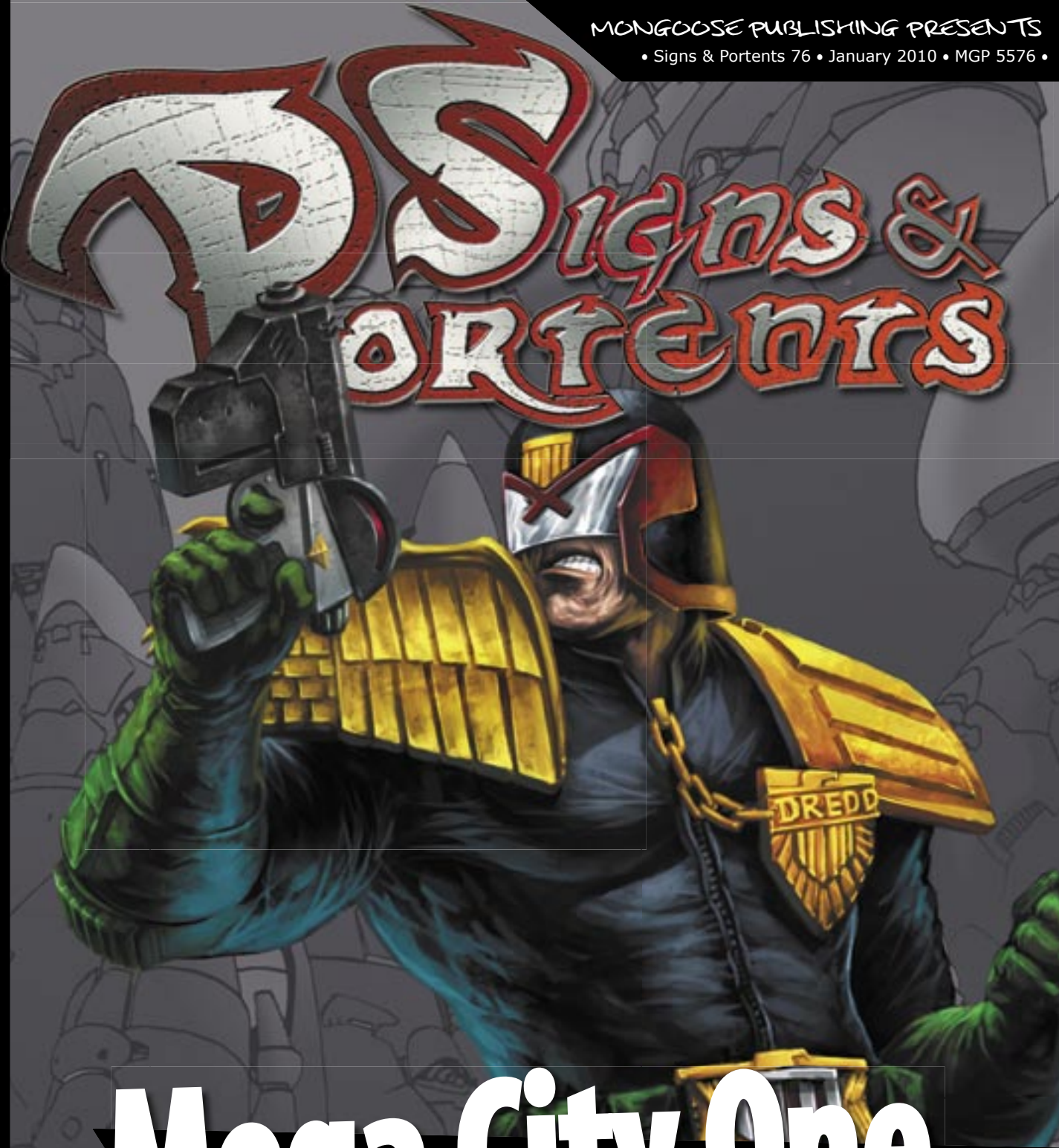


Also This Month: **Deus Vult** - Enjoy the Preview • **Conan** - Dead Eyes • **Traveller** - Military Specialist and Duellist Careers



Mega City One Archives

Mongoose Publishing presents the ultimate Judge Dredd Tomes

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- Green RuneQuest
- Purple Paranoia
- Yellow Flaming Cobra
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Editorial



HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

I hope that you all had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all from everyone at Mongoose. We are back in action in the studio after a very well earned rest over the festive period and working hard already to ensure that 2010 is another great year for Mongoose products.

RuneQuest II will be hitting the shelves very early on this year, soon to be followed by several supplements from the *Glorantha* and *Eternal Champion* settings – to name a few! The *Traveller* line will also be getting plenty of attention this year so keep an eye on the Mongoose website for new additions to your favourite settings.

Unfortunately I finally succumbed to the dreaded Swine Flu one week before Christmas, which was great fun... not quite as fun though as the part where I didn't realise that it wasn't just a bad cold and so went to a funeral and infected half of my giant family! As you can imagine, I was not too popular this Christmas! Still, I did get a Nintendo Wii out of it!

Once again, a Happy New Year to you all and indeed a happy new decade!

Charlie

Credits

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Matthew Sprange

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Patrick Reineman

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Mongoose News

By Charlotte Law

New Writer for Mongoose

Throughout December 2009, Mongoose Publishing has been searching for a new addition to our writing staff. We have had many excellent candidates apply for the position and are now getting down to the business of making a decision. Stay tuned for an announcement sometime in January.

RQII Sneak Peak

On the Mongoose Publishing Website you can now find previews, not only of *RuneQuest II* but also of *Deus Vult*, a new setting for *RuneQuest*. Don't miss these exciting previews, not just of the writing but of the excellent art that is going into these books.

Latest Lone Wolf Instalment

Lone Wolf 13 will be shipping early this month. Mega Deal customers will be the first to receive their copies and the shops and mail orders will follow shortly after.

The End of Legacy of War

This issue sees the last instalment of *Legacy of War*, Simon Beal's 14 part scenario for *The Universe of Babylon 5*. Be sure to check out the exciting conclusion to this excellent adventure.

Mega City Archives

The first of the Mega City Archives goes on sale in January. Those of you who are looking to collect them all should know that if you collect archives 1-12, you will receive Volume 13 for free. Volume 13 covers Judge Death and his minions.



Convention Diary

Conception

Naish Holiday Village, Highcliffe, Christchurch, UK
Wed 27th - Sun 31st Jan 2010

<http://www.conceptionuk.org/>

Siege of Augusta

Doubletree Hotel, 2651 Perimeter Pkwy, Augusta, GA, USA
Fri 22nd - Sun 24th January 2010

<http://www.siegeofaugusta.com/cgi/index.php>

Vapnartak

Knivesmire Stand York Racecourse, York, UK
Sun 7th Feb 2010

<http://www.yorkwargames.org/Vapnartak.htm>

UK Games Expo

The Clarendon Suites, Stirling Road (off Hagley Road),
Edgbaston, Birmingham, UK
Fri 7th - Sun 6th Jun 2010

<http://www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk>

More events will be added to this list on a monthly basis as they are confirmed

The Awesometer

Generic events that get our hearts racing (or sometimes not) each and every month!

AWESOME

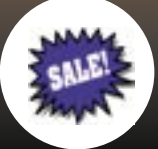
HAPPY NEW YEAR

2010 is sure to bring us all some excellent new adventures, Happy New Year!



A new release in the form of Bayonetta for the PS3 and Xbox 360, get your hands on this Kick Ass hack n Slash Masterpiece

The sales are there so you can part with all your Xmas pennies, time to spend, spend, spend.



Charlotte Law's TOP 5

Predictions for Mongoose staff New Years resolutions

- 1. Fordy – 'I will stop being the one who eats all the pies, and cakes, and doughnuts, and ...'!
- 2. Nick the Greek – 'I will stop letting Milo boss me around.'
- 3. Lawrence – 'I will stop rubbing it in to all of the staff still based in the UK about how great my life is since I left.'
- 4. Sandrine – 'I will stop kicking everyone's ass on Facebook Scrabble.'
- 5. Kelly – 'I will adopt a Zen like attitude to all things stressful!'

CHRISTMAS IS OVER



FOR NOW...

GRUESOME

The Timeline

A visual guide to get your tails wagging for future Mongoose releases

February: Pavis Rises, up first for the new Glorantha



March: Glorantha the Core Rulebook washes up



April: Bring your best slay



Quote of the Month

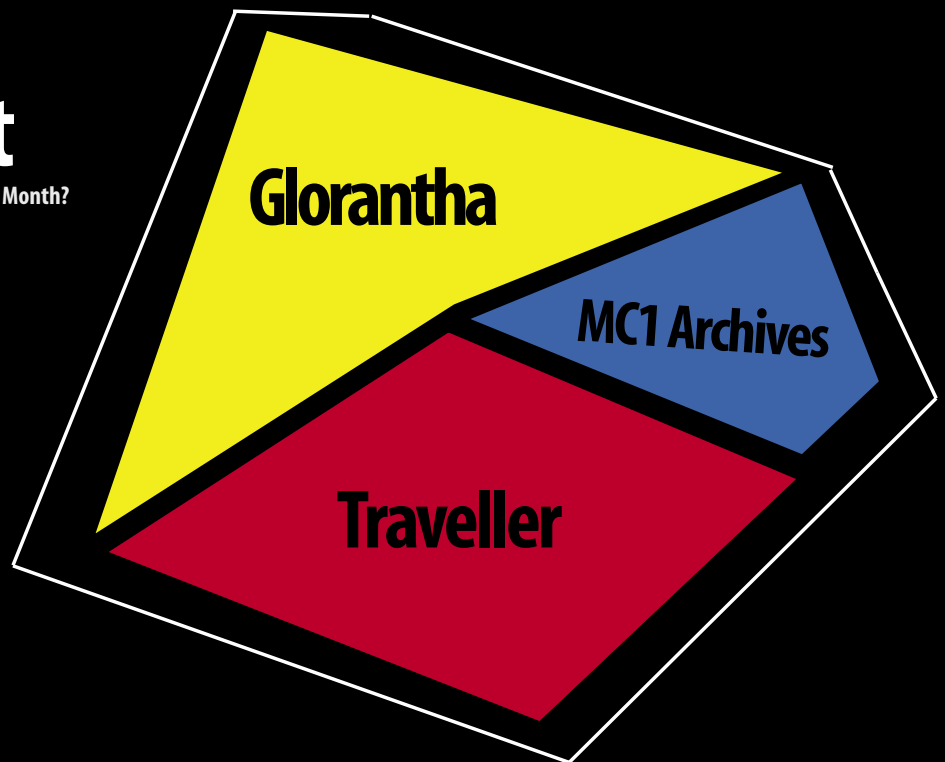
Which phrases have been flying around the office more than the dogs ball?

The Greek stole
my chicken!

The sad cries of Mongoose Kelly and her husband at the Mongoose Publishing Christmas party. We had a fabulous banquet at a local Chinese restaurant and our own Nick 'The Greek' Robinson kept forgetting exactly what it was that he ordered... he is the oldest Mongoose, bless him!

The Time Chart

What have we been spending our time on at Mongoose this Month?



ing gear, its time for Deus Vult

VULT

May: Terror of the Darklords unleashes it's fangs



June: Mongoose unearths the Ancients



January 10 Releases



Bounties & Warrants is packed full of missions for budding bounty hunters. From petty thieves to genocidal maniacs, from lone assassins to fortresses packed full of criminals, players will have to be cautious and inventive if they are to maximise their profits, and bring back their targets – alive, not dead!

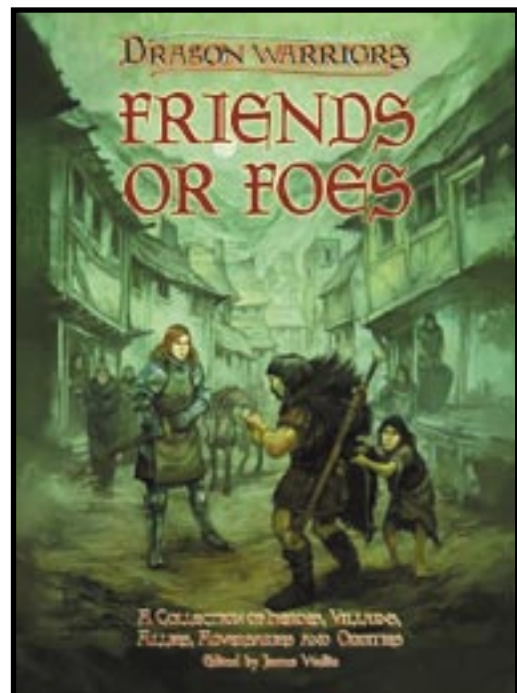
Bounties and Warrants
Price: \$24.95
Format: Softback (128 pages)
MGP10003

FRIENDS OR FOES describes 36 fascinating characters from all over the world of Dragon Warriors, and interconnects them in a weave of plots and history that can be used to underpin any number of adventures. There are corrupt nobles, weird sorcerers, people cursed by the Fae or tormented by the past, merchants and mercenaries, priests and peasants, and even a selection of notable monsters such as Jasper the Gargoyle and the Silver Stag.

Consider Baron Darcheaux, haunted by the ghost of his dead son; Father Corbin, the man of faith cursed by the lords of the fairies; Rocelin the Minstrel whose songs will chronicle the adventuring deeds of the player-characters; Thomas and William the brewing brothers whose rivalry is almost as potent as their beer; or Tuanku, the beautiful diplomat from the southern isles who appears to have a rusty nail embedded in the back of her neck. All characters have full game-stats and a selection of adventure-seeds to get them involved in the players' campaign.

The book also contains GM notes on creating hirelings with personalities, and an almanac of stats for basic NPCs from bandits and town guards to poachers, pilgrims and primitives. No Dragon Warriors game is complete without FRIENDS OR FOES!

Friends or Foes
Price: \$19.99
Format: Softback (64 pages)





Mega City One Archives Volume 1
 Price: \$29.99
 Format: Hardback (144 pages)

What you will hold in your hands is a collection of lore related to the Justice Department and the citizens it protects – often from themselves. These volumes will detail the world of the Judges as never before – if it drives, shoots, breathes, sprawls or hides in the shadows of Mega-City One, you will find it in this comprehensive collection.

Volume I: The Justice Department

This volume takes you on a guided tour of the only power great enough to keep the peace in a world gone mad. Within these pages, the training of new Judges is described, luminaries and notable members are discussed and the procedures that maintain effectiveness and discipline are revealed. This book covers the Justice Department from Sector Houses to sequestered archives, from the mechanical miracles of Tek-Div to the world-shaping decisions of the Council of Five and the Chief Judge. Here are the halls of power. Here is where rules are made.

This is the Law.

The Justice Department is the start of an exciting new 12 volume series that examines the world of Judge Dredd as never before. Each volume contains a proof of purchase logo that, when all 12 are collected, can be exchanged for a special 13th volume, covering Judge Death and his allies, absolutely free!

Note: This is the only way to obtain the special 13th volume of the Mega-City One Archives. It will never go on sale!

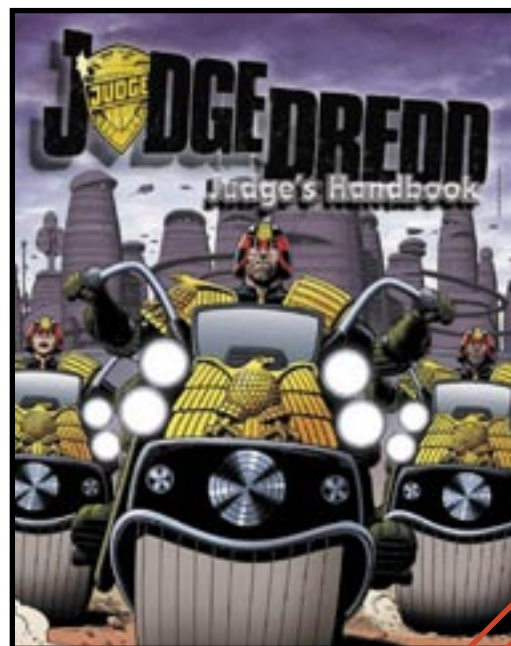
Judge's Handbook

Price: \$29.99

Format: Softback (160 pages)

Uncover the secrets of the Justice Department in Mega-City One. Within this book, you will find all the methods, technologies and procedures the judges use to track down criminals. From the forensics of Tek-Div to the Manta Prowl Tank, there is a tool to solve every crime, and your judges have access to them all.

The Justice Department provides new rules and options for judges as they patrol the streets of Mega-City One, and allows them access to the more elite divisions and promotions, allowing them to become Exorcist Judges, join the holocaust Squad, or even Acc-Div! If that is not enough to complete an investigation, then the judges will be happy to try out the latest weapons and equipment, straight from the workshops of Tek-Div.



January 10 Releases



The mandatory enjoyment of Paranoia's 25th Anniversary continues! With this ultra-high-security book, players can forget the troubles of the little people of Alpha Complex. No more hose jobs as Troubleshooters, no more policing the madness that is Alpha Complex as a Blue Clearance Trooper. No, the life of a High Programmer is one of luxury!

As High Programmers, players will enjoy the fruits of their labours (and those of everyone else) as the pre-eminent leaders of Alpha Complex. There is no way their plans will be scuppered by Alpha Complex's nightmarish bureaucracy. No way that rival High Programmers will seek to bring about their demise. No way that the citizens below them will revolt. No way that the Computer will find even more insane challenges that cannot possibly be completed.

No way at all. Uh huh.

White Washes is the limited edition version of High Programmers, demanded by fans, sporting a new cover matching that of Black Missions. Strictly limited to just 100 copies worldwide, White Washes can only be found on this web site. It will not be appearing in shops.

Paranoia: High Programmers - White Washes
Price: \$49.99
Format: Hardback (208 pages)

Paranoia: High Programmers
Price: \$39.99
Format: Hardback (208 pages)

Paranoia: Forms Pack
Price: \$9.99
Format: Softback (28 pages)

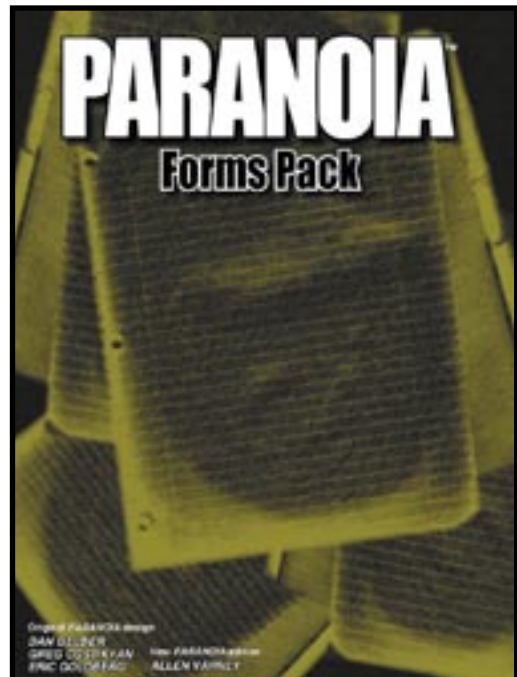
Are your players not suffering enough in Paranoia? Change all that with this handy forms pack! Whether they are Troubleshooters, Internal Security agents or High Programmers, there is no situation that cannot be made more difficult with a form!

Want to requisition a new piece of equipment? Have a form!

Want to execute Alpha Complex's most notorious traitor? Have a form!

Want to enter the mandatory briefing room? Have a form!

The Paranoia Forms Pack. The perfect instrument for discerning Games Master.





The Spinward Marches awaits your exploration in this huge poster map, featuring every system, trade link and starbase in the sector. Beautifully illustrated in full colour, this map is the first in a series that will allow you to explore the entire Third Imperium and beyond, joining posters together to form one gigantic map!

Includes a full key to aid navigation.

Spinward Marches Map Pack

Price: \$9.99

Format: Poster (1 page)

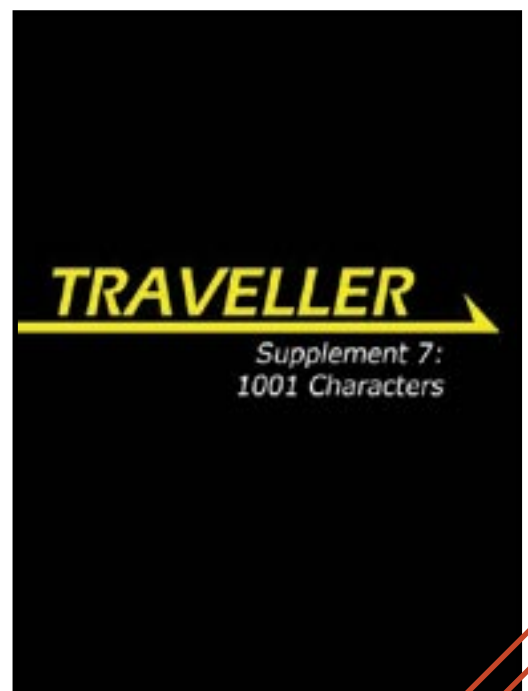
MGP 3827

Traveller: 1,001 Characters

Price: \$34.99

Format: Hardback (208 pages)

A referee's treasure trove, 1,001 Characters provides a quick and easy reference to over a thousand non-player characters, ready for play! Divided into easy-to-use sections, a referee will quickly be able to find the appropriate alien bounty hunter, starport administrator or backwater hunter easily. Each character comes with name, equipment, skills and background, giving them life and personality right from the page.



January 10 Releases

Mongoose stirred the roleplaying community when, in 2006, it announced the return of RuneQuest - one of the most loved and respected game systems of all time. That new edition introduced several changes to the basic system and brought RuneQuest to a new and wider community of gamers.

Mongoose is now delighted to announce the release of RuneQuest II. This new edition of the classic game has taken just about every aspect of the first edition, scrutinised it, revised it, and restructured it to bring RuneQuest aficionados and new players alike the very best incarnation of the classic games engine. RuneQuest fans will not be disappointed in the attention lavished on the new game. In particular they can expect:

A streamlined and revised character creation system, with greater emphasis on character background, but also significant changes that influence a character's starting skills and abilities and the speed with which adventurers develop, improve and progress. Particular attention has been paid to training and skill improvement, but you will also find that the structure and range of skills is greatly enhanced, meaning that new RuneQuest adventurers begin with a greater degree of competence across the board.

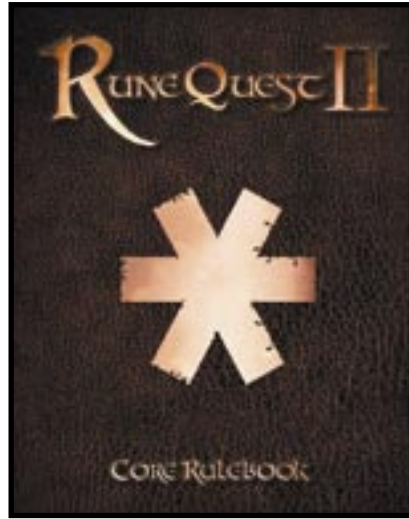
Combat - perhaps the most controversial aspect of the first edition of the game - has been almost completely retooled. Although all the familiar concepts remain (Combat Actions, Strike Rank and so forth), the combat process is based on simple rolls, does not rely on any resolution matrix, and introduces special Combat Manoeuvres simulating the cut and thrust of real combat whilst offering a truly epic, cinematic edge. Combat is faster than before and perhaps more deadly, but every RuneQuest character will find a greater range of tactical options and combat effects that create a satisfying, exciting, combat flow.

Cults, another crucial facet of RuneQuest, have been redesigned and extended in scope. The nature of the relationship with the cult is at the heart of the cult rules, with the most devout gaining the greatest rewards. Cults are more than just places to gain spells and cheap training; their mythical significance, and relationship to myth, runs through the cult structure, driving and shaping the way its members behave.

Elsewhere, RuneQuest II tweaks and brings subtle changes to other aspects of the core system. The presentation of the game rules has been restructured to make it easier for Games Masters and players to find what they need, when they need it. The system is designed with clarity and ease of use in mind. Some - many - rules have needed little or no alteration. Others are common sense tweaks to assist both game balance and maximising game fun, whilst retaining the 'realism' for which RuneQuest is renown.

Great pains have been taken to ensure full backwards compatibility. Although RuneQuest II changes many things, its core and heart remains the same. With a little conversion work Games Masters will be able to easily adapt their first edition characters and settings to the new and, in just about every case, adventurers will improve as a result of conversion. All first edition books and expansions remain compatible with RuneQuest II and, indeed, material presented in first edition expansions has become the foundation for the new game.

So, it is with great pride that we bring you RuneQuest II; a new take on a classic system, assembled by designers and writers who have more than 50 years of RuneQuest experience between them.



With stunning RuneQuest artwork facing the players, and every vital table for the games master, the RuneQuest II Games Master's Screen is the perfect complement to a well run RuneQuest campaign.

With all the important tables and charts, the new RuneQuest II Games Master's Screen is constructed from quality heavy-weight cardstock that will stand the ravages of many years' gaming.

RuneQuest II Core Rulebook
Price: \$39.99
Format: Hardback (200 pages)

RuneQuest II Gamesmasters Screen
Price: \$14.99
Format: Screen



Glorantha

THE SECOND AGE

COMING FEBRUARY 2010

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING

www.mongoosepublishing.com



CONAN'S[®]

SCORE OF STEEL

Every month the guys at Mongoose will be looking to bring you their reviews and opinions on some of the hottest events happening around the world, from Movies, Video Games, Books and naturally Hobby Gaming, of course we all need some scoring assistance.



Chuck Season 2

By Simon Beal

DVD Details

Released: Out now

RRP: £39.99

Region: 2 (Europe) – DVD details may vary in other regions

Running Time: 914 mins

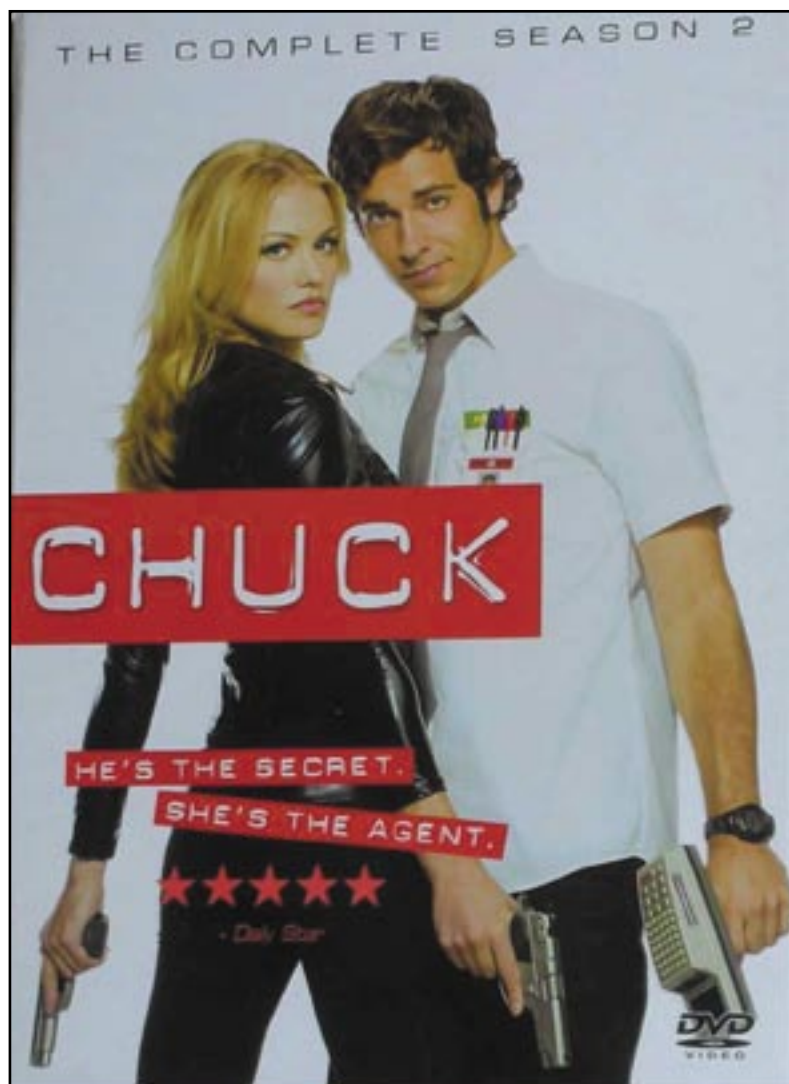
Discs: 6

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Audio: Dolby 5.1

Extras: Truth Spies and Regular Guys, Dude in Distress, Chuck Versus the Chuckles, Declassified Scenes, John Casey Presents So You Want to Be a Deadly Spy, Chuck: A Real Life Captain Awesome's Tips for Being Awesome, 3D version of Chuck Versus the Third Dimension and 3D glasses.

For anyone unfamiliar with this popular action comedy TV series, the basic premise is as follows. Chuck Bartowski (Zachary Levi) is a computer geek who works for the aptly named 'Nerd Herd', the technical help section of a large electronics store called the Buy More. His best friend Morgan Grimes (Joshua Gomez) also works at the store with a bunch of other misfits including Lester Partel (Vik Sahay), Jeff Barnes (Scott Krinsky) and Anna Wu (Julia Ling).



Chuck is sent an email from his old best friend turned nemesis, Bryce Larkin (Matthew Bomer) who is actually a CIA agent. The email contains thousands of images encrypted with data from a new computer system called the Intersect that holds all of the classified information for the CIA and NSA. When Chuck reads the email, the entire contents are downloaded into his brain. This concept may sound like sheer fantasy (and it is) but it works in the context of the show and provides the basis for a one of the best comedy series ever shown on TV.

With the email deleted and the original Intersect destroyed, Chuck is now the only person with this vital information and he is plunged into the deadly world of secrets and spies. Assigned to protect Chuck are CIA agent Sarah Walker (Yvonne Strahovski) and NSA agent John Casey (Adam Baldwin).

Chuck must keep his spy life a secret from his 'real' life, which becomes increasingly difficult living as he is with his sister Ellie (Sarah Lancaster) and her boyfriend Devon 'Captain Awesome' Woodcomb (Ryan McPartlin). As a cover, Sarah and Chuck have a fake relationship, which is made complicated by the fact they both have feelings for each other resulting in a 'will they, won't they' scenario continues throughout the series.

Season Overview

Season 2 has several story arcs running through it, whilst maintaining a reasonable stand-alone structure for most of its 22 episodes. The main theme is the new

Intersect computer being developed by the CIA and NSA that once complete will allow Chuck to return to a normal life, or so he thinks. As the story unfolds we learn that the Intersect was created by someone called Orion, whose identity is revealed toward the end of the season with an interesting twist.

FULCRUM plays a bigger role in this season with many of the episodes featuring agents and plots from this rogue CIA group as they attempt to develop their own Intersect whilst hindering the progress of the CIA's version of the super computer.

Season 2 also explores the characters in more depth, revealing their pasts and introducing the parents of Chuck, Devon and Morgan. The relationship between Chuck and Sarah continues with its ups and downs as old flames for both characters make appearances in several episodes.

A nice touch for the more geek oriented fans (myself included) is the casting of many guest characters from well-known science fiction shows, with appearances from Bruce Boxleitner (Babylon 5), Scott Bakula (Quantum Leap, Enterprise), Robert Picardo (Star Trek, Stargate), Dominic Monaghan (Lost, Lord of the Rings) and several others.

Like the first season, most of the episodes have a B story focussed on the events in the Buy More as the motley crew of employees deal with their new assistant manager Emmett Milbarge (Tony Hale). A

number of these stories also focus on the approaching wedding between Ellie and Devon.

As well as the introduction of new recurring characters, this season also sees a number of new sets in the new CIA's new secret base called the 'castle'. The castle is located under the Orange Orange (formerly the Wienerlicious) and has replaced the old demo room in the Buy More as the venue for mission briefings. The castle has holding cells and other facilities that are revealed throughout the season.

Conclusion

Season 2 is much longer than the previous season without sacrificing the production quality. Most of the scripts are stronger and feature bigger action sequences and better special effects. The comedy is also much improved over the previous season with many laugh out loud moments and amusing themes. In short, every episode was thoroughly enjoyable and managed to include a great mix of comedy and action (usually both), interspersed with emotional and dramatic moments.

The numerous story arcs progress well throughout the season without bombarding the viewer with too much information or too many plot elements to follow at any one time. The Intersect and wedding arcs culminate in the season finale and are dealt with in true Chuck style, with spies, guns, fights and a surprise performance by Lester and Jeff's band, Jeffster. The final scene pays homage to a popular science fiction movie and is, by all accounts, awesome.

Score: 9/10



Extras

There are a host of extras on these DVDs, featuring interviews from the cast and crew with behind the scenes footage. For the most part, these are informative and funny and certainly add value to the DVD set.

Truth Spies and Regular Guys: This feature explores the mythology of Chuck, giving backgrounds on the characters, organisations and locations featured



throughout the series. The creators and actors discuss the characters and their relationships with each other, accompanied by a selection of clips taken from the series.

Dude in Distress: The cast and crew discuss their favourite action scenes from the season. This feature focuses on the stunts, showing behind the scenes footage and techniques for achieving these stunning action sequences.

Chuck Versus the Chuckles: This is a gag reel featuring outtakes and clips of the cast fooling around.

Declassified Scenes: A selection of deleted and extended scenes for the episodes featured on each DVD.

John Casey Presents So You Want to Be a Deadly Spy: A short spoof film of John Casey giving tips to would-be spies in his own unique style.

Chuck: A Real Life Captain Awesome's Tips for Being Awesome: So, you want to be awesome? Then look no further as the master of Awesome gives tips for first dates, high school reunions, running into an ex and job interviews.

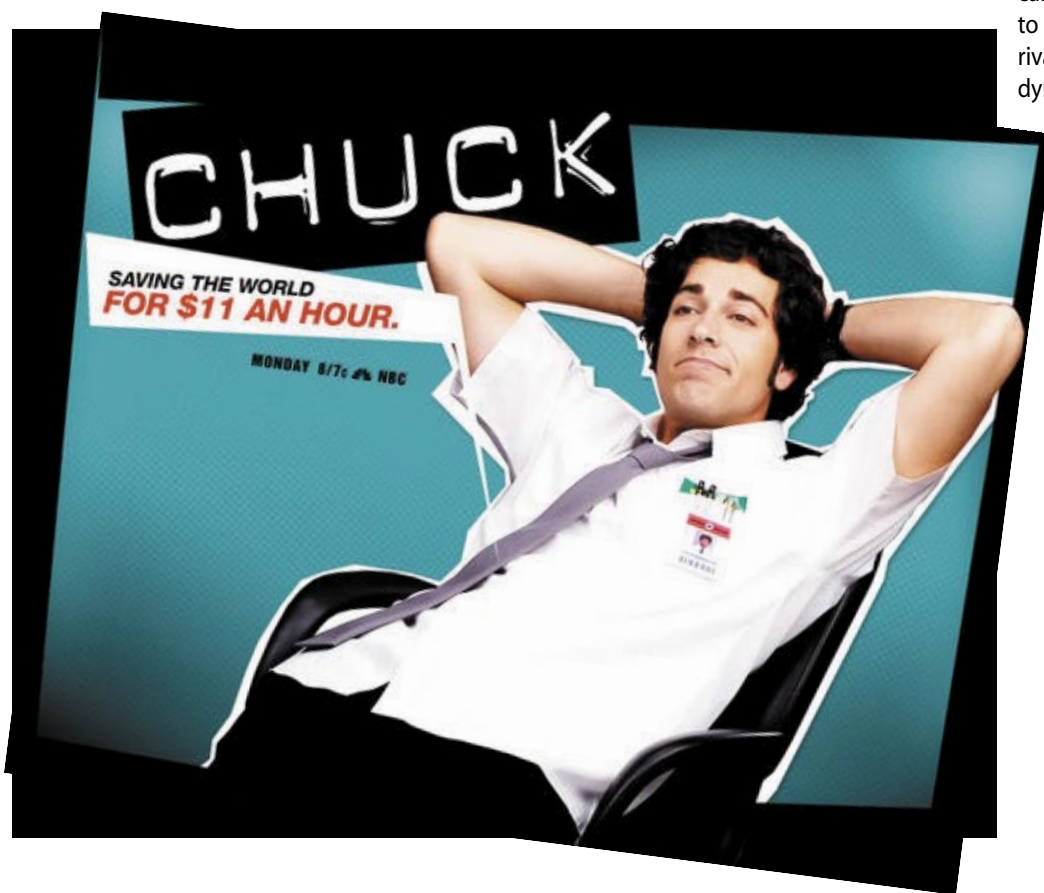
Chuck Versus the Webisodes: A number of spoof Buy More instructional videos including customer service, worth ethic, employee health, leadership and youth marketing.

3D version of Chuck Versus the Third Dimension: This is a special 3D version of Chuck Versus the Third Dimension with 3D glasses included. Unfortunately, I found the new 3D technology to be a bit hit and miss; it rarely worked for me and actually made my eyes ache after several minutes of viewing. However, with the popularity of this technology on the increase it must work for most people and it is certainly worth trying it out.

Roleplaying

Chuck provides a lot of material that can provide inspiration and ideas for any Referee wanting to run an espionage based game (with or without the comedy element). Concepts from the show including rogue intelligence groups such as FULCRUM and new technologies like the Intersect can work in a number of settings from modern day to science fiction universes. The skills and techniques of agents, as well as the missions and technology featured in the show can also be used to help create adventures and characters of this nature.

The reluctant spy concept can easily form the basis of a campaign, especially with a small number of players. One player can take on the role of a character forced to become a spy but lacks the necessary skills; perhaps using the Intersect idea or any plot device that makes the individual important to the intelligence agencies. Other players can be trained agents assigned to protect the 'asset'. Inter-agency rivalries can add to the group dynamic, providing some great roleplaying opportunities and gaming sessions.



TRAVELLER

THE THIRD IMPERIUM



MONGOOSE PUBLISHING

www.mongoosepublishing.com

Deus Vult

By Gareth Hanrahan

Call them the Order.

They've had a lot of names in the past. The *Averrunci*. The *Michaelites*. *Ordo Acerbus Devotio*. Madmen. Sacred monsters.

Names are irrelevant. Only the end result matters.

The Order is a secret branch of the Catholic Church, dedicated to protecting the church and the world from supernatural evils and heresy – by any means necessary. In pursuit of their goal, the Order is permitted to ignore secular law and is blessed with extraordinary grace, meaning whatever they do is right, proper and holy. Should a member of the Order be forced to slay an innocent, to deny God, or even to use the tools of the Enemy when in dire need, all these sins will be forgiven. Only failure is unforgivable.

When Alexandria burned, the Order was there. When the barbarians sacked Rome, they were there too, salvaging the secrets of the philosophers and the alchemists. In a time when Europe is struggling out of the dark ages, the Order's scholars and engineers make secret wonder-weapons. In a time when the Holy Church grows corrupt and faithless, the Order's warrior-monks burn with a fierce and abiding devotion to their cause.

They will need both weapons and faith. The Order is pitted against supernatural horrors. Witch-cults gather in the dark woods, worshipping pagan gods and blighting the harvest with their unholy sacrifices. Worms gnaw the depths of the earth, crawling out of caves to devour the innocent. Necromancers haunt the graveyards and the plague pits; demons thirst for the souls of the virtuous and heretics defy the teachings of the Church.

In the east, Jerusalem – captured by the crusaders almost a century ago – has fallen to the Saracens. The Levant is in uproar

and travellers bring back strange tales of sorcerers and spirits. The Order's eyes in the east are blind, as a third of the Pories were lost during the Great Schism between West and East.

Now is the time the Order will call upon you. Now is the time to prove your devotion.

Deus Vult is a new campaign setting for *Runequest II*. It is set in a fantasy version of Europe – there are monsters in the shadows but the Order has spent 1,000 years battling evil in all its forms, keeping the horrors away from the common folk. Peasant superstitions speak of ghosts and goblins without any real knowledge of the true threat. The Order is sworn to keep the true nature of the supernatural secret at any cost – and if that means innocents must perish to preserve the Order's secrets, so be it. God will know His own.

The players are cast as new initiates of the Order, sent out to hunt down and destroy the enemies of Christendom. They have the benefit of years of training and access to the Order's arsenal of weird weapons and occult tools.

They may even be blessed with divine gifts. Pitted against them are a horde of foes, both supernatural and mundane. The core tenet of the Order is 'by any means necessary' but the players may find themselves unwilling to obey all of their Masters' commands...

While the Order is willing to use violence to achieve its aims, the direct approach is never the best idea for *Deus Vult* characters. It's far better to pretend to be a humble wandering monk, beggar or mercenary, gather the clues and discover all you can about the cult or monster and only then burst into action. Fools rush in; the angels of Mont St-Michel fear nothing but temper daring with wisdom.



Bishop Honorius, Servant of the Servants of God. Every good reward and every good gift is from above, descending from the Father of Light, with Whom there is no change and no overshadowing vicissitudes. Caringly, beloved sons in the Lord, we praise the omnipotent God for you and on behalf of you, because your religious order, your venerable institution is and must remain a secret lest lesser souls become corrupted through vile rumour. Through inspiring grace you became attentive hearers of the Gospel, having forsaken worldly ostentation and private property, indeed having abandoned the wide path that leads towards death, you humbly chose the hard way that leads to life and sacrifice. In agreement with this is the fact that you, just as true disciples of the Lord and warriors most skilled in holy war, are indeed fired up by the flame of charity and fulfil by your deeds the words of the Gospel that say: Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, whence, in accordance with the words of the great Shepard, you are not afraid to lay down your souls for your brothers and defend them from attacks of the pagans. You were appointed by the Lord to be defenders of the Catholic Church and assailants of Christ's foes. It is indeed lawful that may you exert in your pursuit and laudable devotion in such a holy deed with all your heart and all your mind. Nevertheless, we encourage your corporation in the Lord, and, for the remission of your sins, by the authority of God and St. Peter, prince of the apostles, we charge you, as well as those serving you, that you intrepidly fight, invoking the name of Christ, against the enemies of the cross, in order to protect the Catholic Church and to secure that which is under the tyranny of pagans and heretics and ought to be rescued from their filth.

Further, we charge that you always conceal and never reveal the blasphemous secrets and unwholesome knowledge of those you defeat but that you instead destroy it or make goodly use of it in the form of redemption through further victories over the pagan and the heretic. In carrying out this duty, you are encouraged to do whatever is necessary to protect the flock of the Catholic Church from the depredations of evil and things of darkness and for this you have our blessing.

The Deus Vult sourcebook describes the Order's history and operations and gives rules for generating new members of the Order. There's an arsenal of alchemical gadgets, holy relics and supernatural powers, as well as new spells and occult abilities for the enemy (or for the foolhardy initiate who tries to fight fire with fire). There's a guide to Christendom, information on the Church and the other secret orders and a host of mundane and supernatural foes to fight. The book concludes with rules and advice on running occult investigations, a random mission generator and three short adventures.

Deus Vult is followed by a series of adventures entitled The Christ Blade that puts the characters on the trail of the fabled Spear of Destiny and takes them into the heart of the Holy Land.

Due for release in April 2010, keep an eye on the Mongoose website for updates and previews.

By Shannon Appeldine

Ask any Vronkali, any Mreli, or any Embyli and they will tell you that the Slorifings – which is to say the red elves or goblins to us less educated folks – are not true elves at all. They are hybrids, no more elves than men are. Certainly, it is true that the ‘true elves’ do not have much to do with the red elves. Even down in Pamaltela, where both are common, there is more likely to be a barrier to keep the two groups apart than a path to join them together (a fact that is literally true in the lands where jungle and swamp meet, in southwest Umathela).

However there is another way that you can tell how different the Slorifings are from the rest of the Aldryami and that is by examining their gods. The Slorifings certainly are *able* to worship the same deities that look after the rest of the elf races. You will find some Slorifing shamans who commune with Seyotel and her children, a few priests who serve the elemental gods (with Eron, Gata and the Iri shards all being equally popular, as the red elves do not differentiate between the two sorts of elements) and a fairly large number who worship the mixed gods – Bengara, Ferotha, Trigora and Veratha.

However, less than 1 out of 20 goblins call these Aldryami gods their own. The vast majority of Slorifings instead worship gods that are uniquely their own. There are a few who are known all across Glorantha and many, many more who are unique to a single locale – just as there are many species of red elves that are found in just one or two places in the world.

This article details three of the deities of the Slorifings. It expands upon the basic information about the race found in *Elfs: A Guide to the Aldryami* and the more extensive description of them published in *Signs & Portents #73*. Of the three deities described in this article, Slor and Sluj are both widely worshiped among the Slorifings, while Nyth is an example of a more local ancestor god, remembered by just one of the many species of red elves.

Slor, Father of the Slorifings

‘The Aldryami, they talk about Potential, then act like they is it. Is not true. We know Potential, just like them but we remember it was life and death, both of ‘em. Wasn’t true Potential in this world ‘til Slor sloughed off a Falamal’s branches and gave birth to Slorifs all over the world. That was Potential. Is us.’

—Atzen Tiko, Slorifing Chutti

Overview

Slor is the ancestor deity of all red elves. As such, he holds the same place in their mythology as Aldrya and Murthdrya do in the myths of the earth elves and the sea elves. The God Learners claim that he is a grandson of the Grower and the hidden fourth seed of Falamal, because that draws a nice parallel between all of the elf ancestor deities – and God Learners like things nice and clean, because it makes it easier for them to steal other peoples’ magic. The red elves, on the other hand, say that Slor is the child of Potential itself. Or maybe he is Potential embodied in the world of Glorantha. On the other hand, he might be part of Falamal’s very essence, changed into something else. They are not unified in their precise beliefs and sometimes they are not even consistent in the same conversation. That drives God Learners crazy.

As the parent of all Slorifings, Slor is sometimes called ‘Great Spore’, ‘Spore Father’, or ‘Spore of the Great Tree’. Slor is also the Slorifing god of secrets, for he hid in Falamal’s branches in the Red Age. Finally, he is also the Slorifing god of change for he symbolises his children, which are constantly metamorphosing.

Mythology

In the beginning there was Potential and it tried to enter Glorantha to make the world. However, because Potential entered

the universe with a purely generative urge, it was unable to complete the transition. Only those parts of it related to creating, growing and healing instantiated in the newly created world. They became the Grower. This was very bad, because with only half of its nature, Grower had no balance. It almost destroyed everything in its urge to create.

Fortunately, the ultimate expression of the generative urge was destruction. This allowed the other half of Potential to enter Glorantha. Sadly, it found that its Grower-half had changed too much to join itself as a complete being. Thus the second half of Potential became Taker. In doing so it created the Cycle. It thought that was Balance but they are not the same thing.

All this time, Potential also continued to dwell outside the world, for it is infinitely divisible yet never dwindling, like a great spore cloud. It saw that within the world it was not complete and it also saw how it could become complete within the world – not by entering it but by being *born* within it. Thus did Potential rebirth itself in Glorantha one more time and this time it was complete and that was Slor.

When Slor was reborn, he recreated himself upon the tallest height of Glorantha, which was the great tree, Falamal. He hid within the leaves, moving from branch to branch. Whenever he stopped he would exhale and new spores would float down toward Glorantha. During this time, the wind god Orlanth was constantly blowing in the north and as a result most of Slor’s spores blew south, onto the land that is today called Pamaltela.

Because Slor was Potential, he was constantly creating new things and as a result there were soon hundreds of different Slorifing species in Glorantha. One need only compare them to the scant two or three species of Aldryami to see how favoured a species the Slorifings are.

We call the time when Slor was alive in Glorantha the Red Age. It began the moment that Slor first insinuated himself into Falamal's limbs and it ended when Falamal was cut down, plunging him – and Slor – into the Underworld.

As the Black Age came to an end, Slor's people tried to enter the Underworld to restore their god but they were hindered along the way by the Seven Chaos Children, the Last Great Fire Empire and the Two Men with a Large Fan. Each time Slor's people overwhelmed their foes with raw numbers, despite the hundreds of species that were forever destroyed in the process. Despite the fearlessness of the Slorifings and despite their resolute nature, these distractions cost them too much time. The Underworld was closed to mortals under the Compromise before the Slorifings could find their lost father.

Thus, Slor still waits to be found in the Underworld. The Five Lost Slorifings – those who made it into the Taker's lands before the Compromise was made – still wander, ever seeking, without hope and without the support of their fellows. In the world of Glorantha above, species of red elves disappear one-by-one, for the Great Spore is no longer there to replenish them.

Special Notes: Unlike the ancestor gods Aldrya and Murthdrya, the followers of Slor may only access him through divine practice.

Runes: Death, Fertility, Plant.

Type: Ancestor spirit.

Pantheon: Elf.

Worshippers: Slorifings of all sorts. The occasional 'true' elf that believes in the Balance but does not want to worship Bengara, Ferotha, Trigora, or Veratha.

Worshipper's Duties: Explore new lands that can be spored, learn the knowledge of enemies and spread the Slorifing nations to the four winds.

Initiate Membership

Requirements: Anyone who wants to spread the ways of Slor is welcome.

Cult Skills: Athletics, Dodge, Lore (Slor), Lore (World), Persistence, Resilience, Survival.

Cult Spells: Allergy*, Endurance, Good Fortune, Heal, Mobility, Vigour.

*This spell is in the *RuneQuest Spellbook*.

Common Divine Magic: All.

Special Divine Magic: Live on the Enemy, Spore.

Acolyte Membership

Requirements: Standard.

Spore Spreader (Rune priest) Membership

Requirements: A candidate must have 90% or more in Survival, plus 75% or more in four of the other cult skills.

Special Benefits

Initiates get a +10% to Life Sense in their home swamp. Rune priests automatically detect any Slorifings within 100 metres.

Associated Cults

Falamal: Provides Fruition and Sprout. See *Cults of Glorantha: Volume I*, pages 85 and 93.

Sluj, God of the Swamps

'The Slorifings say they got some swamp god but what do they know? I think they're just worshipping Gata who's got a little wet. Heh.'

—Imberrino Spearwit, Embyli Warder & Diplomat

Overview

Sluj is the god of swamps. He is a solid element grown mercurial and in this way he is the perfect symbol of the goblins – who themselves are mercurial Aldryami. Symbolically, Sluj represents slow and steady determination, the successful melding of different elements and the silent, gaping maw of the deep earth.

Sluj is also called 'Slime Man' and 'Dirty Earth'.

Mythology

When the Grower dismembered himself, he created the earth, the sun and the water. At first each remained aloof and apart from its fellows. However when Slor

initiated the Red Age by blossoming upon Falamal's limbs, he heralded a new time of hybridisation in the world – when all of Glorantha came together to make things that were greater than those that had existed before.

Thus were born the goblins, the men, the beasts and the other red races. The stories of these hybrids can be found even in the stories of the Aldryami. However, the Aldryami do not likely to admit that their perfect elements became hybridised at this time also, as they joined together at their interfaces.

Water and sun created steam, a rather ephemeral element that only has importance in the stories of the sea elves. Earth and sun created air, the most troublesome of all of the elements and one that is strangely missing from the myths of the Aldryami – despite the damage that air did during the Red Age. Finally, water and earth created swamp – the greatest of all the elements, for it combined the protection and stability of Gata with the fertility of Eron.

Sluj is the god of all swamps, who came into existence when water and earth were first allowed to mingle in the Red Age. He was a great advisor to the Thousand Dynasties of Pamaltela. He sat upon the Twin Sunken Thrones that were all that remained of an ancient forest. When the forces of the Black Age began to overpower the remaining Dynasties, he split the southern continent in two, to form the swamps of Porlaso and Hornilio – permanent havens for his sacred people.

Where so many other elemental gods, such as Hamalao, Aron and Gata, were wounded near to death during the Black Age, Sluj never was, for he could never be found and could never be taken even if he were, for he was too slick and slippery. Thus he still lives in the land of Glorantha, always ready to give support and protection when called upon.

Runes: Earth, Water.

Type: Elemental god of Earth and Water.

Pantheon: Elf.

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Worshippers: Slorifings of all sorts. Very rare 'dark' elfs among the Aldryami, who believe the Slofing's claims that there are more elements than the six recognised by most Aldryami.

Worshiper's Duties: Protect the swamps, remain alive and everchanging, make new things out of old.

Initiate Membership

Requirements: Only plant beings may join. Slorifings may join automatically upon reaching maturity.

Cult Skills: 1H Hammer, Athletics, First Aid, Healing, Lore (Sluj), Persistence, Resilience, Survival.

Cult Spells: Clear Path, Douse*, Heal, Protection, Sink*.

* This spell is in the *RuneQuest Spellbook*.

Common Divine Magic: All.

Special Divine Magic: Become Unstoppable, Sucking Sludge.

Acolyte Membership

Requirements: Standard.

Great Sludge (Runelord) Membership

Requirements: A candidate must have 90% or more in Resilience, plus 75% or more in four of the other cult skills.

Special Benefits

Initiates get a +10% to Athletics in any swamp. Acolytes can see all of the natural dangers of a swamp. Runelords may detect the raw elements that make up any created object after several minutes' study.

Associated Cults

Eron: Provides Command (Undine).

Gata: Provides Command (Gnome) to Runelords.

The Thousand Spores

When Slor opened up his sacs, thousands of different spores drifted down from Falamal to the world below. Some rode the winds far and wide; some ride them still. Most, however, eventually came to rest in Glorantha. Each of these became the progenitor of an entire species of red elfs.

None of the Thousand Spores – as they are known – dwelt in Glorantha for long, for

they had to die so that their species could live. However, many of them remained active in different ways: some guided their peoples from the Underworld; some were reborn as red elfs of their own species; and some even returned from the Underworld in their own bodies, through various means.

Following the end of the Red Age, however, the majority of the Thousand Spores have been lost. Though the founders of all of the living species of red elfs can still be contacted in different ways, only a handful of the founders of the hundreds of extinct red elf species still exist.

The surviving members of the Thousand Spores can be worshiped as heroes. As with the elf heroes discussed in *Elfs: A Guide to the Aldryami* (pages 90-93), each of the Thousand Spores can be worshiped jointly with any other major red elf deity (specifically, Slor or any of the elemental gods) without any increase in time or resource commitment. Unlike the Elf heroes, the Thousand Spores appear as typical deities, not as spirits.

One example of these heroes, Nyth – the founder of the adventuresome Nythini species – appears in this article. He is a typical Thousand Spores giving a scant number of Initiate benefits but no higher levels of membership. Duties that would typically be carried out by acolytes, runelords, or rune priests of the cult instead fall to the appropriate members of the Slor religion.

Nyth, Death-Defying Slorifing Ancestor

'Slor is our body. Nyth is our spirit.'

—Atzen Tiko, Slorifing Chutti

Overview

Slor is the ancestor deity for the Nythini species of the Slorifings. He is the embodiment of many of the most central

aspects of red elf psychology, such as their need to constantly explore and expand.

Mythology

Nyth claims to be the first of Slor's spores that landed in the earth. He is not the only one of the ancestors to make that claim but he certainly does have one of the better arguments. Whatever the case, he was one of the five greatest leaders of the Thousand Spores in the early days of the Red Age. It was he who discovered the land of the Sitting Emperor, he who found the first Marsh of Plenty and he who led the first Hundred Dynasties to the Land of First Spring.

Nyth did a thousand stupid and courageous things during his first life. His luck finally ran out during some adventure that was so minor that it was never recorded. He spored, 1,000 Nythini sprang up from his body and then he went down to live in Trigora.

In the time before the dawn, Nyth returned from Trigora at least a dozen times. He stumbled upon the Forgotten Passage once, which led him back to the Twelve Tribes. Another time he appeared right in the middle of the Battle of Three Lost Gods and died so quickly while fighting the forces of Oblivion that almost no one realised he had returned. He tricked his way out of Trigora a half-dozen times, fought his way out another three or four and was even rescued by mistake once. Each time he returned to the Slorifing people and led them on great adventures, goaded them into great danger and generally made them the best Slorifings that they could be.

Since the Dawn, the gates to Trigora are much more tightly shut, and thus Nyth has not been seen in the world for 1,000 years. Some say the time of his next return grows very near.

Runes: Disorder.

Type: Ancestor god, Trickster.

Pantheon: Elf, The Thousand Spores.

Worshippers: Almost exclusively Nythini.
Worshipper's Duties: Do the unexpected, brave the dangerous, teach these duties to others.

Initiate Membership

Requirements: Standard. Candidate must also be an Initiate of Slor or one of the elf elemental gods.

Cult Skills: Acrobatics, Athletics, Dodge, Influence, Persistence.

Cult Spells: Befuddle, Fanaticism, Mobility.

Common Divine Magic: Find Species, Reflection, Spiritual Journey.

Special Divine Magic: Group Goad.

New Spells

The following spells follow the standard descriptive rules found in other *RuneQuest* supplements.

Divine Magic

Become Unstoppable

Duration 15, Magnitude 2, Touch

Cult: Sluj

Sluj teaches that steady persistence can accomplish anything. This spell helps worshipers to live up to that ideal. It grants the target +20% Persistence and +20% Resilience. In addition, the target suffers no ill effects from wounds until a location's Hit Points are reduced to a negative score greater than its starting Hit Points. When that occurs – or when the spell's duration expires – the target immediately suffers the effects for any locations reduced to 0 Hit Points or below and gains three fatigue levels.

This spell may not be combined with Berserk or Fanaticism.

Live on the Enemy

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive

Cult: Slor

The name of this spell refers to Slor's second lesson to his peoples, which says, 'If you cannot defeat an enemy, live upon him for a while.' This spell may be cast to exactly duplicate the effects of any Divine Magic cast in the caster's sight within the last five minutes. The magnitude of Live on the Enemy must be one greater than the magnitude of the spell being duplicated.

Group Goad

Duration 15, Magnitude 1, Progressive

Cult: Nyth

This spell helps a Nythini to encourage others to follow him into dangerous situations. It affects the caster and up to 100 followers who can hear him. Each Magnitude of the spell gives the caster a +5% bonus to Influence others to do something dangerous or reckless (+10% if the listener is Slorifing). It also gives each listener who decides to follow the caster a +5% bonus to Persistence rolls required to keep engaging in the task (+10% if the listener is Slorifing). Finally, it makes all Slorifing followers immune to Fear spells of the same Magnitude or less.

Spore

Instant, Magnitude 1, Progressive, Ranged

Cult: Slor

Worshipers of Slor may create a Spore Cloud using this spell. It is one metre in size per 1 magnitude of the spell. See *Signs & Portents #67*, pages 76-77 for notes on the Spore Clouds, as well as complete statistics. Alternatively, a Slorifing may choose to sacrifice himself as he casts the spell. This creates a Spore Cloud that is five metres in size, plus one metre per magnitude of the spell.

Sucking Sludge

Instant, Magnitude 1, Ranged

Cult: Sluj

A more powerful variant of the Sink rune magic spell. It may only be cast at a target standing on soil or sand. It traps the target in a sucking pool of sludgy quicksand. While the character is in the sand, all active activities, including combat and Dodge tests (but excluding the test required to escape this spell), have a –20% penalty. The target may also not move normally while in the sand; to escape he must succeed at three Athletics tests, each of which takes a Combat Action.

For each Athletics test that fails, 1D6 SIZ of the target sinks into the sand and all subsequent tests have a –10% penalty. In addition, the target sink s1D6 SIZ at the start of each Combat Round. If all of the target's SIZ sinks, he drops below the ground and starts suffocating as if in water (see *RuneQuest*, page 90). Nearby friends may add half their Athletics score by spending a Combat Action.

Piercing Magic

By Uri Kurlianchik

Whether it's the bored and decadent Stygian noble in search of new sensations, or the tribal Pict warrior seeking purification of the soul through the torment of the flesh, piercing can be found everywhere in the world of Conan. Mundane piercing grants their bearers access to the darker side of pleasure, radical aesthetical or emotional self-expression and sometimes even imaginary friends to relate to. Some pierce their flesh to dishearten their enemies, while others do it to stun people with a terrible beauty. Some piercings, however, are more than that. It is an awesome magical power or a disfiguring hellish torment.

Piercing is a class of magic items that grant various bonuses and special powers to the piercee but often with a terrible cost. Unlike traditional items, piercing becomes part of the character and any damage inflicted on the item equally hurts the owner. Once joined, the two become one.

'Piercing Magic' details the entire piercing process from the forging of the jewellery to the actual piercing and offers 10 new magic items for players and GMs to enhance and individualise their characters.

The Piercing Process

Piercings are created with the Craft (Jewellery) skill and are enhanced with ancient and cunning spells known only to a handful of mystics across the world. The chances of a PC acquiring such spells are extremely slim and the chances of him later surviving long enough to actually use them are even slimmer.

Even the utilisation of magic piercing is a tricky process and entails many risks and unpleasant side effects. Piercing a character requires a successful Heal check (DC varies). Failure raises the infection save DC (see table for more details) by 10. Critical fumbles result in special damage as described in the table.

A magic piercing becomes a part of the character, sipping some of his or her life

force to fuel its own. Every piercing has a different 'side effect'. These effects differ according to the piercing used and cannot be removed in any way as long as the piercing is in place.

Infection table

Location	Infection DC	Fumble
Ear	11	Deafness
Brow	15	Blindness
Mouth	13	Stuttering*
Limb	17	Nerve Damage**
Torso	17	Severe Infection***
Internal	21	Death

* A stuttering character cannot cast spells with verbal components and takes -8 on all skill checks that require speech.

** -4 on all rolls that require the use of the limb in question.

*** Like Black Plague.

Infection

The most mundane risk of piercing is the wound getting infected and resulting in a disease causing 1d3 points of Constitution damage per day. Such a disease requires three consecutive successes on the Fortitude save to heal. Consult the Infection table for basic save DCs. Exceptionally poor or outstanding sanitary conditions may greatly alter this number (piercing in field or dungeon conditions usually raises the DC by 7).

Unless noted otherwise, this is a natural disease and can be treated with the Treat Disease application of the Heal skill.

Allergic Reaction

Most piercing can be forged from a variety of materials, including most kinds of metal, some precious stones, onyx or even bone. When a character first puts on the piercing, the GM should make a secret check to see whether the character is allergic to this particular material and how severe this allergy is.

Allergy Table

Material	Allergy chance	Severity
Organic	20%	Light (-1 to a random ability)
Metal	10%	Medium (-2 to a random ability)
Stone	1%	Severe (-4 to a random ability)

Rejection

Magic piercing is 10% likely to be rejected by the body, in which case it slowly crawls out of the skin, causing considerable pain (-2 to all rolls) until it fully leaves the body (2d4 days later). Consult the following table for conditions that may alter the chance of rejection.

Rejection Table

Condition	Modifier
Character is undead	-10%
Character has Con 19+	-10%
Piercing has different Code of Honour*	+20%
Failure on piercing heal check	+20%
Character has fast healing	+20%
Character has allergy	+10%/20%/40% (by severity)
Character has regeneration	+50%

* Having no Code of Honour counts as having a different Code of Honour.

A rejected piercing can be tried again without any additional ill effects.

Reading Piercing Descriptions:

Location: Where on the body the piercing can be located, unless otherwise stated, a character can only have one piercing per location. 'Internal' piercing is placed inside the body, which usually requires a complex

and dangerous operation and is usually attached to at least one internal organ.

Piercing DC: The Heal DC to properly apply the piercing.

Side Effects: The continuous punishment the piercing inflicts on the piercee's body as long as it remains in place.

Removal: The consequences of removing the piercing. Forcible removal of the piercing (through grappling or targeted attacks) has the same effect but with a -10 penalty to the relevant save (if applicable) and inflicts additional 1d10 points of damage (5d10 for internal piercing). Like many of the magic items found in the Hyborian Age, magic piercing incurs their owner's Obsession. This makes their removal even more catastrophic for sorcerers. For more details see 'Rule of Obsession' in the *Conan Core Rulebook*.

Axis of Truth

Location: Tongue

Piercing DC: 17

Code of Honour: Civilised

Side Effects: None

Removal: Permanent muteness.

This piercing is most commonly forcibly applied to criminals and traitors but some radical religious orders require novices to undergo this piercing to prove their dedication to the cause. The axis is a series of poles pierced through the tongue, forcing it to take only the straight path of truth and not the crooked way of falsehood.

An axis piercee is unable to utter lies; giving false information in other ways, such as forging letters, hand gestures and so forth is not affected.

The axis of truth is designed in such a way that its removal will permanently paralyse the tongue. This damage can only be healed with a DC 35 Heal check.

Brain Nails of Terror

Location: Head (Internal)

Piercing DC: 27

Code of Honour: None

Side Effects: Attacks to the head result in a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage inflicted). Failure inflicts 50 points of damage and 1d4 points of Wisdom damage.

Removal: Succeed on a DC 20 Fortitude save or die.

Brain nails are among the most twisted and extreme piercing in the world. They are mainly used as a status symbol by powerful necromancers, cult masters or other villains who consider physical damage unlikely. On top of forcing Terror saves on anyone they encounter (see 'The Terror of the Unknown' for more details) the piercee can also cast the following spells at will without expending his own power points. All spells cast by the Brain Nail of Terror have the same caster level as the piercee.

At will – *Incantation of Amalric's Witchman, Lesser Ill-fortune,*

3/ day – *Gelid bones, Mind Reading*

1/ day – *Greater Ill-fortune, Visions of Torment and Enlightenment*

Being among the most evil and perverse artefacts of the Hyborian age, the brain nails automatically confer 2 corruption points on the piercee – no saving throw is allowed.

Naval Leaf of Wholeness

Location: Stomach

Piercing DC: 13

Code of Honour: Barbaric

Side Effects: Necromancy spells and attacks performed by undead inflict double damage and receive a +2 bonus to their DCs.

Removal: wounds do not heal for a week.

Naval leaves are most common among woodland sages and sorcerers who specialise in nature magic. These small,

leaf-shaped brooches grant the piercee the ability to heal 1 point of damage every 30 minutes or 1 point of ability damage every day (must be decided at the beginning of the day). Additionally, the character enjoys a +1 bonus to saving throws against natural poisons and diseases.

Piercing of Far Speech

Location: Ear and Mouth (see description)

Piercing DC: 13

Code of Honour: None

Side Effects: 5% per night to have a nightmare that will make further sleep impossible. Three nightmares in a row force a DC 15 save against minor insanity.

Removal: Deafness (ear) or Stuttering (lip) for a week.

These piercings are most coveted by powerful thief guilds and other secret societies where corrupted masters must control fanatic followers from the shadows. In such groups, they serve both as rites of passage and to ease communication. This piercing has two parts; a tragus and a lip ring. The tragus piercee hears every word uttered by the lip piercee as long as they are within a mile distance. A lip ring can have up to 8 tragus attached to it but attaching more than 2 lips rings to a single tragus endangers the tragus piercee's sanity as contradictory thoughts and emotions begin to echo in his mind. The sound produced by the tragus is real and can be overheard by a successful Listen check (+15 to Listen DC).

Septum of the Bull

Location: Nose

Piercing DC: 15

Code of Honour: Barbaric

Side Effects: The piercee must succeed on a DC 15 Will save or respond with violence to an even minor provocation.

Removal: The character becomes weak and listless for a week, resulting in a -2 penalty to Will saves and all rolls involving physical activity.

This nasal piercing looks like a crude iron ring and is popular among barbarians, gladiators and career mercenaries with sorcerous masters. Except for the +2 Str bonus it bestows on the piercee, it also grants a +4 bonus to the opposed Strength check made during Bull Rush attempts.

Rib Guards

Location: Torso (Internal)

Piercing DC: 15

Code of Honour: Civilised

Side Effects: Double damage from bludgeoning weapons. Bludgeoning crits inflict additional 1d4 points of Constitution damage.

Removal: Permanent loss of 2d8 HP.

Rib guards are magic rings worn over the ribs in such a way that one side protrudes from the flesh while the other is hidden inside the body, giving the appearance of long bejewelled metallic strips along the piercee's body. They grant the piercee a +4 natural bonus to Damage Reduction by making his bones as durable as steel. Unfortunately, when bones do get broken they tend to pierce internal organs making critical hits especially devastating.

Third Eye Ring

Location: Forehead

Piercing DC: 13

Code of Honour: Civilised

Side Effects: The third eye is always open. The piercee must succeed on a DC 15 Will save or stay up all night. Depending on the wickedness of the environment the DC can vary from 10 to 25.

Removal: Character is blind for a week.

This eye-shaped ring is pierced through the skin of the forehead and grants the piercee darkvision and the ability to cast *mind-read* and *psychometry* at will but for no more than 20 minutes per day.

Killer's Hand Barbells

Location: Hand

Piercing DC: 19

Code of Honour: Barbaric or Civilised

Side Effects: The piercee must succeed on a DC 15 Will save each night or become compelled to murder a random person with his bare hands in the following eight hours.

Removal: Hand is paralysed for a week.

These oversized barbells are pierced through the piercee's palm in a ceremony known for the excoriating pain it inflicts on the recipient. Except for enjoying a +1 enhancement bonus to all unarmed attacks, the piercee can attempt an unarmed death attack (as an assassin of half his HD) three times per day.

This piercing is extremely rare and is almost exclusively used by ancient and degenerate Oriental assassin cults.

Heart Plug

Location: Torso (Internal)

Piercing DC: 27

Code of Honour: Civilised

Side Effects: The Piercee must consume one heart of a creature of his own race species once per week or start losing Constitution points at the rate of 1d3 per day.

Removal: Profound bleeding which causes the piercee to lose one-third of his hit points each round, resulting in death at the end of the third round unless the plug is returned.

The heart plug takes on itself many of the body's vital functions, granting the piercee many resistances and immunities but also making him completely dependent of this vile item. The piercee becomes immune to wounding, critical hits, poison and diseases. Additionally, he enjoys a +4 bonus to Fortitude saves against all effects that target living creatures only.

The heart plug is most commonly forcibly applied as its removal practically guarantees death and the side effects are possibly the most appalling of all magic piercing. Particularly sadistic villains enjoy forcing the heart plug on captured adventurers and watching with amusement as the once-noble heroes are driven to madness and suicide. Also, depraved nobles often demand that all minions have heart plugs and walk around shirtless, to remind them that their lives are literally in the hands of the master.

Webbing Rings

Location: Hand

Piercing DC: 13

Code of Honour: None

Side Effects: Performing unarmed attacks has a 20% chance of forcibly removing the piercing.

Removal: -2 to all rolls involving hands for a week.

This simple piercing consists of eight small rings which are pierced into the webbing between the fingers granting the piercee a +20 bonus on Swim checks. They are most commonly found among ship captains and are sometimes temporarily used by adventurers who must go beneath the waves.

It is rumoured that in olden times there was an entire seaside kingdom where all men had these piercings and used them to rule both land and sea with the iron fist of tyranny. If this is the truth then surely, there is some underwater cave or a forsaken island with chests full of webbing rings and other, much more potent, magic piercings. But where can this vault lie and what horrors may guard its dark riches; that no one can tell...

The author would like to thank Galia 'the Red Gooch' Shofman for inspiring this article.

TWILIGHT SECTOR

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A TWILIGHT SECTOR CAMPAIGN

Melvin

By Benjamin Pew

A typical starship in the *Traveller* universe is powered by a fusion power plant. This power plant requires purified hydrogen for fuel and will consume it fairly hungrily. The earliest commercially-viable fusion plant is built at late TL-8, even though experimental models exist earlier (however, these are fuel-swilling monsters that do not put enough energy out to be worthwhile). A TL-8 starship-grade fusion plant will consume two tons of fuel per level of ship drive per week, that is to say a TL-8 plant A will use two tons of fuel in a week, while a plant B will use four tons. Many plant designers feel that this is still very inefficient, even if it is cost-effective for their purposes and try to increase the efficiency of their designs. A standard TL-9 fusion plant design will be able to make that power plant A use two tons of fuel in four weeks – effectively doubling its endurance; likewise, larger power plants will be able to be twice as efficient. This doubling of efficiency will remain the same up until about TL 15 or so, when the fusion plant is efficient enough to run for several years straight before needing to be refuelled. Most designers will generally include several weeks' fuel tankage in their designs in order to provide for long-term operations.

Fusion Power Plant Efficiency:

TL 8: A Fusion power plant A requires 2 tons of fuel to get 2 weeks worth of operation; multiply this by the size difference of the power plant in use to get the amount of fuel required for that period. For example, a power plant B is twice as big as a power plant A and as such requires 4 tons of fuel, while a power plant E, being five times as big, requires 10 tons of fuel, while a power plant N, being 13 times as big, requires 26

tons of fuel. This is the standard table listed on page 107 of the *Traveller Core Rulebook*. Note that the factor of difference between the power plant used and power plant A will determine the fuel required for each succeeding Tech Level.

TL 9: A Fusion power plant A requires 2 tons of fuel to get 4 weeks worth of operation. As with TL 8 plants of greater size, increase this by the factor of difference between the power plant utilised and a power plant A. Therefore, a power plant B will still use 4 tons of fuel, while a power plant N will still use 10 tons and a power plant N will use 26 but each plant will get 4 weeks worth of power from that amount of fuel.

TL 10: At this TL, a power plant will get 6 weeks worth of operations for a certain amount of fuel; as with all listed TLs, fuel requirements will remain the factor of difference between the power plant used and power plant A. A power plant A will get 6 weeks worth of operations for 2 tons of fuel, while a power plant N will still use 26 tons for that same 6 weeks.

TL 11: Power plants of this TL will get 8 weeks for a certain amount of fuel tonnage. This is the standard efficiency for most civilian power plants, although most plants built at later TLs will be built using methods, materials and costs appropriate their TL.

TL 12: Power plants built at TL 12 will generate 12 weeks of power for their required fuel tankage. Most high-grade civilian power plants are built to operate at this level and many non-military plants are also.

TL 13: A breakthrough in efficiency causes power plants built at this tech level to generate 24 weeks of fuel for the tonnage required. Most power plants will contain two-thirds of their required tonnage in order to provide backup fuel in case of combat damage. This becomes the standard efficiency for military vessels until TL 15.

TL 14: Power plants of TL 14 manufacture will provide 50 weeks of operation for their required fuel tonnage. This is fairly common on long-range scientific and survey vessels and intruder-style military vessels, as it provides them with nearly a year's worth of power plant operation. Power plants greater than E will usually only carry their full load of fuel in order to counter loss through combat and accident.

TL 15: The Tech Level 15 power plant will provide 76 weeks worth of operation for the required fuel tonnage. Indeed, the primary reason that the TL 15 power plant is not more common among space faring vessels is its expense and relative rarity. TL 12 and 13 power plants and indeed TL 15 power plants built to TL 12 and 13 specifications, are much cheaper, even if they are larger and less efficient. TL 15 plants are the desired standard for all ships in important fleets, such as the Core Fleet that protects Capital and for important vessels such as the Emperor's Yacht.

TL 16: At TL 16, fuel efficiency is practically indefinite. But it is a very rare ship that will have such a power plant, as it is notoriously hard to find. A power plant of this manufacture will be 70 percent the size of a standard TL 12 power plant but will be 400 percent more expensive.



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LONE WOLF

THE CITY OF HOLMGARD: UNCOVERED PT 1

BY DARREN PEARCE

'Tis the heart and soul of the Sommerlund, tis a place where you can find anything you desire. Or at least that's what I've been told. I'm going to move there come the next year, just you wait and see. I'll be a famous knight, someone of renown and then all those who mocked me will witness how great I've become.'

—A commoner overheard in a tavern in Port Bax.

BRIEF HISTORY

One of the first settlements in Sommerlund, Holmgard was the seat of power of King Ulnar I and became a beacon of hope in the Lastlands. Holmgard was built on blood, sweat and tears and countless battles were fought to secure the lands against bandit, monster and Darklord threats. The city started life as nothing more than a tiny mud settlement in MS 3434 amidst the bloodshed. When King Ulnar I lost his life defeating the Darklord Vashna in MS 3799, a statue was erected in the City of Holmgard to honour the man. Over the years during this time the city prospered and began to grow, new buildings were layered into the old design, a massive stone wall was added and several large ship building facilities were constructed taking advantage of the natural gulf where both great rivers combined. This was the perfect location to expand the city as it offered a good source of water and plenty of arable farmland around it.

Kings came and went and the Darklords continued to smoulder in their own lands. The spirit of Vashna cried out for vengeance, howling curses from the Maakengorge and Holmgard welcomed the Kai Lords with open arms, as well as its Durenese allies, especially those from Port Bax. It seemed like a brief respite for the Lastlands and even all of Magnamund. Many traders flocked to the city and established their operations, merchants chose to build a market and nobles from across Sommerlund and further afield, such as Cloesia and Dessi moved into the city.

When the Darklords renewed their assaults in MS 4219, the Kai Monastery and the City of Holmgard were the focus of Darklord Zagarna's ire. Once more though the combined might of Sommlending and Durenese stood firm against waves of assault, the walls of Holmgard were mildly damaged but never breached and scores of Giak, Drakkarim and human servants of the Darklords perished. Once more the Darklords grew silent and the victories brought more people to Holmgard, some to serve in the Sommerlund Border Rangers and some to start new lives in the city.

In MS 4771 the Age of Magnamund brought great prosperity to Holmgard and with the death of the Black Zakhan all of Magnamund rejoiced. It was a wonderful time of peace and Holmgard declared a month long festival to celebrate. Agents of the Darklords infiltrated the city but were exposed by three Kai monks; they fled Holmgard and vanished before they could

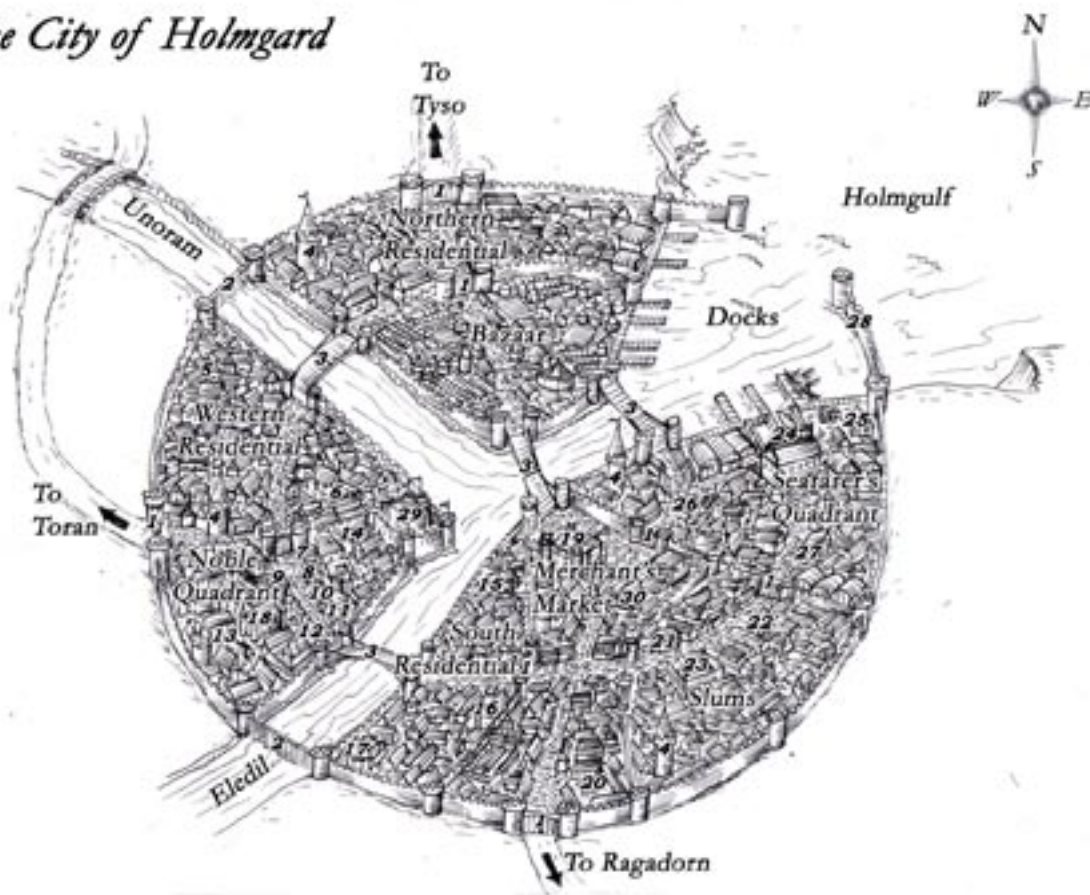
be brought to justice. The Kai monks were Singing Fox, Dancing Owl and Shadow Raven. For their work in exposing the evil in Holmgard, they were promoted within the Kai order and given greater responsibility.

The Darklords did not take kindly to this and in MS 4775 they returned to Holmgard, a Helghast managed to slay several important civil officials and took one of their identities. Trant Gyron was exposed as he tried to get close enough to assassinate the king. Holmgard survived yet another attempt to weaken its defences and its morale. Finally in MS 5050 two Kai Lords were slain in a back alley of the city as the Darklords attacked the monastery and begin a campaign of terror that left Lone Wolf as the only survivor.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Capital City of Holmgard is home to 100,000 people and is also the seat of the King of Sommerlund, King Ulnar V. It is a magnificent sight to behold with its white and grey stone walls that rise to a height of 200 feet. The city sits upon the mouth of the churning Holmgulf where it finally meets the sea and is fed by the two great rivers known as the Unoram and the Eledil. They run through the city and meet close to the King's keep. The gate houses are nearly 100 yards in length and the rivers

The City of Holmgard



Key

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Gate Houses | 16. The Gunnar |
| 2. RiverGate Houses | 17. Kai's Son |
| 3. Bridges | 18. Brightmarch Estate |
| 4. Watch Towers | 19. Engineer's Haven |
| 5. Kolania: Sage & Herbalist | 20. Stables |
| 6. The White Ostler Inn | 21. Finkle's Fickle Things |
| 7. Bandel's Finery | 22. Tat's |
| 8. Trista Black's Potion Emporium | 23. The Red Boar Tavern |
| 9. Jenna's Quality Wines | 24. West Star Shipwrights |
| 10. Kanein's Sweetshop | 25. Fisherman's Haven |
| 11. Morgan's Curios | 26. The Mariner Inn |
| 12. Talestra's Desire | 27. The Crooked Mast |
| 13. The Silver Hand Inn | 28. Sea Walls |
| 14. The Fireside Tavern | 29. The King's Keep |
| 15. Ishir's Dice | 30. The Golden Sun Tavern |

can be navigated by boats. The city uses a special constructed lock mechanism to allow the boats to move into the city.

There are four bridges which span the two rivers. These split into two to allow galleons and other larger ships to pass through unhindered. They are controlled by a mechanism that links to a small bridge guard post which is manned day and night by dedicated city or dock workers. The rest of the city is split into several quadrants and these in turn all have 100 foot high stone

walls that separate them from each other. These walls are inset with smaller gate houses and are patrolled constantly by the uniformed members of the Holmgard City Watch.

If one were to look at Holmgard from above it would appear to be a chaotic place, broken into several sections sitting at the mouth of the sea. The houses and rooftops are all crammed closely together and there is a famous route known as the 'Roofways' which leads from the western

residential quadrant to the King's keep. It is accessible by reaching the steps that lead to the roof of an inn. The western gate has an entry close to it that leads to a large tunnel, about 100 yards into the stone of the walls.

There are coach houses near each major gate of the city, one to Tyso, one to Toran and one to Ragadorn. These businesses bring in a number of passengers and can be booked days in advance if the customer has the right connections. Otherwise, they

operate upon a first come, first served basis. There is no accommodation for passengers at the city based coaching houses although they have their own stable. The coaching houses are operated by various commoners and they answer to the Coachman's Guild. This is a loose conglomeration of businessmen that set the guild up to maintain fair, safe and most of all comfortable travel to and from the other cities within Sommerlund and also on journey's beyond the borders.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Holmgard is a hotbed of interesting places to go and see. There are numerous locations for adventure and for the unwary traveller to lose their life. For instance this is where Lone Wolf fell afoul of the Alchemist Kolanis. However, Holmgard is an incredible city that is a marvel of Sommlending design and construction, as well being a melting pot for all kinds of folk.

The gate houses

The gate houses of Holmgard allow the city to lock down and provide additional heavy defences with their thick wooden doors and steel portcullis' in times of war. They are as gigantic as the main walls themselves, having a pair of towers at each side and are truly a masterwork of incredible stone masonry. Into each one there is built a tunnel of 100 yards and there are major gate houses on the northern, western and southern sections of the city walls.

The river gate houses

The popularity of the city is partially due to the fact that there are two massive rivers that feed the Holmgulf running through it. The engineers of Holmgard devised a complex series of locks that combine with the swing bridges to the city to allow the flow of shipping to proceed fairly smoothly. The large 200 feet high river gate houses are controlled by two towers upon either side. Here an operator manages the flow of water and controls the lock with a system of levers, connected to a number of pipes

and mechanisms for moving liquid around the various chambers.

The river gate houses have large doors that are banded with steel. They have two portcullises that can be lowered should the city come under attack.

Western Residential

The western quadrant of the city is split into three separate areas. To the north there is the area known as the Western Residential where the normal folk of the city live. Through a gate to the south there is the Noble Quadrant for the richer folk and finally where both rivers meet near the eastern centre of the city the walled keep of the King sits in all its glory, banners flying proudly from its walls. There are numerous buildings that lie between the King's keep and the western gate and the rooftops are connected via a tenuous hidden pathway known as the Roofways.

There are numerous buildings that make up the area of the Western Residential quadrant, most of them being the houses of the general population of Holmgard. With their interconnected rooftops, towers and so forth they give a claustrophobic appearance to the city streets below.

The watch tower

There are four major watch towers in each of the major quadrants of the city. One to the north in the Northern Residential, one to the west in the Western Residential, one to the south in the South Residential and one to the east where the Seafarers Quadrant lies.

The watch tower in the Western Residential is one of the most important. This tower serves as the central command for all the others and it is here that orders are given and relayed around the city by junior officers and runners that can navigate Holmgard easily via the giant stone walls.

The Grand Hall is where the soldiers are stationed most of the time and this is the location that Lone Wolf first enters through the small alcove and up the stairs in the Flight from the Dark following the guard officer. The Library is directly connected to the hall and this is the only watch tower that has such a feature.

The early architects decided to build a secret passage into the stonework that runs from the location to the King's keep. This allows the servants of the king to move undetected through the city, as well as the king himself should he wish to escape the keep or visit the main watch tower.

The twisting dark winding passage runs through the under-earth of the city and it takes a good 10 minutes to walk along it. It terminates in the King's keep in one of the rooms that lies in the area of the Chambers of State.

Shops and Services

Kolanis: the sage and herbalist

Kolanis' shop is a primary place for all sorts of potions, unguents and herbs in Holmgard. Though behind the man and his dealings, there are darker things afoot. Kolanis works with local undesirables and takes much of his income from mugging important people who come to his shop.

Kolanis dresses in basic clothing, nothing too fancy. He has shifty eyes and always watches his customers with an eagle like stare. He has a penchant for keeping dogs of the small easily controlled variety. These pets are trained to bark when a new customer enters thus alerting the man behind his screen.

There is another surprise behind his screen. Kolanis has recently begun to team up with a number of people from the slums, thieves that take a cut of any spoils he manages to acquire. He usually picks his targets carefully but as the events of MS 5050 spiral out of control he makes the mistake of trying to mug the Kai Lord, Lone Wolf.

Taverns and Inns

The White Ostler inn owned by Daramund is a two storey building with an attached stable. It is quite a large place capable of supporting a good number of people. It boasts a fine cuisine and serves a special wine known as the Ostler's Favourite and is widely known for the steak and ale pies cooked by Daramund himself. The White Ostler has a direct path onto the Roofways, from some small stairs, over a low wall and with a bit of a leap onto the Roofways themselves.

The Grey Song tavern is owned and operated by Kella Yorrall and has facilities for a reasonable number of guests. It has a couple of spare rooms but usually patrons are not permitted to sleep in the tavern. Kella might allow someone a space in the back room or by the hearth if she takes a shine to them. The Grey Song is so named for a legend that speaks of a Kai who saved the architect from a gruesome fate when the tavern drew the attention of a disguised agent of the Darklords. This cultist was brought down by the Kai Lord who then stayed to clean up the damage and mess.

The Roofways

The Roofways, is what the residents of the city that know, or care to know about them, have named the rickety path from the White Ostler to the edges of the King's Keep. Really it is a dangerous collection of wooden planks, boards, small jumps and broken rooftops. There are several parts of the Roofways where it is possible to miss a leap and plunge between 30 and 60 feet straight down.

The Noble Quadrant

In direct contrast to the residences to the north, the noble buildings of the southern part of the western quadrant are made from better quality stone. They have shimmering golden rooftops and the guards patrol the streets, many in the employ of the noble houses themselves. These are the homes of the rich, powerful and elite of Holmgard. It takes a certain quality of visitor not to be accosted by the guard here and characters that look like common street scum will certainly garner the interest of the patrols.

One of the most impressive mansions is the estate of the Lord Falgraen Brightmarch. This building virtually dominates the centre of the noble area. The nobles rely on Falgraen's estate for their protection in times of war and his army is of some concern to the King Ulnar V. At the moment though, they remain loyal to him so the king tolerates their presence within the city.

Shops and Services

To prevent their numbers from being accosted by the general rag-tag commoners

within the city, there are noble shops all along a twisting street known as the King's Fancy. These are all extremely expensive places and retail a variety of items ranging from clothes and sweetmeats to potions.

Bandel's Finery

This shop sells a number of exquisite items. These are all of fine quality and are what the very best noble wears in the correct season. Bandel changes his collection every season to keep up with the trends of the Royal Court and other areas of Magnamund.

Trista Black's Potion Emporium

For the finest potions in the city, or as Trista claims in the whole of Sommerlund, there is no better place for the nobility to go than her shop. Trista Black is a flighty young woman who knows how to sell a product, although not necessarily how the product is made or actually works. She makes her living purveying love potions, healing draughts and other such things to the fine nobility of the city.

Jenna's Quality Wines

Jenna Thufold is an older woman who knows her wines. She purveys a number of highly priced Sommlending beverages, sometimes 30% more than the listed price for such things. She will pay handsomely for samples or bottles of new wines, giving at least 20% on top of the price that you might expect to pay for it elsewhere. Jenna owns a house in the city where she has her own private vineyard and she produces the Pride of Holmgard brand which is officially endorsed by the Royal Court.

Kanein's Sweetstop

For that special gift for that special person, Kanein keeps a shop that purveys the finest sweetmeats, sugared candies and nuts in the city. He is an elderly man, almost grandfatherly in demeanour with impeccable manners and a soft disposition. He has a fondness for the younger nobles and often slashes a price by half for someone he likes.

Morgana's Curios

The interior of Morgana's shop is a mixture of part curio shop and book shop. There

are all sorts of interesting things within, ranging from obscure books to the odd very curious item indeed. Morgana keeps the place tidy and is a quiet young woman whose voice rarely rises above a whisper. Her long silvery blonde hair is usually kept in a neat tail under the shadow of her hood.

Talestra's Desire

Talestra Visanan is a female noble who spends her time running a perfumery for her peers. She delights in new scents and fragrances and her shop always smells like a vale in summer. She purveys bottles of perfume, fragrance bags, small phials of fragrance water and numerous other scented items including candles and oils. She is a bright and breezy auburn haired beauty with a quick wit and sharp tongue.

Taverns and Inns

While there are several establishments in the area that serve the needs of the nobles, there are two worthy of mention as they stand out from the crowd.

The Silver Hand Inn

The Silver Hand Inn is a fine coaching establishment and serves the needs of its clientele perfectly. Jasson and Trisha Angard have won the hearts and minds of the noble elite with their excellent manners, service and cuisine. Normally two such commoners would not be given the time of day by the nobility. However, the reputation for excellent service, quality wines and food means that the Silver Hand Inn has gained a strong niche in the quadrant and is the favourite dining place of many of the higher ranked families.

The central courtyard has a statue of the moon goddess Ishir within it and spaced around the walled enclosure are several well kept stables. The silver gates are inset with a sigil of an open palmed hand and it is from this the Inn gets its name. The rooms are pleasant and the top most area of this three story building is reserved for high ranking nobility and the owners. Jasson and Trisha are hard working, pleasant people who do not allow trouble in their inn.

The Fireside Tavern

The Fireside Tavern is a single storey building. The outside door is carved into the shape of an intricate hearth and it is from this carving and many of the interior carvings that the tavern takes its name. An elderly man keeps a close eye on the inner workings of the taproom and employs a number of highly skilled staff to make sure that his patrons are well catered for.

Johan Rasilden Ramius Torgald was once a novelist who chronicled the fantastic adventures of many famous heroes. He is a scholar and a gentleman who now spends his time in his tavern, though he keeps copies of all his old manuscripts carefully hidden upstairs. Johan dislikes being the centre of attention but he is clever, well spoken and always willing to share a fireside tale, a glass of good quality red wine or a smoking pipe with friends.

Northern Residential

North of the bazaar is an area known as the Northern Residential, this area has the majority of the middle class, there are no nobility that make their homes here. There are no shops and services since the bazaar to the south serves all of those needs quite adequately. It has a large watch tower and there are a few guard posts scattered through the north where the guards may lock down prisoners prior to transport to a more secure location.

South Residential

On the eastern side of the Eledil is the South Residential quadrant of the city. This is where the majority of the commoners live and it provides homes for the workers that run shops and services in the Merchant's Market. In contrast to both the Western Residential and the Noble Quadrant the South Residential is a quieter place at most times of night or day. There are fewer people on the streets and it has a more relaxed feeling than elsewhere in the city.

The quadrant is enclosed within a high stone wall that divides it from the Merchant's Market to the east. Two gates are set into the wall, one to the north section of the wall and the other to the south section.

Shops and Services

Due to its close proximity to the Merchants there are no shops and services in the South Residential area.

Taverns and Inns

While there are no inns that reside in the area, there are several taverns. These are a cut above the rest of the drinking holes and usually have one or two special features interesting to the traveller.

Ishir's Dice

Ishir's Dice is a little tavern that sits just to the north of the main area. It is a quaint and dark place and often has shuttered windows no matter what time of the day. It is lit day and night by the flicker of candles. A tall raven haired beauty runs this tavern, her name is Isha Garent and she hails from Anskaven. She is somewhat of a gambler and the focus of her little tavern is games of chance and luck. Isha was a hired blade from her home city and stayed in Holmgard, after falling in love with the city and its people.

She is a boisterous green eyed woman who loves a good bet. Isha often deals out hands of cards to her customers and keeps the wine and ale flowing day and night in her establishment. Ishir's dice is a good place for unwinding and the house wine, Lucky Seven is not to be missed.

The Gunnar

The Gunnar is a tavern owned and operated by Gunnar Blake and like the man that operates it; the tavern is a well kept and frugal drinking establishment that serves everyone. Dwarves get their drinks for half price and this is the only place in Holmgard where the Gunners can buy stocks and supplies for their weapons. He sells Boom Powder and Bor weapons and he refuses to sell these stocks to non-dwarves. His tavern is situated in the middle of the South Residential.

Gunnar Blake is a tough no-nonsense speaker who keeps himself to himself, unless there happens to be a dwarf around and then he is a different man. His usual gruff exterior vanishes and he becomes quite open and friendly. He is not

fond of the Kai Lords and views them as secretive, dangerous people who should be monitored, even though he grudgingly admits do a fairly good job of keeping things civil in Sommerlund.

Kai's Son

Kai's Son is an unusual tavern as it is modelled upon a smaller version of the great Kai Monastery. This peculiar homage to the Kai Lords comes from the mind of a young aristocrat, Sandine Danvarre who dreams one day of being a Kai Lord. However, it is only a dream as the Monastery has already rejected the girl for reasons that they refused to reveal.

This does not stop Sandine's dreams, she is a bright, youthful somewhat vain young woman who dresses in garb akin to that of a Kai Lord and she attempts to emulate them where possible. If a Kai Lord should enter her establishment, they can say goodbye to any kind of privacy as she will pester and cajole for stories and may even try to form a romantic entanglement. The taproom of the tavern is a shrine to her love of the heroic Kai and it is guaranteed that one day it will get her the wrong kind of attention from the wrong kind of people.

Merchant's Market

This is one of the busiest, loudest and most obnoxious areas of the city. The Merchant's Market is the location where all the shops, services and traders come to gather. It is packed with people day and night and sometimes there is very little room to move past a particularly popular shop such as the bakery or butcher. People often head out early in the morning to catch the opening of such establishments and hopefully beat the long lines of customers.

There is always something going on and often the watch have to march into the area to quell scuffles that break out. These are usually caused by undesirables entering the city through the south gate or by the small slum area in the east in the city. There is some concern from the city planners that putting the slums and the seafarers in such close proximity is a potential recipe for disaster.

Shops and Services

Butcher: Geln and his wife Brena run this establishment. They are a pair of hard working Sommlending that cut and cure the various meats that their hunter son Marcus brings into the shop.

Baker: Mrs. Morgan and her famous pastries are known throughout the city. She is a sought after baker and makes some exceedingly good cakes and pies. Elisa Morgan is a well mannered, well spoken elderly woman that takes pride in what she does. She supplies adventurers with her famous 'three cheeses' and pickle, pork pies at a very reasonable price. Two silver pieces per wrapped slice.

Chandler: The candle maker, Eliha Quyn is a thin whip-reed kind of man, older than most and looking as if he has one foot in the grave. He speaks in a spidery whisper and always wears a pair of tiny spectacles on the tip of his nose. His fingers are wrinkled and usually covered in wax. There is no better candle maker in all of Sommerlund. His shop is a dark place full of lit candles of all kinds.

Grocer: Arald Pence looks after his little grocery and provides fresh fruit and vegetables to the folk of Merchant's Market. He loves his customers and is a talkative loud fellow who appears to be around the age of 40 summers. With his black eyes and short cropped dark hair, he looks much younger than he really is as he is at least 50 summers in age. Arald has a fondness for tall tales and will quite happily seek to engage any adventuring folk in banter for as long as possible.

General store: Dugan Ren never wanted to join the Gunners of Bor. He is an outcast from dwarven society as a result and tends to his little general store far away from the confines of his people. He has very little time for traditional dwarves and prefers to cater to taller folk. He sells all manner of goods except Boom Powder and Bor weapons which he refuses to stock. He is a gruff fellow with a shock of dark hair, a thick black beard and a brusque manner added to his bass-like tones.

Book shop: The Lady Gracelyn Leeton is a wealth of information about Magnamund.

She comes from a noble family but refuses to work in the Noble Quadrant as she is not at all fond of the excessive pampering of her peers. Gracie, as she likes to be called is a well dressed woman, young and pretty, with a mass of blonde ringlets and baby blue eyes. She knows a great deal about Magnamund's former history and devotes herself to the study of the gods Kai and Ishir. Gracie is currently searching for more information on this pantheon, since it is sadly lacking. She dithers a lot and although this can irritate some of her more standoffish customers, she is non-the-less a bright engaging woman.

Alchemist: Fiskel Bryte is an odd one. He runs his shop and mixes potions, unguents and other things better off left unsaid. He is a detached man, white haired and middle aged, his fingers are covered in odd brown stains and powder can usually be found under his finger nails. He speaks with a high pitched and irritating voice, best described as being on 'ether' and a curious mix of helium. That said he is a master alchemist and a brilliant man. His potions and powders are expensive and his services do not come cheap.

Clothiers: Juliana sells all manner of clothes, some of them fine but most of them of reasonable quality. She is a medium height woman, curvy with long red hair. Her pleasant smile and demeanour can shift to righteous indignation or anger in the blink of an eye. She is fair and honest with her dealings and will always try and help a person out, although she prefers animals. Her shop also serves as her home and usually there is a black cat, known as Midnight around to keep an eye on important things, such as spare balls of twine and two yet unnamed kittens that have been donated to Juliana by a stranger.

Fishmonger: Marla Vale is the wife of a fisherman that works upon one of the many trawlers that operate out of Holmgard. Numan Vale brings in a stock of fresh merchandise especially for his wife when the trawler returns after months at sea. Marla is a thin woman, not exactly pretty but not exactly plain, her short bobbed brown hair and freckles make her look a lot younger than she is. She deals fairly

with her customers and gives a discount to those folks who are of an obvious seafaring nature. Her light breezy voice can carry when she puts the full bellow of her lungs into it.

Wood carver: If you want something made out of wood, either ornamental, useful or just a toy then you can look no further than Helda Tyme. She is a hard working woman who loves to carve wood. She has a penchant for toys and loves to make small rocking horses for the children of the city. Helda is a gentle faced, auburn haired, middle aged woman who always speaks in a direct manner and can be stern when she so chooses.

Potter: Banden turns his hands and feet to the making of crockery from clay that he fires in his shop's kiln. He provides an extensive selection of plates, mugs, bowls and other items for sale and designs custom items to the customer's specification. Banden is a young man of about 24 summers and has deep brown eyes, soulful with just a hint of sadness to them. However, he has suffered no tragedy in his life and is happy enough but is short on words and comes directly to the point in his business deals.

Blacksmith: A large tattooed man known as Baren runs this smithy and he has mallet sized hands. For such a giant he is capable of great feats of dexterity as he works to repair horseshoes, other iron items and works metal of all types. He will often turn his hand to making arrow heads for the bowyer and sometimes crafts metal hafts for weapons, which he sells to the weapon smith. He has a deep commanding voice, a wide smile and a fairly calm disposition. He is a focused man who works without interruption until he has made the correct stroke, only then will he answer a question directed to him.

Armourer: The shop is split into two; upon the right hand side you have the dwarf Hyan who turns his hand to providing metal armour to his customers and on the other his sister Dyan. She provides leatherworking services including that of armour, to the customers. Hyan is a brash fellow and his ginger beard and hair

are kept trimmed closely to his craggy features. Dyan is a gentler kind of person, quieter than her brother with long braided flaxen hair. Both have little tolerance for braggarts and they deal with customers as fairly as they are in turn dealt with.

Bowyer/Fletcher: Leyana makes bows and arrows whilst she dreams of one day joining up with the Sommerlund Border Rangers. She is a thin woman just shy of her 20th and has long red hair which she keeps in three braids, each secured with an ebony clasp. Her eyes are sea green in colour and her voice is easily heard through the din of the streets as she pretends to shout orders to imaginary ranger allies. She is likely to cut the price in half of any bow or arrows sold to Knights of Sommerlund, Kai Lords or Sommerlund Border Rangers.

Weapon smith: Daven Tomson is a man who knows his blades. He is a master smith and produces some of the finest weapons in all of Holmgard, which he displays and sells at his shop. Daven thought about joining the Knights of Sommerlund but his heart seems to be focussed somewhere in the region of Palmyrion. He is a friendly man, well spoken, fair of face and dark of hair. His serious brown eyes often regard people curiously and he is fond of hearing stories of further afield. Daven keeps a stock of masterwork blades for people that impress him and he is often called upon to keep the city watch's weapons in good repair.

Gem cutter: Kastigar Brightmane is so named because of his shock of white hair. Even at the age of 26 he is a man that gives the impression he is older than he looks, he has wise grey eyes and sallow features that some whisper are the result of weaving enchantments. He runs a gem cutting service and makes fine adjustments to all kinds of stones. It is rumoured that Kastigar actually cut the gems for King Ulnar V's crown. He is tolerant to a point but brooks no argument and he is not above using his magic to make a point to an arrogant customer or to eject a troublesome one.

Silversmith: Elane Brya is a thoughtful but preoccupied young woman. She adores silver and works exclusively with this metal. She is responsible for making some fine jewellery and items for the elite of the city

and her silver pendants, which she crafts into all shapes and sizes, including wolf heads and other animal shapes are highly sought after. Elane keeps her business spotless and she is a meticulous person. Her short dark hair frames a winsome face and her soft grey green eyes are intelligent and bright. She speaks in husky tones and never abbreviates or shortens a single word, her enunciation is perfect.

Engineer's Haven: In a city such as Holmgard with its mighty gates, river locks and swing-bridges there is great need for an engineer and skilled workers. Lucan Rathe Avar is the brains behind the Engineer's Haven. This is a building that functions rather like a guild and provides a place for all kinds of engineers, architects and planners to come and work in an environment where they can be sure of safety for both themselves and their machines. Lucan is assisted in his endeavours by the burly dwarf Honnard who acts as a foreman for the assembled workforce. At any time Honnard's crew can be seen out and about in the city keeping things running smoothly.

Lucan is a thin faced man with little or no time for dawdling. He speaks in patronising tones without trying and never gives up on an argument even if he is wrong. He wears the finest clothes and carries a long thin walking cane. His dark eyes glitter with a malign kind of light and his long dark hair is always kept in immaculate condition.

Honnard wears his workman's clothes, leather apron and so on with pride. He is a likeable fellow who rolls his R's a lot when he speaks. He talks quickly and sometimes leaves people in the dark about what he is truly saying, so he often repeats himself more slowly for the benefit of those folk who missed his first speech. Honnard is clean shaven and for a dwarf this is very odd. He is also bald, a second oddity but as he will tell you, 'When you've caught your hair and beard in a machine there's little point in keeping either long!'

Honnard keeps his engineers working as productively as possible on his various plans and upgrades to the city defences, swing-bridges, gates, river locks and maintenance of the river edges.

Stables: Although there are coach houses where passengers may book passage to the other cities of Sommerlund, there is a need for fine horses of all colours and breeds in the Merchant's Market. Luci Tallow fills this need by operating a stable close to the main gate. She provides horses for the coaches and sells her animals to those whom she is certain will look after them. Luci is a small mousy woman with long fine blonde hair, blue eyes and a wicked smile. She has a honeyed voice and knows how to get her way by using her wiles.

To be continued in Part 2, only in the February issue of Signs & Portents.



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Écrit par Gareth Hanrahan, le livre de règles de Traveller contient le matériel familier des fans de l'édition originale mais contient également quelques surprises.

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Dead Eyes

By Rodrigo Vilanova de Allende

Introduction.

It is late autumn in the borders of Hyperborea, the wind and howls of marauding wolves break the silence of the sinister Graaskal Mountains. The pervading silence is uncanny, almost unnatural and the eerie presence of death hangs in the air. The characters, captured and forced into slavery to one of Hyperborea's impressive mining complexes, are faced with the challenge of escaping the slave camp and reach the relative safety of Brythunia or Hyrkania before the first snow falls upon them.

Preparation.

This scenario requires that the characters be captured and sent into one of Hyperborea's iron mines, some weeks east of the Skull Gate of Hyperborea outpost. The mining complex is located in the limits of the Graaskal Range, near the source of the Nezvaya River. Captured slaves from Brythunia, the Border Kingdom, Hyrkania, hyperborean outlaws and the odd aesir and cimmerician toil their lives away under the brutal discipline of the hyperborean slave-drivers. The only nearby link to 'civilisation' is the hyperborean outpost of Laplaga, on the banks of the Nezvaya. Here, the hyperboreans trade with hyrkanians, turanians and zamorians furs, ore, grain, horses and the always in demand, slaves. Hyperborean raiders bring their captives to be sold to the hyrkanians which in turn sell them to the southern kingdoms.

During winter, the roads leading to the mines are closed by ice and snow, making the encampment a death trap for those unlucky enough to still be alive by then. Usually, the hyperboreans slavers migrate towards Laplaga or Castle Sigtona (if lucky enough to be summoned by their lords). From time-to-time, though, early blizzards trap the slavers and their charges, giving rise to the infamous 'Dead Eyes': undead monsters that prey on the unfortunate borderer, slave and raider alike. Another possible setting is for the characters to be

posted as guards in the slave pits, if this is the case, the Game Master will need to make some adjustments or simply use the NPCs at the annex as slaves instead of slavers.

Both Game Master and Player Characters will need a copy of *Conan the Roleplaying Game*. This adventure is designed for 1-4 mid level (6th to 8th level) Player Characters, although adjustments can be made to suit a particular campaign where slaves are a common element of society (e.g. Zamora, Turan, Stygia and so on). Non-Player Characters are found in the annex.

The main feelings of this adventure should be persecution.

Chapter One: Escaping Hyperborea.

The mining complex of southern Hyperborea is a collection of slave camps mining ore and stone from the Graaskal Mountains. From there, constant caravans head west and north to the dark fortresses of Sigtona, Pohiola and Haloga supplying them minerals in exchange of food, tools and more slaves to work the mines.

A harsh and brutal life is guaranteed to anyone who ends at the camps, slave or slaver alike. With the only solace for the slave drivers and raiders who reap the benefits during winter, when they return to hyperborean towns and castles to feast and forget their chores for several weeks before returning.

As for the slaves, they are faced with a short life of brutal abuses until winter when they will be herded north and east, to the winter camps. There, they will entertain the hyperborean nobility as fodder in gladiatorial battles against well trained fighters or as experimental subjects for the wicked northern necromancers.

This scenario begins with the characters entering one of the southernmost slave

camps as captives, destined to mine their lives away, under the brutal lash of their hyperborean masters. The Game Master should present a convincing reason for the character's capture and ensure they are weak enough to prevent them from trying to fight their way out of the slave camp (a good option is to have the characters begin with 1/3 of their Hit Points).

Here, they will meet Afsun the Whip and his second in command, Grobar the Snake. The infamous Afsun is Hyperborea's most notorious slave-driver, with a bloody career climaxing in a huge fortune which has Afsun ready to retire after this season's end.

Grobar, on the other hand, is a wiry, mean looking man, accompanied by three huge dogs. The slaves clearly fear the dogs and their master, since he is known to hunt for slaves and fugitives with the beasts letting them feast on the occasional unfortunate soul. So far, the mine's quotas have impeded Grobar to feed a slave to his dogs but he makes it clear he will do it the moment the quotas are reached.

Life in the camps is brutal and the GM should make sure that the slave drivers treat the Characters harshly as they are assigned to toil in an open quarry for ore. At the end of the day, they will return to the camp to eat a small bowl of gruel and rest as much as they can in the slave pits. There, they will meet Pritkus the hyrkanian. He is the head-slave, responsible for discipline and efficiency among the workers.

Pritkus is a violent survivor, considered an asset to the hyperboreans. Thus, he is not willing to risk his status (and life) for a couple of new slaves. Pritkus will explain the rules of the labour camps and he expects utter compliance on behalf of the characters.

If the characters decide to challenge Pritkus for leadership at the slave camp, they will have to face not only him but

his henchmen, in charge of coordinating the slave squads during the day. Although there are no real weapons inside the slave quarters, the slaves themselves have an assorted selection of improvised weapons (ranging from clubs and knives to chains and spikes, no martial weapons, of course).

The guards will not interrupt the fight, assuming Pritkus is more than capable of putting an end to it. In case one or more slaves die during this fight, the guards will intervene with a huge display of brutality (perhaps even killing a few more slaves in the process). Pritkus (if he survives) will be held responsible for the slaves behaviour and will be put in a solitary cage outside the slaves encampment, his fate will be shared by one of the Characters who will be arbitrarily identified by one of the slaves as the initiator of the ruckus. The rest of the slaves will also be punished: no food for a day and an extra shift of work at the mines.

If Pritkus survives, he will be caged in solitary, able to communicate only with the Character sharing his punishment. During this trial (GM should follow the rules for exposure to harsh weather or simply make Constitution rolls against blizzard conditions) Pritkus will realise that his only real option for survival is to try to escape the camps, offering his assistance to the characters if they are willing to risk evasion with him.

In case Pritkus is killed or he somehow overpowers the Characters during the fight, two brythunian slaves, impressed with the characters' strong will, approach the characters at night suggesting a plan for escaping the camps as soon as possible.

Once the plan is set for escape, the characters should make all arrangements without the hyperboreans noticing. The slaves in the solitary cages are closely guarded by day, with the only opportunity to talk to them once every day when someone brings food to them. At night, there are no guards, but leaving the slave

quarters is a deed in itself, since slaves are well guarded, especially after dark.

Both Pritkus and the brythunians stress out the fact that no other slave should hear about the plans to escape, since the fear of Afsun's anger has overpowered their hopes of escaping. Afsun, it is said, has never lost a slave in his career and all escape attempts have ended tragically for the slave population of the camp.

Chapter Two: Fleeing Death.

The characters now have several decisions make: how exactly will they escape, who will they include in their plans and where will they flee to once free of the camp.

The nearest settlement is a hyperborean town two days north from the camp, in the skirts of the mountain range. Escaping there will surely be quite an adventure but unless the characters are from hyperborean stock, they will be discovered very quickly and tortured until dead.

Running south is what the brythunians want, assuring the characters there are hunting lodges and lumber camps dispersed all over the Graaskal range. The main problem with this strategy is that the escapees will have to cross the mountainous range, braving several days of cold weather and other dangers.

Escaping towards Hyrkania is the option favoured by Pritkus, as the slaver-encampment of Laplaga can offer the



Dead Eyes

escaped slaves a relatively safe place to rest before fleeing east, south or south west. Since it is mainly populated by outcasts of Hyrkania, Zamora and Hyperborea, as long as the fleeing characters do not confront directly any of the hyperborean officers, they should be safe.

Finally, trekking towards the Border Kingdom and/or Cimmeria is also very dangerous as it is the longest route before the slaves reach any camp or settlement. Also, the brythunian slaves will object as that will take them farther from their homelands.

While the characters make plans, two important events will happen simultaneously: the ore quota will be filled and the hyperboreans will make preparations for leaving towards the winter camp. At the same time, foul weather will be brewing with a storm threatening to hit the camp and the passes very soon.

The characters will need food, warm clothing and weapons of some kind if they are to escape the camps. To this effect, they will have to rely on stealth, guile and even social skills to steal or bribe the guards and fellow slaves. Capture during this stage will imply a severe punishment by Afsun, who will leave the characters in the cages to freeze to death.

Escaping the camp is not as simple as it seems. Starting a fire in the slaves quarters is dangerous and reckless since the slaves barracks are locked on the outside, leading to the death of many slaves if not the characters themselves. Creating a riot or some distraction during working hours at the mine can prove effective but it means Afsun and Grobar will be warned very quickly assembling a hunting party. Evasion at night may be the safest bet as the characters will have a head start if they are not noticed until morning.

At this point, the atmosphere in the camp is a stressful one: the hyperboreans are keen on leaving the camp for their well deserved rest while the slaves are worried about the weather and the harrowing trek back to

the winter camps, where many more will die before the next mining season begins.

In any case, if the characters delay too much or are confused as to what plan to follow, a terrible blizzard will hit the encampment with the temperature dropping alarmingly and the wind howling furiously all night long. If any of the characters are caged outside, someone must go and free him, otherwise, he will die for sure. In case any character braves the guards and storm, they will find that the guard posts are deserted with no sight of the guards anywhere. At the same time, the caged character will hear a harrowing screech that somehow calls him towards the woods at the camp's limits.

If rescued, the characters will have their opportunity: escaping will be dangerous since the blizzard is still raging but by now it is almost done. Otherwise, the characters will learn of the guards disappearance next morning when the relieving guard will find their comrades corpses with their throats cut and frozen, on the limits of the camp.

Assuming the characters learn of the guard's demise and that they choose to inform the other slaves, terror will sweep over the workers, inciting a riot as they will claim that the 'dead eyes' have targeted the camp and that everyone will die shortly.

This riot will result in the full brutality of the hyperborean guards, led by Grobar, who will fall bloodthirsty among the weak slaves. The characters can choose either to fight with the slaves or to flee for their lives as planned.

The slaves, although numerically superior to the hyperboreans, have no actual means of defence, only 1 out of 4 slaves has some kind of weapon and they are all completely unarmoured. There are approximately 250 slaves facing 60 guards. Although in the first moments of the clash, several slavers will fall to the rebellious slaves, the hyperboreans will quickly organise forming a joint front against the slaves (almost all of the slavers are soldiers). At the same time, very few of the men and women facing them have

any kind of martial training, Pritkus or the characters being the only ones capable of organising anything resembling a unified front.

One way or another, the battle will be terribly cruel. If the characters lead the fight against the slavers and manage to make some progress against the slavers, they will have to face the terrible Afsun who will be found engaged in the very midst of the melee. Assuming the characters manage to overcome Afsun, the rest of the hyperboreans led by Grobar (assuming he survives), will try to flee northward after torching the whole encampment.

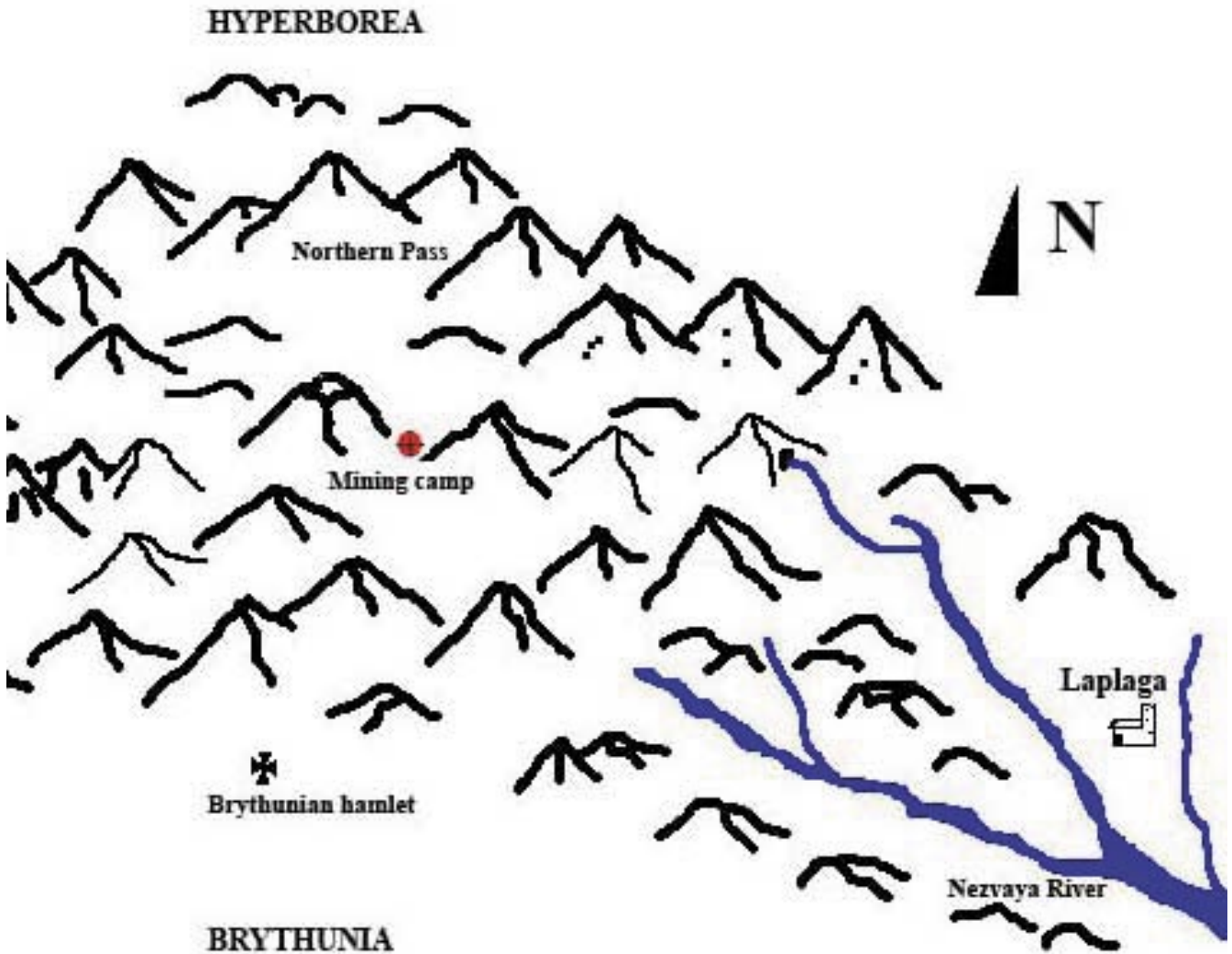
If the characters flee from the fight, Afsun will quell the rebellion, putting all surviving slaves to the sword, leaving their carcasses to the wolves. After that, he will lead his surviving warriors in hot pursuit to kill the characters.

Chapter Three: Dead Eyes.

After the successful escape from the camp, the characters will have to make sure they survive. Borderers, Nomads and Barbarians will be the best suited classes to ensure the party reaches its final destination. If the escapees happen to include one of the brythunian slaves, they will lead the characters towards the main passes between the Graaskal range and Brythunia. Otherwise, the GM should feel free to ensure the characters suffer throughout this dangerous journey.

Although there should be a very real danger of getting lost in the mountains, the most imminent danger to the characters is in the form of Afsun's raiders, closely following the characters tracks. Grobar will be the chief tracker and he is confident that he will catch up with the characters rather quickly, this may be used by clever characters for setting ambushes and/or traps for the marauding hyperboreans.

The GM should make a track roll to pit Grobar's tracking skills against the



characters. Two rolls per day are suggested (one in the morning and one at dusk), with Grobar needing three successes to reach the fleeing characters (GMs should keep track of the time of day Grobar reaches the characters, as it can affect the outcome of the story). Otherwise, standard track and movement rules can be used (page 139, *Conan the Roleplaying Game*).

The second night the characters spend in the wild brings another storm upon them. If any of the characters stands guard, he will hear a strange, hypnotic call issuing from the darkness of the storm. Unless he succeeds at a Will save roll (DC: Dead Eyes'

magic attack roll) he will leave the camp and walk towards the storm where he will be ambushed by the legendary 'Dead Eyes'. If the character survives this first attack, he will realise his predicament and will be able to defend himself, assuming he succeeds at a Will saving throw (DC 12). The rest of the party will be entitled to awake at the noise of battle and join their comrade in the defence against the terrible spectres.

The monsters are easily neutralised as they are few in number (this time) but the characters will have to realise the fact that it is just a matter of time before the wraiths overcome their sagging defences,

especially if they are to escape from the hyperboreans during daytime.

If Grobar or any of the hyperborean raiders beat the characters in their track rolls, reaching them at dusk, they will slowly and silently approach them, preparing to fall upon them when the slaves sleep. In this case, the Dead Eyes will manifest as usual but they will attack the hyperboreans with terrible ferocity, focusing on them instead of the slaves (unless they interfere or get in the way).

This will be a confusing situation, especially since the skirmish is taking place at night during a blizzard. Spot checks should be

Dead Eyes

made in order to avoid hitting allies or the wrong enemies. At the same time, it is very easy for the characters to become separated and even lost in the middle of the woods. The screams of the dying and terrified hyperboreans along with the eerie keening of the undead monsters is impressive and a Will saving throw (DC: 12) should be made to avoid fear in case the characters have not faced the icy horrors yet.

If the characters are caught by the hyperboreans during daylight, Afsun's raiders will try to capture them alive, Grobar's dogs being a very real threat to the characters. If any of the party is captured, the raiders will take him/them to Afsun's presence. The slaver will order to set up camp while half of the remaining raiders (including Grobar) will continue the persecution of the remaining slaves.

In this case, the captured slave(s) will be tortured by the raiders until dark, where the hyperboreans will retire to rest and get drunk. At this point, the Dead Eyes will attack the small camp, with much the same result as stated before, although the surviving characters will have an opportunity to rescue anyone captured.

Assuming the characters did not attack any of the Dead Eyes, they will be able to flee the massacre of the hyperboreans, the last thing they hear being the shouts of Afsun, drowned by the wails of the undead monsters. Otherwise, their nightmare is not over yet and the Dead Eyes will pursue the characters after finishing the hyperboreans.

By then, there will be fewer spectres in pursuit, focusing on separating the characters (assuming they did not get separated at the start of the fight) and then finishing them one by one. Fleeing their cold death will require brutal feats of strength in order to defeat in single combat the remaining monsters, fire (where can they come up with an appropriate source of fire?), heroic tracking skills (in order to reach one of the lower passes of the mountains before dawn), or sheer luck (hiding from the monsters in a very clever place).

Whatever the case, the surviving characters will be able to regroup and plan their escape without the pressure of the hyperborean raiders on their tracks, although the Dead Eyes threat is still very real.

At dawn, if the characters decide to back track to the place of the skirmish, they will find most of the hyperborean raiders dead and frozen, fresh snow will have covered most of the evidence of the battle but there will be tell tale signs of the violence witnessed some hours earlier. Of the Dead Eyes there will be no trace at all, as is their nature.

As it turns out, one of the hyperboreans will have escaped the slaughter, presenting himself to the characters, although quite affected from the impressions suffered last night, the hyperborean is sane enough to offer guidance to the characters out of the mountains in exchange of letting them join their party and escaping the accursed place.

It is up to the characters to let the hyperborean join them or to execute him on the spot, in payment for his earlier cruelties towards the slaves. For his part, the hyperborean will keep true to his word at least until reaching Laplaga, where he will inform the hyperborean officers in charge of the settlement. At this point, it is up to the characters and the GM to follow the story in Laplaga or leave in a hurry to more exotic and welcoming places.

Epilogue.

Winter has arrived and the characters hopefully have reached a safe haven. Either in the settlement of Laplaga and then to the southern kingdoms, in a cimmerian hamlet or in the warm villages of Brythunia, the characters can rest and regroup.

If the characters stay at the ruined slave camp, they will have to find a safe route for them and whatever slaves survived the riot, since there is not enough food for them to survive the winter once the snow closes the passes. At the same time, the threat of the Dead Eyes will increase with each night that passes, preying on the weak and desperate, until the time is right to strike in full force.

The GM may decide to have Afsun and/or Grobar survive this adventure, in which case, the characters will have a terrible and obsessed nemesis tracking their steps towards warmer climates. Also, if one or more of the characters dies at the hands of the terrible Dead Eyes, the GM may decide to bond their vengeful spirits to the surviving characters who will be haunted by their lost comrades' evil spirit during especially cold winter nights.

Appendix.

Dead Eyes

Medium Undead

Climate / Terrain: Frozen Mountains

Organisation: Solitary or gang (5–20)

Initiative: +2

Senses: Spot +5

Languages: None

Dodge Defence: +2

Hit Points: 4d8 (27 HP) **DR:** 5 (fire negates)

Saves: Fort: +4, Ref: +2, Will: +3

Immunities: Cold (plus undead qualities)

Speed: 30 ft. (40 in heavy snow or ice)

Space: 5 ft. **Reach:** 5 ft.

Base Atk: +4 **Grp:** +7

Magic Atk: +1

Melee: +4 (damage according to weapon held)

Special Attacks: Special

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 10, Con – , Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13

Special Qualities: Undead, Control Weather (blizzard), Nocturnal, Hypnotic Wail, Weakness: fire.

Feats: Steely Gaze, Tracking

Skills: Intimidate 8, Listen 5, Spot 5, Survival 10.

Advancement: 5–7 HD

Dead Eyes are sinister groups of undead, appearing as frozen warriors with hideous black eyes. Created by the death of several men and women in the hateful hyperborean slave camps, the Dead Eyes are a mystery to hyperborean scholars, many of whom consider them just another legend to scare slaves into submission, ignoring that these undead are the product of a slow and hideous death, which gives them a thirst for vengeance so terrible that

even the most cold necromancer would hesitate before them.

Dead Eyes come to being one year after their deaths, closely linked to the foul weather that killed them in the first place. Completely nocturnal, they disappear like mist when touched by sunlight, only to rise again when darkness comes. During night, they will follow the tracks of any living human in the vicinity and conjure a terrible blizzard (Control Weather) that will numb all but the most resilient warriors. While this blizzard is going, they will let out a haunting wail that effectively hypnotises their victim (as *Entrance* but without the target's HD restriction), pulling him forth toward the darkness where the Dead Eyes await to butcher him. After that, they will repeat this manoeuvre until dawn or the victim's camp is sufficiently weakened for a frontal attack.

Creatures of ice and death, Dead Eyes are extremely vulnerable to fire. If attacked with fire, every hit can dispel them for the rest of the night unless a Fortitude Saving Throw (DC 22) is made.

Pritkus, the head-slave.

Hyrkanian nomad.

Hit Dice: 6d10 (42HP)

Initiative: +2

Speed: 30 ft.

Parry defence: +3

Dodge defence: +3

Base attack: +6 / +1

Attack: +9 / +4 (knife: 1d4 +3 / x2 / AP --)

Special Qualities: Favoured Terrain +2 (plains), Born to the Saddle, Nomad Charge +1.

Saves: Fort + 7 Ref + 7 Will + 3

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 11.

Skills: Bluff 5, Climb 2, Craft (herbalism) 1, Gather Information 3, Handle Animal 4, Heal 2, Hide 2, Knowledge (local) 1, Knowledge (rumours) 5, Listen 5, Move Silently 3, Ride 4, Search 2, Spot 3, Survival 3.

Feats: Track, Endurance, Diehard, Leadership, Mounted Combat, Brawl, Power attack, Toughness.

Reputation: 6

Pritkus is not loved by his peers. He controls the slaves by force and fear, having seen too many slaves tortured to death for disobeying the hyperboreans. Still, he is aware that he only has a couple of years before dying by accident, disease or slaver's whim. This is making him desperate enough to trust the characters with attempting escape and fleeing towards Brythunia or Hyrkania.

Afsun's Raiders

This is a band of 20 hyperborean mercenaries, consisting of soldiers and borderers. Assume there are 6 soldiers (treat as Sellswords, *Conan the Roleplaying Game* page 358) and 14 borderers (treat as Bandits, *Conan the Roleplaying Game* page 357). Broken down in smaller groups, all under Afsun's supervision. The raiders are brutal, sadistic and vicious warriors with no redeeming qualities except their loyalty to Afsun.

Afsun the Whip

Hyperborean Soldier.

Hit Dice: 9d10 (52HP)

Initiative: +1

Speed: 30 ft.

Parry defence: +6

Dodge defence: +4

DR: 6 (scale hauberk)

Base attack: +9 / +4

Attack: +12 / +7 (war sword, 1d12 +4 / 19-20 x2 / AP 3)

Special Qualities: Bonus Feat x5, Formation Combat (heavy infantry), Formation Combat (improved heavy infantry), Officer +1.

Saves: Fort + 11, Ref + 4, Will +6

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb 4, Intimidate 8, Jump 4, Knowledge (geography) 5, Knowledge (local) 6, Knowledge (rumours) 5, Knowledge (warfare) 4, Profession (slaver) 4, Ride 6, Search 2.

Feats: Endurance, Diehard, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Ride, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialisation.

Reputation: 8

An old man by his profession's standards, Afsun is without a doubt the most successful slaver in his realm's history, thanks to his

cold and calculating ways. Physically a stereotypical hyperborean, Afsun succeeds due to the strict discipline and clear-set objectives. He is ambitious but even more, he is patient, except when his plans are being challenged, as is the case with the characters escape attempt. This may prove Afsun's first and final mistake.

Grobar the Snake

Hyperborean Borderer

Hit Dice: 8d10 (43HP)

Initiative: +6

Speed: 30 ft.

Parry defence: +4

Dodge defence: +4

DR: 3 (quilted jerkin)

Base attack: +8 / +3

Attack: +10 / +5 (broadsword: 1d0+2 / 19-20 x2 / AP 3) (mace: 1d8 +2 / x2 / AP 2)

Special Qualities: Favoured Terrain +3 (mountains), Combat Style (two weapon combat), Improved Combat Style, 2nd Favoured Terrain +1 (forests), Guide.

Saves: Fort +7 Ref +8 Will +2

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb 2, Craft (herbalism) 2, Handle Animal 6, Hide 3, Jump 2, Knowledge (geography) 2, Knowledge (local) 3, Knowledge (rumours) 1, Listen 3, Move Silently 5, Ride 3, Search 3, Spot 4, Survival 6, Swim 2, Survival 5, Use Rope 3.

Feats: Track, Endurance, Diehard, Improved weapon combat, Improved initiative, Light footed, No honour, Run.

Reputation: 7

An evil man, even by hyperborean standards, Grobar is tired of living under Afsun's shadow, no matter how profitable it has been. Now, after Afsun's announced retirement, he will do anything to ensure that his rise in power is absolute and no filthy slave is going to get between him and his destiny as leader of the mine complex and first slaver of the northern kingdom.

Grobar is the lead tracker of Afsun's raider, always in the company of his three war dogs (*Signs & Portents # 68*, pages 24-29). A veteran slaver, he is not used to being confronted in combat or in person, when this happens, he is usually left angry and bitter, looking for deadly revenge later on, be it on the overconfident hyperborean or the rebellious slave.

Mutie Mayhem new traits for Strontium Dog

By Colin Chapman

Mutation in the universe of Strontium Dog changes people in profound ways, often deleterious, sometimes beneficial. Traits represent these latter mutations and occur in a bewildering variety, as the new Traits here demonstrate.

New Head Traits

Dual-Headed

The mutant has two fully developed heads with different personalities, though these possess the same characteristic values for simplicity's sake. The mutant can perform two actions per round at no penalty (one action with each head), look in two different directions, hold two different conversations and so on. Every action beyond the second suffers the normal -2 DM to all skill checks. There are, however, a few downsides to the mutation.

Any skills or skill levels the Strontium Dog gains during character creation must be assigned to individual heads. For example, if the mutant gained Deception at level 0, it might assign that to its right head. If the mutant then gained another level of Deception it might assign that to the right head again (increasing it to level 1) or to the left head granting that head Deception level 0 as well. If either head is rendered unconscious or otherwise impaired, the skills it knows cannot be used unless the other head also knows them and the mutant can only perform the normal one action per round. Any other Brain or Head Traits the mutant has must be assigned randomly to individual heads. After character creation the mutant is free to develop further skills like a normal character but again must assign any newly learned or improved skills to individual heads.

Because the mutant's heads are actually somewhat independent and individual they are also prone to periodic disagreements and arguments. On any Exceptional Failure, or whenever the Referee deems it likely

given the circumstances, the heads bicker and argue, one head blaming the other for such chronic failure, refusing to participate in the given situation, or otherwise expressing a very strong difference of opinion. The mutant is incapacitated with self-arguing for 1-6 rounds or until one head manages to convince the other in an opposed check, the Player making an appropriate Persuade roll for each head per round until one wins. If the mutant is attacked or otherwise imperilled while arguing, both heads will agree to put aside their differences for the moment until the threat has passed.

When it comes to adding up the armour protection values of any armour worn by the heads, average the ratings of the pair. For example, if one head is wearing a full helmet (protection 4) and the other head no helmet (protection 0) the heads only provide Protection 2 to the mutant's overall protection total.

Headbanger

The mutant's head sports a natural weapon such a crest of spikes, bony protrusions or pair of horns, enabling them to deliver truly vicious headbutting attacks. The mutant has a Headbutt attack which can be used with Melee (unarmed) and inflicts damage according to the mutant's Str score.

0	1d3
1-2	1d3+1
3-5	1d6
6-8	1d6+1
9-11	1d6+2
12-14	1d6+3
15+	2d6

Mimic

The mutant's vocal cords are incredibly versatile. They can literally mimic any sound they have heard with perfect accuracy be it the sound of a blaster being fired, the growl of a wolrog, or the voice of an individual they have heard. This provides +1 DM to Deception rolls in some situations, such

as when trying to impersonate a specific person the character can vocally mimic.

New Body Traits

Amphibious

The mutant is able to breathe without difficult underwater as well as on land but is not necessarily any more adept at actually swimming which requires the Swimmer Trait.

Bioelectric Shock

The mutant can generate bursts of bioelectrical energy channelled through touch, whether through the mutant's own unarmed attacks on others or when the mutant is touched. The mutant can only generate enough bioelectrical energy for a round of use once per hour. Any unarmed attacks or contacts by or against the mutant within the round of electrical generation cause or suffer stun damage according to the mutant's Str score. The mutant's unarmed attacks cause their normal damage as well as the non-lethal electrical damage.

0	1d3
1-2	1d3+1
3-5	1d6
6-8	1d6+1
9-11	1d6+2
12-14	1d6+3
15+	2d6

Chameleon

The mutant's skin can shift and change colour and pattern at whim. Used appropriately it can provide excellent camouflage, granting +2 DM to Stealth rolls if the mutant is stationary or +1 DM to Stealth rolls if the mutant is moving. These benefits are negated if the mutant's skin is mostly covered.

Fast Metabolism

The mutant has an unnaturally swift metabolism. The mutant gains a +2 initiative bonus but is constantly

hyperactive, consumes twice as much food as normal and halves their Endurance for the purposes of determining fatigue.

Prehensile Appendage

The mutant possesses a prehensile tail, tentacle, elephantine trunk or extra arm. This limb can hold things and wield tools and weapons as well as a normal limb providing versatility but does not provide any extra attacks. The mutant gains +1 DM to any Melee (unarmed) rolls when grappling though.

Tail Lash

The mutant sports a tail able to deliver a nasty attack. This might be scorpion-like, a muscular tail ending in bony spikes or a crushing bludgeon or a thorax-like extension with a stinger. The mutant has a Tail attack which can be used with Melee (unarmed) and inflicts damage according to the mutant's Str score.

0	1d3
1-2	1d3+1
3-5	1d6
6-8	1d6+1
9-11	1d6+2
12-14	1d6+3
15+	2d6

New Arms and Legs Traits

Beweaponed

The mutant's hands or feet are cruel weapons, equipped with claws, talons or crushing studs. The mutant has a Claw attack which can be used with Melee (unarmed) and inflicts damage according to the mutant's Str score.

0	1d3
1-2	1d3+1
3-5	1d6
6-8	1d6+1
9-11	1d6+2
12-14	1d6+3
15+	2d6

Extra Leg

The mutant has a fully-functioning extra leg. The mutant gains +1 DM to any Athletics (co-ordination) rolls involving maintaining their balance and increases his natural ground movement rate by two metres.

Handy Feet

The mutant's feet are truly prehensile, as adroit at manipulation as the mutant's hands. Not only can the mutant perform such tricks as hanging from his feet, he can use them as hands when necessary. The

mutant gains +1 DM to any Athletics (co-ordination) rolls involving climbing.

Patagia

The mutant has membranes of skin stretching between his arms and legs from wrist to ankle. Muties may not be made for flying but this Trait enables the mutant to glide like a flying squirrel. The mutant gains the Athletics (flying) skill at level 0 and can glide 9 metres per round. The mutant cannot gain altitude while gliding and descends one metre every time they move forwards. They cannot use more than one minor action for gliding in a round.



Genghis is taken to the Cleaners

By Nick Robinson

Control

++Item++
++Taps++

Registered Peeper reports tap in progress, Marc Almond Street. Units in vicinity respond.

At the Scene

A small gang of juves are assaulting Genghis Stolle, a cleaner at the nearby Dreggs's Check Cashiers Service. The judges should arrive in time to prevent Genghis from being badly injured and prevent his belongings being stolen.

You drive along Marc Almond but cannot see anything untoward; however a cry for help from a side alley attracts your attention.

The Alley

There are five juves wielding coshes attacking a middle-aged man. They look up and see you and immediately stop what they are doing and run away from you down the alley.

The Taps

These are five young criminals, unusually they are not part of any major street gang but a small group of independents. They will try to escape rather than fight unless the only way to escape is through the judges.

Juve Muggers

Str 7 (+0), Dex 8 (+0), End 8 (+0), Int 7 (+0), Edu 6 (+0), Soc 6 (+0)

Skills: Gun Combat (slug pistol) 1, Melee (unarmed or bludgeon) 1

Equipment: Clubs, three have antique revolvers

Armour: None

Desperation: -1

The Victim

Genghis is very thankful towards his rescuers.

Thanks, judges! I was just on my way home from work when these little creeps jumped me and ran off with my bag just as you turned up. Not that they would find much in there, just some of my cleaning tools and an empty lunchbox – and for that they beat me up!

He will want his bag back if the judges look as though they want to keep it as evidence. If refused he will pull a gun which he carries for self defence (he was so shocked to be mugged tonight, of all nights, that he forgot to use it against the juves).

'Give me back my bag, you drokkers, or I'll shoot you. That's my bag and I want it back!'

Genghis Stolle

A cleaner by trade Genghis is one of the lucky ones in the harsh realities of Mega-City One unemployment. However he could not resist all those credits just lying there in easy reach...

Str 8 (+0), Dex 7 (+0), End 9 (+0), Int 5 (+0), Edu 6 (+0), Soc 8 (+0)

Skills: Gun Combat (slug pistol) 2

Equipment: Bag of cleaning products with 42,000 credits hidden in the bottom, hand cannon

Armour: None

Desperation: -2

What is Going On?

Genghis was cleaning up as normal at Dreggs when he noticed the safe had not been properly shut and was ajar. Inside his bag are some 42,000 credits, the former contents of the safe, hence his desire to get his bag back.

If the judges do hand over the bag without any gunplay and do not cotton on to what is happening the next time they go out on patrol their briefing will include notice of an arrest warrant for Genghis Stolle for burglary.

As a final note the judges should find out where Genghis got the money. At least the individual who left the safe open should be arrested for incitement (as it is certain Genghis (who has no previous criminal record) would not have become a thief without such temptation).



I Don't want to Drown

By Nick Robinson

Control

++Item++

++Taps++

Citizen reports possible taps working the shore of the Campbell Memorial Leisure Lake. Units in vicinity respond.

At the Scene

You reach the leisure facility but can see nothing. In the distance you can see a group of juves making their way towards the nearby arcades on Catspur Street.

A Search of the Area

As you approach the lake's edge you can hear a man's groans, as if in pain. Looking down from the top of a wall bordering the lake you see a figure leaning against it, he looks up towards you with an unfocussed gaze, by his expression it looks as though he is hurt.

The Victim

The victim is David Riedle, a resident of nearby Donald Sutherland block. He is extremely intoxicated and came down to the lake to finish the last of his muncesky. He became worried about the tide coming in so went home to retrieve four extra long masonry nails and a hammer. To prevent himself falling and perhaps drowning when the tide came in he nailed his legs to the lakeside wall, to complete the task he asked some passing juves to nail up his arms. They obliged and he is now crucified. Safe to say in addition to being extremely drunk Riedle is none too bright. The fact there is no tide on the lake makes the whole situation even more pathetic.

Getting a Statement

Riedle is drunk. His explanation will be unclear (when asked who did this he will proudly state he did). When it is pointed out he could not have nailed his own arms to the wall he will mumble, fall quiet (briefly) and then say it WAS him but he did have some help from his young friends (who, incidentally, have appropriated his wallet).

The Juves

The judges may have gone after the juves, who will run once they see they are being followed. Considering what they have just done they will resist arrest with some vigour but are not so stupid as to fight to the death, looking to escape first. The judges can easily catch the juves if they approach them immediately on reaching the lake, if they search for and discover Riedle first then they will have to pass a Street Perception skill check to find them.

Perp Statistics

Dirk Drek

Leader of this group of Duke Klansmen, Dirk has long been known to Justice Department, being in and out of the juve cubes since he was just eight. Dirk is getting a little long in the tooth to be running with juve gangs now and unless he is apprehended at this point will shortly be looking for bigger payouts than the usual 'juvie stuff'.

Str 9 (+1), Dex 8 (+0), End 9 (+1), Int 9 (+1), Edu 6 (+0), Soc 6 (+0)

Skills: Gun Combat (slug pistol) 1, Melee (unarmed or bludgeon) 1

Equipment: Spit Pistol, Club

Armour: None

Desperation: -3

2 Senior Gang Members

Str 7 (+0), Dex 7 (+0), End 8 (+0), Int 7 (+0), Edu 6 (+0), Soc 6 (+0)

Skills: Gun Combat (slug pistol) 0, Streetwise 1

Equipment: Antique revolvers

Armour: None

Desperation: -2

4 JUVE MUGGERS

Str 6 (+0), Dex 8 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 6 (+0), Edu 6 (+0), Soc 5 (-1)

Skills: Melee (blade) 0

Equipment: Daggers

Armour: None

Desperation: -2



My Name Is...

By Nick Robinson

Control

++Item++

++ARV at CitWest branch, Jimmy Carter block, level 42 plaza. Units in vicinity respond.++

Getting There

On your way to Carter you go up the slipzoom when a car suddenly veers across your path, clearly out of control. It is an aging Chrysler-Honda MTB2300 saloon – a model which went out of production at least 20 years ago.

The Problem

The driver is an eldstster who is in the middle of a heart attack. At this moment in time he is not able to do much when it comes to driving with any skill.

The judges will initially need a successful Lawmaster skill check to prevent them losing control. A success with +2 Effect or more allows the judge to drive up alongside the vehicle, a failure equates to a loss of control, forcing the judge to brake in order to avoid a collision and being unable to do anything further about this situation. A failure with an Effect of -4 or more will cause the judge to become unseated and inflict 2D6 damage to the officer.

A suitably heroic act (boarding the vehicle and taking it over) will allow the judges to successfully resolve the situation. It will require another Lawmaster skill check (with a Very Difficult dice modifier of -4) to do so, allowing the vehicle to be brought back under control. A failure at this stage indicates the car crashes before the judge can position himself to make the attempt. The easiest way to prevent the accident, however, is to call traffic control and have them override the onboard computer and take control of the vehicle (this feature exists on most road vehicles as a safety measure, even if they are not in autopilot mode).

If the car crashes then both the eldstster and his young grandson strapped in the back are both killed. If traffic is not slowed (either

by the judges providing traffic control or by calling traffic division to ensure this is done using vehicle overrides) a major pile up will occur and there will be multiple fatalities.

If the car is successfully brought to a halt by the judges they will need to perform first aid on the driver (with a -2 DM due to the Difficult nature of the task) to stabilise him. A med-team will also need to be called in to ensure he recovers. If he survives the judges might think to be thorough and search the vehicle. The kilo of sugar and banned eldzines (several different issues of Dead Juves Weekly) in the trunk of his car, if discovered, should lead to several months encubement.

Back at the Bank

By the time the judges arrive at the bank the robbers will have made their escape. The manager will describe them as best as he can (poorly) but the whole incident has been recorded by the security video cameras.

There are three perps, all wearing masks and coveralls, wielding handguns. They do not speak but hand over a note to the manager. Small carry-lots are used to store their loot and all three wear gloves. A heavy scent is at the scene, a popular and cheap variety of perfume which would disguise any other scents which might help the judges trace the perps.

If the judges think to check the customers at the bank when they arrive they will find one has an outstanding arrest warrant for tap offences. Several others can be picked up for minor offences (possession of a sugar cube, playing a walk-slug above acceptable levels).

The Clue

The one clue the robbers have left behind is their demand note and this will be their undoing.

The note is poorly written. It says *'Fill up our bags else everyone in this bank is dead.'* A tech division report can be prepared on the ink used and an analysis of the hand writing provided but this should prove unnecessary as it is written on the back of part of an Iso-Block release form issued just a few days ago. The form is issued to all newly released perps and is widely used to claim benefits.

The form is for one Gerry Spacho, released three days ago after serving a seven year stretch for ARV. He was part of a large gang but was unarmed in the initial raids, hence the lighter than usual sentence. He has a long record and is not at the halfway house assigned to him.

Another member of the same raid was one Waldo Sharpe, who was released at the same time and from the same Iso-Block as Spacho. He is listed as residing with his bother Jock on the 4th level of Carter, just above the main slipzoom which runs through the block.

If the judges raid the apartment they will find all three of the men with the evidence (masks, guns and creds). They are armed and will resist arrest.

Follow Up

The judges should return the cash to the bank, if they check they will find themselves to be 10,000 credits short. Any surviving members of the gang will state they do not know why this is the case. The bank manager has stolen the missing sum and should be searched and arrested.

Perp Roster

Gerry Spacho

A career criminal, in so much as someone who spends most his life in iso-cubes because he gets caught every time he commits a crime can be called a career criminal. Gerry is an unpleasant, anti-social thug.

Str 8 (+0), Dex 8 (+0), End 7 (+0), Int 5 (-1),
Edu 5 (-1), Soc 4 (-1)

Skills: Computers 1, Gun Combat (slug
pistol) 2, Mega City Geography 1

Equipment: Hand Cannon

Armour: None

Desperation: -4

Waldo Sharpe

Another long term perp, Gerry and Waldo
have been partners in crime ever since they
grew up in the same juve gang together.

Str 9 (+1), Dex 8 (+0), End 10 (+1), Int 6 (+0),
Edu 6 (+0), Soc 4 (-1)

Skills: Deception 1, Gambling 1, Gun
Combat (slug rifle) 1, Stealth 1, Streetwise
2

Equipment: Sawn-off Stump Gun

Armour: None

Desperation: -3

Jock Sharpe

Waldo's younger brother has managed to
remain free for most his life, if only because
he does not have the drive to be a criminal
without his brother taking him along on
jobs.

Str 6 (+0), Dex 6 (+0), End 8 (+0), Int 4 (-1),
Edu 6 (+0), Soc 6 (+0)

Skills: Drive (wheeled) 1, Gun Combat
(slug pistol) 1, Mega City Geography 2,
Streetwise 1

Equipment: Antique Revolver

Armour: None

Desperation: -3



Justice Department Release Form

Iso-Block Release Form

Name: Gerry Reginald Pinkerton Spacho

Residence Allotted: Faraquan Halfway House, Malcolm X Block.

Benefits Office: 32nd Level Plaza, Malcolm X Block.

Reference: 171-223-X34529.

I, Garry Spacho, confirm all my possessions on entry to Iso-Block
172 have been returned in the same condition as they were when
confiscated. I accept Justice Department has the right to check
upon my conduct at any time in the future subsequent to my
release and conduct any actions they feel necessary.

Signed: *G Spacho*

Releasing Officer: Judge Warden Sturn.

Duellist

By James Desborough

Duellists are experts in personal, one-on-one combat, fighting for their own personal honour or that of their ship, unit or even their society. In some societies whole battles can be settled in personal combat and even in interstellar society, different naval vessels can establish their pecking order and superiority to other vessels through the quality of the ship's duellist.

Duellists usually appear around TL 3, as planetary societies establish patterns of nobility and mercantile activity as well as personal weapons technology that begin to favour personal expertise and demonstrate the necessity of avoiding too much collateral damage to expensive businesses and cities.

Enlistment: Dexterity 8+. The duellist must enter the career from a military tour (Army, Marines, Navy) or one as a Noble. Successful applicants retain their military rank, or are commissioned at rank 1 of their service (Army, Marines, Navy).

Assignments:

Choose one of the following

Fencer:

The fencer is an expert in bladed combat, typically favouring the rapier as their weapon of choice, technologically enhanced or not. While they might be trained primarily for sport they are still deadly in a melee fight.

Pistoleer:

The pistoleer is a master of the quick draw and a marksman with hand weapons. They fight deadly pistol duels with other pistoleers and engage in marksmanship competitions to determine their ranking.

Champion:

Champions fight with sword, pistol or both at once, usually in matters of honour that are considered to be life or death, rather than sporting events or friendly bouts between rivals. In many eyes this is only one step up from an assassin.

Skills and Training:

Roll	Personal Development	Service Skills
1	+1 Str	Leadership
2	+1 End	Carouse
3	+1 Dex	Melee (blade) or Gun Combat (any pistol)
4	+1 Soc	Athletics
5	Melee (blade) or Gun Combat (any pistol)	Persuade
6	Diplomat	Diplomat

Roll	Fencer	Pistoleer	Champion
1	Melee (blade)	Gun Combat (slug or energy pistol)	Gun Combat (slug or energy pistol)
2	Athletics (any)	Athletics (any)	Melee (blade)
3	Carouse	Carouse	Athletics (any)
4	Diplomat	Diplomat	Carouse
5	Leadership	Leadership	Leadership
6	Gambler	Gambler	Gambler

Ranks and Benefits:

Roll	Rank	Skill or Benefit
0	—	—
1	—	—
2	Duellist	Melee (blade) 1 or Gun Combat (slug or energy pistol) 1
3	Duellist third class	Ally
4	Duellist second class	Contact
5	Duellist first class	Ally
6	Duelling Master	Contact

Mishaps:

Roll	Mishap
1	Severely injured in action. (This is the same as a result of 2 on the injury table). Alternatively roll twice on the injury table and take the lower result.
2	Injured. Roll on the injury table.
3	You are involved in a bout-fixing scandal. Lose one Social Standing.
4	You form a rivalry with another outstanding duellist. Gain a Rival.
5	A rival duellist attempts underhanded tactics to get you out of the fight. Roll End 8+. If you fail, roll on the injury table.
6	You are passed around from place-to-place as a duelling asset, preventing you from settling down or forming attachments. You do, however, gain a Contact.

Events:

2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	You are brought in to fight a particularly prestigious duel. You have no choice but to accept. Roll Melee (blade) 8+. If you succeed gain 1 Social Standing and a bonus of 10,000 credits. If you fail, roll on the injury table twice, taking both injuries.
4	Being a duellist gives you plenty of opportunity to travel and take in unusual experiences. Gain a level in any skill.
5	You are feted and festooned with gifts from your patrons thanks to your performance. Gain a +1 DM to any one Benefit roll.
6	You become a political pawn as the champion of two rival patrons. Gain a level in Advocate, Carouse or Diplomacy as they vie for your services but also gain an Enemy.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	An officer from a rival service (Army, Navy or Marines) attempts to poach you from your current service to fight for his force's honour. If you accept change the service to which you are attached and a +2 DM bonus to any one Benefit roll. If you refuse gain a +2 DM bonus to your Advancement check and gain an enemy, the officer who tried to recruit you.
9	You make a great deal of money betting on yourself in fights through intermediaries. Gain a +1 DM bonus to any one Benefit roll, a level in the Gambling skill and gain an Enemy in the underworld.
10	You capitalise on your fame as a duellist to gain media exposure and even greater fame. Gain a level in Carouse, Diplomat, Persuade or gain a +2 DM to a single Benefit roll. Your media exposure also gains you a Rival.
11	You become the personal champion of a powerful officer or noble. He becomes your ally and you gain a +4 DM bonus to your next Advancement check.
12	A bout that you're involved in becomes the talk of the quadrant and is studied by other duellists. You are automatically promoted.

Career Progress

	Survival	Advancement
Fencer	End 7+	Dex 7+
Pistoleer	Dex 7+	Dex 7+
Champion	End 8+	Dex 6+

Mustering Out Benefits

Roll	Cash	Benefits
1	5,000	Blade or pistol
2	10,000	+1 Social Standing
3	20,000	+1 Dex
4	30,000	+1 Str
5	60,000	+1 End
6	75,000	Personal vehicle
7	150,000	Yacht

Military Specialists

By James Desborough

In primitive planetary cultures, as well as in high-tech societies, there are a number of roles within the militaries of those worlds that are hyper-specialised. Many of these aren't necessarily suitable for player characters within a standard campaign, wet-navy sabotage specialists are little use on a world with no water for example, but others can find their places amongst the stars, whether they come from primitive planets or not.

These specialists are advanced careers that can only be accessed via other careers with the character transferring into the specialist career after an excellent performance in their previous tour. If the option is available the character must immediately apply for and enter the specialist profession, following the completion of their previous term.

Berserker

A Berserker works themselves up into a battle frenzy in combat, for the duration of which they are more resilient to damage, can exert more of their natural strength and can take a great deal more punishment than usual before succumbing to their wounds. While more common in primitive societies (TL 0–2) some advanced societies retain Berserkers due to tradition or use combat drugs and implants to get a similar effect from their soldiers, trained or not.

Berserkers, high tech or low tech, are specialists in close quarters combat and are generally armed with heavy, simple melee weapons, short range, powerful side arms and heavy but simple armour, equipment that they can use in their frenzied state.

Enlistment: Endurance 8+, must come to the berserker from a Drifter (Barbarian) tour for low-tech societies (TL 0–2), or from a military career for higher technology societies (TL 3+). The character must have Melee (blade or bludgeon) at 0+ to enter the career.

Assignments:

Berserkers only have one speciality, that of the Berserker itself. Low-tech Berserkers take the Animals skill and use the left hand rank designation while high-tech berserkers take the Drive skill and use the right hand ranking. High-tech Berserkers that use chemicals or implants to enter the berserk state can substitute Gun Combat (any) for the new Berserker skill should they so wish.

Skills and Training:

Roll	Personal Development	Service Skills
1	Melee (any)	Athletics
2	+1 Str	Melee (any)
3	+1 End	Survival
4	+1 Dex	Carouse
5	Survival	Animals/Drive (Any)
6	Carouse	Berserker

Roll	Berserker
1	Berserker
2	Melee (any)
3	Survival
4	Athletics
5	Carouse
6	Animals/Drive (Any)

Ranks and Benefits:

Rank	Berserker	Skill or Benefit
0	– / Private	Melee (any) 1
1	– / Lance Corporal	Survival 1
2	Warrior / Corporal	
3	– / Lance Sergeant	
4	Chieftain / Sergeant	Leadership 1
5	– / Gunnery Sergeant	
6	– / Sergeant Major	

Mishaps:

Roll	Mishap
1	Severely injured in action. (This is the same as a result of 2 on the injury table). Alternatively roll twice on the injury table and take the lower result.
2	Injured. Roll on the injury table.
3	You are the only surviving member of your unit, following a disastrous engagement. You carry the blame and are pushed out. You may not continue in this career and receive no benefits or mustering out bonuses from this career.
4	Your frenzy causes you some brain injuries through stress on your system and a near embolism. Lose 1 point of Intellect.
5	You lose control of your rage and assault and nearly kill an officer or chieftain, gaining them as an enemy.
6	You are prone to slipping into your red-rage at inopportune moments. When you are under stress the Games Master may call for you to make an Int 6+ roll or fly into a berserk rage.

Events:

2d6	Events
2	Disaster! Roll on the mishap table but you are not ejected from this career.
3	Your chieftain or officer offers to put you forward for special duty. If you accept you get a +2 DM to your next qualification and advancement rolls but you owe them a favour.
4	You are involved in a number of vicious battles. Gain one level of Melee (any) or Survival.
5	Your unit is involved in the sacking of a defeated enemy settlement. Gain a +1 DM to any one benefit roll.
6	You take part in a truly brutal and bloody campaign. Roll End 8+ to avoid injury, if you succeed gain one level in Melee (any) or Leadership.
7	Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table.
8	A chieftain/officer takes a personal interest in your training. Increase your Berserker or Melee (any) skill by 1.
9	You fight with exemplary courage and skill in an important battle. Gain a +2 DM to your next advancement check.
10	A constant life of battle highs and peacetime lows hones your skill and temper to a fine edge. Raise one of your existing skills by 1 level.
11	You are tempered by battle and injuries becoming hard and scarred and brutal. Gain +1 Str or End.
12	You are without peer in battle and are automatically promoted on your next term.

Career Progress

	Survival	Advancement
Berserker	End 8+	Str 7+

Mustering Out Benefits

Roll	Cash	Benefits
1	1,000	+1 End
2	3,000	+1 Str
3	6,000	+1 Dex
4	7,000	Melee Weapon
5	8,000	Armour
6	12,000	Contact
7	20,000	Ally

Berserker Skill

The Berserker skill is used by Berserkers to enter their state of frothing frenzy and combat strength. Entering the state of frenzy is normally an Average (+0) roll but this can be made more difficult through the use of tranquilisers and other means of interfering with the berserker's state of mind, including psionic influence.

While in a frenzied state the Berserker's Str and End are considered to be one higher and they are considered to have a natural armour Protection of 1, representing their ability to shrug off minor wounds. These temporary bonus points vanish at the end of the frenzy – typically at the end of combat – and it is possible for this to cause the death of the berserker.

While in their frenzy Berserkers may not use complex weaponry, such as firearms, or equipment such as computers. Anything more complex than opening or closing a door is simply beyond their faculties in such a state and they're limited to the use of melee weapons.

The Berserker skill may only be learned through the Berserker career or through the repeated – and dangerous – use of Berserker combat drugs or implants. Most high tech Berserkers do not learn the skill at all and can only enter their frenzies through technological means.

Berserker Combat Drugs

Crude Berserker drugs become available at TL 6 and have the same effect as the skill (given in the previous section) but the occurrence of the frenzy is not controllable and may result in the user turning on their friends and allies. It also requires an End 8+ roll not to become addicted to the drug, requiring a daily dose or progressively taking 1 damage every day.

Low tech Berserker drugs cost 100 credits a dose.

These primitive Berserker drugs are generally replaced with stim, metabolic accelerators and combat drugs until TL 11 when advances in medical technology and tailored pharmaceuticals make a more powerful and controllable form of Berserker drug possible.

These high tech Berserker drugs have double the effect of the skill or the crude

drugs and come with regulator harnesses, worn on the neck or wrist, that administer the drug precisely – or remotely – to avoid problems with attacks on friends and allies. The tailored drugs are much less addictive with the roll being reduced to End 6+.

High tech Berserker drugs cost 500 credits a dose.

Injection regulators costs 1,500 credits and are available from TL10.

Military Berserkers using these drugs are inured and conditioned to their use and can withstand addiction and other ravages with relative ease.

Berserker Implant

An alternative to the drugs and the training is a cybernetic implant. These are available in a crude form from TL 8, all the way through to TL 16. These implants work through various methods, combined together,

from flooding the body with adrenalin and electrochemically stimulating aggression, to releasing engineered hormones and fleets of nanites into the bloodstream and even cutting off the body's pain receptors and hijacking the nervous system with pre-programmed, high speed actions.

The implant can only be turned on once per day with a maximum duration of 1d6 hours, the body's biorhythm being unpredictable. This rises to twice per day at TL 10, three times at TL 12, four times at TL 14 and it becomes possible to constantly run it at TL 16. Running the frenzy for more than three hours at a time and every three hours causes 1 point of damage which can only be healed by natural rest.

Military Berserker implants are often placed in penal troops, alongside explosive 'kill switches' and can be activated remotely with the correct signal and codes.

Berserker Implant

TL	Cost	Str	End	Dex	Initiative	Armour	Other
8	5,000	—	+1	—	—	1	-1 Int from implantation.
9	6,000	+1	+1	—	—	1	-1 Int from implantation.
10	8,000	+1	+1	+1	—	1	—
11	9,000	+1	+1	+1	+1	1	—
12	10,000	+1	+2	+1	+1	1	—
13	12,000	+2	+2	+1	+1	1	—
14	15,000	+2	+2	+2	+1	1	—
15	20,000	+2	+2	+2	+2	1	—
16	25,000	+2	+2	+2	+2	1	The character regenerates 1 End of damage each turn through nanotechnological healing technology, unless they are rendered dead.

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BY SIMON BEAL

LEGACY OF WAR

EPISODE 14: TRUTH ATTENDS TO ITSELF

Episode Date: August – September 2268

'The truth will attend to itself.'
— Delenn

Background

When the Excalibur departed in the previous Episode to deploy the new cure, they were intercepted by an Earthforce fleet. The Excalibur was still damaged from the previous engagement and it was outnumbered, leaving no option but to surrender. Galen was able to obtain the cure and escape unnoticed.

The Excalibur crew are currently being detained near Mars. High ranking officials who are part of the Legacy Group have arranged for the Equinox and a transport vessel to take the prisoners away to be questioned at a secure facility.

Last Chance

Shortly after hearing the news of the Excalibur's capture, the players will be contacted by Galen who requests that they meet up at a nearby location. When the players' arrive at the agreed rendezvous, read out the following:

As you exit from hyperspace you see a White Star ship and Galen's pinnacle. You receive an incoming transmission from Galen:

'Do not be alarmed, I brought some help and we are coming aboard.'

Galen will dock with the players' ship, as will a shuttle from the White Star (detailed in *Signs & Portents* issue 69). The players will probably be surprised to see that Mr Garibaldi has come from the White Star. Once everyone is onboard the player's ship and greetings have been made, Galen will explain the situation as follows:

'Captain Gideon had arranged to meet some of his contacts to discuss ways of deploying the cure. Of course, I could go there unnoticed and administer the injections but Gideon was hoping to make a statement by doing it himself – not only would it help exonerate you and his crew but it would be another string in the bow to expose the Legacy Group.'

Unfortunately, he was betrayed by someone he thought he could trust and an Earthforce fleet was waiting for him. I took the cure and was able to leave without being detected.'

At this point, Garibaldi will interject.

'After Galen explained the situation to me, I agreed to help. This is a big risk for the ISA so I have taken command of this White Star unofficially, with a crew I know I can trust. I was hoping for a better opportunity before getting involved but the Legacy Group have to be stopped – they are a threat to both Earth and the ISA.'

If all else fails then the lives of everyone on Earth comes first and Galen will administer the cure but we have an opportunity to end this. My sources indicate that members of the Legacy Group are en route to transport the Excalibur crew to a secure location. They will be arriving any day now but we can follow them using a locator device that Galen has planted on Captain Gideon.'

Galen continues.

'You should be able to follow the transport and attempt a rescue. I have another matter to attend to, so I will not be able to help any further with this. Good luck, to all of us.'

Unless there are any questions, Galen will leave. If asked what he is going to do, Galen

will simply reply 'All in the fullness of time'. If asked about the locator, he will explain that Earth technology is unable to detect the locator so the transport ships will have no idea it exists. The White Star has been modified to track the signal.

If the players ask why Gideon and his crew are being taken by the Legacy Group, he will not know for certain but it is likely that they will interrogated to find out what the players are up to and to remove any threat to the group's plans.

Planning

The players must now discuss their options with Mr Garibaldi for rescuing the Excalibur crew. This must be done quickly before the Equinox reaches its destination, which will most likely have additional defences; even by itself a Hyperion cruiser will be a match for the players' ship and the White Star, especially considering that it must be disabled and not destroyed if the prisoners are to be rescued.

The White Star and the players' ship have greater speed and manoeuvrability but the Equinox has a greater number of weapons and armour. In order to free the

prisoners, the players must figure out a way of getting onboard the Equinox or disabling it enough to force surrender. The players may also want to take control of the Equinox with minimum damage so the Excalibur crew can take command of it.

Once a team is onboard the Equinox they can free the prisoners to help them, so additional weapons will be needed to arm the Excalibur crew. Once the prisoners are free, they can help the players to take control of the Equinox. Seth and other high ranking officers should be taken alive to be questioned and ultimately prove the Legacy Group's existence and plans.

Before the players can board the Equinox, they must follow it and choose the best way to begin the attack. This can be anything from a simple assault from behind to calculating its destination and setting an ambush.

The players might assume that the Equinox is heading to the bases in sector 260 or 420 but both facilities have been abandoned and destroyed by the Legacy Group. The Equinox is actually heading to the new Legacy Base in the Kandar system.

Both Seth and Quinn are present onboard the Equinox to oversee the questioning of the Excalibur crew. Their main goals are to find out what the players are up to and where the new cure is. If Seth can obtain the cure developed by the Excalibur crew he can claim that his people developed it, further increasing the power and influence of the Legacy Group.

Boarding the Equinox

Breaching pods or similar craft can be used to board the Equinox but there is a high risk that they will be shot down during their approach unless they are shielded by other ships (such as fighters) or enough of the Equinox's weaponry is disabled.

The boarding party will be met by heavy resistance and their best chance is to deduce that the prisoners are secured in staterooms on one of the decks and free them. Once freed, the Excalibur crew can help the party take control of the Equinox. Meanwhile, the White Star and players' ship must endure the battle taking place outside.

If the players fail to rescue the Excalibur prisoners en route, their only other option

The Equinox

The Equinox is carrying 100 of the Excalibur prisoners, including the command staff. An unarmed transport carries the remaining crew. The Equinox is a modified Hyperion Cruiser (the standard version is detailed in *Warships of Babylon 5*). It has fewer armaments than other models but a greater capacity for carrying troops (or prisoners). Three of the light shuttles have been modified to maximise passenger capacity.

Equinox			Tons	Price (Cr.)
Hull	75,000 tons 4 sections each	Hull 385 Structure 383		7,500
		Reinforced Hull	7,500	750
		Reinforced Structure (double)	7,500	1,500
Armour	Crystaliron	10 points	9,375	3,750
Artificial Gravity		None	—	—
Jump Point Generator		Jump 3	7,500	30
Manoeuvre Drive		Thrust 4	1,312.5	656.25
Power Plant		Rating 4	2,250	5,625
		Emergency Power	225	562.5
Bridge		4 Command Modules	1,500	1,500
Computer	Core /7 fib	Rating 80		105
Electronics	4 x Countermeasures	DM +4	28	24
Weapons	Bays	4 x Heavy Laser Cannon	204	16
	Barbettes	8 x Medium Plasma Cannon	40	24
	Turrets	8 x Twin Light Pulse Cannon	8	20
		4 x Interceptors (Triple Sandcaster)	4	7
Ammunition		750 Interceptor rounds (Sandcaster barrels)	67.5	—
Fuel	15,180 tons	6 Jump 3 – 20 weeks of operation	15,180	—
Cargo	14,077	3,000 tons set aside for spare parts	14,077	—
500 Staterooms			2,000	250
Extras	5 x Briefing Room		20	2.5
	20 x Armoury		40	10
	Luxuries	Steward x 10	10	1
	Probe Drones x 10		2	1
	321 Escape Pods		160.5	32.1
	Repair Drones		750	150
	Armoured Bulkheads	Drives	1,128.75	225.75
Craft	4 x Light Shuttle	Standard Hangars	520	259.664
	6 Starfury Heavy Fighters	Standard Hangars	156	204.3
	Cobra Bays	Launch Tube for Starfuries	500	250
Software	Manoeuvre/0		—	—
	Intellect	Rating 10	—	1
	Library		—	—
	Evade/2		—	2
	Fire Control/4		—	8
	Auto Repair/2		—	10
	Jump Control/3		—	0.3
Maintenance Cost (monthly)				1.9565
Life Support Cost (monthly)				1
Total Tonnage & Cost			74,999.5	23,478.37

will be to follow the ship to Legacy Base #3 and attack the facility. This will be more difficult in some respects as there will be two enemy ships to deal with and more soldiers to fight.

Earthforce Marines

Str: 8 (+0), **Dex:** 11 (+1), **End:** 12 (+2), **Int:** 7 (+0), **Edu:** 8 (+0), **Soc:** 7 (+0)

Skills: Athletics (Co-ordination) 2, Drive 1, Gun Combat (Energy Pistol) 2, Gun Combat (Energy Rifle) 3, Medic 0, Melee (Unarmed Combat) 1, Persuade 0, Recon 1, Stealth 1, Survival 0

Equipment: PPG (3d6–3) or PPG Rifle (5d6), Flak Jacket (6).

Questioning the Crew

If the players are successful in taking command of the Equinox, they will hopefully have Captain Durall, Seth and Quinn in custody. These are the most important individuals that can provide the information and proof needed by the players and should therefore be captured alive if possible.

These individuals will not talk easily, so the players will have to be very persuasive or use a telepath to get the information they require. Seth knows a lot more than the others but is the most difficult to interrogate (–4 DM). Each successful skill check will reveal one piece of information as follows:

- Location of Legacy Base #3 (everyone).
- Defences and layout of Legacy Base #3 (Seth and Quinn).
- Details about Psi Corp remnant (Seth and Quinn).
- High ranking officials in the Legacy Group including some of the joint chiefs (Seth only).
- Plans of the Legacy Group (Seth only).

Legacy Base #3

This base was established on Kandar III after the Legacy Group were forced to abandon their other bases over six months ago. The underground base used by the Drakh (see Episode Two) was perfect for their needs and the group expanded it deeper underground to accommodate more personnel and facilities.

Unlike other bases used by the Legacy Group this one is not heavily guarded, relying more on stealth rather than firepower. Only the Shadow Striker (see Episode Four) defends the base, hiding nearby in hyperspace and ready to be called to action. The remaining vessels in the Legacy Group's fleet are defending a fourth base that is currently being built elsewhere.

Both the base and the Shadow Striker are further proof of the Legacy Group and their activities. If the players can disable the Shadow Striker they will effectively have control of the base until reinforcements are requested by the base personnel; additional ships will take several weeks to arrive and can be prevented if the players are able to jam communications.

The players may try to assault the base, either to rescue the prisoners or to secure the facility and personnel there. The base has a heavy security contingent and the tunnels are easy to defend, making a ground assault difficult and deadly.

Security

Str: 9 (+1), **Dex:** 9 (+1), **End:** 8 (+0), **Int:** 8 (+0), **Edu:** 8 (+0), **Soc:** 8 (+0)

Skills: Athletics (Co-ordination) 1, Gun Combat (Energy Pistol or Energy Rifle) 2, Investigate 0, Melee (Unarmed Combat) 2, Persuade 1, Recon 2

Equipment: PPG (3d6–3) or PPG Rifle (5d6), Flak Jacket (6).

The upper level of the base is much the same as it was when the players came here before in Episode Two. The first cavern is the main security area with the base's command and control centre located in the old laboratory and prison areas. A secondary security centre is located by the landing bay, which also leads down to the new lower levels.

The second level houses living quarters for the base personnel. The third level contains research laboratories and holding cells. If the Excalibur crew have been taken to the base, they will be detained here.

Truths

Once the players have some of the Legacy Group in custody and hopefully other

evidence such as the Equinox, base and Shadow Striker, they are in a position to expose the group and reveal the truth behind the events that have occurred over the last 18 months. To do this though, the players must give themselves up and let the appropriate authorities deal with the situation.

Mr Garibaldi will suggest getting the ISA involved to act as an impartial third party. Although this is primarily an internal Earth matter, the use of Shadow tech is a violation of the terms set out by the ISA and there should be enough evidence to support this. As such, the activities of the Legacy Group has far reaching consequences that extend beyond Earth Gov.

If the players agree (and they have no other options at this point), Garibaldi will contact President Sheridan to make the arrangements. A number of White Star ships will be sent to escort the players to the ISA headquarters on Minbar.

During the journey, the players will learn that Galen has already been discussing this matter with Sheridan and explained much of the situation. Galen has also handed over the real cure as further evidence, which Sheridan is having analysed by his people to confirm the story.

Trials

Once the players, Excalibur crew and Legacy Group prisoners are all present on Minbar, the inquiry will begin to uncover the truth of the events that have transpired over the past few years. There are a number of officials and representatives from Earth Gov and the ISA have agreed to arbitrate the proceedings as an impartial party, with both President Sheridan and Delenn forming part of the panel.

Key members from each group will be called to give statements and show evidence. The players can choose who they want to give evidence, which can be any survivors from the Orinoco but should include at least one Player Character. Gideon and Galen will both testify, as will Mr Garibaldi (he is not officially part of the ISA so there is no conflict of interest). After giving statements, each individual will be questioned by both ISA and Earth Gov

representatives. There are numerous facts that the players can reveal, including:

- The Legacy Group were responsible for the Ghost of Hyperspace and framed the party for those attacks, forcing them to become fugitives. This can be backed up by the Shadow Striker evidence if available as well as Gideon's experience with hybrid ships and his encounter on Legacy Base #2, which prompted his assassination on Mars.
- The Legacy Group have used Shadow tech extensively to build hybrid ships, creating slaves and the development of their cure to the Drakh plague. Earth Gov might be able to justify its use for the cure but not for any other reason.
- The Legacy Group were working with the Drakh, prior to the attack on Earth. However, there will be little evidence to support this.
- The players, Orinoco crew and other individuals were all captured and imprisoned on Legacy Base #1. Again, there will be little evidence other than the testimonies of those concerned.
- Chen Wing was assassinated by the Legacy Group after the players were imprisoned because he knew where they were headed before they disappeared.
- Several members of the Legacy Group are remnants from Psi Corp, including Seth and Quinn. A scan of Quinn will reveal that his personality has been tampered with and records from Ancient Wonders will show that he was not registered as a telepath when working for that company.
- The Legacy Group have a new secret base on Kandar III.
- The players and Excalibur crew developed a real cure to the Drakh plague, knowing that that first cure would have side effects that could potentially allow the Legacy Group to control humanity.
- Some members of the Legacy Group are high ranking officials within Earthforce and Earth Gov, including some of the joint chiefs. This will cause a stir as several of these individuals are present at the inquiry, prompting them to be called to the stand for questioning.

The players will likely have other facts, evidence and witnesses to present and the more they can prove the better their chances will be. Seth and his people will deny the existence of the Legacy Group by using half truths to defend their actions and they will attempt to prove that the players are guilty of all the charges levelled against them.

The players should have enough evidence to prove their innocence and the existence of the Legacy Group. A number of recesses might be called while certain statements are confirmed, such as the existence of the Shadow Striker and Legacy Base #3. As more evidence is presented against Seth, he will find it increasingly difficult to defend his position and that of the Legacy Group.

If the players are successful, the ISA arbitrators will rule in their favour – the players and their crew will be exonerated of all charges made against them. The Excalibur crew must attend a military tribunal for breaking away from Earthforce but their involvement in developing the cure will work in their favour.

Seth and the Legacy Group will be accused of numerous crimes, including using Shadow tech, murder and conspiracy against their own government and possibly aiding the Drakh attack on Earth. A long process of trials and inquests will take place on Mars to expose everyone involved, uncover other secret projects and reveal the truth behind the many accusations made against the group.

The Cure

With their innocence proven and their names cleared, the players will be invited to cure to the people of Earth in a number of media events where they will travel to the major cities to administer the cure. Everyone visiting Earth will first be inoculated against the plague, using the nanotech modified by Dr Chambers. The party will be hailed as heroes for their involvement in finding the cure and will even become media celebrities for a short time. The cure will soon spread and within two months, Earth will be declared free of the Drakh plague.

Ending the Episode

The episode ends once the inquiry has concluded. Hopefully the players have

cleared their names, exposed the Legacy Group and administered the cure for the Drakh plague but if things have not gone well they will be imprisoned or possibly killed during the earlier battles.

If the players were successful then they will attend a number of press conferences, with various media organisations asking for exclusive stories and interviews by those involved.

Continuing the Story

The campaign can end at this point or the Referee can pick up some of the threads and continue the story if preferred. Some ideas are as follows:

The Legacy Group: Although many individuals within the Legacy Group have been arrested, there are still those whose identity remains unknown. The members of the group that have escaped justice still have a number of ships at their disposal. After recent events they will abandon their current base and either attempt to construct a new one or remain mobile.

The players might be employed by Mr Garibaldi or the ISA to investigate or hunt down the Legacy Group, or alternatively the Legacy Group might hunt down the players for their role in exposing the group. Either way, there is a lot of potential here for further scenarios.

Ancient Wonders: Mr Garibaldi still owns Ancient Wonders, which has continued to operate with the individuals the players met during the early episodes. Garibaldi will ask the players to resume their employment with him and the company. The party has certainly proven itself and Garibaldi might even invite one of the players to run the company.

There is still alien technology out there, waiting to be discovered and there are still those who wish to exploit it. By continuing their original jobs, the players can explore forgotten worlds and ensure that new technologies are used by the right people for the right reasons.

The Interstellar Alliance: Instead of offering the players their jobs with Ancient Wonders, Mr Garibaldi might ask them to work for the ISA, either as operatives or even

Universe Today

Galaxy Edition

Earth Is Cured

The people of Earth are rejoicing again after a new cure to the Drakh plague is being administered to people in every major city. The cure, based on nanotechnology, is expected to spread throughout the population within two months and isolated communities will be given the cure independently.



This cure was developed in secret by the renegade Excalibur crew and fugitives from the Star Dancer. Captain Gideon and his crew, praised by many for their involvement in developing the cure, must now attend a military tribunal for breaking away from Earthforce several months ago.

A different cure (reported by Universe Today in June) was sabotaged by the same group, claiming it had side effects that were not reported by its creators. Experts are now investigating these claims but Earth Gov has confirmed that the original cure will not be used now a better solution has been found.

The new cure is completely safe and is able to spread amongst the population, from person-to-person. This removes the need for everyone to be given the cure individually and the long surgical process required by the previous cure.

At the heart of this new cure are nanobots based on organic technology. The ISA has approved the use of this cure as it does not incorporate any outlawed Shadow tech. However, the origins of this alien technology remain unknown.

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16th September 2268

Fugitives Cleared

The fugitives accused of the Ghost of Hyperspace attacks have been cleared of all charges. This story was first reported in November 2266 and soon gathered pace as more ships went missing.

Evidence proved beyond a reasonable doubt that the crews of the Star Dancer and the Earthforce Omega class destroyer Orinoco, were framed for the attacks on ships in hyperspace by a secret organisation within Earthforce.

An inquiry arbitrated by the Interstellar Alliance was given sufficient evidence and witness accounts to exonerate the accused of any involvement in the attacks.

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Secret Organisation Arrested

The secret organisation within Earthforce responsible for numerous crimes, including enslavement, murder and conspiracy are believed to be the remnants of President Clarke's administration and the Psi Corps.

This group has also been accused of using Shadow technology to create the first cure to the plague and a hybrid ship, that became known as the Ghost of Hyperspace.

A number of individuals, including several of the joint chiefs have been arrested. The trial will take place on Mars and is expected to last many months before all those involved are exposed and charged.

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as part of the Rangers. President Sheridan will happily recruit such a resourceful team that can be used in a variety of roles.

Freelancers: The players might want to become freelancers, available for hire for a variety of tasks. They are well known and have their own ship, so they are in a good position to choose the jobs that are

of interest to them, whether for money or other reasons.

Techno-Mages: For Referee's and players wishing to explore the Techno-Mages further, Galen or another techno-mage might work with the players to discover more about the origins of their technology and how it can be created to allow the

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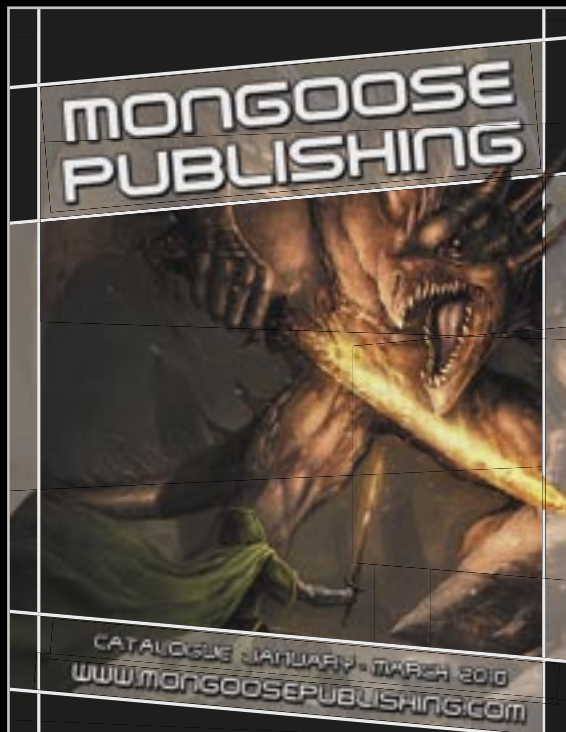
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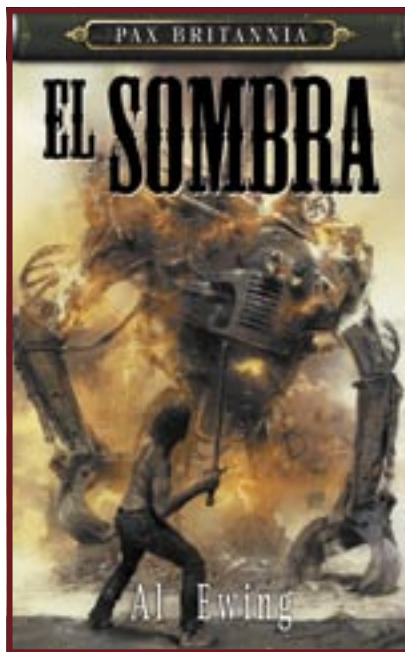
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