome is complete, and its bulk lies undisturbed upon the crowded desk top. I speak of Warhammer 40,000/WH40K, alias Rogue Trader which some may recall as Citadel's proposed futuristic battle game based around the Warhammer system... once advertised never forgotten. Ah, well. WH40K is indeed the long awaited futuristic version of the Warhammer Fantasy Battle System, and shares many of its mechanisms and much of its feel.

WH40K is something of a new approach to future gaming, it's 'science fiction' for starters, but pure fantasy set in the far future (about forty thousand years in the future to be approximate). Technology is important, but not the mainstay of civilization - the game is set in a dirty, mean, bloodthirsty universe.

Among much else, the background features an Emperor as old as the human race whose psychic energies are all that stands between humanity and extinction. Unfortunately the only way to keep the Emperor alive is by the continual sacrifice of lesser psykers (psylocists, telepaths and the like) and by the rigorous suppression of those whose minds have been taken over by underworld creatures.

Although the game shares Warhammer Battle mechanisms, they have been suitably modified to allow for the very different weapons and equipment. Statistics follow the same form, for example, and many of the creatures cross over. In fact, the Warhammer Fantasy world and WH40K share the same universe; the Slann, as Warhammer players will already know, are extra-terrestrials anyway, and as for the place of Chaos... all will be revealed.

Rick Priestley

Blood Royal - the game of dynastic conflict, is getting close to release. Invented by Derek Carver, a man already with Warrior Knights to his credit, it features many new and innovative features.

The concept of the game is very simple; players control dynasties of royal characters and a country in 14th Century Western Europe, and must try to use these resources to make their dynasty the richest at the end of the game. Rather like Diplomacy or Machiavelli, the key to winning the game is the success players have in negotiating deals with one another. The difference is that these deals are formalised through contracts which the players make with each other when they marry their royal characters. These deals cannot be broken until one of the characters in the marriage dies, and so the players are actually writing additional rules into the game as they play.

Even with these contracts, there is plenty of scope for treachery, double-dealing, power-politics, dynastic aggrandizement and open warfare. It is possible to play Blood Royal as a wargame, and there will be times when more subtle players resort to armed force to seal an advantage. The real key to the game, however, is the making of deals, and using these to protect yourself from the machinations of most of the players while you move in on a single victim, erm... ally, that's the word...

Paul Cockburn

Gobbledygook Competition

Now look here, you 'Gook fans. This is your chance to win fame and riches beyond human dreams. You could be the first Frank Miller. Perhaps. But this is it. We've frittered away nearly a whole pound (and a bit more) on the wonderful prizes that you can win in the Gobbledygook Competition.

All you've got to do is write a script for a 'Gook strip. Sounds easy like that, doesn't it? But wait, there's more to it than sitting down and drawing out a 'Gook of your own. In fact, that's exactly what you shouldn't do! We want a script, not a completed strip. This should include details of what each panel shows and the words. The words include any text boxes ('Blundering in the blizzard, Gook discovers...'), speech (who says what and when) and special effects notes (TLUMP!!! RRRRRUUPPP!!! SQUIDDY!!! YAAARRRR!!! - you know the sort of thing).

Take care.

All the winners will be used by Bil to create 'Gook strips for White Dwarf. The best entry will win £50, a subscription to White Dwarf and an original piece of Gobbledygook artwork. The five runners-up will each receive a subscription and artwork. So, why are you still sitting here? Get writing, and send your entries to:

Gobbledygook Competition
Gnome Dwarf
Games Workshop Design Studio
M41 Low Pavement
Nottingham NG1 2DL

And the closing date for entries is 1 April 1987. Seems appropriate somehow.