

SP Signs & Portents

Also This Month: **Traveller** - Xenologist Career • **RuneQuest II** - New Encounters • **Lone Wolf** - Enemy Mine Adventure

DEUS
VULT
OUT THIS MONTH

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Editorial



So the spring has arrived at last, bringing with it the longer days that make us all smile. Spring has also brought some interesting arrivals at Mongoose Towers.

Our new intern, Mischa Thomas, arrived from Sweden during March to begin his four month internship in the Mongoose studio. Mischa has already begun to excel and has been a great help to layout guru Will Chapman. We are also allowing Mischa his own special project, based around material from your beloved magazine... look out for details of this in the coming issues.

March also saw the arrival of the first sample laser printed books. From the publisher point of you laser printing is quicker and easier so you can imagine the jubilation when we discovered that laser printing also looks good in our books... so good in fact that I got confused as to which was which!

On more of a personal note, I finally got the mobile phone upgrade that I have been waiting for and as I write this editorial, I am eagerly awaiting the delivery man who carries my new iphone. So I was thinking that if anyone knows of any good apps (as there are clearly too many to scan through) that may be of interest or use to me, please let me know via the forums... much appreciated!

Have a great month

Charlie

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Mongoose News

By Charlotte Law

Schedule Feng Shui

The Mongoose release schedule now seems to be almost perfectly balanced. At the beginning of this year we made the executive decision to give each book an extra month in production, a move which is paying off by providing us with even better quality text and art work, as well as ensuring that the releases flow pretty seamlessly.

PDFs Ahoy!

We have added lots of new PDFs to Drivethru recently. Visit http://rpg.drivethrustuff.com/index.php?manufacturers_id=45 to download the new additions, including Gvurrdon Sector Map Pack, 1,001 Characters and the Judges' Handbook.

God Wills It

The newest setting for new edition *RuneQuest* hits the shelves this month. *Deus Vult* is a 12th century setting that will take your Adventurers all over medieval Europe, cloaked in mystery, to rid the world of evil. With plenty of exciting supplements to follow, this rulebook is not to be missed. Check out a primer on Drivethru.

BF(d)Evo

The *Battlefield Evolution* line is going to be retired shortly in order to make room for some new miniatures games that will be hitting the stores shortly. If your collection is still missing a component you may want to grab it quickly before it is gone for good.



Convention Diary

Con-Quest

Derby Assembly Rooms, Market Place,
Derby, DE1 3AH
Saturday 10th April 2010

<http://www.con-quest.co.uk>

.....

Traveller Open Day

Mongoose Publishing, 52-54 Cricklade Road
Swindon, Wilts, SN2 8AF, United Kingdom
Saturday 1st May 2010

<http://www.mongoosepublishing.com>

.....

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>

.....

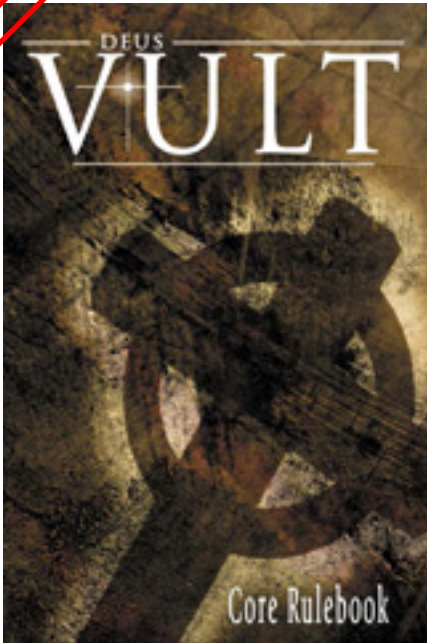
Continuum

John Foster Hall, Leicester,
United Kingdom
Fri 2nd - Mon 5th July 2010

<http://www.continuum.uk.net>

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

March 10 Releases



In 1095, Pope Urban II called on the kings and knights of Europe to liberate the Holy Land in a great crusade. As one they lifted their voices to Heaven, crying deus vult - God wills it! This cry was taken up by thousands of knights and peasants, martyrs and madmen, as a great tide of righteous fury flooded across the world.

This cry was heard in the shadows, too. Since the days of the apostles, a secret order of warrior monks guarded the church and protected Christendom from all enemies, both natural and supernatural. Trained from birth and equipped with lost secrets of ancient civilisations, this secret order also hears the call to crusade. Deus vult - God will it, and they are the instruments of His divine Will.

It is the closing years of the twelfth century. Saladin has reconquered the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and the holy city is once more in the hands of the Saracen. Heresies and sorcery rot Europe from within, while the nobles quarrel and bicker. Even the church is falling prey to this corruption. The world must be saved, through any means necessary. No enemy, no sorcery, no doubt and no fear will prevent the monks of the Order from carrying out the Will of God. Deus Vult!

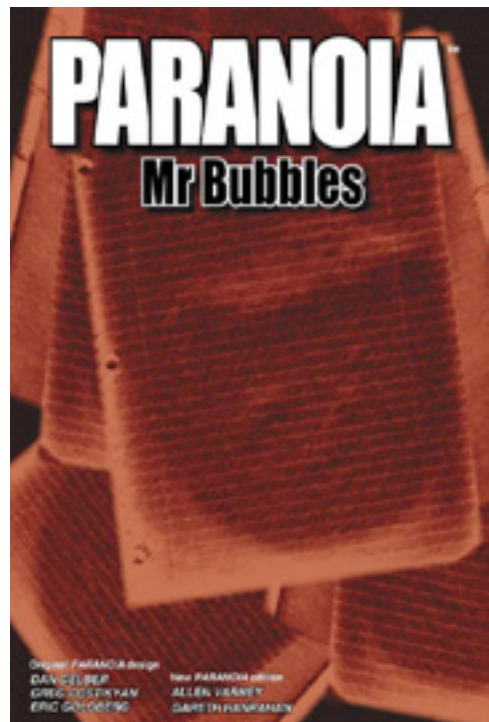
DEUS VULT
Price: £25.00
Format: Hardcover (176 pages)

Pre Order Now

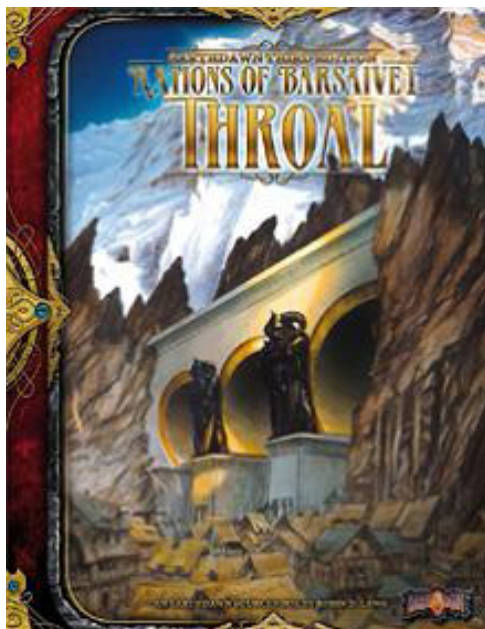
Mr Bubbles
Price: £6.00
Format: Softback (32 pages))

The classic (by which we mean, from the last edition) mission returns! Dan Curtis Johnson's epic tale of Troubleshooters, scrubbots and spam returns for the 25th Anniversary edition. From the initial briefing and its (heh) explosive revelation to the wonderful chance to participate in a hit HPD&MC show to all sorts of exciting commercial offers, Mr. Bubbles is mandatory fun for your players.

- * Pregenerated Troubleshooters
- * Chase scenes and things that explodes
- * You get to throw stuff at the players



Pre Order Now



Nations of Barsaive 1: Throal
 Price: £20.00
 Format: Softback (144 pages)

ON THE BRINK OF WAR

The kingdom of Throal is the heart of Barsaive, the center of culture, commerce and knowledge. The dwarfs united the people of Barsaive and threw off the yoke of oppression; now traders and adventurers from the dwarf kingdom travel across the land, bringing prosperity and liberty to every town and village. But the end of those peaceful days is looming on the horizon, and the nations of Barsaive struggle to survive the great war that seems inevitable.

The return of the Therans and the brutal assassination of Throal's greatest king have thrown the province off-balance. The only heir to the throne, King Neden, turned out to be a hot-headed youth who began his reign with a military assault against the hated Therans. He failed, and soon realized that the Denairastas of Iopos have played a deadly political game to put the dwarf kingdom and the Theran Empire at each other's throats and Throal's population on the verge of civil war...

Nations of Barsaive Volume One: Throal offers *Earthdawn* players and gamemasters an in-depth look at the mighty dwarf kingdom. From the bustling, noisy Grand Bazaar to the majestic chambers of the Royal Hall, the Kingdom of Throal encompasses seven cities full of people from all walks of life. This sourcebook offers adventure hooks and reams of additional material for *Earthdawn* adventures and campaigns set in Throal and the surrounding area. Requires use of the *Earthdawn* Player's and Gamemaster's Guides.

Pre Order Now

Necromantic Arts
 Price: £20.00
 Format: Hardback (112 pages)

Life and death are two sides of the same coin, and controlling one gives great power over the other. There are many uses for necromancy, some more potent and dangerous than others. On one level, using corpses as animated labourers is little different from using golems or elementals. Many healing spells are partially necromantic in nature, working with dying instead of dead flesh. Other benign uses of necromantic arts including calling up or otherwise contacting the dead as part of religious ceremonies, or even as part of respectful scholarly inquiry. Some cultures or races may accept such forms of necromancy, as long as the dead are honoured and respected, even if they object to sorcerers marching corpses around.

Necromantic Arts is a toolkit for making despicable and terrifying enemies for the players in your *Runequest* games. Material in this book can be applied to any setting using the *Runequest* rules, from *Glorantha* to *Lankhmar* to *Elric* or to your own homebrewed games.

Pre Order Now



March 10 Releases



RuneQuest II – Écran du Maître de Jeu

L'Écran du Maître de Jeu pour RuneQuest II est le parfait complément pour votre campagne RuneQuest car il incorpore toutes les informations vitales pour le Maître de Jeu. Son illustration de couverture ne manquera pas non plus d'impressionner vos joueurs.

Conçu dans une épaisse couverture cartonnée et contenant toutes les tables nécessaires, le nouvel Écran du Maître de Jeu vous accompagnera fidèlement dans vos parties de jeu pour les années à venir.

RQ II Écran du Maître de Jeu

Price: £13.99

Format: Screen (2 pages)

Pre Order Now

Reign of Discordia is the core setting book in line of the same name by the celebrated game designer Darrin Drader and Reality Deviant Publications. RoD gives you what you need to know about the galactic civilization following the fall of the Stellar Imperium. Future sourcebooks and adventures will further add to the dynamic space opera setting presented in this core setting book.

Within the pages of Reign of Discordia, you can fight against the RTillek and their crusade of extermination against the known species, fight to protect the independence of dozens of worlds, participate in the cold war between Earth and Lamog, haul cargo to the Frontier Systems, involve yourself in the various crime syndicates, work for one of the interplanetary conglomerates and engage in corporate sabotage, play a role in the advancement of one of the interplanetary organizations, salvage starships, and engage in a number of other activities that will bring danger and adventure.

Welcome to the threatened and turbulent galaxy of 2690. Can you make a difference in these difficult times?.

Reign of Discordia

Price: £25.00

Format: Hardback (168 pages)



Pre Order Now

The Friendly Roleplaying Games Convention



2010

**Friday 2nd to Monday 5th July 2010
John Foster Hall, Leicester**

www.continuum.uk.net/

Artwork © Bob Shaw

The Xenologist

By Uri Kurlianchik

'God loves aliens, otherwise he wouldn't have made them so darn expensive!'

— Captain Hordan Arber

The xenologist is not a scientist, though many xenologists would like to think of themselves as such. He is an adventurer, an explorer and a businessman; a supplier of exotic alien pets or a Doctor Dolittle in outer space.

Xenologists are people who dedicate their lives to various non-sentient alien life-forms. Some become interstellar pet merchants; others work as freelance veterinarians who can deal with the most bizarre anatomies, while still others

choose to risk life and limb trying to tame the untamable.

While there is much demand for the xenologist's skills and wares, he is often viewed with suspicion as the true power and sentience of an alien creature is rarely known in advance; what appears to be a cute and harmless pet might very well end up devouring an entire family when the stars are right. Because of this constant risk, xenologists rarely set up permanent 'pet shops' but travel from planet-to-planet, trying to sell their services or latest catch. This sometimes brings them at odds with the law because their businesses often include smuggling, poaching and violations of animal rights laws (where such exist).

Nevertheless, many wealthy and powerful merchants and aristocrats are willing to pay small fortunes to possess unique and impressive pets, ignoring both the danger and the illegality of the issue. This makes the risks taken by the xenologist more than worthwhile... should he survive to retire.

This article discusses the xenologist career, the unique challenges he has to face and the skills and items that help him overcome them. For Referees, two example alien pets and a patron for xenologist adventures are presented for immediate use in any *Traveller* campaign.

Qualification: Edu 6+
-1 DM for every previous career

Skills and Training:

Roll	Personal Development	Service Skills	Advanced Education (Minimum Edu 8)
1	+1 Int	Gun-Combat (non-lethal)	Advocate
2	+1 Edu	Comms	Astrogration
3	+1 Soc	Broker	Engineer
4	+1 Dex	Trade	Computers
5	Athletics (any)	Zero-G	Pilot (any)
6	Melee (any)	Vacc Suit	Heavy Weapons (non-lethal)

Roll	Specialist: Trader	Specialist: Tamer	Specialist: Caretaker
1	Survival	Persuade	Science (xenology)
2	Stealth	Animals (training)	Medic
3	Sensor	Investigate	Animals (veterinary)
4	Animals (Riding)	Science (xenology)	Investigate
5	Recon	Survival	Survival
6	Streetwise	Diplomat	Admin

Ranks and Benefits:

Rank	Trader Skill or Benefit	Tamer Skill or Benefit	Caretaker Skill or Benefit
1			
2	Survival 1	Animals (training) 1	Animals (veterinary) 1
3			
4	Gun-Combat (non-lethal) 1	Science (xenology) 1	Medic 1
5			
6	Trade 1	Persuade 1	Science (xenology) 1

Assignments: Choose one of the following:

- **Trader:** You made your living from capturing, transporting and selling exotic alien creatures to anyone who could afford them.
- **Tamer:** You broke and trained wild aliens to serve as mounts, guards, pets or beasts of burden for their owners.
- **Caretaker:** You were a doctor of non-sentient aliens, capable of taking on completely unknown physiques.

Mishaps:

1d6 Mishap

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Injured. Roll on the Injury table. |
| 2 | An animal you imported goes on a bloody rampage. Reduce your Social Standing by 2 and gain an Enemy. No one wants to continue doing business with you and you are forced to quit. |
| 3 | You are bitten by an alien that causes you to mutate. Roll on the Injury table and reduce your Social Standing by 1 due to your mutation. This Mishap does not cause you to leave this career. |
| 4 | You accidentally sell a sentient alien as a pet. Gain an Enemy. Roll Advocate 8+, if you succeed gain Advocate 1 and keep your job, if you fail you are disgraced, imprisoned for 1d3 years and banned from practicing xenology. |
| 5 | You were captured by wild aliens. Roll Persuade 8+ if you succeed you are free to go, otherwise spend your next term as a Barbarian. |
| 6 | Your spaceship crashes on a savage alien world and years pass until you are rescued. Gain Survival 2. |

Events:

2d6 Event

- | | |
|----|---|
| 2 | Disaster! Roll on the Mishap table but you are not ejected from this career. |
| 3 | An aristocrat asks you to smuggle illegal aliens to his planet. If you accept, roll Deception 8+ or Persuade 8+ to gain Streetwise 1 and an extra Benefit roll. If you refuse, you gain an Enemy in the political sphere. |
| 4 | You spend months at a time living and hunting among the friendly natives of some primitive planet. Gain one of the following skills; Melee (any) 1, Languages (var), Animals (farming) 1 or Stealth 1. |
| 5 | You become a popular expert on alien pets; your business thrives and you are a common guest on talk shows. Increase your Social Standing by 2 and gain +1 to your next benefit roll. However, animal rights groups target you as their Enemy. |
| 6 | You spend a while living among the friendly natives of a relatively civilised planet. Gain a Contact. |
| 7 | Life Event. Roll on the Life Events table (<i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i> page 34). |
| 8 | You develop a very close connection with an alien you recently acquired or trained. Gain an Ally. |
| 9 | A sentient alien desires you to bring it a human as a pet. If you agree, roll Persuade 8+ or Melee (any) 8+ if you succeed you get an extra benefit roll and a Contact. If you fail you lose one benefit roll, gain an Enemy and you must take the Draft in your next career. |
| 10 | You are praised by animal rights groups everywhere for your humane treatment of animals and careful choice of clients. Gain a Contact in the political sphere. |
| 11 | You come across a powerful alien who treats you as a favoured pet and becomes your Ally. Either gain one level of Science (xenology) or +4 DM to your next advancement roll. |
| 12 | You discover a new creature which proves to be an extremely sought after commodity (as food, medicine, beast of burden and so forth...) You get +3 DM to a Benefit roll from this career and also you gain Trade 1 or Broker 1. |

Career Progress

—	Survival	Advancement
Trader	Dex 6+	Int 9+
Tamer	Int 6+	Soc 7+
Caretaker	Edu 6+	Edu 8+

Mustering-Out Benefits

Roll	Cash	Other Benefits
1	1,000	+1 Str
2	5,000	Weapon
3	10,000	+1 Edu
4	20,000	Ship Share
5	20,000	Armour
6	40,000	Two Ship Shares
7	60,000	Free Trader

New Equipment

In the xenology business it is essential to be able to capture the target without harming it. Whilst on earth this can easily be done by using stunners and standard sedatives, xenologists are often forced to deal with creatures whose anatomy is so alien that earthly sedatives and stunners have no effect on them and other means of detention are required, such as extraterrestrial poisons, nets, force fields and even stranger methods.

To achieve this aim, xenologists have developed an entire arsenal of non-lethal weapons. Since most xenologists are rivals and loathe sharing their professional secrets, these weapons vary widely. Presented here are the most common of these tools;

Dart Gun: The dart gun is the most primitive and least effective weapon in the xenologist's arsenal. Basically a specialised shotgun, this hefty weapon shoots a small syringe filled with a sedative that will hopefully temporarily incapacitate the target. This has two major drawbacks; the first is the physical damage done by the high-speed projectile, which can severely injure or even kill smaller aliens.

The second problem is the difficulty to acquire reliable sedatives – many good xenologists lost their lives after shooting a small dart into the backside of a 50-ton

monstrosity only to discover the sedative is not quite as effective as the alien merchant assured them it would be. For more information on sedatives and the methods of acquiring them, see the sidebar 'Finding the Right Sedative.'

Net: this grenade explodes into a cluster of miniature semi-intelligent missiles linking a durable metal net that envelopes and captures the target/s. Because of their heft, net grenades are usually shot from grenade launchers rather than thrown. Only creatures with Str 9+ can throw net grenades and only with –2 DM.

Trapped creatures are completely immobilised and automatically fail any roll that requires movement or reaction. The only kind of action they can attempt is to try damaging the net, which usually has protection 3 and can sustain up to 30 points of damage before breaking. Due to the net's tightness, only personal-range attacks can be used.

Cryogenic: Possibly the most sought after weapon in the xenology business, this futuristic grenade cryogenically freezes an area and all inside it, enabling the xenologist to quickly transport the victim to a cryoberth and from there to his ship. Its greatest disadvantage is the inherent danger of cryogenic freezing (see *Traveller Core Rulebook* for more details).

Any creature *fully* within the grenade's

area of effect must make an Endurance check with a negative DM equal to 3d6. If this check fails, the creature is frozen and will die in 2d6 minutes unless moved to a cryoberth. If the Endurance check is successful, the creature is slowed down for the same duration – all its characteristics are halved and it cannot take significant actions.

Creatures partially within the area of effect perform the same roll, only in case of failure they are slowed down instead of being frozen. Success means they suffer no ill-effects at all.

Force Field: The force field grenade is an extremely sophisticated weapon that creates a large, almost impenetrable semi-sphere around the grenade's location. A force field lasts for 30 minutes and weighs about 150 kilograms. It does not stop laser rays and can be penetrated by an energy attack that deals 50 or more points of damage in one strike.

The difficulty to escape the force field is a function of how precisely the grenade was thrown;

Grenades:

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Mass (kg)	Blast Radius	Cost (Cr.)
Net	10	Ranged (thrown)	1d3	2	6	500
Cryogenic	11	Ranged (thrown)	Special	0.5	6	5,000
Force Field	13	Ranged (thrown)	None	0.5	6	2,500

Slug Throwers:

Weapon	TL	Range	Damage	Auto	Recoil	Mass (kg)	Magazine	Cost (Cr.)	Ammo Cost (Cr.)
Dart Gun	6	Ranged (shotgun)	2d6 + Special	No	1	4	5	250	30 + sedative

* reusable, see description.

Force Field Escape Difficulty

Distance from target	DM to dodge
0–2	–2
3–5	0
6	+2

Finding the right sedative

Despite the advances brought about by the stellar age, sedatives are still the cheapest and most widespread means of capturing exotic animals. However, as demand rises for stranger and stranger creatures, so finding the right sedative becomes a greater and deadlier challenge, sometimes even harder than finding the alien itself.

If the creature is known to science, the xenologist can attempt to acquire the sedative on a nearby planet. This requires a Streetwise 8+ roll and usually costs between 100–5,000 credits per dose, depending on how difficult it is to come by. If the creature is unknown, the xenologist can attempt to deduce the proper sedative based on past experience and scientific knowledge with a Science (xenology) 12+ roll with a DM equal to the xenologist's terms served.

The right sedative operates like tranq gas (see *Traveller Core Rulebook* for more details). The wrong sedative will usually have no effect at all or cause one of the following:

Roll	Effect
1	Same effect as arsenic on earth creatures.
2	The target becomes extremely sexually aroused with the first creature it sees.
3	The target increases all its physical characteristics by 1d6 for 2d6 minutes.
4	The target permanently gains a random planetary quirk (see page 69 in <i>Traveller Core Rulebook</i> for more details). The process takes 2d6 minutes during which the target is paralysed with searing pain.
5	The target becomes severely depressed and apathetic, neglecting any kind of self-defence for 1d6 hours.
6	Same effect as neurotoxin on earth creatures.

New Rules:

Training aliens

The skill used to train animals, be they earthly or extraterrestrial, is Animals (training). Despite that, without the Science (xenology) skill, training an alien is a Formidable Task (-6 DM) and the best a trainer could hope for is to teach the creature in question not to attack humans.

An experienced xenologist trainer, however, can do much more – he can teach an alien to perform various useful duties, rear it to be a friendly and playful pet and, on rare occasions, even install in it a rudimentary understanding of human society.

Rolling a natural 2 means the tamer made some horrible mistake and was ravaged by the animal (if applicable). How much damage the animal caused to the hapless trainer and what was its subsequent fate is left up to the Referee's discretion.

Animals with Instinct 3 or less cannot be taught any orders, as they are too dim to communicate with.

Rear/ Break

Rearing is the act of raising a wild animal, born in captivity or captured in infancy, to be domesticated, while breaking is the act of domesticating an adult wild animal. An animal that was not reared/ broken cannot be taught any orders and is much more difficult to handle or pacify. Breaking an animal takes 1–6 weeks, while rearing takes whatever period it takes the animal in question to reach maturity. Both checks are Intelligence-based.

Teach

A domesticated animal is not dangerous but nor can it serve its owner in any useful way. For this reason many owners choose to spend a few extra thousand credits for the xenologist to teach the animal to perform some basic orders. The amount of orders an animal can learn equals to its Instinct DM (minimum 1) plus the following modifiers;

Presented here are some of the more popular orders taught to animals, followed by their Difficulty and a brief description. In any case, apply the animal's Instinct DM to the Animals (training) roll to teach that particular order. Teaching an order usually takes 1–6 weeks and each subsequent failure imposes a cumulative -2 DM on the next roll.

Attack (Var) – This order tells the animal to attack a specific creature within sight. Note that most animals lack the intelligence required to recognise machines or even creatures vastly different from themselves as living beings and so may fail to identify them as potential targets. The Difficulty of teaching this order varies, depending on the ferocity of the animal in question but usually ranges between Very Difficult (for peaceful herbivores) to Routine (for pouncing, chasing and killing carnivores).

Defend (Var) – This order tells the animal to follow you or any other creature you indicate and attack whoever attacks or threatens them. Along with Attack, this is one of the most popular orders in certain social circles, where having a squad of towering monstrosities accompany you everywhere is more than a safety measure – it is a fashion statement. The Difficulty to teach this order is the same as the Attack order.

Patrol (Var) – This order tells the animal to patrol a designated area and to attack anyone who enters it unaccompanied by the animal's master. The Difficulty to teach this order is the same as the Attack order.

Seek (Difficult) – This order tells the animal

Condition	DM
Animal needs to be broken*	-4
Animal was injured/ traumatised by a member of the xenologist's species	-2
Animal is herbivore	+2
Animal is omnivore/ other	None
Animal is carnivore	-2
Animal is small	+2
Animal is human-sized	None
Animal is large	-2
Animal is huge	-4
Animal is colossal	-6
Group Animal	Apply animal's Pack DM to Animals (training) roll

* As long as the animal is not broken it is hostile and does anything in its power to escape or harm the trainer, depending on its disposition.

Condition	Orders
Animal lives in groups of 6 or more in nature	+1
Animal lives in hierarchal groups in nature	+1
Animal is has the Intermittent behaviour	+1

to try to find a certain quarry. Because most animals lack the intelligence needed to use a verbal description, this order is usually given in conjunction with showing a picture of the quarry, letting the animal sniff or taste something that belonged to the quarry or anything else that might help the animal locate the quarry using one of its senses.

Ride (Average) – This order teaches the animal to serve as a mount, which includes understanding which direction and at what speed that person wants the animal to go. No matter how cooperative the animal is, however, riding still requires an Animals (riding) roll. Pouncers are notoriously difficult to train and ride. Training a pouncer to be a mount is a Very Difficult task and all Animals (riding) rolls are made with –2 DM.

Work (Routine) – Work is not a single order but rather a certain mind frame conveyed to the animal. Work-trained animals are meeker and more dependent; they pull, push, lift and otherwise move various objects for their owners and usually work into exhaustion without any coercion being required. This order is almost never taught in TL 4+ societies as machines have replaced ordinary beasts of burden by this stage.

Come (Easy) – This order tells the animal to stop whatever it is its doing and return to its owner. Although it is one of the simplest orders to teach, ensuring that the animal actually carries it out, especially when engaged in some pleasurable or exciting activity, might require an additional Animal (training) roll. See Handle/ Pacify for more details.

Fetch (Routine) – This order tells the **Saq'se'qan**

animal to bring you, unharmed, an object or creature within sight. Many air and space ships keep large flying animals onboard, constantly on the lookout for any tools or passengers fallen overboard.

Tricks (Routine) – This order actually includes a large group of actions such as: sit, stay, play dead, give paw (or any other equivalent appendage) and lie down. It is not as practical as the previous orders and is used mostly for leisure and entertainment. Ordinarily these orders are automatically carried out by the animal. However, just like with the Come order, distracting the animal from some pleasurable or thrilling activity might require an Animal (training) roll.

Dealing with alien xenologists

An interesting twist for a xenology campaign could be an encounter with alien xenologists who consider the players to be non-sentient creatures to be used as pets, beasts of burden or display animals. How will the players cope with hunters equipped by the most sophisticated non-lethal weaponry in the universe? If captured, will the players try to prove their intelligence to their alien captors or will they try to escape their captivity using guile and ferocity born out of desperation? If both fail, how will the players interact with the other aliens they are kept in bondage with? After their escape, will the players' experiences cause them to reconsider the morality of their trade?

Handle/ Pacify

Sometimes a tamer can find himself face-to-face with a powerful, unrestrained animal that can tear him to ribbons in seconds if he makes the wrong move. Sometimes an ordinarily well-behaved animal gets a sniff of some delicious morsel and cannot resist going after the treat. These are the cases when the handle/ pacify option is used.

Pacifying a wild animal is ordinarily a Very Difficult task, while handling a disobedient trained animal is Routine to Average, depending on how strong is the temptation the animal faces. All the DMs applied to Rear/Break rolls are also applied to Handle/ Pacify rolls.

Physical violence can help but is risky; a character in a position to bully the animal must make 8+ Persuade roll. Success enables the character to add the check's Effect to his Animals (training) roll, while failure causes the Effect to be applied as a negative DM to the roll.

Handle and pacify take 1–6 minutes and each subsequent attempt is done with –2 DM.

Alien Pets:

Described here are two 'pets' that demonstrate both the allure and danger of the xenologist profession.

Deception 2, Survival 2, Persuade 3
Claws and Teeth (1d3), Furry Hide (1).
Number encountered: 1
Psionic talents: Telepathy, Telekinesis

The saq'se'qan is an extremely intelligent alien parasite that feeds on the mental

Type	Habitat	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Instinct	Pack	Psionic Strength	
Siren (Other)	Desert Walker	4	6	7	11	12	3	7

waves generated by ill will and aggression. While unable to verbally communicate with members of other species, it has significant psionics powers that enable it to manipulate its victims into hatred and strife. Nothing brings the saq'se'qan more joy and substance than a domestic murder-suicide.

An adult saq'se'qan resembles a fat and grumpy purple hyrax whose mood swings tend to be more comical than intimidating. This amusing appearance combined with the creature's high intelligence, apparent fondness of children and longevity can lead the uninformed buyer to consider it the perfect pet – a mistake that will cost him at the very least his marital happiness and possibly his and his entire family's lives.

A healthy saq'se'qan can fetch a price of up to 2,000 credits from a client who is unaware of the creature's sinister nature and up to 10,000 credits from a client who is aware of it and intends to use it for unwholesome purposes.

The khal'oman is a bizarre creature that can cause dreams to manifest by gently touching a sleeping creature. In the wild, khal'omans prey on the dreams they summon, which makes them popular pets for people who suffer from night terrors and insomnia.

The latest rage, however, is to immobilise khal'omans in such a way that will enable them to create dreams but not to devour them. The results are phantasmagorical parties where dreams and reality intermingle to create an experience survivors will never forget. These parties

are not only illegal due to their frequent fatalities and mental traumas but are also a common target for animal rights groups' raids because of the stress and pain it inflicts on the captured khal'oman. This has led most governments to ban khal'oman import for non-medical purposes.

An adult khal'oman looks like a melon-sized jumble of colourful and luminescent strings that pulsate with ever-changing ghostly lights. Some strings hang loosely from the creature's body, their touch is fatal to manifested dreams but quite harmless to real creatures. Khal'omans use these free strings to weave complex webs used to capture and slay summoned dreams. Costumes woven from these strings are uncomfortably warm and shift and crawl all the time but their magical glow makes many dandies more than willing to make this sacrifice.

It is unknown where or how these creatures multiply and all attempts to cause them to reproduce outside their native planet have failed.

A healthy khal'oman can fetch a price of up to 10,000 credits.

Sample Patron:

Below is a sample patron for xenologist adventures, a demented Noah-figure bent on collecting a sample of every species in the universe.

Baron Tvan Khamefeth

Required: Survival, Science (Xenology), Sensor

Reward: Cr. 20,000 per capture

Players' Information

Tvan is a slightly unhinged baron who is investing unimaginable sums of money in creating the largest travelling zoo in the universe. For this purpose, he has constructed a moon-sized ship and travelled the galaxy's safer zones for decades, collecting animals and making sure he has the minimum amount required for each animal type to multiply.

However, to acquire aliens from the farthest and wildest regions of space, Tvan employs xenologists who explore new planets for him, returning with truly unimaginable beings... or not at all.

Referee's Information

Tvan is in fact quite mad, the role of a deranged street preacher fitting him far better than being a member of the highest echelon of society.

Sadly, he is also immensely charismatic and phenomenally wealthy, which has enabled him to attract a cult-like following of radical animal rights activists, religious nuts, deviants and self-proclaimed scientists who operate his travelling zoo and tend to his every whim.

1. Tvan wants to open the most extensive zoo in the universe but radical animal rights activists infiltrate into his ship and release all the animals. With alien madness reigning in the corridors, the PCs must make their way to the control room before the ship crashes into some world, bringing about a catastrophe of planetary proportions.

Khal'oman

Type	Habitat	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Instinct	Pack	Psionic Strength	
Trapper (Other)	Rainforest Flyer	1	7	4	4	5	8	2

Recon 0, Stealth 1, Survival 1
 No attacks, no armor. Number encountered: 1d6+1
 Psionic Talents: none.

2. The next stage of Tvan's plan is to begin kidnapping sophonts, possibly even some of his xenologists. By creating a self-contained universe that includes all life-forms, Tvan hopes to become a God.
3. As for previous, only owning a small universe is not enough – you have to get rid of the competition, which Tvan hopes to achieve through his extensive secret collection of nuclear bombs.
4. Tvan wants to discover the most powerful creature in the universe and so once his collection is complete he will begin pitting the aliens against each other until only one remains. His hired xenologists are, of course, 'invited.'
5. As for previous, only instead of pitting the aliens against each other Tvan plans to secretly release them on earth and watch the slaughter from the safety of his orbiting ship.
6. Once his collection is complete, Tvan plans to acquire a vast amount of Khal'omans and use them to literally unleash an army of nightmares on the universe. The fact that no one, not even he, will be able to control the apparitions does not concern him for some reason...



TRAVELLER

Open Day May 1st 2010

On Saturday May 1st, Mongoose is throwing open its doors for fans of Traveller. Taking place at our offices in Swindon, it is completely free to attend, and everyone is welcome, whether you have played Traveller before or not!



**Doors open at 9:00, and games begin at 9:30am, finishing at 6pm -
and we have some special games lined up for you!**

DISTRICT 268

At the southern edge of the Spinward Marches you're not in the Imperium and you're not in the Sword Worlds but you are in the no-man's land in between. The Redemption is old, so old that her papers don't go back to her launch and it's only will-power, speed tape and the handiwork of various engineers of various abilities over the years that holds her together, well that and a crew with nothing to lose. That's where you come in. The crew of the Redemption, like the passengers, only board her because they have no other option. Bad debts, death sentences, paternity suits, deep-felt shame - all of these are reasons to run from your life.

FIRES OF REBELLION

Coming out of cold storage after light years of travel on board the *Costaguana*, they arrive at a colony world under rebellion, and they will have to defend Earth's interests from the rebels. However, after their first victory, matters rapidly become more complicated as it becomes clear that this colony is threatened by more than just unhappy colonists.

STORM WARNING

Quiet times require quiet missions and this one looked easy. Jumping into an interdicted system owned by your employers with two passengers and some cargo can only be easy, right? There's a storm coming and only the crew of the *Angels Share* can stop it...

THE HOUSE ON THE HILL

On the planet Tivid lies a secret few could have guess existed, but for the crew of the *Angels Share* it's simply about getting their latest passengers safely to port. With a virtually desolate planet, a few extreme sports nutters and a mysterious group of aliens, it should be a relatively simple ride...

JUDGE DREDD: SIMPSON

Another day on the streets. A bus load of Tex-Cit tourists has gotten lost (presumed hijacked), a shootout at the Meg One Bank and the Juves Without a Block were causing trouble again. Then the call came in, 99 Red, Judge Simpson in trouble. A senior street judge, a thirty year man, Simpson was a tough judge but one willing to share time with younger street jocks. Just the other day he was regaling you with a tale of criminal ineptitude where he had gotten a call where some would be ARV artists had phoned ahead to a bank and told them to have their cash ready for their withdrawal ten minutes later. And now he is in trouble and you are the closest unit to his last known location.

HAMMER SLAMMERS: THE RANGOON INCIDENT

It was supposed to be a simple job. A small force sent to rattle sabres in some distant territory of some backwater government on a backwater world. No combat expected, a perfect low fee job, allowing the newest recruits to be slowly brought up to speed with the unit's SOPs. Your small section was sent to guard a tiny mining facility, unfortunately your employers had misjudged their opposition and you found yourselves cut off from the rest of the unit when the tanks rolled over the border and headed towards the region's capital. Now you have to get back to your own unit unless you want to find yourselves prisoners and out of a job on your first time out.

THE THREE FACES OF GOD

System Defence in the remote Penelope system (Spinward Marches/Five Sisters 0533) have received a garbled distress message from Penelope D, a large moon orbiting one of the system's three gas giants. You are being sent to investigate and carry out a rescue if necessary. But this is no ordinary moon. Its atmospheric properties are unique and formidable. In addition, somewhere under that atmosphere, in a subterranean complex, is an esoteric religious sect with a unique transcendent apocalyptic doctrine. Who sent the message and why? Can you find out in time and what should you do?

STRONTIUM DOG: SOUTHERN FRIED DOG

A Termination Warrant has been issued for the retirement of one Colonel James Timeson-Richmond, a mass serial killer and sociopath responsible for the death of over 450 people across 3 star systems. Enter you, the Strontium Dogs, the ugliest, tallest most downright Muppet looking bunch this side of the Mississippi. Word is Timeson has holed up somewhere in the river delta of the old Missie and hooked up with some old gang members and he ain't entertaining guests! Time to go huntin'.

As always, the Mongoose store will be open all day, giving you the chance to pick up the latest goodies for Traveller and our other games (and for Cubicle 7 games too!).

Directions to Mongoose's offices can be found at;

<http://www.mongoosepublishing.com/pdf/officemap.pdf>

See you there!

Enemy Mine

By Darren Pearce

This adventure is designed for 2–4 Kai Lords and introduces several powerful enemies, as well as challenging the characters with a tough choice near the end. It is intended to be played after the Merchant's Task from the rulebook.

Any text in boxes is to be read aloud to players.

Part 1: An urgent

summons...

Read this aloud to your players.

A few days have passed since you returned from your last mission, you have put a great deal of effort into your tasks at the monastery and your Kai Master seems to be pleased. You have been treated no differently than the others but you can sense that deep inside, Kai Master Stormsong is extremely proud, though he would never show it openly.

As you are practising in the courtyard with each other a young Kai monk, known to you as Winter's Gale, comes running over.

'Kai Master Stormsong has sent for you,' he says without stopping to take a breath, 'It sounds important, he wants to see you in the Kai Master's Chambers at once. I wouldn't delay if I were you.'

Before you can catch Winter's Gale to question him further he bows and runs off again, heading to another group of Kai monks further on in the courtyard.

Give the players some time to discuss this, not too much, since you want them to get right into the thick of things and some players will spend hours discussing the minutiae of any plan or scene. After a few minutes of discussion has passed, gently nudge them in the direction of the Kai Master's Chambers if you have to. Read this aloud to your players.

You catch a glimpse from the upper side of the monastery, your Kai Master peers down at you from a window and you get the feeling that you run the risk of being late to your meeting. You decide to head on through the monastery, climb the stairs and eventually stand before Stormsong in the Kai Master's Chambers, a grand room full of history and power. You do not stop and stare but wait patiently for Stormsong to address you.

If your players do not spend time discussing things and get right into the adventure, then read this aloud to them.

You decide to head to the Kai Master's Chambers, after all you do not wish to be late or spend a week chopping wood because of tardiness. You move swiftly through the monastery and eventually stand in the Kai Master's Chambers, a place full of history and power where Kai Master Stormsong awaits you. You wait patiently for him to speak.

Regardless of how your players get to Stormsong, he has an important mission for them and waits in the Kai Master's Chambers ready to impart his findings to the players.

Read this aloud to your players.

Kai Master Stormsong speaks softly, 'You have come a long way in such a short time; this is why I have summoned you here, Kai monks. You have a history now with this matter and it would be remiss of me not to utilise your skills in this regard. We have learned that there is a link between Jasper Kleth and the Darklords of Helgedad. They have a fledgling operation in the Durncrag Mountains to our west, a slave master known as Ryketh has set up his lair in an abandoned tunnel section of an old iron-mine.'

The Kai Master paces a little as he talks, 'I have decided that you are ready to face this foe, you will travel to the old mine and put a stop to his operation. You will free any trapped populace from this Ryketh and bring him to justice, either of the authorities or if he will not surrender, then he must be dealt with as you see fit. A lot rides on your shoulders for this particular mission but if I did not feel you were up to the task, then I would be sending someone else.'

He takes a small map and puts it down on the table, 'I have marked the location on this map and the Border Rangers have confirmed that there are two ways into the mine. One requires a little more athletic approach; the other is a direct confrontation. I will leave this up to you, do you have any questions?'

This should be your third time playing the role of Stormsong, by now you should have a good handle on the man and how he acts. He has very little information to impart to the players since they have had numerous hints from his speech. Yet he will answer questions as best as he can. Once again be prepared to play him to the hilt, remember his mannerisms and quirks if any and make sure to react to the players based on their previous performance in the last two adventures. If they have been true to the Kai then he will be quietly impressed, if they have succeeded but allowed innocents to be harmed then he will be terse and unimpressed, yet still willing to send them out on the adventure since they have a background with it.

Things that your players might ask:

1. Where is the mine exactly? It is to the west of the Kai Monastery in an old abandoned iron-mine on the eastern edge of the Durncrag Mountains.
2. Can you tell us more about the guards at the mine? Stormsong knows that it is a fledgling

operation, the guards will not be many but they will be highly trained. Operating that close to the Kai is a dangerous plan, so they will not have put as many guards in the mine as they would have liked.

3. Will the Kai monks have any support? No, they are on their own.
4. Can Stormsong elaborate more on the two entrances? Yes, one is directly at the front of the mine, lightly guarded and is the frontal assault option. The other requires a climb and is not guarded, natural erosion has opened a fissure that leads into the mine tunnels and will allow the Kai monks to sneak in quietly if they so wish.
5. Can they use brute force to take the mine? Stormsong cautions against open conflict, the tunnels are unstable and should a support be knocked loose, it could cause a cave in. He also cautions about the prisoners held within, the guards might kill them if an alarm is raised.

Give your players some time to discuss matters with Stormsong and then read the following aloud.

Stormsong watches you for a few moments and then gestures to the door. He smiles one last time, 'May Kai watch over you and may you be victorious in your mission, young Kai monks. Go now and bring honour to the order, the prayers and thoughts of your brothers are with you in this.'

He has made it quite clear that they are dismissed and it is now time for them to leave. Give them a few moments to decide what they want to do.

Once they are ready to leave then read then following aloud to them.

You leave Kai Master Stormsong and head back out into the monastery, you have everything you need and the Kai monks have already prepared fresh horses. You mount up and turn your steeds to the west, riding swiftly and surely out across the lands of the Sommerlund, the Freyland of the Kai stretches before you. It is beautiful and picturesque, even with the dark teeth of the Durncrag Mountains in the distance looming ever closer and closer.

Part 2: One mountain, two ways in.

Give your players some time to travel, speak in character and make plans. Once they have had a few minutes of conversation, including idle chatter out of character, then read the following aloud.

After a long and uneventful ride you come to the edge of the Durncrag, they rise above you like giant fangs, dark and grey against the warm blue sky of Sommerlund. A few whispers of ragged cloud are torn across the heavens as you gaze skywards before you look back at the front of the mountain. An old rocky pathway leads up a winding narrow pass; this is where you must go. You dismount and leave your horses tied to a few broken old trees. Then you pick your way up this winding pass and towards the top where there is a battered signpost. It reads: King's Iron Mine, No Trespassers. The rest is shattered and seems to have been used for firewood.

You stop for a moment and look out across the area; you can see the dark mouth of a small cave that yawns just before you, rocks forming broken teeth above the arch. This is the entry to the mine, you can try to enter by the front or continue on to find the climb and a stealthy way in.

What is it you wish to do?

Your players now have the choice of two ways in, they can go in swords swinging through the front entry and risk the guards setting off an alarm or they can circle around and find the climb. Either way, they have a choice to make.

If they choose to look over the front entry then read this aloud.

You move across the clearing trying to keep from being spotted, when you catch sight of two bored looking men leaning on their swords. They have not seen you yet.

If the players dealt with Kleth from The Merchant's Task

Ask the players to make a Difficulty 4 Test, this should be a pretty simple Test since the guards are not all that alert and they do not expect trouble.

If the players let Kleth go or he escaped in The Merchant's Task

Ask the players to make a Difficulty 6 Test. This test is harder because the guards have been warned and are looking for anything out of the ordinary.

Players who have the Kai Discipline of Camouflage can add a +2 Bonus to the Test.

If the players succeed on the Test then they get the drop on the two guards that are watching over the front entry, this will confer a +2 Bonus to COMBAT SKILL. Read this aloud.

You move quietly and swiftly across the clearing until you are in a better position to survey the mouth of the mine. You can see that there is no way, apart from verbally, that the guards can raise the alarm. What do you plan to do now?

If they decide to attack the guards, then jump ahead to the section marked: FIGHT!

If they decide to wait and see what happens, then jump ahead to the section marked: WAIT and SEE!

If they decide to pull back and search for the climb after all, then skip to the section marked: CLIMB!

If the players fail the Test then read this aloud.

Enemy Mine

You try to get across the clearing to a better position but you are spotted. A yell goes up from one of the guards and the other lifts his sword. Rather than rush you, they move across the mine entry and impede your progress. A challenge in their eyes glitters like the steel in their hands.

The players are going to be involved in a battle. The two guards are not interested in raising the alarm though, they want to prove to Ryketh that they have what it takes to defend the mouth of the cave and they do not want to run to him for help. He would likely have them whipped for leaving their post.

FIGHT!

When a combat breaks out use the following stats for the guards, there are 2 guards here at the mouth of the tunnel.

Slave Master Ryketh's Guards

Ryketh has paid a small fortune for these hired mercenaries and he expects them to perform better than common thugs. He has given them a handsome reward and told them that once the Sommerlund is in the hands of the Darklords, they will be given a place in the New World Order. This is what keeps the men loyal and drives them to follow the callous and cruel orders that he gives.

COMBAT SKILL 15 ENDURANCE 22

Remember that if the players ambush the guards, then the players gain a +2 COMBAT SKILL Bonus in this fight.

The battle should be evocative; the guards are a noisy pair and are not above hurling copious insults at their adversaries. They probably talk too much. Utilising all of the skills that you have learned in your previous two adventures you should be able to make these battles as memorable as the others. Do not inject too much humour into the Non-Player Character guards though, make them nasty pieces of work and make the players hate them as much as you can. These are the kinds of men who

would sell their own grandmother to buy firewood just so they could keep warm for a night.

If the players win the battle, read this aloud.

You bring down your enemies swiftly and they die in a clash of blades under your Kai's battle prowess. You hide the bodies and enter the cave mouth ready to face any more challengers should they appear.

You can skip ahead to Part 3 now.

If the players lose the battle, read this aloud.

You perish at the hands of your foes, your adventure barely begun. Your blood falls on the cold earth as you breathe your last.

Their adventure is over and you can ask them to make new characters, try the adventure again with a different character or run an adventure of your choosing. Most players will want to try again and you should give them that chance, perhaps they will do better next time. Do not forget to give them 2 Rank increases and 2 Disciplines because they should start this adventure at a higher Rank.

Wait and See!

Sometimes inaction can lead to greater rewards, just like in a video game where you wait for the guards to separate. As a Games Master you can give the players a much needed break like this, add a spin to a scene and allow them to try a different tactic than simple violence. If they opt to watch what the guards do, they can observe the men as they stand and gossip outside of the cave mouth and learn some valuable information about the kind of enemy they might be facing inside the mine. Also they may get a chance to take one of the guards down silently.

Read this aloud to your players.

You wait a little while and listen to the men talk, they speak of things both mundane and of concern to the mission at hand. They discuss their colleagues and conditions in the mine; you learn that there are presently 10 prisoners, divided into two groups of five in two cages and that the operation is not a small one. They have reopened the mine and are using the slaves to mine iron for weapons. You also learn that the slave master is not a man to be trifled with; he is a Drakkarim and is unlikely to surrender. As they chatter, the one man on the left shuffles a little, eyeing a bush and says to his friend, 'Guard me spot for a moment, need to go relieve myself.' His friend is less than impressed and shakes his head saying, 'Be quick, I'm not taking it in the neck for you if someone comes to check.'

The first man moves off and walks into the brush where you are by the side of the mountain; this would be the perfect time to strike whilst he is out of sight of his friend.

Remember when you are describing this scene to your players; make the guards voices sound like they have different accents if you can. This will help them become more than just a pair of numbers on a sheet to be eliminated. They will appear to be real people, although nasty ones who need to be put in their place.

The players can now eliminate one of the guards quickly and quietly, either killing him or knocking him out if they want. You should ask your players.

Do you want to try and incapacitate the guard when he relieves himself?

Do you want to kill the guard when he relieves himself?

Either way, you will need to ask them to make a Test.

The Difficulty for the Test is a 5, the guard is still somewhat alert even though he prepares to relieve himself.

The Kai Discipline of Camouflage will add a +2 Bonus to this Test.

If the player fails at the Test, then read this aloud.

You sneak up behind the guard but a twig snaps and gives away your position. The man gives a yell. This draws the attention of his friend, you have been discovered and now you must fight your way out of the situation.

Jump to pXX and the section marked FIGHT!

If the player succeeds at the Test then read this aloud.

Kill:

You quickly snap the guard's neck; it is a swift and decisive move. He falls into your arms and goes limp, you move the body to the side and cover it the best you can. It will not be long before his friend comes to investigate.

Incapacitate:

You deliver a swift and telling blow to the back of the man's neck; he drops like a sack of potatoes and falls into your arms. You bind his hands and feet and shove a rag in his mouth as a gag. You take his weapons from him and leave him tied to the base of a tree. You have to be quick; his friend could come and check on him at any moment.

Either way the players have removed one guard from the battle and they stand a chance of bringing the second over to investigate what has happened to his friend. Wait a little while and let the players talk about what they want to do, then read aloud.

After a few minutes when his companion does not return, the second man looks nervously around. He yells, 'Hey, Herrik, where are you? Oh Darklords take you for a fool, stop playing silly beggars and come back here man!' When Herrik does not answer he begins to look even more nervous. 'I swear I'm going to come over there and gut you like a fish, this is not the time for games man.' After another minute he reluctantly leaves his post and heads over to where his companion went.

Once again the players can choose to try and ambush this guard; it will be harder since he is on the alert and looking for trouble now.

The player should make a Test at Difficulty 7; the Kai Discipline of Camouflage gives a Bonus of +2 to the Test.

If the player fails the Test then they are going to have to fight the guard. Read this aloud.

You sneak up on the man but he spots you out of the corner of his eye. He looks wildly around and rushes into combat.

In this combat the man is aware so he gains a Bonus of +1 to his COMBAT SKILL and fights as though he has an army of men behind him. He is that afraid of the slave master. You can jump to pXX and the section marked FIGHT! Remember there is only one guard now.

If the player succeeds in the Test then you may ask them if they are going to kill or incapacitate this guard. Once they have made their choice read this aloud.

Kill:

You drive the palm of your hand into the guard's face, his nose bone shatters and you deliver a quick thrust of your sword into his stomach. He doubles over and goes down hard, blood splattering the floor beneath him. It is over quickly and he lies dead at your feet. You hide the body and move his equipment to one side with his friend.

Incapacitate:

Before the man can react you are on him, he struggles before you knock him unconscious. He drops to the floor; you quickly bind and gag him, tie him to a tree and remove all of his equipment. You leave him a distance from his friend so that if they both wake up they cannot cooperate.

Now that all of the guards are dealt with the players can enter the mine, so you should skip ahead to pXX and Part 3.

CLIMB!

Your players have decided to take the stealthy option, avoiding combat at the mine entry and using their athletic skills to get up the side of the mountain into a fissure and some deep tunnels of an older section of the mine. This requires that they first of all scale the mountain and just like the rooftops of Toran in Adventure #2 we have broken it down into 3 sections that require one Test each.

Read this aloud to your players.

You find the correct place to climb, a section of the mountain wall has eroded over time and you can just see a rocky promontory that is marked on your map. This has to be it, you can easily scale the wall here to begin with but there is a chimney of rock that will require some trickier navigation. It should not be a problem to one such as you however, since you are Kai monks and at the peak of your physical fitness.

Stage 1: Gaining a Foothold

Make the players take a Difficulty 3 Test since this is a really simple series of handholds, clefts and outcroppings. This should be a simple matter for the Kai monks and will not tax their abilities.

If the players succeed then read this aloud.

You take no time at all to get a good grip on the rock; you scale the first part of the mountain without a problem. You slide into a position to take on the chimney and brace yourselves there.

Skip to Stage 2: The Chimney.

If the players fail then read this aloud.

You try to gain a foothold, manage a quarter of the climb then slip, you crash back down on some sharp rocks.

Enemy Mine

Any player who fails takes 2 ENDURANCE as damage; they should mark this on their Action Chart.

They should skip back to the start of Stage 1.

Stage 2: The Chimney

The players are now poised half way in their climb, all that separates them from a tumble is a natural shaft of rock called a chimney in the side of the mountain. It will be harder for them to climb but not as hard as what is to come. Make them take a Difficulty 4 Test since they have a rock wall to brace against but it is a harsh physical exertion.

If the players succeed then read this aloud.

You take a deep breath and swing out and into the chimney itself, bracing yourself against the rock. You can feel the jagged wall press into your back. Slowly you make your way up until you are at the top of the chimney, the only way up is to leap upwards and hope you catch onto the edge of the rocky promontory itself.

Skip to Stage 3: A leap of faith!

If the players fail then read this aloud.

You get half way up the chimney when your foot misses the wall, you scramble and pitch to the side, swinging out and smacking against the mountain. A small tumble of rock scatters down and rattles off into the floor below. You skitter down and are left banged up where you started, breathing heavily.

The player that fails takes 5 ENDURANCE as damage; they should mark this on their Action Chart.

They should skip back to the start of Stage 2.

Stage 3: A leap of faith!

This is the final hurdle before the players can enter the mine a hard leap from virtually no footholds up and onto a rocky ledge that has seen better days. This is a harrowing event and you should make sure as you describe it to them that you give a sense of tension in your voice. Dramatise

the script and stress certain words as they cling to the edge for their lives.

Make the players take a Difficulty 5 Test since this is harder than the previous stages, they must balance on tip toe and leap upwards and outwards, catching on the edge of the rock before they fall off the mountain and land in a heap at the bottom.

If the players succeed then read this aloud.

It is as if you fly for a moment, you leap upwards, twisting slightly and your body takes you outwards into thin air. A few seconds of time stretch into an eternity of motion and suddenly you can feel the cold rock beneath your fingers. You pull yourself up and scramble to your feet ready to aid anyone else who follows.

The lucky player who goes next will gain a Bonus of +1 per Kai monk on the ledge, so if you have 4 players and 3 have succeeded in getting onto the ledge, the Bonus will be +3 for the 4th players Test.

They should all be safe and sound, so if they are skip ahead to the section marked: FISSURE!

If the players fail then read this aloud.

It is as if you fly for a moment, you leap upwards, twisting your body slightly and you go too far outwards. A serious error of misjudgement sends you tumbling down and towards the edge of the mountain. You have one chance to redeem yourself. You try to catch onto the edge of the chimney on the way down, you catch on but you feel the pain as your body and muscles scream in agony against the sudden jarring stop.

If this is the first player to try to get onto the ledge they can do little but plummet down and take 8 ENDURANCE as damage from the fall. They must make the chimney climb again and the leap, they return to Stage 2.

If this is not the first player, the other Kai may attempt to aid their comrade in arms. Ask the players if they would like to try to catch the Kai monk. If they wish to do this they must take a Difficulty 5 Test to prevent the Kai monk from falling back to Stage 2.

If there is more than one player safe on the ledge who wishes to help, you can add a Bonus of +1 per player beyond the designated player to this Test. Ask one player who wishes to make the Test to make it at Difficulty 5 and then add the Bonus for every other player to this Test.

If the players succeed then read this aloud.

You catch your brethren by the shoulders and haul them onto the rocky outcrop; they are now unharmed, safe and sound.

If the players fail then read this aloud.

You miss the ledge and your fellow Kai can do nothing to aid you, you tumble back down and crash to the bottom of the chimney, catching on just in time and straining your muscles and body from the sudden stop.

The player takes 8 ENDURANCE as damage and must repeat the climb from Stage 2.

FISSURE!

Once all of the players are safe and sound atop the rocky outcrop, you can read the following aloud to them.

You stand for a moment and look out across Sommerlund, then turn towards the dark mine fissure. As you squeeze inside you can hear the steady tink-tink-tink of pick axes against rock from further within. Kai Master Stormsong was correct; this is the perfect way to enter the mine without detection from the front.

You follow a dark and winding passage that leads down and further into the mine area, it looks as though water might have once flowed through here, carving a passage into the very mountain itself. Finally you are able to drop down into one of the mine tunnels; all is quiet save for the sound of the pick axes further on in.

There are no guards and there seems to be nothing to impede your progress.

Part 3: Into the Dark...

If the players entered the mine tunnel further down by use of the fissure their reward is an easier infiltration of the mine, read this aloud to the players.

You are now in the main mine tunnel, behind you there is an area that could only be reserved for sentries. You have decided to avoid conflict as much as possible it seems, so you press on towards the sounds of digging and the mine core itself.

Skip ahead to the section marked: Mine Core!

If the players entered the mine tunnel via the front, read this aloud.

You move swiftly further on into the mine, leaving the world outside behind. You can hear the steady tink-tink-tink of picks against rock from further in. The tunnel dips further on down and leads towards a softly lit area, it is from here that you can make out the sounds of voices for a moment. Sharp laughter and raucous speech gives you the idea that there are at least three or four men further on, if not more.

Since they have not found the back way into the mine, the players will have to try and sneak past the sentries or confront them.

If they confront the mine guards then they will have to fight six armed men, three from each of the mine alcoves.

Confrontation

Read this aloud if they decide to force a confrontation.

You move up to the guard alcoves and draw your weapons, you are in no mood to play this quietly and you leap upon your foes with a sudden flourish of steel. Battle is joined as the guards are taken by surprise.

The players are quickly thrown into a battle that will alert the whole mine; the guards will fight to the bitter end and will

not surrender. They are in two groups of three, one group attacks from the left and one group attacks from the right.

Mine Guards

These are elite guards that the slave master has hired to protect the mine tunnels; he has paid them well and promised them a fortune in slaves, gold, gems and more when Sommerlund belongs to his dark masters. They serve him willingly and rather than fear him, they obey his will out of respect for the man's battle prowess and his position as a Drakkarim. They will not back down from a fight.

COMBAT SKILL 15 ENDURANCE 22

Players will gain a Bonus of +1 to their COMBAT SKILL against these guards, even though they are surprised they are better trained than normal.

This is a large battle that will make a lot of noise; it will alert the rest of the mine and from now on the player's chances of sneaking around undetected will be significantly less. Make sure to describe the fight evocatively and the guards will not back down, they will not surrender and many of them would rather die than be forced to displease the slave master. They will hurl insults and press the Kai monks severely.

If the players are victorious in their battle, read this aloud.

Your skill in combat wins the day and you press your foes hard, you bring the last of them down and he falls to the ground. Now all is silent but you are certain that the battle has been heard by the other defenders in the mine. You will have to be on your guard now.

You can give them a few minutes to discuss what to do and then let them press on. In this case skip to the section marked: Mine Core!

If the players are defeated, read this aloud.

You are pressed hard by your enemies, their skill in battle surprises you and even against your superior Kai training they are more than a match. A wicked blow sends the last of you into oblivion, your life and adventure here is over.

The players are finished and their adventure is over, you can let them try again with different characters; remember to give them 2 Rank and 2 Disciplines since this adventure is harder than the previous ones.

Sneak Past

If the players are wily and wish to try and get past, make them take a Test.

If the players let Kleth escape from Adventure #2: The Test will be at a Difficulty 7 since these elite guards are on the lookout for anything suspicious.

If the players killed Kleth or he was arrested in Adventure #2: The Test will be at Difficulty 5 since the guards are not as alert.

If a player has the Kai Discipline of Camouflage it will confer a Bonus of +2 to their Test.

If the players succeed on the Test, then read this aloud.

You slip quietly past and further on into the mine network, moving swiftly through the tunnel and deeper into the Durncrag Mountains. The sound of digging gets closer and closer, coupled with the sounds of a cracking whip.

You can skip ahead to the section marked Mine Core!

If the players failed their Test then read this aloud.

You manage to dislodge something with your foot, it causes a clatter. You look down to see that a pick handle has toppled over onto a metal bucket and made a raucous clang. Now you are faced with a confrontation, as six armed men suddenly burst out from the alcoves here in the tunnel, three a side.

Enemy Mine

Now the players must battle the mine guards, so you can adjudicate this fight just as you would any other. The players do not gain a Bonus of +1 to their COMBAT SKILL in this fight since they have alerted the guards. Skip to the section marked Mine Guards and use the statistics found there.

Mine Core!

The players are now deep into the mine; they have found a large cavern with two sets of cages and a group of guards. There are eight men who patrol along with the Drakkarim, Slave Master Ryketh. Depending on the outcome from Adventure #2 there will also be Jasper Kleth who serves as the right hand man to Ryketh. The players are really going to want to even the odds, so you need to impress to them that taking on such a large group would be potential suicide.

Read this aloud to your players.

You move quietly through the mine tunnel, stopping only to listen before you continue on. Eventually after 10 minutes the old dusty tunnel gives way to a large cavern. It is lit with flickering torches and you can smell the stale scent of sweat, feel the human misery as the people here are worked and cut to the bone under the cruel lashes of the Slave Master Ryketh and his minions. Ragged and malnourished souls swing their pick axes for all they are worth. On the left side of the cavern are a set of iron cages, these are empty as the whole work force is working together on a dark rock face. Only one guard patrols backwards and forwards, a large iron key hangs from his belt. You also spot a contraption above them, a hefty wooden beam that they are shackled to, a loop of chain around their necks and padlocked together. A lever is close to where the slaver patrols, you realise that one pull of the lever would cause the machine to activate and hang the slaves by their necks until they were dead.

If you can somehow dispatch him, then you could be able to sneak right up close and free the prisoners. They may aid you in keeping the rest of the guards occupied as you close

in on Ryketh. Regardless of the options open to you, time is running out and eventually someone will discover you here in the mine unless you are careful. If the alarm is raised then the prisoners will surely die.

You will have to act quickly.

The players have a few options open to them here; this is just a small list of the kinds of things that they will try.

1. Confront the guards, Ryketh and if he is still alive/out of jail, Jasper Kleth. This is a dangerous battle since there are 8 guards, one Drakkarim and Jasper Kleth to contend with. In this case skip to the section marked: A Battle in their Favour.
2. Kill or incapacitate the slave guard, taking his key and freeing the prisoners. If this is the case, skip to the section marked: Freedom!
3. Do something that you did not expect. As previously detailed in the other adventures, players will often do something that is completely unexpected. You should be prepared to wing it, adjudicating the situation and imposing Tests for anything that requires a modicum of skill to succeed. It is impossible to predict all the outcomes in the adventure. You can use the Non-Player Character stat blocks and what you already know of the system to make it appear that you already planned ahead. Never let them know that you have made something like this up, it all adds to your mystique as a Games Master.

Give them a few minutes to discuss things In Character and Out Of Character then ask them what they plan to do. If they pick an option similar to the previous list skip to the relevant section.

A Battle in their Favour

Your players have not heeded your advice and they are feeling cocky, they are out to prove they can take on the Darklords and their minions without help or assistance. This is a battle that will not end well for them unless they are extremely resourceful or just plain lucky.

Read this aloud.

You step out of the shadows and challenge the very might of the Slave Master Ryketh. He stops overseeing the plans on a large wooden table and snorts from under his wicked black iron helmet. He calls to his men and they react quickly.

One of them rings a large bell that is behind the Drakkarim Captain and the sound echoes through the whole mine. It is now on alert.

'You are fools to step out of the darkness so, Kai; I did not expect you to be so foolhardy. I am aware of your plans to stop me; I cannot allow anything to impede my master's progress. Let me show you the result of your actions. Now more innocent lives will be lost and sacrificed upon the altar of progress.'

He gives a nod to the slave guard and the man pulls a lever to his side, there is a sickening crack as the device activates and the struggling slaves are shot into the air, wicked chains digging into their necks. One-by-one the 10 of them kick and gag, until they stop and are silent.

'Have your simpering Kai Masters taught you nothing; you are supposed to be a hidden sword of the righteous or the justice of steel. You are not supposed to be idiots, acting like Sommlending Knights against greater odds. Or did you think Kai would form a shield to protect you from idiocy?'

He orders his men to attack and the battle is joined.

The players' actions in this case have resulted in brutal consequences; 10 slaves are dead and they are now embroiled in a battle for their very lives against great odds. The alarm bell rings out and will

summon reinforcements depending on how the Kai monks entered the mine.

If the two guards from the mine mouth are still alive, they will appear during the slave master's speech. The same can be said for any survivors from the Kai's infiltration. If they killed everyone on the way in, there will be no reinforcements. If they did not, then either 8 or 6 men will show up depending.

If Kleth is still alive from Adventure #2 and he has not been incarcerated.

Jasper Kleth

A mean man, one who has spent his life in brutal competition with almost everyone he has ever known. He is a rough looking customer and he really enjoys inflicting pain. Kleth has been a servant of the Darklords in Toran for a few years, under the command of a vicious slave master. He uses every dirty trick in the book to get his own way and he was going to murder Harbold and take his business over, using it as a front to increase slave trade in Toran.

COMBAT SKILL 17 ENDURANCE 27

Mine Guards

These are elite guards that the slave master has hired to protect the mine tunnels; he has paid them particularly well and promised them a fortune in slaves, gold, gems and more when Sommerlund belongs to his dark masters. They serve him willingly and rather than fear him, they obey his will out of respect for the man's battle prowess and his position as a Drakkarim. They will not back down from a fight.

COMBAT SKILL 15 ENDURANCE 22

There are normally 8 of these guards but if the alarm is sounded then there can be additional 8 or 6 reinforcements, depending on how the players entered the mine. So they could end up facing 16 men in total.

Slave Master Ryketh

Attired in his black iron armour, this is a massive Drakkarim Captain who has served the Darklords faithfully for a number of years. He is extremely well spoken and prone to mocking his foes in a gentlemanly manner, odd for one of the Drakkarim. He gets results so his cordial manners are tolerated. He speaks in perfect diction and his booming voice echoes from under the black iron of his helmet.

COMBAT SKILL 19 ENDURANCE 30

He carries a massive Drakkarim Two-Handed Sword that confers a Bonus of +1 to his COMBAT SKILL.

This battle will be decisive and brutal; Ryketh will not give up at all and will press the players hard. He will attack the weakest member of the group first and then concentrate on the strongest, remaining quiet during combat and letting his sword do his talking.

If the players are victorious then skip ahead to the section marked: VICTORY!!!

If the players fall in battle then read the following aloud.

You are hard pressed in this fight, this almost seems impossible to win. The Drakkarim's men and the man himself are excellent warriors, you are cut down one-by-one until the last of you is hauled before the man barely alive. He nods to you and ends your life in a single sword stroke. Your adventure here is over.

The players have failed and their punishment for fighting greater odds is death, you can let them try the adventure again with other characters or move on to a new adventure. New characters for this adventure should begin with 2 Ranks and 2 Disciplines. New Kai monks in your own adventures should begin at the beginning; they should not be rewarded for failure, or be given higher Rank, they must earn this from the Kai Masters. It is of course fine for you to let them play advanced Kai if your adventure has been set up for it.

Freedom!

If the players opt for a better, stealthier approach then read the following aloud.

You move over to the shadows, keeping out of sight. Your Kai training allows you to flit about like a ghost in here. Now you are but a breath away from the patrolling man, one of the slaves in the line stops and drops his pick, it seems he's had enough, the timing could not be better. The slave guard snarls and stomps towards him. If you act now you should be able to get the drop on the man before he even has a chance to do anything. Or you could wait and see.

If the players wait and see, read this aloud.

The slave guard reaches the slave and slams his hand into the man's stomach, he does not speak but he kicks the man twice in the ribs and then lashes him with his whip. He walks off muttering about useless dregs and you feel his eyes upon you. He calls out and soon you find yourselves surrounded by the Drakkarim Captain's men. Without speaking Ryketh calls them to attack you and you must battle the defenders of the mine as well as this brutish man. He is a huge Drakkarim in black iron armour.

Skip to the section marked: Battle in Their Favour and prepare to run the combat between the defenders of the mine, 8 armed men, Jasper Kleth if he is alive and has not been incarcerated from Adventure #2 and Slave Master Ryketh. He does not bother triggering the alarm.

If the players jump the slave guard, ask them if they are going to kill or incapacitate him then read the correct section out aloud.

Kill:

You waste no time, dispatching the slave guard with a wicked snap of his neck. He drops and you lay him between some crates. You take his key and begin to move amongst the slaves undoing their bonds and whispering to them. It takes very little effort to ignite a revolt here and you tell them to wait for your signal. The spark of revolution burns in their eyes and they grip their pick axes tightly, one of them takes the guard's whip and sword.

Enemy Mine

The players will have an easier time of it now, they have 10 allies and these pick axe wielding slaves will keep the 8 guards occupied allowing the Kai to tackle Ryketh.

Incapacitate:

You bring the slave guard down suddenly; he does not even have a chance to cry out. You bind him and leave him behind some crates. You take his key and release the rest of the slaves, you tell them that you plan to free them but they must fight for that freedom as well. One amongst them gives you a nod and they prepare to strike, on your signal.

The players will have an easier time of it now, they have 10 allies and these pick axe wielding slaves will keep the 8 guards occupied allowing the Kai to tackle Ryketh.

Part 4. Slave Master Ryketh

It is now or never, your players are about to confront a dangerous foe. They have a small army behind them and you should give them a few moments In Character and Out Of Character to discuss what they plan to do. When they are ready, read this aloud.

You have come so far, now ready to finally face the foe behind the slave operations in Sommerlund. This man, Slave Master Ryketh is a huge Drakkarim Captain in black iron armour with a wicked helm and a massive two handed sword. He is an extremely imposing man who has an air of power about him. You stand before him suddenly, dragging his attention away from his battle plans laid out on the table.

If the players did not kill or incarcerate Jasper Kleth from Adventure #2 then he will be there too. If this is the case, read this aloud, if not skip past this paragraph.

At the right hand side of Ryketh is the man who can only be Jasper Kleth, he spots you and his face pales. He reaches for his sword.

Kleth is not best pleased to see the players but he is also scared of them, they brought

a lot of trouble down on his head and he is feeling the sting of Ryketh's whip. Read the next section out regardless.

Slave Master Ryketh looks up from his battle plans, he is about to speak when one of your slave allies throws his pick axe towards a guard by the alarm bell. It is an amazing throw and the pick buries itself into the man's head. Undaunted Ryketh moves around his table and speaks to you.

'You have caused me a great deal of trouble Kai monks, for this I am duty bound to put an end to your meddling. Guards, kill the slaves, leave the Kai to me.' With this he orders his men to attack and brandishes his massive two handed sword, waiting for the opportune moment to strike.

Chaos breaks loose and the slaves begin to strike out at Ryketh's men with their pent up anger and frustration, keeping them occupied and stopping them from interfering with your work. The alarm can never ring as one of the slaves pulls it free and drops it in a bucket of water, before he leaps on another guard and uses a stolen sword to gut him.

The battle is now joined; you must stop this villain once and for all!

This is an epic battle, be sure to describe the fight in the background. Whilst there is no need to use Tests for the slavers or the mine guards, you can embellish the fight by describing what the players see in the background rather like the previous paragraph with the alarm bell and the stolen sword. It is moments like this that breathe life into your Magnamund adventure and make the players remember it for a long time. They will love the epic nature of the battle and the sounds and screams of combat as it rages around them.

Make the fight with Ryketh and Jasper if he is there, give them some witty dialogue in combat (from Jasper) or make Ryketh a silent and deadly foe, have him strike and wound characters based on his success in combat. If he looks to be deadly then the players will respect him as more than another head taken on their road to success as Kai monks.

Slave Master Ryketh

Attired in his black iron armour, this is a massive Drakkarim Captain who has served the Darklords faithfully for a number of years. He is extremely well spoken and prone to mocking his foes in a gentlemanly manner, odd for one of the Drakkarim. He gets results so his cordial manners are tolerated. He speaks in perfect diction and his booming voice echoes from under the black iron of his helmet.

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A mean man, one who has spent his life in brutal competition with almost everyone he has ever known. He is a rough looking customer and he really enjoys inflicting pain. Kleth has been a servant of the Darklords in Toran for a few years, under the command of a vicious slave master. He uses every dirty trick in the book to get his own way and he was going to murder Harbold and take his business over, using it as a front to increase slave trade in Toran.

COMBAT SKILL 17 ENDURANCE 27

If Ryketh is defeated then skip to the section marked: VICTORY!!!

If the players fall in battle then read the following aloud.

You fight long and hard against the Drakkarim Captain and he proves too much for you, with a series of decisive blows he batters aside your defences and ends your life. He is a merciful man and grants you a quick death. As your vision blurs you can hear the screams of the slaves as they are put to the sword, demoralised by your death. The mocking laughter of the other warriors echoes into your ears as finally your eyes close and you are swept away to oblivion. Your adventure here is over and Sommerlund is one step closer to the Darklord's power.

They have been defeated but they came so far, you may wish to allow their next characters to start a new adventure at Rank 2 or they can try this adventure again at a higher Rank. Remember to give them 2 Ranks and 2 Kai Disciplines if you do this.

VICTORY!!!

If the players win the day, read the following aloud.

You strike a final blow against the Drakkarim Captain that sends him crashing to the ground; his table shatters under the weight of his impact. A candle ignites oil against a map of Sommerlund, plans that have been laid for so long. The map starts to burn before a slave manages to snatch it and pulls it free; the Freylund of the Kai has been obliterated from the map. It sends a shiver down your spine as you wonder if this is a portent of the future or just bad luck. One-by-one the men who fought under the Drakkarim Captain surrender and are stripped of their weapons and armour. The slaves let out a mighty cheer and tumultuous clapping breaks out.

You watch the Drakkarim Captain breathe his last; gracious even in defeat he speaks one last time.

'You have proven yourselves worthy Kai, odd that such lowly monks would fell one such as I. However, I can go to my death knowing that I did not fail my masters. For what is to come, you have no hope against.' Before he can be questioned further he collapses to the ground and dies with a sigh.

It is over, you have freed the slaves and you have killed Ryketh and his minions. You gather as much evidence from the table as possible and then lead the slaves out towards safety.

If the players did not kill all the guards on the way out, then read the following aloud, otherwise skip on to the section marked: Cave Mouth.

As you progress further out from the cave, you stop and take the other guards prisoner. They do not give you any trouble as they are no match for Kai monks and a small army.

Cave Mouth

If the players did not kill the guards at the cave mouth then read the following aloud.

You step out into the fresh air and call upon the two guards to surrender; they do so when they see you and the small army you command.

If the players incapacitated the guards at the cave mouth then read the following aloud.

You stop to check on the guards, leaving them in the state you had found them in. You stand now in the fresh air, victorious.

Once the players are outside read the following aloud.

The slave leader looks at you and smiles, he shakes his head, 'I did not think I would ever see outside again, I am truly in your debt. As we all are. Yet we must return to the caves and guard these men until someone can come to deal with those who still live.'

You nod and wish him well; turning your head towards the Kai Monastery you head back down to your horses, mount up and ride as though the Darklords themselves were on your backs. You make the trip in half the time and rocket through the gates of the Monastery. The Kai Masters are gathered close to the courtyard and Stormsong is there, he almost looks overjoyed to see you.

'My brave Kai monks,' he says with a soft tone. 'It is good to see you back again; I take it that your mission went well?'

Now it is time to play Stormsong again, remember that he is very fatherly in his attitude to the players, he will not lavish them with praise openly but he is extremely proud of their accomplishments. Give the players a few minutes to explain everything that they have to say, nod and

listen as Stormsong, be prepared to play this role to the hilt.

Finally when they are done, read the following aloud.

Kai Master Stormsong seems very proud of you, he stands before each of you and nods. He then dispatches a Kai monk to inform the Sommlending Border Rangers who are camped nearby, he will send them to keep a close eye on the defeated slavers. He requires no more of you this day. You are dismissed and told to prepare for arduous training in the days to come.

'You have done the order proud,' he says finally. 'I expect you to always perform so well in all your tasks, which reminds me, there are floors that need to be mopped and wood that needs to be...' he laughs. 'I jest, go get some rest you earned it.'

As the monastery continues to resound with the sound of training and prayer; you follow the Kai Master's advice and are eager to seek a good meal, a warm drink and a bed until the next day dawns.

Their adventure is now over and the threat to Sommerlund has been thwarted!

Reading the (Draconic) Writing on the Wall

By Shannon Appelcline

Summary: A wall with ancient draconic writing might hold secrets that the EWF would pay dearly for.

Locale: Any place in Glorantha that is prone to earthquakes. Dragon Pass is a great option.

Requirements: None, though players associated with the EWF will be particularly interested.

The Encounter

An earthquake suddenly shakes the ground, displaying the power of Maran Gor and knocking heroes to the ground (unless they succeed at an Athletics test). It also upsets the wildlife, possibly requiring the heroes to fight their way past herds angered beasts.

The next day the Adventurers find a large ravine cutting across their path. It is at least eight metres across, more than more would want to jump but the five metre climb down, then back up the other side does not seem very challenging (Athletics test at +20% bonus to climb this rough surface). Once down in the ravine, the Adventurers will note a sickly green glow coming from about 25 metres to the side, where the ravine narrows a bit and becomes partially enclosed. When they approach it, the heroes see an unexpected sight:

Glowing viridescent letters writhe upon the wall like living creatures, seeming to twist and turn even as you watch them. They have a strange, draconic feel to them – cold, serpentine and very, very old.

These letters spell out words in Auld Wymish. However, they are not in the written Auld Wymish language invented by the EWF; instead they are Auld Wymish tongue words made concrete as primal draconic runes.

These runic words have also attracted some local draconic forms in the area, including a swarm of **dragon bugs** that surge forward, attacking the Adventurers as they approach.

Development

Having defeated the dragon bugs, the Adventurers can investigate the draconic wall.

Anyone with some knowledge of Auld Wymish can understand most of the writing. It describes a series of several rituals, most of which occur within the outline of the Great Dragon. The specifics of these are left to the Games Master, but they could be used as a model for a campaign — as the Adventurers either try to conduct or prevent the rituals. Alternatively, knowledge of these rituals could be sold to the highest bidder, or ignored entirely.

However, there is no ignoring the fact that these primal draconic runes can leave a permanent mark on those who view them. If the Adventurers stay in the area for more than five minutes, have them all make a Persistence test.

The Adventurer (if any) who fails the test with the highest roll forges a permanent connection to the writings. Draconic things will occasionally plague his dreams and draconic creatures will sometimes notice him in Glorantha, perhaps to his benefit, perhaps not. Not only can these effects be used as an ongoing campaign subplot but a full plot could be built out of either attempting to remove this connection or trying to follow the messages of the draconic dreams.

NPCs

Angered Beasts. If you wish the Adventurers to fight beasts crazed by the

earthquake, good choices include a brown bear (*RuneQuest Core Rulebook*, page 163) or a pack of wolves (*RuneQuest Core Rulebook*, page 181). Otherwise, choose an opponent that is most appropriate for the region and your group — or ignore this prelude fight entirely.

Dragon Bugs. These are huge insects that have taken on draconic characteristics, including reptilian scales. Nonetheless, dragons, dragonewts and all other things draconic disown them. They are also very aggressive. Include enough to outnumber the Adventurers by a few.

Further Adventure Seeds

The EWF Interest. Allinkeul Brightmind, a Draconised Orlanthe Dragon's Voice, learns of the Adventurers' encounter with the wall of writing. He wishes to be brought to it. Unfortunately, as they approach the ravine, the heroes will learn that others are seeking the wall and armed conflict may well result.

The Shaker's Story. Maran Gor's unearthing of the draconic wall was not accidental. Whether she wanted to reveal it or destroy it is up to the Games Master but in either case, some of Maran Gor's most persuasive followers encourage the heroes to finish the job that Maran Gor began.

RuneQuest Encounters

These *RuneQuest* Encounters are short, structured adventure seeds that can be used as the basis of an RPG scene. Additional ideas suggest how to expand them into long-term plots. This issue's Encounters draw on professions and information found in *Glorantha: The Second Age*.

	Dice	Average	1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	3D6	11	1–2	Right Hind Leg	3/3
CON	3D6+3	14	3–4	Right Centre Leg	3/3
SIZ	1D6+1	5	5–6	Left Hind Leg	3/3
INT	3	3	7–8	Left Center Leg	3/3
POW	3D6	11	9–11	Abdomen	3/5
DEX	3D6+6	17	12–13	Thorax	3/6
CHA	4	4	14–15	Right Fore Leg	3/3
			16–17	Left Fore Leg	3/3
			18–20	Head	3/4

Combat Actions	2	Typical Armour: Scales, 3 Armour Points Traits: Breathe Flame (1D3, 1/day), Dark Sight, Magic Sense Skills: Athletics 40%, Evade 50%, Persistence 35%
Damage Modifier	-1D2	
Magic Points	11	
Movement	12m	
Strike Rank	+9	

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Weapon Skill	Damage	AP/HP
Sting	S	S	45%	1D6-1D2	As for Abdomen

Waiting for the Sun

Summary: A Jrustelan Knowledge Quester is awaiting the re-enactment of a myth involving the Sun God. Lucky for the Adventurers, they get to play a role.

Locale: Any place in Glorantha that has a hill.

Requirements: One or more Adventurers associated either with a sun god, a fire god, or a light god or else with a darkness god or a troll god.

The Encounter

Cresting the top of a hill, the Adventurers are momentarily blinded by a shaft of bright, golden sun that pierces the partial

cloud cover. When their eyes clear, they see a jaunty looking man sitting off to one side of the path in a comfy folding chair. He has just finished a light snack and seems happy to see the party.

‘Welcome, welcome, my friends. I was afraid that you would not arrive today. Now quickly, you must tell me your affinities, so I can tell you whether to step right or left!’

The man is **Svoalac Goldensight**, a Jrustelan Knowledge Quester. He has recently looted through the myths of Peloria and has come to the conclusion that this precise location will today see a re-enactment of the myth of the Hill of Gold — when the Sun God was defeated

and devoured by a Darkness God. Svoalac’s intent is to watch the re-enactment, then as the myth comes to an end, steal away some of the fire power which the ailing Sun loses.

Svoalac’s first goal is to determine whether the Adventurers represent the forces of darkness or the sun. He will continue to quiz them — perhaps even posing moral dilemmas or asking questions of philosophy — until he reaches a satisfactory conclusion. If the Adventurers turn out to have more sun affinity, he will tell them to stand to the right of the hill and if they turn out to have more darkness affinity, he will tell them to stand to the left.

Waiting for the Sun

Development

As soon as Svoalac announces which side the Adventurers are allied with, their foes appear from the other side of the hill. It is a band of **trolls** if the Adventurers sided with light and a band of **Pelorians** if they sided with darkness.

These foes have a grudge. If you can, build on something that the Adventurers recently did, else make up a grudge — like the Adventurers taking food the trolls

were hunting or trespassing through land that the Pelorians claim as they own. In any case, they spring to the attack while Svoalac sits back to watch.

The fight should be stacked against the sun forces. Perhaps not dramatically so but they should be at a disadvantage. If the Adventurers have sided with darkness, no problem but if they have sided with light, be ready to have the trolls maim rather than kill.

In either case, Svoalac will take a weapon from the light forces after their defeat; by taking this part in the myth he hopes to steal the fire powers that the Sun God lost that day. Afterwards he will heal the Adventurers as best he can.

NPCs

Svoalac **Goldensight**, **Jrustelan Knowledge Quester**. Though Svoalac has never studied sorcery, he is still a powerful Jrusteli with a wealth of experience and reliable Common Magic at his disposal.

			<i>1D20</i>	<i>Hit Location</i>	<i>AP/HP</i>
STR	13		1–3	Right Leg	4/5
CON	12		4–6	Left Leg	4/5
SIZ	14		7–9	Abdomen	4/6
INT	17		10–12	Chest	4/7
POW	17		13–15	Right Arm	4/4
DEX	10		16–18	Left Arm	4/4
CHA	14		19–20	Head	4/5

<i>Combat Actions</i>	3	Armour: Scalemail, 4 Armour Points
<i>Damage Modifier</i>	+1D2	Equipment: Long Bow, Long Sword, Target Shield, Scalemail, many scrolls and quills
Magic Points	17	Common Magic 85%: Abacus 1, Bear Witness 5, Befuddle (2), Heal 4, Second Sight (3)
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+14 (+8)	Skills: Athletics 63%, Culture (Jrusteli) 74%, Evade 46%, Influence 79%, Insight 72%, Perception 85%, Persistence 78%, Resilience 48%, Survival 71%

Combat Style

Long Bow 62%

Sword and Shield 57%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Long Bow	H	175m	1D8	4/7
Long Sword	M	L	1D8+1D2	6/12
Target Shield	L	S	1D6+1D2	4/12

Pelorians

Use Pelorians as foes if the Adventurers choose darkness but adjust combat skills and armour to be slightly worse than the PCs.

			1D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
STR	14		1–3	Right Leg	3/6
CON	14		4–6	Left Leg	3/6
SIZ	13		7–9	Abdomen	3/7
INT	11		10–12	Chest	3/8
POW	13		13–15	Right Arm	3/5
DEX	11		16–18	Left Arm	3/5
CHA	13		19–20	Head	3/6

Combat Actions	2	Armour: Ringmail, 3 Armour Points
Damage Modifier	+1D2	Equipment: Short Spear, Heater Shield, Ringmail, Holy Sign of Yelm
Magic Points	13	Common Magic 41%: Bladesharp 2, Light 1, Parry 2, Repair 1
Movement	8m	
Strike Rank	+12 (+7)	Skills: Athletics 53%, Brawn 44%, Evade 34%, Lore (Tactics) 35%, Persistence 35%, Resilience 41%

Combat Style

Spear and Shield 45%

Weapons

Type	Size	Reach	Damage	AP/HP
Short Spear	M	L	1D8+1+1D2	4/5
Heater Shield	L	S	1D4+1D2	6/12

Trolls

Use Dark Trolls (*RuneQuest Core Rulebook*, page 165) as foes if the Adventurers chose light but adjust combat skills and armour to be slightly better than the PCs.

Further Adventure Seeds

Second Verse. Happy with the Adventurers' performance, Svoalac will approach them again, trapping them in some mythic recreation at a future time.

The Power of Light (or Darkness). Unbeknownst to themselves, if the Adventurers win the battle, they manage to keep a bit of solar power for themselves. A light spirit may occasionally cast Firearrow, Fireblade, Ignite or Light for them. In the future, he will want something in return, drawing them into a new solar quest, whether they are interested or not.

A Gallery of Outsiders — Five New Species for Traveller

By Bryan Steele

The *Traveller* universe is immense and contains a huge variety of different beings that occupy a vast collection of worlds and galaxies. In the *Traveller Core Rulebook* several of these alien species are revealed to readers but in such a vast universe there has to be more. Science fiction and horror stories, comics and movies have shown countless beings that have grabbed our attention in one way or another. Those creatures have sparked new and interesting alien races. Perhaps these alien creatures may appear in some world within your version of *Traveller*?

This article gives descriptions and rules for five interesting alien races that have been dreamt up due to popular movies

and stories. It also details how *Traveller* Referees and players can choose to make use of them in their own gaming sessions – as Player Characters or new oppositions.

Artificial Soldier – Hatched in labs, tested in battle...

Designed by scientists looking to create the perfect disposable warrior that could be dropped into a battlefield to do whatever it takes to fulfil the mission, the artificial soldier program forgot to omit one very important factor – self-preservation. These silica-based humanoid life forms are everything the scientists planned them to be, except they were supposed to just ‘die out’ after their mission was over. They did

not. Their genetically fabricated bodies were so tuned to survival in battle that their basic ‘do anything to live on’ programming carried over after their missions ended. In effect, they refused to simply fade away after their intended use was up.

Artificial soldiers cannot breed but they have learned how to recreate the building processes that allows their ‘birth’ from control-environmental wombs and their fast-tracked behavioural and learning processes. They managed to find a way to effectively reproduce asexually, turning a few dozen battle-hardened veterans into a fully capable, albeit militaristic, society.

Other than the tattooed barcode numbers

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
1 st Generation Infantry	Army (Infantry) 3	12	10	8	7	10	4	—
Drive (wheeled) 1, Gun Combat (energy pistol) 2, Leadership 1, Medic 1, Melee (blade) 2, Recon 1, Survival 2, Tactics 1; Artificial Soldier Traits								
Blade (2d6), Laser pistol (3d6+3), Combat Armour (14)								

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Laboratory Breeder	Army (Infantry) 2, Scholar (scientist) 1	11	10	8	9	12	5	—
Computers 2, Gun Combat (energy pistol) 2, Life Science (cybernetics) 2, Medic 1, Melee (blade) 2, Pilot (spacecraft) 1, Survival 1; Artificial Soldier Traits								
Blade (2d6), Laser pistol (3d6+3), Combat Armour (14), Medikit, Multi-spectrum Medical Scanner								

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
5 th Generation Spacer	Army (Infantry) 1, Drifter (Wanderer) 2	10	10	10	7	9	3	—
Athletics (coordination)1, Comms 1, Gun Combat (energy pistols) 1, Gun Combat (slug rifle) 2, Investigate 1, Jack of All Trades 1, Medic 1, Melee (blade) 1, Recon 1, Streetwise 1, Tactics 1; Artificial Soldier Traits								
Comms, ACR w/ 2 magazines (3d6), Combat Armour (12), Medikit, Survival Kit								

on the necks of the first 72, all artificial soldiers are basically identical. They are physically fit, bald, eerily smooth-skinned and exactly 1.95 metres tall. They are strong, fast and preternaturally good at learning, all at the cost of natural healing capabilities and a social awkwardness that borders on sociopathic.

Artificial Soldiers in Traveller

Artificial Soldiers have Notable Strength, Dexterity and Education (+2), Weak Social Standing (-4) and cannot manifest Psionic powers. Additionally, Artificial Soldiers do not naturally heal. They 'seal wounds' using the Medic skill; gaining lost Characteristic points equal to the Effect of the roll (once per day).

Example Artificial Soldier Characters

The following are several ready-made Artificial Soldier characters to use in a *Traveller* game.

The Carnaxians – All for meat, meat for all...

Native to an industrialised planet on the rim of a high-radiation system, the Carnaxians were once common omnivorous humanoids living on a lush planet with adequate agriculture and replenishing livestock. After 20 generations of pollution and over-industrialisation, the planet's flora became scarce and weak. After the vegetation vanished, chemical proteins

and vitamin supplements became thin and eventually nonexistent. The Carnaxians turned to base carnivorous behaviours at first, eventually even succumbing to cannibalism.

Fifty more generations and several evolutions later, the Carnaxians have become the personification of predatory instinct and insatiable hunger. They began to hunt each other like tribes of savages, only equipped with guns and armour as often as not. The hunt became half the fun; the devouring of one's enemies the greater half, of course. Reaching out into the stars, the Carnaxians found new prey – and new tastes to fill their maws.

Carnaxians are short and squat humanoids, roughly 1.5 metres tall on average. They

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Carnaxian Pack Leader	Scout (Exploration) 2, Rogue (Enforcer) 2	9	11	10	7	4	7	—
Gun Combat (slug pistol) 2, Investigation 1, Leadership 1, Melee (natural weapons) 2, Recon 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Zero-G 1; Carnaxian Traits								
Body Pistol w/ 2 magazines (3d6-3), Flak Jacket+Natural (7), Stunner (2d6+3)								

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Carnaxian Meatmonger	Scout (Exploration) 2, Rogue (Enforcer) 1	10	10	9	6	3	6	—
Athletics (Endurance) 1, Gun Combat (slug pistol) 2, Investigation 2, Melee (blade) 2, Melee (natural weapons) 3, Recon 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2; Carnaxian Traits								
Blade (2d6), Body Pistol w/ 2 magazines (3d6-3), Flak Jacket+Natural (7), Hunting Survival Kit, Stunner (2d6+3)								

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Carnaxian Instinctual Predator	Rogue (Enforcer) 1, Psion (Psi-Warrior) 3	9	11	10	7	5	8	9
Athletics (Endurance) 1, Awareness 2, Gun Combat (slug pistol) 1, Investigation 1, Melee (blade) 1, Melee (natural weapons) 2, Recon 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Telekinesis 1; Carnaxian Traits								
Blade (2d6), Body Pistol w/ 2 magazines (3d6-3), Flak Jacket+Natural (7), Hunting Survival Kit, Stunner (2d6+3)								

A Gallery of Outsiders — Five New Species for Traveller

are covered in thick and leathery skin the colour of soured milk, making great contrast to their deep blue, pupil-less eyes. Their long-fingered hands and long-toed feet end in sharp claws good for grasping prey and their wide, froglike mouths are filled with serrated teeth similar to a shark's. There is little more frightening than a Carnaxian hunting party looming over you as you come to...their stunners ensuring you are *live* prey when they begin to eat you.

Carnaxians in Traveller

Carnaxians are Armoured (1), have Notable Dexterity (+2), Natural Weapons (claws and bite) and Feral. Carnaxians suffer a -2 to all skill checks if they have not eaten fresh meat that day. The damage of a Carnaxian's bite attack is 2d6; their claws inflict 1d6+1. When a Carnaxian shows Psionic potential, they add +1 to their Psi Characteristic.

Example Carnaxian Characters

The following are several ready-made Carnaxian characters to use in a *Traveller* game.

The Gorrilans – High-tech apes with low-tech tactics...

An offshoot from the common uplifted apes that came away from Earth aeons ago, the Gorrilans are hulking reminders that having a high technology level does not always mean having a higher sense of civilisation. Dedicating their lives to brutal close combat tactics and constant warfare between Gorrilan clans, each member of the species is hard as nails and never afraid of engaging an enemy. As long as they can get in close and get their armoured mitts on their foes, a Gorrilan is happy.

Gorrilans thrive on combat and constantly test their mettle against what they hope to be greater opponents. They adorn themselves with trophies; kill markings and reminders of their glory. To some these markings look cluttered and ugly hanging from the aliens' fur or armour but to a Gorrilan it speaks volumes of their battle prowess, ability and worth to the rest of Gorrilan society.

Gorrilans are 2.5 metre-tall gorilla-based humanoids that tend to rest forward on their knuckles, walking on their elongated arms like their terran counterparts. Their fur is dark brown, black or even a silvery grey, with near-black skin tones showing on their hands, feet and faces. They are extremely strong due to their musculature but tend to move somewhat awkwardly as a result of it.

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Gorrilan Clan WarApe	Marines (Ground Assault)	13	6	9	7	6	7	—
Athletics (strength) 3, Carouse 1, Gun Combat (slug pistol) 1, Heavy Weapons (man portable artillery) 1, Melee (bludgeon) 2, Melee (unarmed) 2, Recon 2, Survival 2, Tactics 1, Vacc Suit 1; Gorrilan Traits Baton (2d6), Comms, LMG (4d6), Gauss Pistol w/ 2 magazines (3d6), Powered Gauntlets (2d6+4), Combat Armour (14), 1d6-3 Combat Implants, 1d6-2 War Trophies								

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Gorrilan SiegeApe	Marines (Star Marines)	14 (18)	8 (6)	11	7	7	8	—
Athletics (strength) 3, Battle Dress 2, Carouse 1, Gun Combat (slug pistol) 2, Heavy Weapons (man portable artillery) 2, Melee (bludgeon) 2, Melee (unarmed) 3, Recon 1, Survival 1, Tactics 2, Gorrilan Traits Battle Dress (16), Rotary Machine Gun (5d6), Gauss Pistol w/ 2 magazines (3d6), Rending Fists (4d6+6), 1d6 Combat Implants, 1d6+2 War Trophies								

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Gorrilan Silverback Officer	Marines (Star Marines) 2, Nobility (Administratr) 2	14 (18)	10 (8)	12	9	10	9	—
Athletics (strength) 2, Battle Dress 3, Carouse 1, Gun Combat (slug pistol) 2, Heavy Weapons (man portable artillery) 2, Investigate 2, Leadership 2, Melee (bludgeon) 3, Melee (unarmed) 3, Recon 1, Survival 2, Tactics 3, Gorrilan Traits Battle Dress (16), PGMP-F2 (10d6), Gauss Pistol w/ 2 magazines (3d6), Rending Fists (4d6+6), 1d6+2 Combat Implants, 1d6x5 War Trophies								

The Gorrilans in Traveller

Gorrilans have Notable Strength (+2), Large size and Weak Education (-2). Gorrilans suffer a -2 to all ranged combat rolls and are incapable of refusing a challenge to any test of physical prowess (within reason).

Example Gorrilan Characters

The following are several ready-made Gorrilan characters to use in a *Traveller* game.

The Vampyr – In space, bloodsuckers do NOT sparkle...

Dozens of terran myths and legends surround the idea of an undead creature that lives off the blood and energies of the living – the vampire. As all myths have

some root in fact, so too does the legend of the vampire. Long ago, when Earth was in its darkest of ages, a race of predatory aliens came to the planet in search of resources. One of these was a renewable source of their primary food item; colloidal iron. This race, the Vampyr, needed trace amounts of iron in their diets to survive but had weak digestive systems that could only tolerate liquids and soft pastes. The answer was iron-rich human blood.

The Vampyr came to the planet and many others like it to hunt and feed upon the blood-bearing creatures occupying it. Unlike the stories about them, Vampyr (both single and plural in reference) are very much alive. They simply have a very cool body temperature, a circulatory system that is based on osmosis rather than a pumping heart and a severe physiological reaction to direct ultraviolet

light. Their fabled strength, speed and amazing charisma hailed from their innate psionic abilities, which are formidable. So long as they keep the iron content in their body high, they are amazingly adaptive creatures through the power of their mind.

Like their descriptions in the stories, the Vampyr have extremely pale flesh and red eyes like those of an albino. Their strange metabolism and internal organelle structure makes their skin clammy and their wounds do not bleed so much as *weep*. Other than their sharp fangs (which include all of their teeth, not just the pronounced canines) they are similar to terran humans in size and form but many have longer or pointed ears and more almond-shaped eyes. They can pass as humans with makeup or in very low light but with their mental skills they rarely need to.

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Vampyr Socialite	Nobility (Dilettante) 3, Psion (Adept) 1	7	9	6	9	9	10	10

Athletics (Coordination) 1, Awareness 2, Carouse 2, Computers 1, Deception 3, Gambler 1, Medic 1, Melee (blade) 1, Melee (natural weapons) 2, Stealth 2, Telepathy 2; Vampyr Traits
Blade (2d6), Executive Protec Suit (4), 1d6-4 vials of blood, 2d6 x 1,000 Credits

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Vampyr Bloodhunter	Rogue (line/crew) 2, Psion (Psi-Warrior) 2	9	9	8	8	7	8	11

Athletics (Coordination) 2, Awareness 3, Clairvoyance 2, Computers 1, Deception 3, Gun Combat (slug pistol) 2, Melee (blade) 2, Melee (natural weapons) 2, Stealth 3, Telekinesis 2; Vampyr Traits
Blade (2d6), Silenced Body Pistol (3d6-3), Mesh Armour (6), 1d6-2 vials of blood

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Vampyr Warlord	Nobility (Administrator) 2, Psion (Psi-Warrior) 3	10	9	8	8	7	9	12

Athletics (Coordination) 1, Awareness 2, Clairvoyance 1, Comms 1, Computers 1, Deception 1, Gun Combat (slug rifle) 2, Leadership 2, Melee (large blade) 3, Melee (natural weapons) 2, Stealth 1, Tactics 2, Telekinesis 2, Telepathy 2; Vampyr Traits
Broadsword (3d6), Gauss Rifle (4d6), Combat Armour (12), 1d6 vials of blood

A Gallery of Outsiders — Five New Species for Traveller

Vampyr in Traveller

Vampyr are Psionic, have Notable Psi (+1), Natural Weapon (bite) and a Fast Metabolism. Vampyr have Weak Endurance (-2). The damage of a Vampyr's bite attack is 1d6. Additionally, any part of a Vampyr caught in direct ultraviolet light (yes, open space counts) unshielded suffers 1d6 points of damage each round. They also suffer an additional 1d6 of damage from any weapon with 'laser' in its name.

Example Vampyr Characters

The following are several ready-made Vampyr characters to use in a *Traveller* game.

The Zom-B Infected – When there is no more room in Hell...

The zomroniasis complex B, or Zom-B for short, was a powerful bio-weapon used on rogue human colonists during the much hated and tragic Colony Wars of Sigma-7. Designed originally to be a low-orbit weapon that would deaden and desiccate

flesh when spread into the atmosphere, complex B was unfortunately never tested in a high-radiation environment – a worldwide travesty in the making. When the Corporation deployed Zom-B onto Sigma-7, the radiation layer in the upper stratosphere mutated the bacteria and turned it into a powerful flesh contagion that turns men into pain-deadened monsters.

Contagious beyond just the first exposure, the infected of the Zom-B bio-weapon can also pass their powerful disease to anyone they bite (or somehow spread their saliva to). In a matter of hours the bacteria turn the human into a grey-green leathery beast with black nails, teeth and eyes. They are undeniably tough and can withstand most injuries, healing through the devouring of what was lost – flesh.

Those infected with the Zom-B weapon are not truly dead or rotting, they simply look as if they should be. They are horrible to look upon, smell terrible and have a constant shuffle to their step due to the deadening in their nerve endings; a blessing and a curse. While they might not be able to feel

the world perfectly, they also never feel the pain of the wounds that are killing them... when the people of the galaxy see them as the monsters they were made to be.

The Zom-B Infected in Traveller

Zom-B Infected have Notable Strength (+1) and Endurance (+4), Natural Weapon (bite) and a Slow Metabolism. They also have Very Weak Dexterity and Social Standing (-4). The Infected cannot heal normally, only healing damage they have suffered equal to the damage caused from their bite attacks. The damage of a Zom-B Infected's bite attack is 1d6+3.

Additionally, any human (or near-human species) bitten by a Zom-B Infected must pass an Athletics (Endurance) skill check or contract the disease; becoming one of the Zom-B Infected in 2d6+4 hours.

Example Zom-B Infected Characters

The following are several ready-made Zom-B Infected characters to use in a *Traveller* game.

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Sigma-7 Colonist	Citizen (Colonist) 3	8	6	12	7	6	4	—
Athletics (Strength) 1, Gun Combat (slug pistol) 1, Melee (natural weapons) 1, Survival 1; Zom-B Infected Traits Body-Pistol w/ 1 magazine (3d6-3), Cloth Armour (4)								

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Sigma-7 Soldier	Army (Infantry) 2, Citizen (Worker) 2	10	6	12	6	7	5	—
Athletics (Strength) 1, Gun Combat (slug rifle) 1, Melee (blade) 1, Melee (natural weapons) 1, Survival 1, Tactics 1; Zom-B Infected Traits Blade (2d6), Assault Rifle w/ 1 magazine (3d6), Mesh Armour (6)								

Character	Career Path	Strength	Dexterity	Endurance	Intelligence	Education	Social Standing	Psionic Strength
Romero Crops	Army (Infantry) 1, Rogue (Enforcer) 3	11	6	13	8	8	5	—
Athletics (Strength) 1, Computers 1, Gun Combat (energy pistol) 2, Melee (blade) 0, Melee (natural weapons) 2, Stealth 2, Streetwise 1, Survival 2; Zom-B Infected Traits Blade (2d6), Stunner (2d6+3), Flak Armour (8)								

TRAVELLER

THE THIRD IMPERIUM



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'There is no hunting like the hunting of man, and those who have hunted armed men long enough and liked it never care for anything else thereafter.'

—Ernest Hemingway

Description

Lanzas is the largest and most successful bounty-hunting operation on the planet. Lanzas employees are hired in a wide array of enforcement and apprehension roles, from providing on-site security to bailiff, eviction and debt-collection duties. What Lanzas is most famed for though is its bounty-hunting work. Lanzas hunters regularly turn in a full 87% of all bounties posted by the UIG and the Corporation-states, netting billions in pure profit with comparatively tiny operational costs each year.

The Lanzas minor corporation was started initially as a small private operation by Catherine Lanzas, an ex-Western Federation Agent after leaving the Corporation upon realising that her promotion opportunities were being scuppered by internal politics. As CEO of Lanzas, she has become one of the wealthiest women on the planet, lagging behind only Yuan Quingzhao, the CEO of the Ai-Jinn. Most of Catherine's former Division have since also left the service of the Western Federation to join the Lanzas Corporation, acting as both high-level executives and the corporation's most formidable hunters.

The majority of Lanzas bounty hunters and enforcement staff are simply well-trained but minimally augmented humans. Lanzas employees are aggressively recruited primarily from ex-Corporate military and UIG police personnel, ensuring that every enforcer and hunter is a veteran of combat. Agent-level augmented humans are employed on only the most difficult jobs; those requiring

the hunter to face extreme danger versus powerful enhanced marks. In a nod to her old days as a Corporate Agent, Catherine assembles augmented Lanzas hunters into Divisions and trains them in unit-cohesiveness. Such tactics are essential to allow them to take down the likes of rogue Agents, Machina Cultists, telepaths and even the occasional Malenbrach that has broken its conditioning.

In addition to its own full-time staff, Lanzas acts as a brokerage firm for unaffiliated bounty hunters, including some Corporate Agents. In return for providing information and handling all the legalities of fugitive processing, Lanzas takes a cut of the bounty from every mark brokered through them. In addition, individuals who have been wronged by a specific fugitive may offer to pay extra to provide an incentive for the criminal's swift capture. Particularly high-paying ventures of this sort are typically assigned to Lanzas' personal Agents to ensure customer satisfaction. It is rumoured that for the right price Lanzas can arrange it so that the fugitive is more likely to 'resist arrest' and have to be detained with lethal measures, though this is denied officially.

Corporate Goals

Lanzas is a simple money-making venture, as well as one that helps provide profitable work for retired or discharged servicemen. Beyond the personal convictions of its individual employees, Lanzas has no formalised corporate doctrine beyond a desire to get rich quick through the trade in bounties. Lanzas retains good corporate relations with the Kildanna Corporation who are responsible for the world-famous and justifiably feared Kildanna Penitentiary. Kildanna, a new breed of high-profile legal slavers, makes the majority of its wealth off the sale of depersonalised criminals for cheap labour; criminals much like the ones Lanzas brings in a steady stream of.

For now relations between the two minor corporations are cordial but it is rumoured that Lanzas is planning a hos-

tile takeover, allowing them to profit both from the capture and subsequent sale of their marks. If successful, this combination may well provide Lanzas with the impetus to break through into Major Corporation status.

Mind-Set

Lanzas is, alarmingly, even more puritan than the Western Federation, seeing the larger Corporation as corrupt from within and in need of redemption. The CEO herself sees the corporation as carrying out the true work of the Federation, protecting the people from scum and villainy rather than dirtying their hands with gun-money. A minority of Lanzas hunters see a strange, pseudo-religious aspect to their work, believing themselves to be guardians of law and order, visiting righteous judgement upon offenders. For the most part, though, full-time Lanzas hunters are among the most mercenary and direct individuals on the planet. To most, working for Lanzas is simply a way to carry on doing what they have done most of their life in the army or police but for a vastly inflated pay-check.

Operational Method

A Lanzas operation begins with a Hunter Agent Division being assigned a high-risk mark and getting a brief from their Broker on all the latest intel on their movements. From there they mount an investigation focused entirely on finding their location. Once located they begin a strategic ambush, aiming to take down their target or targets quickly and efficiently with as little fuss as possible. Of course sometimes this is not possible, such as when the target knows they are being tracked and is fully prepared for an attack. In such situations Lanzas Divisions can be every bit as vicious and unrestrained as E.I. Agents, deploying heavy weapons, explosives and even cyberframes to break all resistance into dust and sweep up the remains afterwards.

Names And Ranks

Lanzas is not centred on any individual corporate state and recruits its Agents from a wide array of nationalities. Agents

bearing any surname can be found in the employ of Lanzas, all that it required is a mercenary attitude and a casual disregard for human life; common enough things in the Corporate Age.

There are a few deviations from the common rank structure within Lanzas, however;

Broker – A Lanzas mission officer (MO). Rather than managing a few Divisions, a Broker is expected to act as a go-to guy for the hunters stationed in a whole installation.

Hunter – Generic term for a field Agent of any rank.

Mark – Not an official corporate rank, 'mark' is slang for a target fugitive. Derived from the practice of 'capture marks' – tally symbols stencilled on guns or armour for every fugitive taken in.

Sample Occupations

Patch Doc

Medics sent out with Lanzas hunter-teams are typically trained in triage techniques for quickly saving someone on the brink of death. The purpose of a Patch Doc is not to help keep his Division-mates alive and active, though most do so also, it is to stop marks who have a higher 'alive' bounty from devaluating. A Patch Doc's pack usually contains a mixture of kill-or-cure drugs, the agents to counteract them in a hurry, potent sedatives and restraints.

Smoker

Lanzas Agents typically make heavy use of chemical weapons such as knock-out gas as well as flamethrowers for 'smoking' fugitives out of hiding. Smokers are experts in such means, possessing an instinctive understanding of fire and gas; how it moves, what drives it, how to fan it and guide it and keep it under control. Immediately recognisable by their heavy hazard suits, respirator units and perpetual odour of acrid smoke and unnameable chemicals, Smokers form the heavy-weapons arm of Lanzas divisions.

Hound

Much of a standard Lanzas operation involves investigation and forensics to track down their mark. Hounds are bounty-hunter detectives who take a personal approach to criminology. They cultivate webs of contacts in the underworld, often sparing more small-time fugitives in return for them acting as their eyes and ears on the street. Most have obsessive and detail-focused personalities, able to train their minds to think like their mark and never relent in their search until the target has been brought to justice.

Sub-Sects

Lanzas is too new and unfocused as a company to have developed much in the way of internal schisms or philosophies yet.

Example Characters

Bruce 'The Dawg' McCanon

Celebrity Bounty Hunter (Rank 3, Level 8)

Known for his simple rustic wit and extraordinary accuracy with a baton-gun, Bruce McCanon has the dubious honour of being the rising star of Bright And Sunny Media's daytime TV lineup. His television show, 'The Dawg Hunter', is one of the most popular series around in a time-slot which is usually awash with insipid talk shows and gardening programs. Bruce has started taking on increasingly dangerous targets, sometimes taking the camera himself when the television crew get intimidated in order to boost his ratings enough to finally break into a primetime slot, just so bored spire housewives will stop writing pornographic fan-fiction about him.

Reneé Broussard

Big-Game Hunter (Rank 4, Level 25)

Born and raised in a small, destitute Belgian community that had originally been a refugee-camp from Minerva's bombing of France. Reneé grew up sur-





rounded by crime, squalor and harsh living conditions. He is one of Lanzas' most accomplished hunters, specialising in taking down the most dangerous prey such as rogue Agents, telepaths and even Malenbrach. His typical tactics involve chasing the target into the Old Cities or Underswells and using the crumbling, claustrophobic terrain to harry and weaken his target with surprise attacks, traps and fear tactics before taking them down once their strength has been sapped. He often employs the people of the city to aid him in making the capture and pays a large part of the bounty back to them.

Unique Abilities And Equipment

Hunting Licenses

Lanzas Agents start with a number of licenses that assist their work for free;

Bounty Hunters License
Termination License 1
Biohazard And Toxin License

Restrain Training

Lanzas Agents are trained to take down and incapacitate their targets quickly and efficiently without killing them. They gain the Restrain Training for free.

Hunting Equipment

Lanzas Agents get a 20% discount on all equipment identified as 'capture tech' by Lanzas. To qualify, such equipment must be either a nonlethal weapon or an aid in restraining prisoners. This Includes;

- Tazers, Stun Pistols and Stun Rifles
- Injector Pistols and Injector Rifles
- Riot, Knockout and Flashbang Grenades

- Knockout gas canisters and Knockout darts
- Handcuffs & Nylon Ties
- Psi-Cuffs & Telepathic Disruptors
- Immobiliser Foam
- Bounty Bags
- Shutdown Chips

Lanzas Certification

Agents working for Lanzas gain an extra +20% to the cash received for every bounty they bring in. The corporation takes less of a fee for processing when it's for their own Agents.

Pay Grade: 700 x Rank, Lanzas living wages aren't the largest around, but most of their Agents get quite rich on the bounties they take in.



RuneQuest II

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