

Clawmarks 28



Inside:

- Recipes To Die For** -- You'll be screaming for these!
The Archbiscop's World Tour -- Who's Next?
CLAW Campaigns -- Are you part of these? You should be!
KAOS -- Let loose the Dogs of War!

You know you're in CLAWs when... You use roleplaying to bitch about none-roleplayers in front of them.

Contents (Not SPOContents)

| | |
|--|----|
| EDITORIAL by Brendan Quinlivan | 4 |
| Unknown Armies Review by Brendan Quinlivan | 5 |
| The Ideal Cthulhu Campaign by Sress Mohler | 8 |
| Recipe for YogNog Sochoch by Simon Cross | 11 |
| CLAW Campaign Summaries | 12 |
| Limericks and Rhymes | 18 |
| The Two Towers Film Review by Jessica Tiffin | 19 |
| The Ethics of Slaughter by Lara Davison | 22 |
| Short but Deadly by Mike Dewar | 24 |
| The CLAW303 Supp Exam by Dylan Craig | 26 |
| Dragonfire 14 by Mark Perry and Mike Dewar | 28 |
| Seostock 2002 by Seb Martin | 30 |
| J-Tho 3 by Ian Kitley | 31 |
| KAOS 2003 by Ian Kitley | 32 |
| RIPs and Notices | 33 |
| The Archbishop of Necropolis | 36 |
| FridgeQuotes | 38 |

You know you're in CLAWs when... Everyday you see more and more people converted to the cult of the Chocolate Danish.

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EDITORIAL TYPE THING

WELCOME TO THIS ISSUE OF CLAWMARKS! CLAWMARKS 28 (IF MY MEMORY SERVES ME CORRECT). THOSE WHO KNOW ME WELL WILL REALIZE, AS I OBVIOUSLY HAVE, THAT THIS ISSUE OF CLAWMARKS IS OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE TO ME, SINCE IT IS (OBVIOUSLY) MY FIRST CLAWMARKS AS CLAWTHING! THIS IS ALSO THE CLAWMARKS ISSUE THAT CORRESPONDS WITH MY BIRTHDAY (IT'S ON THE TWENTY-EIGHTH).

RIGHT, NOW THAT THOSE FORMALITIES HAVE BEEN DISPENSED WITH, I CAN ACTUALLY START WRITING ABOUT IMPORTANT THINGS, LIKE EXACTLY WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS FANTASTIC PUBLICATION - NO SARCASM INTENDED. REALLY. THIS IS THE PUBLICATION THAT ALLOWS US TO SHOW THE REST OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD EXACTLY WHAT WE'RE ALL ABOUT, SO THAT WE CAN DISPEL ALL THEIR FEARS...

... AND WE COULD ALSO SELL SAND TO SOME OPEC COUNTRY, AND FREEZE HELL OVER (HEY, THOSE LG AIR-CONDITIONERS SHOULD DO A GOOD JOB! THEY MAKE GIRLS GET UNDRESSED TOO, WHICH IS BONUS!!)

NOTE: SARCASM HAS BEEN APPLIED HERE. SO MAYBE ONLY ONE WHO FINDS THE LG ADS APALLING, BITE

SO, WHAT EXACTLY IS THE POINT OF CLAWMARKS? FRIGHTEN THE COMPETITION WITH SHEEP JOKES, CLOWNS, NASTY IN-JOKES, SELF-REFERENTIAL MOUR, AND GENERAL WEIRDNESS? ENLIGHTEN MASSES AS TO WHAT WE REALLY ARE ("RAVING NUTTERS WHO DRESS IN BLACK AND PLAY WEIRD GAMES", I HEAR SOME SAY?) LET OTHERS KNOW WE'RE THE SAME AS THEM - JUST WITH A SICKER SENSE OF HUMOUR? GIVE OTHERS FASHION TIPS ON HOW TO BE GOTH?

I THINK IT'S ALL OF THE ABOVE, BUT ALSO NONE OF THE ABOVE. WE ARE CREATING THIS THING YOU HOLD SO THAT WE CAN LAUGH AT OURSELVES, CELEBRATE AND ENJOY WHAT WE DO, TAKE STOCK OF THE FACT THAT WE HAVE THIS SOCIAL CIRCLE WE CAN BE A PART OF (WITHOUT FEELING SELF-CONSCIOUS OR AFRAID), AND REFLECT ON ALL THE WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED.

WHICH USUALLY AMOUNTS TO SLAYING OR STOPPING IMAGINARY FOES, BEING DRUNK, RIPPING EACH OTHER OFF, AND LAZING AROUND. OH WELL, CAN'T ALWAYS BE PERFECT CAN YOU?

WELL, EXCEPT FOR ME, OF COURSE!

YOUR LOVING, CARING, DEVOTED, BENEVOLENT, WELL-MEANING, FRIENDLY, SAINTLY AND ALL-ROUND-NICE-GUY EDITOR AND CLAWTHING,

BRENNAN



CONFIDENTIAL - ASYLUM RECORDS ONLY

Unknown Armies the Review

- Brendan "Avatar of Brendan" Quinlivan

OK, I'm going to try and contain myself here, because I'm likely to froth at any point, so bear with me. Yes, I am a fanboy, and I **can** stop at any time.

Simply put, Unknown Armies (UA) is one of the best RPGs I've ever played, right up there with Call of Cthulhu/Delta Green. Everything else I've played is toast in comparison. This game proves that simplicity works very well, and that you don't need a whole sourcebook's worth of tables and formula to run a realistic game.

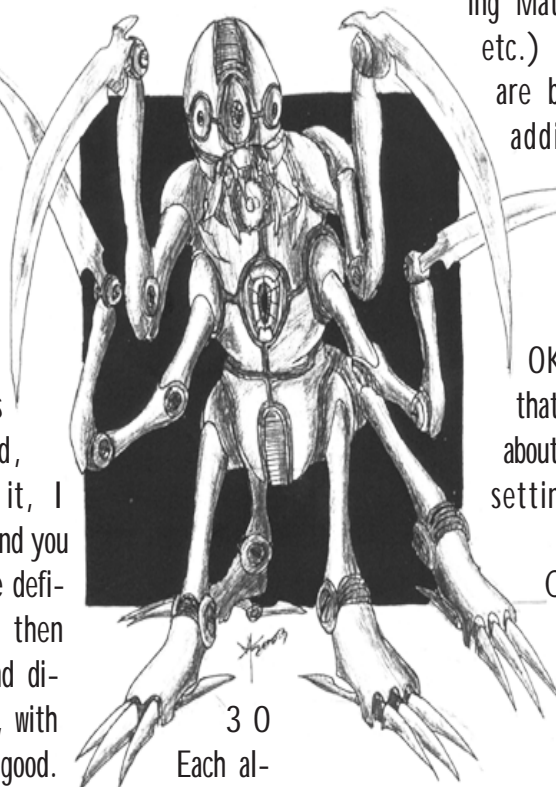
Firstly, UA has one of the most in-depth character creation systems I've come across. However, one mustn't confuse "complicated" with "in-depth". The 1st Ed. character sheet is quite an experience, because you spend more time writing on it than you do filling in numbers or colouring in dots - the 2nd Ed. sheet is less to my liking. You need to describe your character's Obsession, Rage Stimulus (what gets him angry/mad/p'd-off), Fear Stimulus (what makes him crap in his pants) and his Noble Stimulus (what he wants to achieve). Furthermore, you also have to briefly describe (in a phrase or a few words) each of his four stats: Body, Speed, Mind and Soul. Let's face it, I may have Body 55 (average) and you may have Body 55, but we are definitely built differently. You then take 220 points (usually) and divide it among those four stats, with being awful and 70 being very good.

lotment of points then is divided among the skills related to that stat: i.e. a big brawny Body of 70 will give 70 points worth of Body skills. Speaking of the Skills, you have to make up names for them. Again, my self-defense skill might be "Karate your Ass", and yours might be "Flail Wildly". So the game allows you to truly create individuals, since the in-game stats further describe the character as well. This is one of the few games where you can accurately(!) create yourself, to my knowledge.

The system is percentile (d100 - based) so rolling is easy: roll equal to or under your skill, and you pass. The closer to your skill, the better/more favourable (whether pass or fail). Roll 001 (1) and you get an OACOWA (Open A Can Of Whup Ass); roll 100 and you BOHICA (Bend Over, Here It Comes Again). Sadly, they removed this from 2nd Ed. and replaced it with the more formulaic "Critical Success" and "Critical Failure" (boo hiss!!!). Rolling Matched Successes (11, 22, 33, etc.) is great and Matched Failures are bad (77, 88, 99, etc.). In addition, any skill at 15% or higher makes you competent enough not to roll in a non-stressful situation.

OK, now for the GREAT (no, that's not an in-game acronym) bits about the game: combat, magick and the setting.

Combat is slick and fast and deadly, just like in real life. Second Ed. has refined combat down to the following **5** *choices* (nice, hey): 1



roll/fixed initiative, 1 roll only, or 2 rolls. Initiative can be a Speed skill, which can be bought up with XP. So if you're fast, you're fast. You can either act on your Initiative skill score, or roll for it (are you feeling lucky, punk?). Or you could roll all in one (my favourite). In any event, combat works as follows:

- 1) Check initiative: either skill or rolled separately
- 2) Hit the bastard: roll your combat skill. Pass, and you hit him and do damage equal to your roll (for guns), or the sum of the dice (hand-to-hand). See, what gun you use only figures out how much your maximum damage is. A .22 is puny compared to an assault rifle. However, the skill of the user is the overriding factor: a SAS operative will still kill you easily with a .22, while Joe Average will struggle to handle an assault rifle. Great!

The other great bit about combat is that you never know how much damage you've actually taken. It's not like DnD where you take 49 damage and still have 122 hp left, so you can still fight for another 5 rounds. Nosiree. Here, the GM keeps track of your health, and *describes* how much damage you take. You'll notice this adds an element of realism to combat, since once you're hit, you don't know how much longer you've got left until you permanently invest in real estate (buy the farm - for those of you who didn't get it!) You also instinctively become more cautious. Furthermore (and I always emphasize this to my players), *guns kill people*. Your average Joe Soap has Body 50-55, which equates to 50-55 Wound Points. A 9mm (any 9mm) will do a maximum of 50 damage. A SWAT team member with "Blow You Away" at 60% (really, really good) will cripple you beyond repair with a single good shot (50 damage).

Magick is great as well. Here the magick has a postmodern feel to it (by the creators' own admission). Adepts (magick-users) are obsessed, psycho nutjobs (no, really - there are no logic-bound, mathematical, formulae-following mages here). Adepts are obsessed with some aspect of reality, and that obsession is what

bends reality to their will. Of course, the "topics" of obsession vary widely, and are quite unique. One of my favourite magickal styles, for example, is Dipsomancy (alcohol-based magick): alcohol allows you to break down your boundaries and inhibitions, and thus allow you to work magick. Of course, it only works while you're drunk. If you're sober, you can't work your magick. Entropomancy (chance-based magick) allows you to play with probability and chance. Of course, there is the paradox: in order to influence probability and chance, you have to give yourself up to it. Obsessed Entropomancers tend to do things like: "Hey, why don't I flip this coin; heads, and I slam my hand in the door; tails, you do it! Whaddayasay?". By the way, this is one of my other favourites... Magick here is kewl, because there's no Paradox (a la Mage: the Ascension): here, what you put in is what you get out - put more effort into gathering charges, and the more spectacular the effects you can pull off. Works for me.

Then there are the other magick-types: the Avatars. These people have tapped into a particular idea that forms part of the collective unconscious of all people. The story with avatars is quite complicated and metaphysical and conceptual and whatnot, so I won't explain that much. Examples would probably help more, so let me give you a few. Sandra Bullock almost single-handedly created the Girl-Next-Door Archetype, but seems to have lost a bit of contact with her creation of late. The Marlboro Man is probably an Archetype of some kind, more than likely an update of The Cowboy. Not very en vogue these days, though. I also have my favourites here too: The Executioner is one of them, although of late, it is more than likely The Hitman. The person who hunts down and kills others on someone else's orders. The one who exacts vengeance or punishment for someone else. The faceless, maskless, androgynous killing machine. Oh, and guess what the Executioner does really well? My other favourite is The Fool: the one who jokes around, makes slapstick pranks, and generally is a well-meaning, goofy, head-in-the-clouds kinda guy.

You know you're in CLAWs when...Everything is a conspiracy and it's probably your fault.

The Fool picks out things from his bag, redirects damage around to other people by tripping over his own feet, etc. and generally causes mayhem and chaos. Without even doing a thing. He he he. The Merchant (another of my favourites) allows him to make deals with people (or other entities) for life-force/experiences/memories/body/you-name-it, a la Faust. Great stuff!!! He he he he.

The other thing about UA is the madness system: no Sanity Points here, just 5 gauges, with 2 sets of notches each. In essence, there are 5 types of mental stress: Violence, The Unnatural, Helplessness, Isolation and Self. Each has two divisions: Hardened and Failed. Hardened notches indicate that your character has encountered a mental stress and dealt with it. A Failed notch entails they haven't dealt with the stress. It makes for very interesting playing, since the Hardened notches you have in a gauge, the more immune to the stress the character is. However, this also entails he reacts to the stress less. Meeting someone who calmly talks about how he tortured some poor teenager to death is just disturbing. Having lots of Failed notches means that your character is close to becoming a mental basket-case. Not good in anyone's book. My main love for this madness system is that it is fairly accurate (read: realistic and fairly psychologically accurate - I've done research, trust me), and it covers people's reaction to stimuli in interesting ways. As you degenerate, your personality actually changes. Unlike Cthulhu (the only other game that I've played that has a Sanity system), there isn't an abstract rating that goes down, and entails you get more phobias. I love Cthulhu and it's system, don't get me wrong, but I

just think that UA is a more accurate reflection of how our minds actually work. Don't bite my head off, please. It would hurt. Lots.



Anyway, the other great thing about UA is that the meta-story/backstory/setting/whatever isn't that important. It's not like Delta Green where if you know what's actually going on as a player, your whole experience is ruined (this is the game that details ALL the conspiracies on the back cover! - I still like it though). In UA, you can read the back cover of the book, you can read the GameMaster section, you can read the NPC section, you can read the ready-to-run adventure, and the GM can still throw you a complete and utter curveball. It doesn't actually matter that you know everything as a player, because it only makes your character more paranoid, and wildly accusatory ("You're all working for the Six Who Dare, aren't you? I know you are! You have six everywhere!"). These guys don't have magick as such, but instead have more subtle powers, that work more out of the eye of normals.

In short, Unknown Armies is THE game to play. No two ways about it. Realistic, slick, *cinematic* combat; cool, screwed-up magick; an insanity system that is great, and allows for repercussions to actions; a great setting; character creation that's a pleasure; and a very slick system. Get it. Now.

You know you're in CLAWs when...
Paranoia is a way of life, not a disease.

The Ideal Cthulhu Investigation

This popped into my head out of the blue. Its roughly based on an actual CoC session I played in. I don't know if the scenario was store-bought or made up by the GM. The CoC "kill'em all and let Cthulhu sort'em out" paradigm is an easy target, but what the hell.

The Ideal CoC Investigation (from the character's POV):

Michael Ellis has survived enough investigations to figure out just how this survival thing works. His "official" profession long forgotten, he is now a full-fledged professional CoC Investigator!

Recently, he and his mythos-scarred compatriots have learned of mysterious goings-on in Saint Thomas, Louisiana. Ellis has decided to participate in the investigation by staying in his hotel room in Boston. He communicates with the other investigators by phone.

Ellis begins his chilling narrative:

Sept 9, 1933: Things go splenoreoly! I curleo up in front of the pikeplace, hot tea near one hand, the Boston Globe in the other. The slippers Mum sent fit perfectly. Oh, yes, finally heard from fellow investicators today. They're campeo out in some run-down hotel in that 300-awful bayou, and have proceeded to question the locals. I told them to watch out for ancient books of evil, images of the local mailman in medieval tapestries, all the normal rot.

Sept 11, 1933: I take in a pleasant auto-tour of the coastline.

Sept 12, 1933: I had the most distressing call from my compatriots today, transcribed as follows:

Some fellow whose voice I can't place: "We're getting torn up by these werewolf creatures! They hie out in the tunnels in the levee during the day, but all hell breaks loose at midnight!"

Me: "Why the deuce are you out there at midnight? Remember! 'Investigation in the morning is safe and boring, investigation at night is monster's delight!'"

Jim: "Well, uh, I dunno, nighttime just seemed like the best time for us to sneak around. You know, breaking and entering for clues."

I rolled my eyes. And they wonder why one of them dies every time they step out of their hotel rooms!

Jim again: "We did find a bunch of rocks laid out in a V. Oh, yeah, and one of us died there. Werewolves, again. These things... they're loathsome! Sanity-blasting! They're about 7 feet tall..."

Me: "NEVER describe the monsters to me! And if you find comes of mind-blasting knowledge, keep them to yourself! Don't read any passages to me!"

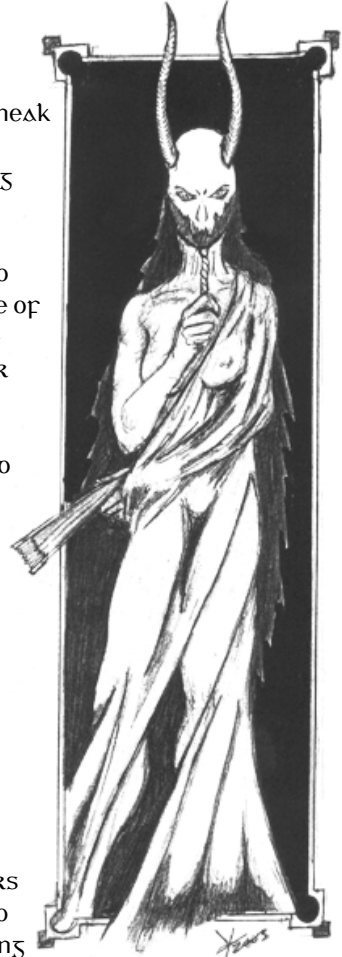
Jim: "Hey, what are *you* doing? You seem to know everything. Come down and help us out!"

Me: "Bloody hell! That's right I know everything! Why do you think I'm up here? Look, you do your part, I'll do mine, er, Jim."

Jim: "I'm Randolph. Jim died six investigators ago"

Me: "Okay, Randolph. I'm mobilizing into action as we speak."

Hanging up the phone, I proceeded to finish the Globe, and then headed out to the Miscellaneous Goods store. At the store, I ran into the elderly proprietor, Mrs. MacCurdie. A friendly woman, I've bought many a supply of investigative goods from her over the years.



Mrs. MacCurrie: "whaccha lookin' for today, sweetie?"

Me: "Oh, hello, Mrs. MacCurrie. I'm in the mind for, oh, a jar of marmalade and a loaf of that delightful bread I smell baking as we speak! Oh, and a new kettle. Hmmm, ah, yes, and 500 .32-caliber bullets, um, 2 100-bullet drums for a Thompson gun, and as many sticks of dynamite as you have on premises."

Her: "Ah, doin' a bit of investigative work, eh?"

Me: "Er, no, well, yes, but just not me personally."

Her: "What's threaten' the world this time? Somechin' squamous, I bet!"

Me: "Oh, more likely than not. I suspect hascum, that blobby fellow whose name begins with an H. Ah, yes, thank you, 20 sticks should do it."

Sept 14, 1933: I receive a curious phone call.

Ranolph: "we found this... hole in the wall in the basement of the town hall. You look through it, and you can see planets out in space. The professor says that from the star positions, Albeberan must be on the other side of the wall. Then something started slithering through it! We all shut our eyes and tried to get out of the room. Wembley started waving this strange knife he found, and it started to slither back to its own side of the hole. Then the, uh, lumberjack, Logan, said 'to hell with it! I'm looking!' Then he went stark raving insane. We had to shoot him."

Bleedin' lumberjacks! They're all the same!

Sept 15, 1933: another phone call from my compatriots! Am I a bloody nursemaid?

Some fellow whose voice I can't place: "Have ya sent the supplies, limey? We're getting slaughtered down here!"

Me: "I resent that tone, fellow investigator! The supplies are on their way. I marked the boxes "Fragile! Infectious Pus Samples! Do Not Open!", so they should get to you without any undue impedance."

him: "Sooo. We're just running around down here. No one's gotta clue on what to do."

Me: "Bloody hell! Haven't you found the spellbook, or the artifact, or the witchdoctor, or whatever to close that bloody dimensional rift to, er, Mr. H?"

him: "Well, we had the spooky knife with runes all over it, but Wembley threw it into the rift. We think it's orbiting Albeberan now."

Bloody dilettantes!

him again: "We've got a spellbook, too, but the guy whose reading all the spellbooks refuses to cast the gate-closing spell. Says he doesn't wanna go insane."

Me: "Look. In the course of my many investigations, I happened to obtain a Mi-So brainbox. So tell him he can cast the bloody gate-closing spell his way, or *my* way. You can pull him around on a bleeding wagon! Er, sorry. Look, um, Ranolph, you've got to be tough!"

him: "That's, er, Bill. Ranoy died two investigators ago. That's another thing. We're getting short on investigators here! We've gone through the entire Wembley family tree, and now we're resorting to recruiting from the villagers. If you think sharing a hotel room with a half-dozen tribal fishermen is a picnic, chink, again!"

Me: "Urrgh. Yes, I see your point. I shall take care of it!"

September 16, 1933: I place an ad in the Boston Globe's classifieds.

September 17, 1933: Most distressing news! The Slobe's positioning of my classified ad could not have been worse!

DRAVE INVESTIGATORS NEEDED FOR ILL-FATED STARKWEATHER-MOORE EXPEDITION. Will pay food, housing, travel expenses, sanitarium bills. The chance to die in a very exotic locale. Call 666-1707 and ask for Prof. Sipple. Not an EOE.

Foolhardy zents (and ladies!) with a touch of curiosity about the unseen world wanted for Louisiana Bayou investigation. Rapid advancement to leadership pos. quite poss. Interested parties please contact Michael Ellis at 242-4242. Ammo supplied.

Wanted: Immediate Placement! People with security experience needed for the next voyage of the U.S.S. Enterprise as it sails for uncharted islands in the Pacific. Will supply red shirt. Contact J.C. Kirk at

Bloody hell! And a free shirt! How can I compete with that?

September 20, 1933: At last, my fellow investigators have figured out the enigma of the stone blocks, and all that cultist rot. Quite frankly, it all sounds the same after awhile. The resolution is at hand, as I learned from my last phone call:

Bill: "Yeah, we've just about wrapped everything up here. We've got the rift closed, and we're planning on attacking the cultists before they try to sacrifice us."

Me: "Well, you should be familiar with how it works. If it gets too hot, start throwing dynamite as if it were going out of style."

Bill: "There's not too many of us left, though. The Anthropology professor and the journalist are both gibbering loons. It's just me and the boxer who can still do one and one and not get Cthulhu."

Me: "I'm sure you'll be able to take care of it. Good luck!"

My job done, I settle down in my easy chair. Tomorrow's Globe should have all the details, if this goes anything at all like a typical investigation.

September 21, 1933: Ah, the Globe!

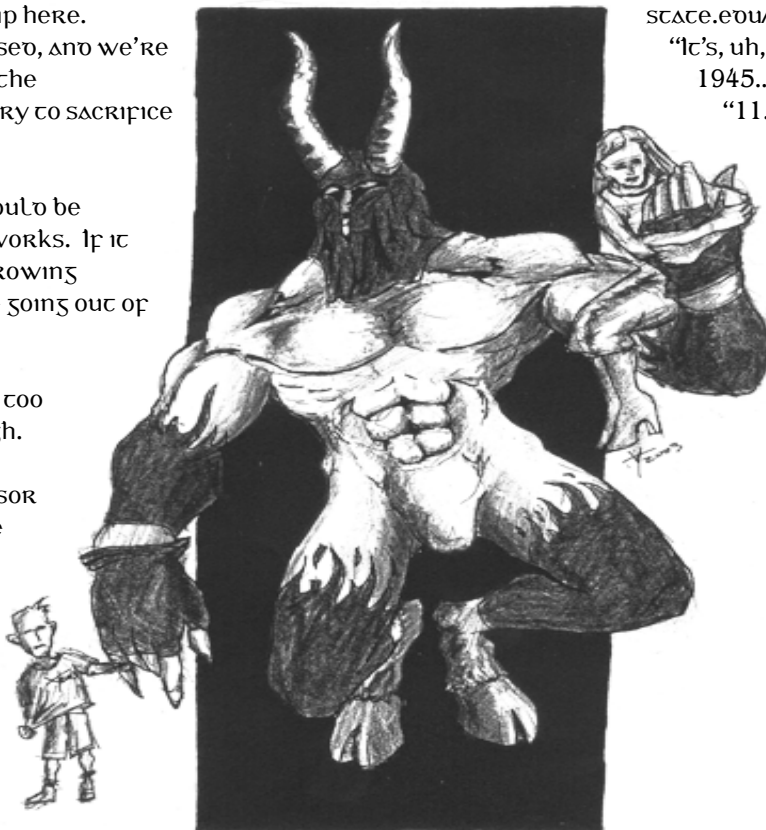
"Saint Thomas, Louisiana- an explosion of tremendous proportions rocked the little town of Saint Thomas last night as a fireball engulfed the town hall. Several members of a local religious cult, including the leader, are believed to be dead, as are an anthropology professor from Boston University and a journalist for the Chicago Tribune. Eyewitness accounts place the professor, Dr. Chester Meaney, and the journalist, Emma Splister, running into the town hall with lit dynamite strapped to their bodies, and foam running from their mouths. Investigations continue..."

Another threat to humanity checked! I strangely feel more sane than when I started this investigation. To the victor goes the spoils!

—
Greg Mohler greg50@pacific.mps.ohio-state.edu
Mechwarrior RPS (focusing on people, not robots) reads 'n' stuff at:

<http://www.physics.ohio-state.edu/greg50>

"It's, uh, November 6, 1945..." - Deck, "11.6.45"



You know you're in CLAWS when... You use the words "smackdown" and "smite" in every-day conversation

RECIPE FOR YOGNOG-SOTHOOTH

- 12 iridescent globes
- 1 lb flesh (preferably someone else's)
- 2 cups dark rum, brandy or bourbon
- 2-4 cups liquor
- 2 vaporous brains of the spiral nebulae
- 1 Old Man Whateley
- 1 cup peach brandy, if desired
- 8-12 large stones
- 1 large book by Ibn Schacabao
- 1 cup whiskey
- 5 crustaceans of Yuggoth (in fish tank)
- 1 large pot of water
- 1 large hammer

Before you begin, make sure that Old Man Whateley is securely bound and gagged, that the vaporous brains from the spiral nebulae are safely bottled and that the crustaceans of Yuggoth are happily scuttling around their tank. Also ensure that the 12 iridescent globes are not infected with salmonella. If they are stupendous in their malign suggestiveness, you should probably get a fresh batch. Right away.

Have a tot of bourbon. Tell the crustaceans you will be summoning the Beyond-One. Have another tot of bourbon.

Arrange the large stones in a circle, preferably on a hill top. Seat Old Man Whateley in the middle. Open the large book and place it in Whateley's lap. Step back and have another tot.

This is the first tricky bit. Convince the vaporous brains to make the untranslatable Sign. It may help to offer them some whiskey. If they remain reluctant, you can try to beat them until they look thoroughly whipped. Lastly, and this is often necessary as vaporous brains are notori-

You know you're in CLAWs when...You no longer find the phrase "maximum rapage" disturbing.

ously stubborn, set the one on fire. This is why you have two. As with other flambe recipes, it helps to add a tot of liquor before igniting. The other brain will certainly make a number of untranslatable Signs. Drink the rest of the whiskey.

Put the large pot of water on the stove. Have a tot of rum. If you're out, switch to the liquor.

Next comes the very tricky and somewhat dangerous bit. Make sure the crustaceans and the hammer are close at hand. Remove Old Man Whateley's gag. You must now attempt to make Old Man Whateley shriek the name "Yognog-Sothoth". Do not under any circumstance allow him to shriek other names like "Hastur" or "Nyarlathotep". You may need the hammer.

Once he has calmed down offer him some liquor if he wants it, but don't let him have too much -Sothoth is a little too close to Shoggoth when you're drunk.

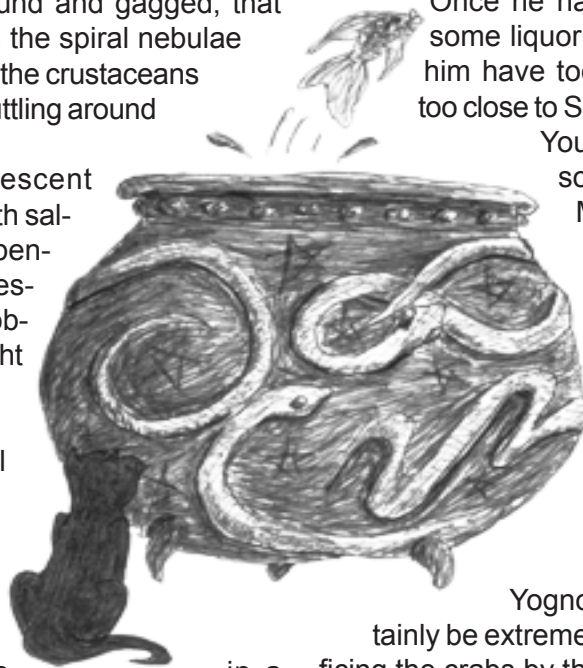
You will probably have to cut some kind of deal with Old Man Whateley to get what you want. The pound of flesh may be useful here. If you are successful, the hills will begin to shake.

At this point the iridescent globes should have started to take on the shocking form of the fabulous Yognog-Sothoth. The

Yognog-Sothoth will almost certainly be extremely hot. Allow to cool. Sacrificing the crabs by throwing them into the pot of boiling water and chanting phrases like "Ia! Yognog-Sothoth! Ia! The Great Beyond-One!" may help the cooling process.

Remember that your Yognog-Sothoth is the All-in-One and One-in-All of limitless being and as such may require a lot of fridge space. Best served immediately.

If you are still alive, drink the remaining alcohol.



CAMPAIGN SUMMARIES

Curveball

— A Mage: The Ascension campaign —

DM

Michael Dewar

There you were. Just ticking along in your nice normal car, with your nice normal job and your nice normal house and your nice normal life.

Forget normal. Normal doesn't even get a look-in where you're headed. Cause that's what happens when reality throws you a...curveball."

REALITY DEVIANTS

Clyde DeVille (No relation to the one with the Dalmatians) - Psychologist at the Fairway Clinic, dealing with the violently insane, Doctor DeVille has an *interesting* day-to-day job. His treatment plans tend to follow one basic theme: "Give the idiot 15 milligrams of Thorazine and strap him to his bed 'till he stops thrashing."

Played by: Nic Botha

Steve Thompson, baseball pitcher for the Boston Red Sox. After a bad season, Steve finds himself unpopular in many circles. His coach yells at him, the rest of the team taunts him continuously, and his girlfriend Clarice (Star on the hit soap: "Days of our Wives") barely acknowledges his existence.

Played by: Andy Moore

Neil Jericho, Professional bank robber (And equally professional Robert De Niro look-a-like). Neil is the consummate businessman, always calm and collected, even while he's pointing a twelve-gauge shotgun at your stomach.

Played by: Brendan Quinlivan

Ricky Weisch, clockmaker and inexperienced Mafia snitch. Life has been hard on Ricky. He's smuggling drugs for the Mafia, while trying to turn State's Evidence at the same time. Unfortunately, no one has fully explained to Ricky the risks involved in playing both ends against the middle.

Played by: Steve Emsile

Marek Koslovich, computer science student at MIT (And serious Red Sox fanboy). Marek's not your average geek. He actually got into university on an athletics scholarship, but then focused on his other great love. Computers. However, Marek is now so far behind on his thesis that nothing short of a major re-bending of time and space will allow him to finish. Sadly, a recent rescheduling has left Piotr unable to play, and Marek left the campaign with a bang. Literally. R.I.P Marek.

Played by: Piotr DuBla

REALITY ENFORCERS

Agent Smythe - This Man in Black is hot on their trail every step of the way, but he seems a reasonable sort. At least, if he wasn't trying to capture/kill them all the time.

Agent Martinez - Where Smythe is pleasant and reasonable, Martinez seems a soulless drone. Smythe seems to have remarkable contempt for his partner, and has conspired against him on at least one occasion.

LET'S PLAY BALL!

Curveball is a Mage: the Ascension game with a twist (or a "curve" if you prefer). In the universe of Mage, reality is an illusion, enforced by the wills of the majority. The strongest-willed and most remarkable among humanity, the Mages, can alter reality to fit their whims. Unfortunately, the backlash of conventional reality against even simple changes like conjuring fireballs or transforming vampires into pigeons is so great as to make "vulgar" magic near-impossible.

Instead, Mages must act within the realms of plausibility and shape chance to their wills. Instead of a fireball - a leaky gas main, instead of a shapeshift - a genetic reconstruction.

But Mage assumes that the characters *know* this. What about those unlucky few who Awaken to magic totally ignorant, confused, unaware of their true potential or how to use it. These are the protagonists of this piece. Avoiding conventional Mage rules, we use the "Weird Shit" skill to show the shaky control these amateur Mages have over their developing powers, and watch their attempts to piece together the crazy world they find themselves in.

On the run from the Mafia, the police, and the mysterious Agent Smythe, the characters are desperately seeking to unravel the mysteries of their own magic and to understand the powerful artefact, Dos Ulak-Uthbar (the Shedder of Light), that they carry with them.

BRING 'EM BACK ALIVE

A Licensed Nova Bounty Hunting Operation. Direct all pending lawsuits to St. Mary's Mother of Mercy Space Station. Current orbit: Mars

DM

Michael Dewar

Since the dawn of time, Man (often prodded along by Woman) has evolved. He has harnessed the power of the atom, travelled the stars and erupted to levels of phenomenal potential. Sadly, Man is still not the brightest species around. Even those gifted with powers beyond their fellow baselines still get into trouble. Still murder their fellow Men. Still rank up debts equivalent to the Gross Domestic Product of a small country. Still double-park when they think that no one's looking. But being Novas, when they screw up - they screw up BIG.

And you can't just send the local sheriff down to bust them, either. No sir. Not unless your sheriff can handle thundering Quantum Bolts, insidious mental attacks or a punch that can overturn a small truck. Most can't.

And besides the obvious physical imbalance, who's to say our felonious Nova will even be there when the sheriff arrives?

A Nova who runs to the ends of the earth to avoid the law, well, in this age of space travel, he lacks imagination. And the frozen moons of Neptune are a just little outside the conventional authorities' jurisdiction.

So who ya gonna call?

Oh, yeah. These guys.

(ANTI-)HEROES

Marcus Anderson - Living in his own private 'bubble' of force energy has had unpleasant consequences for this sociopath. His disturbing dothing fetish is the least of his...quirks - Brendan

DMNOTE: Due to rescheduling, Brendan is sadly unable to make the game sessions. As a result, he was abruptly removed from the quantum wavelength of our reality.

"Doctor Fracta" - Combining considerable megalomaniac delusions with a powerful grasp of entropy and decay, this Nova specialises in innovative viciousness. He's not a bad guy...he's just not appreciated.

- Sean

Cray "Catalyst" Marksen - He likes to hurt himself. And other people, too. This unbalanced Nova can kill you without even landing a blow, assuming that you're stupid enough to get dose to the inferno that surrounds him - Ian

John "Rail" Mason - Leading the stakes on property damage (And lawsuits), Rail lives to go fast. Really fast. And braking is somewhat of an issue for the man with the density of a truck...and the speed of a Concorde - Piotr

Neil "Whiplash" Tennyson - Just plain creepy, this tentaced maladjust balances low self-esteem with general viciousness - Adam

Bring 'Em Back Alive Inc. is still hiring, should there be any suitable Novas out there.

Desired Qualities in an Employee:

- Violence
- Determination
- At least one personality disorder
- And...oh, yeah, there's this thing called Role-Playing Ability too.

NOTE: Hiring is now terminated, due to Bring 'Em Back Alive's truly monumental debt (\$1 238 984,63). They can't afford to pay the employees they have, much less new ones.

COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Spencer - This strange nova is rumoured to be an exceptionally powerful psychic. Despite his fondness for outdated clothes, no one messes with the man who runs the Bullet Board, the equivalent of a Yellow Pages for bounty hunters.

Dix - The repair mechanic on Mother of Mercy, baseline Dix is relentless tormented and picked on by his nova "friends", but he has some very useful contacts.

H/K (Hunter/Killer) - The dote of the bounty hunting universe, the black-suited Novas of H/K will take down any target, anywhere. Be warned, those who make fun of their predilection for leather tend to die - messily.

Random Attack - Nobody quite knows how Random Attack functions, but it seems to work pretty damn well. A bunch of loony bounty hunters with loonier superpowers, but mess with one- and you mess with them all. And then they mess *you* up.

Shift & Lobotomy - The well-spoken Southern gentleman Shift is a sharp contrast to his feral partner. They're friendly with the BEBA team - or as friendly as bounty hunters ever get.

Gays, I said ALIVE! Not in fifteen billion smoking pieces!

Bring 'Em Back Alive is an Action/ Black Comedy romp through the late 21st century. Forget swearing to defend the innocent, uphold the law, and wear skinny little tights - these novas are in it for the money. And the violence. The violence is a big plus.

They're the bottom-feeding scum of the bounty-hunting industry, and they love it. Cheerfully unbalanced, constantly bickering and with a mission track record to which the term "Blast Radius" is applicable, these antiheroes cause catastrophes almost without noticing, but they have a hell of a time doing it.

The Motto of BEBA: You've got power, abuse it!

WHOAMI: A campaign that's one half mystery, one half the ugliest identity crisis you'll ever have

D.M.

Michael Denwar

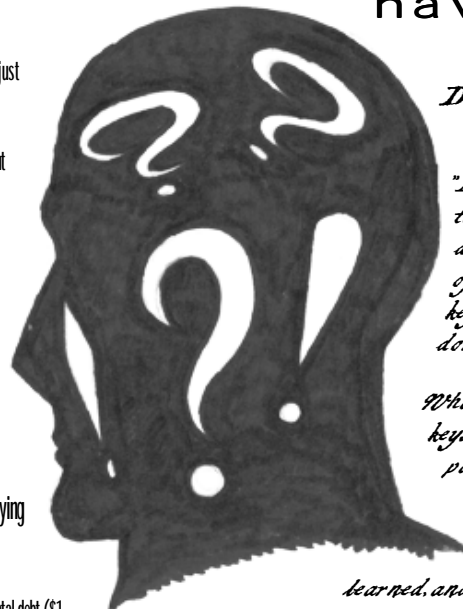
"Memory is a funny thing. You can recall the way your uniform felt on the first day of school, or the exact circumstances of your first kiss, but then lose a set of keys thirty seconds after you put them down.

What if you lost more than just a few metal keys? What if you lost your life, your past...your very identity?

Memory supports our every action. Memories of advice given, lessons learned, and mistakes made provide a framework for any decision. A pedestal of ideas and attitudes that defines everything we are.

Time to smash the pedestal."

Whoami is a street-level Unknown Armies campaign, focusing on the lives of five amnesiac people and their quest to discover what caused their memory loss. In addition to this central mystery, they must attempt to piece together their own lives from the fragments they find.



It's a detail-intensive, relatively low-action campaign, with a heavy emphasis on roleplaying and interaction. The starting players were each given a near-blank character sheet, which is slowly be filled in, as the campaign progresses and they discover more about themselves and their situations. The characters come into their own lives as outsiders, with the players literally building their personalities through roleplaying and the clues they uncover, creating new "memory pedestals" for themselves.

It's not all personal angst and High Roleplaying, though—there's all the suspense and action of U.I.'s supernatural world as well, combined with a healthy dose of Storyteller Sadism (but not too much).

So that's Whoami?, a mystery-intensive story where the greatest mystery is...who the hell are you?

Don't forget.

THE AMNESIACS:

Ex-Detective Christopher Morovitz (Tai):

Apparently Chris recently got himself suspended, shortly after the death of his wife in a fire. He's recently discovered that he's got a son, Steven Morovitz who's currently in a coma at State General Hospital as a result of the same fire. And he and Luco seem to have quite a history...

Luco Bernelli (Brendan): Luco seems to have been at least partially involved in the deaths of Trisha Morovitz, Samantha Walich, Albert Nöbbe and Betty Nöbbe. Technically his mobster uncle, Vincent Bernelli, is the guilty party but Vincent swears it was an accident. Apparently, Luco was unconvinced by his uncle's claims, since he appears to have sold him out to the FBI.

Bernard Anderson (Sean): Something of a mystery, this man resembled a street bum when they first awoke. He's recently been discovered that he is actually Georgio Bernelli, another member of the Bernelli family, who's been out of New York for years. Apparently, there's a tape with enough evidence to convict the entire Bernelli family hidden in a safety deposit box which only Bernie can open...

Ben Nöbbe (Steve): Ben's recently discovered that he has a remarkable talent with a saxophone. Enough of a talent to earn him \$250 a show at an expensive restaurant that Luco co-owns and runs.

Marcie Nöbbe (Tara): Marcie isn't certain of much—except that nothing is what it seems. She's been methodically checking the events around their memory loss, though recently she managed to spare the time to write a fascinating article on foot fetishes for her editor.

FRIEND OR FOE? (I can't remember which...):

Edishar McKensie— A mysterious old man, one of the owners of the Tri-Impire corporation, which seems to have been monitoring the characters since the day they were born. Even more bizarrely, McKensie seems to have somehow

stopped the aging process. They've found photos of him twenty years ago, and he hasn't aged a day.

Mr Dale and Mr Hodgkins— Two bizarre lawyers, whose attitude towards the characters seems unclear. They've aided them with the authorities, but appear instrumental in disposing of the evidence the characters need to piece the mystery together. And Mr Hodgkins, a blind man, proved himself somehow fast enough to trap and bewilder Chris without even straining himself.

Morrison Gaunt— An enigmatic occultist, this old black eccentric seems to have adopted the characters as his personal assistants. Bargaining with the characters using a complex system of favours owed and given, he has aided them in unravelling the mystery...in return for certain "favours," of course.

Vincent Bernelli— Luco's Mafia uncle now lies in State General Hospital after an assassination attempt. He's passed the reins of the Family over to Luco, accompanied by a desperate plea to find Georgio Bernelli

Jeremiah "Duke" Richards— A longtime gangster rival of Vincent's, Duke blames Luco for the destruction of his restaurant, Duke's Palace. The Texan gangster seems willing to hinder the Bernellis and their allies in any way possible, from fake drug busts to hijacking.

Tony "the Fisherman" Vincoz— The Fisherman is notorious in New York gang lore. Few have ever met him, and most of those have died. He's the best hitman the Mafia has to offer, a gifted freelancer who's only loyalty is to his bank balance.

Agent Paul Delany— Luco's handler at the FBI. Delany has agreed to help Luco uncover his past in exchange for a tape that could put his uncle away forever.

Winston— Manager of Luco's restaurant, the ever-loyal, hyper-efficient Winston has gone missing, apparently kidnapped by the Fisherman.

Detective Perry Moore— Morovitz's still-loyal partner has helped him out repeatedly with favours, and seems a master of "accidentally leaking" important documents.

Clive Ferguson— Marcie's ex-boyfriend and the New York Times's premier crime reporter, Clive seems to be growing far too suspicious of the group's activities.

MEMORIES OF TIMES PAST

As the amnesia lives slowly reform, they find themselves pulled in different directions by their differing backgrounds. Luco is sinking deeper and deeper into his Family's dealings, trying desperately to conceal Bernie's true identity from Duke Richards.

You know you're in CLAWS when... You liken octahedral crystals to d8s and you DON'T roleplay.

Chris briefly managed to regain his job, only to be re-suspended shortly afterwards, when he disrupted a hostage situation at a Kwikimart in order to rescue Ben, Bernie and Marcie (who were trapped inside).

Ben is recovering from a severe head injury after a car accident caused by Duke's henchmen, nursed by his sister, who's convinced that their secret behind the group's memory loss lies with the mysterious corporation called Tri-Impire.

Bernie is lying low for the moment, the recent revelation about his true identity serving only to put him at greater risk than ever before.

Meanwhile, an unlikely alliance with an eccentric occultist named Morrison Gaunt has given the group a window into the Occult Underground, and connected them with a powerful artefact called the Stop Clock, a mystical clockwork device which can quite literally freeze time dead in its tracks.

And wherever they go, it seems that two mysterious lawyers, Mr Dale and Mr Hodgkins, have been there before...and erased the evidence.

POWER CORRUPTS: AN ABERRANT STORMWATCH CAMPAIGN

Operation : Religious Cocktail

Operatives : Capt. Mick 'Lynch' Aston (Mike)
1st Lt. Tennessee 'Imam' Drieder (Conrad)
2nd Lt. Nadja 'Boris' Crncovick (Michelle)
2nd Lt. JC 'Rubble' Williams (Sean 'Bob')
Sgt. Bruce 'Doc' Onika (Marc)
Mr. Johan 'Zeus' Schmidt (Piotr)

Mission: Investigate the appearance of religious leader Dhiren Ganda and determine the risk he poses to the security of the Indian Government

Notes:
Following the abrupt creation of the team in order to reclaim control of the UN building during the hostage crisis of a few weeks ago, during which the team successfully eliminated the threat posed by 5 novas, the team was inserted into India. Acquiring the cooperation of the local authorities, the team made contact with the local suppliers and scouted potential

areas of confrontation. Along with liaison Serena Ferat (See note 1), the team joined the crowd at one of Ganda's rallies. During the speeches, the team noticed a strange hypnotic effect the affected some of them, particularly Lt. Crncovick. The team tried many ways to break the spell including shouting by the Captain and an aborted attempt to place explosives in the middle of the crowd (Note 2). The meeting was disrupted when three tear-gas canisters flew through the windows and landed in the crowd. This led to a stampede during which it was discovered that all the doors were locked. Lt. Drieder proceeded to rip a door from its hinges and Capt. Aston attempted to make contact with Ganda. During the commotion two of Ganda's guards were shot and Capt. Aston winged one of the assailants before they got away. After this abortive attempt to make contact, Capt Aston and Lt Crncovick decided to go undercover at a party at Ganda's plantation home while the rest of the team would sneak in. The non-lethal requirements were compromised early on in the mission (refer to Notes 2, 3 & 4). After confrontations with the security, having half the team captured and causing a huge explosion, the team barely escaped with their lives (Note 5). At this point they discovered that Sgt. Ferat was working for Ganda. On returning to Moodley's, the weapons supplier, they discovered it had been attacked and secured the help of this matter-creating nova. Returning to their hotel, they were arrested by the police and taken back to headquarters. During interrogation, the team was attacked and upon subduing the assailants discovered that the entire police station was empty. This prompted an attack on Ganda's research facility by the team. Whilst trying to sneak into the facility, Lt. Crncovick walked into the electric fence and set off the alarms, bringing the security down on their heads. This led to shooting their way through the building, setting off many counter measures and generally causing mayhem. Eventually they made their way down to sub-level 1 at which time they confronted Senka Bhiku, head of security & shape-shifting nova, Lt Ferat, who revealed herself as the fire nova Scorch, and Reth, an invisible, armored nova. Using depleted uranium bullets, the team took down Bhiku and Scorch, and used a fuel-air bullet to wound Reth. Unfortunately this led to the death of both Lt. Crncovick and Sgt. Onika and the eventual escape of Reth. At this point the team decided they had enough evidence to retreat and report back. The information is still being analyzed.

Notes:

- 1) Sexual harassment charges levelled at Lt. Drieder have been reduced to a stern talking-to due to the extenuating circumstances surrounding Serena Ferat.
- 2) Disciplinary action required for Lt Williams.
- 3) It is not believed that Mr. Schmidt, as he claimed, mistakenly loaded a depleted uranium round when attempting to make a non-lethal shot.

You know you're in CLAWs when... Your friends can't distinguish between what you and your character did last night.

- Comments like, "Have there been any casualties?" "We're all fine, sir" and "I've got a gusher here," are not acceptable radio communications.
- Reminder for training, never throw a frag grenade into a munitions room.

Campaign Log :: "Hush Hush" - an Unknown Armies game

My game is called 'Hush Hush' for several reasons, some of which I can discuss, others which must remain secret for the time being. The players are all part of a clandestine organization called the Sleepers, who have made it their mission to remove those adepts or others who threaten to deliberately or unintentionally reveal the fact that magick actually exists, or that the world (as we see it) is actually not as it appears to be.

The intention behind the game is to give the players a chance to play in a Mission Impossible 1 and 2 meets X-Files meets Lord of Illusions meets Hitman: Codename 47 meets

Grand Theft Auto III type of environment/game. Actually, looking at that now, that would be a fairly accurate summary of being a Sleeper. Roll them all into one, add a pinch of insanity, a dash of magick, a crate of weapons and you should have a very 'interesting' little pie.

Should be interesting, for me. He he he he he.

Oh, 'ahem' and for the players as well, of course. Silly me.

This isn't much of a campaign log, simply because I already have a fairly detailed one up on the CLAWwiki

<http://claws.uct.ac.za/CLAWWiki/HushHush>. Enjoy it.

Project Thermopylae by Adeeb Balla Campaign Summary



For an untold epoch the forces of light, shadow and darkness warred secretly on Earth until one day hard men of many nations gathered together secretly to end this conspiracy of tyranny and give mankind control over his own destiny. This was the renaissance. All was well until the 19th century when the Russian faction of this organization went rogue, forging a bond with the fallen angel Machika Nasch, and fell into her thrall, becoming what we know today as the government of Soviet Union.

Now it's 1974 and the modern day success of the original group have gathered again, under the banner of Nato, to end Machika Nasch's reign on earth and stop her threat.

This is Project Thermopylae—the occult secret services of the Nato Nations gathered in one last attempt to beat back the enslaved hordes of Rabkrin, the true ruling power in the U.S.S.R and the agency through which the Dark Goddess wreaks her will.

A G.M.-designed campaign world, using the Unknown Armies playing rules and set in 1974 (Hey, the 70's were sexy). This universe was an attempt to meld the high mythology of Neil Gaiman's "Sandman" with the kickass cool of Ian Fleming's James Bond, combined with ideas ripped off...erm...borrowed from Tim Power's Declare and over 6 dozen other comics and novels. It was at worst a bit clunky and at best cool! (hell, I designed it, it had to be good)

The PC's:

Dmitri Krasnikov (Mike Dewar): a cynical Russian defector gifted with psychic sensitive abilities.

Anthony Dorrance (Sean Finnis): An upper class and lethal S.A.S officer gifted with superhuman dexterity and agility.

Max Cartwright (Ian Kitley): A mean ass ex-cop from New Orleans, the voodoo capital of America.

Greg Mandel (Matt Beats): A chain-smoking physics major turned mage.

This four-man team of rookie agents, led by Case Officer Mary-Anne Ford (a GM character who was a lot more than she appeared) were sent to L.A. to investigate Niels Hansen, a powerful, non-aligned individual who may or may not have been a god, and find out what he was doing in that town.

Arriving in L.A. the team was surprised to discover K.G.B. mage

Zastron in town, accompanied by an army of Bulgarian gunmonkeys and three almost invincible Daughters of Kali (female assassins for hire). Also they met agents of the mysterious bunch of rogue do-gooders, the Phoenix Alliance.

You know you're in CLAWs when... You spend more than two hours a day in Café Nescafé Café Café... but you don't buy their coffee.

You know you're in CLAWs when...You reach "Hobbies" on a form and you're tempted to write WABbing.

These agents (Scythe, White Satin, Salvo and Crackerjack), Zastron and Hansen were tearing up the town seeking a halfbreed angel, living unaware of her power, in L.A. After witnessing a spectacular blowout between Zastron and Scythe, the team utilized Ford's old contacts (a Chinese God trapped in a pillar of granite in the basement of a Chinese health shop) and, to get the head start on the opposition, teamed up with Hansen (who turned out to be Ford's ex-lover). The team track down the half-breed, Vanessa Daniel's being the main event at a strip club.

However, when Zastrov and his army of Bulgarian gunmonkeys show up, hijinks ensue, ending with a massive death toll and the Angel stripper being kidnapped by Scythe.

The team then had to regroup with a meeting with the Phoenix Alliance agents. One negotiation later, the Thermopylae agents reluctantly decide to join forces with the Phoenix Alliance to investigate what Zastron wants with Vanessa. A series of clashes ensue as the team and its allies attempt to safeguard Vanessa as they're being pursued by Zastron, the Daughters of Kali and the horde of Bulgarian gunmonkeys.

Cartwright, Dorrance, Krosnikov and Mandel more than held their own proving to all concerned that they had what it took.

When Lauren reveals that Zastrov intends to corrupt Vanessa and offer her to Machika Nase, the allies decide to launch a preemptive strike with the Phoenix agents, accompanied by Hansen and Ford assaulting Zastron's KGB front company HQ while the boys guard her at a secret hideout.

Whoever, the bad guys learn the score easily enough to send the last daughter of Kali and the remaining gunmonkeys to attack the mansion hideout; but our boys prove they know how to welcome unwanted houseguests by setting up a barbecue in their honour: a C-4-, napalm- and claymore-fuelled barbecue, with the Bulgarians as the main course.

With Zastron routed, the team retreated to Ford's Chinese God buddy where Vanessa was convinced to join Thermopylae, despite the last-minute intervention of her long lost father and Mr. Erybus, earthly agent for the Infernal powers.

Thus ended the team's first mission into the Thermopylae universe, but hopefully not their last, with mucho EXP and mods for everyone, and a lot of scars too. Anyone interested in trying out Project Thermopylae please contact Adeeab at 0836269340.

My thanks to wall my players.

Adeeab

Campaign summary: Current Affairs

System: D&D 3rd Ed.

Setting: Original, underwater

DM: Adrianna Pinska

Candice Cloete is Marthia, a malenti fighter - a former sahuagin spy who has defected to the Side That Doesn't Eat People.

Cassandra Soo is Milaena, a mermaid fighter - having gotten off to a good start by heroically defending her village during a recent war, she has come into the wild backwater to fight sahuagin and other nasties.

Michelle Haward is Aramiatyryne, a malenti cleric - born in a fledgling colony of defectors, she has defied her family and left her home to worship the God of Magic.

Sean Finniss is Tu'Ara'Kya, a shalarin cleric - a member of the caste of Seekers, he has left his homeland in service to the Goddess of Knowledge.

Andrea Hickman has recently joined the game, but has not yet selected a character.

This game started off in the Forgotten Realms, but as I was never entirely happy with the setting, I developed an original underwater world during the holidays, and this is where our heroes will be adventuring from now on. A minor memory rewrite will be required..

The Known World is an area of underwater highlands surrounding six groups of islands. It was created by the tritons, the First People, to serve as a sanctuary from the hostile dragons that roam the Outer Lands.

The tritons begat the merfolk and the fish-men called locathah, and their tribes lived in relative peace for many centuries, while the tritons withdrew into their deep cities. Then sea-elves entered the world through a dimensional gate in what is known as the First Invasion, subjugating the merfolk, enslaving the locathah and establishing the great empire of Adralendrion. They were accompanied by various minor sea peoples, and followed by the evil sahuagin.

The Second Invasion saw the creation of the land empire of Cathleigh on the islands, and several centuries later a great war broke out between land and sea - a war which culminated in the destruction of both empires and brought on a dark age of a thousand years.

Since then, the world has changed. New gods have ascended, and new alliances have formed between the races.

A recent conflict between the Xazrin empire of sahuagin, the elven kingdom of Alabrintar and the merfolk city of Halidru

has left much elven and merfolk territory in ruins. The waters of Carragyn are fraught with peril - thank goodness there are still brave people about who can protect the folk from koalinh thugs, conniving kelpies, vicious moray eels and stinky undead.

Monday Timetable of a fresher CLAWmember:

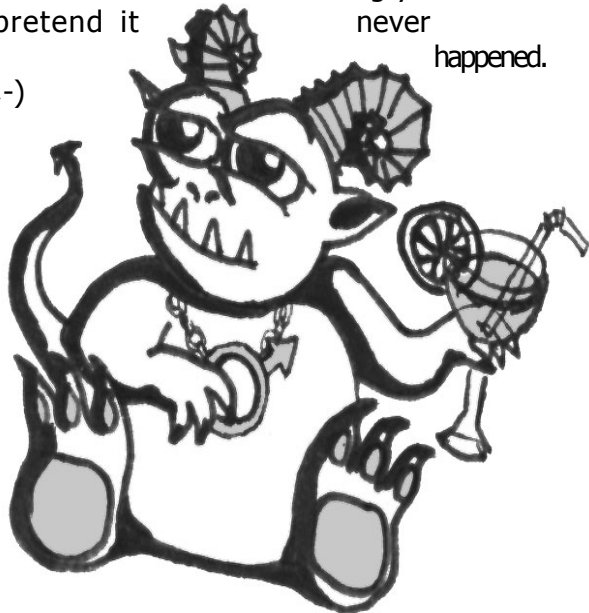
- 1st Period: Maths 100w
- 2nd Period: Free
- 3rd Period: Financial Accounting Ia
- 4th Period: Tut – Stats 100s
- 5th Period: Tut – Business Law
- Meridian: Lunch (Mmm, Mom remembered Melrose!)
- 6th Period: Stats 100s
- 7th Period: Intergalactic War 110f
- 8th Period: Dragon-Slaying 101w
- 9th Period: Necromancy for Beginners (Don't forget shovel!)

Monday Night
Mayhem: End
your day in a
different way

Every Monday night, every week, CLAWs runs a different stand-alone module, run by a different one of our veteran DMs designed especially for our not-so-veteran CLAWmembers. It's a great way for new roleplayers to experience different systems and gaming styles and to allow more seasoned gamers to have a change of pace from long-term campaigns and memorized gaming-systems.

It's the roleplaying equivalent of a one night stand. No strings, no consequences, and in the morning you can pretend it never happened.

;-)



LIMERICKS AND RHYMES OF SOME BITE AND MUCH NASTINESS

BY

BRONWYN SMITH, ADRIANNA
PINSKA, SIMON CROSS

One of the dodgiest people in CLAW
Was a boy with the name Gareth Saul.
All night long he downloaded pics
Of funky-ass tech and near-naked chicks.
If his two loves he could combine,
Why, Gareth would have a 'very good time'.

A girl named Cassandra, from CLAW
Could stand those damn kiddies no more!
She took out her gun
And with them was done
'Til the Police came round to her door.

Mike Dewar, a callow youth
Never respected his elders and was very uncouth.
He called the wrong person a twisted old crone;
Who proceeded to take out a shotgun, on loan.
Little Mikey knew then that his days were done.
Not having a licence ... he'd have to run.

Yancke is a boy from P.E.
Who is so incredibly dodgy.
He roleplays a lot
And gets his 'friends' shot
Next time he won't be so lucky! (bastard!)

The Avatar of Brendan came down to CLAW
Saw all the niceness and said, "No more!
I hereby proclaim in the name of me
That coke will rule over Pepsi and tea.
The circles of Hell will be known by name
And Unknown Armies shall be the only game.
My work here is done, I shall now depart
To rend some player from his still-beating heart."

The latest CLAW hangout
Is nothing to write home about.
The coffee is bad,
The people are sad
And the dj needs a swift clout.

There was a young wombat named Sean
Who dug his own ditch, night 'til dawn
Not one to say no
A spine he should grow
That pale-faced, down-trodden, toad-spawn.

You know you're in CLAWs when... You no longer know where your third period lecture is. Or what it is.

You know you're in CLAWs when... You no longer care either

The Lord of the Rings : The Two Towers

Reviewed, ranted at, dissected and generally prodded by Jessica Tiffin, undercover English academic and hopeless Tolkien geek who still thinks Legolas was très delectable, although admitting that Aragorn is beginning to grow on her...

About this time last year, I infiltrated CLAWMARKS in order to come out as an acolyte of the One True Jackson, he who overcame vast odds to make a film of Tolkien's Lord of the Rings that actually-worked. A year later, having experienced Two Towers, I have to report with sadness that my faith is slipping a little. I am not yet apostate, and certain parts of the film still dissolved me into the requisite puddle of fangirlish glee, but overall I was... disappointed. Possibly even betrayed. No, maybe that's a bit strong. Let's stick with disappointed, for the moment, at least until I've finished writing this review.



Just so that this doesn't become a total downer, let's start with the things I really enjoyed about the film. There were a lot of them. The Balrog battle (too cool!). The Helm's Deep battle (utterly cool). The Ents, and the destruction of Isengard (much better than I would have believed possible, I expected them to run into serious problems realising them visually). The Black Gate (seriously scary and very like the book description). Shadowfax. He glowed. (As did Gandalf, for that matter). The general look of the Rohirrim, vaguely Viking and rather attractive. Gollum, at least in how he looked, moved and spoke (and raspberries to Dobby in the CGI stakes). Of what he actually said, more below. I may be branded a heretic by purists, but I also really liked the sudden appearance of Elves from Lothlorien at Helm's Deep - very dramatic moment, and having Elves along is always good for scenic purposes. (Although I have to agree with Cassie Claire

that Haldir is so gay). Frodo's character development. Okay, I'm a pervy hobbit fancier and my devotion to Elijah Wood is undying, but his struggle with the Ring and its effects is being beautifully depicted.

On a more technical note, I also rather liked the way they compressed Dunharrow and Helm's Deep into one location - I am tormented by the thought that this means we might lose Aragorn's jaunt through the Paths of the Dead, but in cinematic terms it worked very well. Same goes for the use of Eomer to replace

Erkenbrand as the leader of Rohan's eastern forces, arriving late at Helm's Deep, or the compression of the Ents' destruction of Isengard from several days into several hours. In addition, Jackson's use of cuts between the various strands of narrative was an effective use of film strengths - far more exciting than Tolkien's tendency to write following

Aragorn and Co for half the book and then switch over to Frodo and Sam. Taken as a cinematic artefact completely separate from Tolkien's books, the film is a stunning action piece, beautifully filmed, gripping, visually overwhelming and generally cool.

However. <Takes deep breath>. This film, unfortunately, needs to be more than a successful action movie. It is a brilliant piece of cinema, but it is a highly flawed adaption. It did not, as the first did, blow me out of the water. It did not create that sense of suspended enchantment which I experienced after Fellowship; the departures from the book were more jarring, less explicable, far less forgivable. I did not emerge, as I did from the first film, inspired with the desire to re-read the book. I'm rather afraid that I'll only pick up more pointless changes if I do. I emerged feeling disappointed, irritated, disillusioned and - okay,

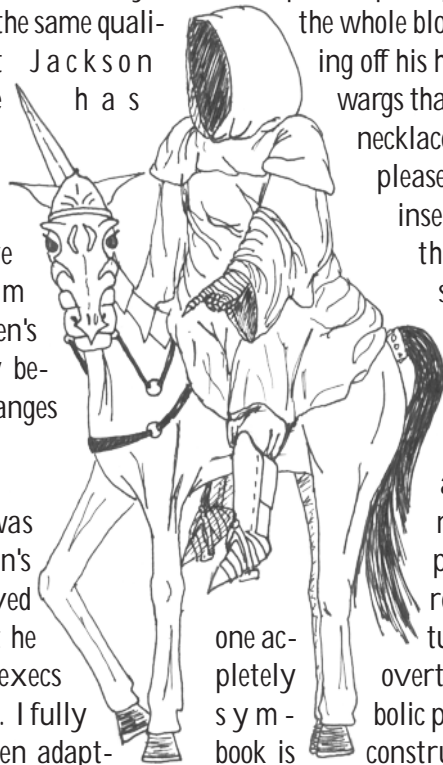
let's face it - betrayed.

Of course, part of this is the result of the first film being so stunningly and unexpectedly good - what it comes down to is that we're blasé. The look and feel of Two Towers are just as free from cheesiness as the first one; the casting is just as good, the actors make even more of their roles than they did in Fellowship. My feeling of disappointment is perhaps partially because I take for granted the amazing visual realisation of these characters, the strength of the casting, the power of the landscapes and the special effects. My socks were knocked off in the first film, they're simply not there to knock off again by the same qualities. Perhaps what I really feel is that Jackson has rested on his laurels a tad - he has not really advanced from the achievements of the first film, but has taken them for granted as much as we do in watching. I do not believe that the success of Fellowship gives him carte blanche to mess more with Tolkien's original than he did at first, simply because he got away with the initial changes he made.

My sense in the way the book was adapted, overall, is either that Jackson's vaunted integrity, about which I raved mightily last year, is flawed; or that he had the combined New Line studio execs breathing down his neck at every turn. I fully understand the need for changes when adapting literary classics to cinema - some things will work in books that simply will not work in films. Part of my enjoyment of the first film was the way in which its concessions to cinema technique did not significantly disrupt or distort Tolkien's vision. The same is not true here. Throughout the film, changes, distortions and diversions speak eloquently of facile Hollywood values which are allowed to continually override and displace the actual story. I can handle compression of places and people for genuine cinematic reasons. I cannot forgive arbitrary additions which take up time and space which Tolkien's own material should have occupied. Quite apart from anything else, the removal of Shelob from the second film into the third puts a huge amount of action into the third book - the whole of the Battle of the Pelennor, the ride to the Gates of Moria, plus Frodo's struggle

through Mordor. Why on earth do they waste time in stupid changes and additions when there is no time to waste?

So, what did I really hate? Let me count the ways... Meduseld, the dramatisation of the Eowyn/Wormtongue backstory. Unnecessary and time-consuming, and angled at idiots. Goddammit, I hate being condescended to by an intelligent director. The warg attack on the civilian column on its way to Helm's Deep - not the warg attack itself as much (although there is no way those were Tolkien wargs, which are quite explicitly described as giant wolves), but the whole bloody stupid bit with Aragorn falling off his horse (serve him right for fighting wargs that weren't Tolkien's) and losing the necklace given to him by Arwen. I mean, please. Gratuitous Hollywood action insert, again aimed at idiots who need the Aragorn/Arwen connection spelled out in words of one syllable. Faramir. Ye gods, did they knee poor old Faramir where it hurts. Booyesen can wander all over the net burbling about character development in Faramir as much as she likes - she's missed the point. The fact remains that the rewrite of his character into someone actually tempted by the ring completely overthrows the very careful moral and symbolic polarities through which the whole book is constructed. Faramir is Boromir's light half. He fulfils exactly the same function as Frodo does for Gollum. He should not be tempted by the ring; he's the symbolic presence of the Men of Gondor as they could and should be, strong, fair and proof against evil. And why, for heaven's sake, take the whole bang shoot off to Osgiliath? As far as I can see, the purpose of the merry riverside holiday jaunt is for Jackson to show off his (completely unnecessary) ruined city set, and to introduce a completely pointless confrontation between Frodo and a random Winged Nazgul. More Hollywood. More gratuitous action. More confrontations made explicitly and unnecessarily visual. Dammit, if Jackson didn't have to do it in the first movie, why the hell did he have to do it here? I darkly suspect that a select hierarchy of New Line studio execs needs to be lined up against the wall and shot.



<pant, pant>. Okay, I'll stop ranting now. If you haven't got the point, it's because you're the kind of person at whom Jackson was angling all these explicit explanations. In my view, the second film has taken the first film's few, mildly annoying unnecessary changes like the balancing-rock bit in Moria, and simply let them loose. In doing so, it has shown infinitely less sensitivity to the integrity of Tolkien's vision; it has continually privileged Hollywood values at the expense of fidelity to the book. Not only in the insertion of action sequences, either - look at the way they've treated Gimli as comic relief. This was also embryonic in the first film, but really becomes ridiculous in Two Towers. Tolkien's Dwarves are anything but comic - they're an ancient, powerful, very dignified people. Comic relief in Tolkien's book comes mostly from Sam and (at times) the younger hobbits, but obviously the scriptwriters are too busy with Sam as noble-sidekick to use him as he was intended to be used.

The problem with these changes is that the overall effect of the film script becomes, frankly, a little shoddy. Losing sight of the underlying coherence of Tolkien's vision leaves some awful gaps of logic in the film as a whole. The Ents, for example; displacing the reason for attacking Isengard from the Ents themselves and onto the hobbits, may make sense in terms of the film's tendency to focus on main characters for decision and impetus, but it makes monkeys of the Ent's psychology. Their attack on Isengard becomes rather random and arbitrary, instead of the carefully-considered decision, by a slow-thinking and very powerful race, that it actually was. Likewise, the Gimli comic relief bits take up enough time during Helm's Deep that we never really see the conclusion of Gimli and Legolas's orc-killing game. Theoden, too, is never really a coherent character; the weird exorcism Gandalf does may be visually impressive, but it destroys the sense of Theoden's weakness as a psychological rather than a magical condition. His hesitation about attacking after his restoration is inexplicable, and makes him into a vague, weak character whose actions make no sense. Overall, the script lacks tightness and coherence at

several points, a weakness I can only ascribe to the flaws introduced by all these damned Hollywoodisms.

Okay, so I hated the movie. Actually, I didn't. I'm still very much invested in the casting and scenery; the visual realisation of Tolkien's world which Jackson has given us, remains a wholly wonderful and unexpected gift. I am clinging desperately to the word going around the fansites, which is that the second film is the one which most deviates from the books, so Return of the King may be more faithful. I am promising myself that I'll attempt to see Two Towers again and to enjoy it as a film, not as an adaptation, even though I'm not sure that I can detach myself from my knowledge of Tolkien to that extent. I am, indeed, rather betrayed by the flaws in the script, although I'm willing to accept that perhaps the scriptwriters for whom I had so much respect are battling against commercial pressures out of their control. I just wish they'd stuck to their guns.



I'm left feeling saddened, having lost that joyous sense, created by the first film, that it can be done. Perhaps Tolkien himself was right after all - he writes, in his essay "On Fairy Stories", that the visual or dramatic depiction of any kind of fantasy is always a mistake, since "it imposes one visual form. Literature works from mind to mind." In Fellowship, Jackson managed, indeed, to speak to our dearly-held mental images of Tolkien's marvellous world. In Two Towers he seems to have lost that ability. We are all the poorer for it.

You know you're in CLAWs when... Someone says something with more than one meaning and you immediately take it the dodgy way.

You know you're in
CLAWs when...You
understand the term
"Fridge Quotes"

The Ethics of Slaughter

Inspired by: *The Blue Dragon's Uncle*

D.M.: Austin Chamberlain

Players: Simon Cross - Tokim (Human)

Lara Davison - Lia (Drow)

Aabrianna Pinski - Brianna (Human)

Jessica Tiffin - Thora (Barbarian)

Another day, another bloodbath. The session started off rather peacefully, with a bar fight. We'd never had a bar fight before and the notion of beating people up without killing them and without using magic was fairly novel. I even managed to resist using my spanking new breath weapon. (See "Dragon Disciple" prestige class) In good spirits we set off across the Mountains to Silverymoon where we planned to do a spot of shopping and maybe sell some dragon bits. By late afternoon we had met up with a caravan of travellers and we decided to camp together. Safety in numbers and all that.

Of course we were attacked, it's a harsh world we play in. This time the perps were a gang of Uthgard Barbarians. To cut a long story short between Lia and Thora we took out about 35 of them, pretty much the whole raiding party. Partly with swords play, partly with explosion and partly by Lia flying around invisible and shooting them with a long bow.

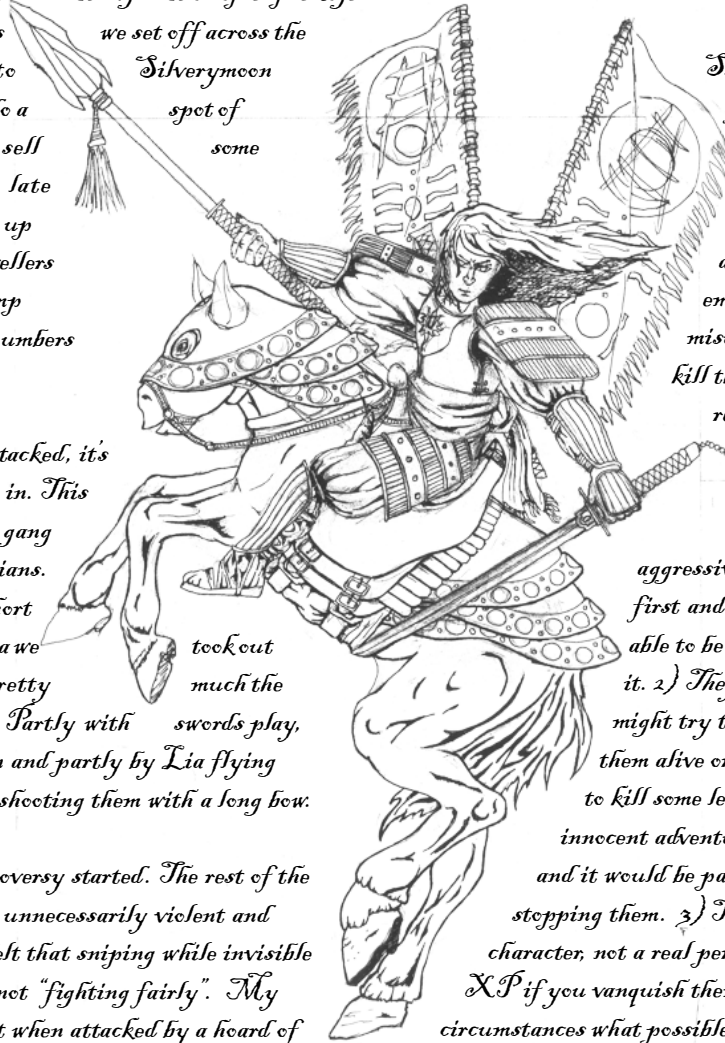
That's when the controversy started. The rest of the party felt that I was unnecessarily violent and bloodthirsty. They felt that sniping while invisible was overkill and was not "fighting fairly". My point of view was that when attacked by a hoard of hostile bandits the prudent thing to do is be to kill every last one of them, fairness be damned. I feel this way for two main reasons: Firstly if you just fight them off and let many of them escape you give them a chance to regroup and launch a counter attack which might get you killed.

on innocent travellers, pillaging their caravans and selling survivors into slavery. I consider it my duty as a relatively powerful and basically good character to kill all of them in order to prevent them from harming other people in the future.

As far as I am concerned the whole notion of a "fair fight" is nonsense unless you are participating in some kind of violent sport. I mean if I thought that someone was an even match for me and had as good a chance of beating me as being beaten by me I wouldn't choose to get into a bloody fight with them. I'd suggest a nice chat over a cup of tea. No, you should only get into a fight with someone under one of two circumstances.

Situation one, they pick a fight with you and you have to defend yourself. In such a case, unless the whole incident can be attributed to some kind of embarrassing misunderstanding, you should kill them. There are a number of reasons for this. 1) This person has proven himself or herself to be a violent and aggressive individual who attacks first and thinks later. They might be able to be reasoned with, but why risk it. 2) They tried to kill you. They might try to do it again if you leave them alive or even worse they might try to kill some less competent and more innocent adventurer than yourself later on and it would be partly your fault for not stopping them. 3) They are an imaginary character, not a real person and you'll get more XP if you vanquish them. Under these circumstances what possible reason could you have for playing fair? It's not as if they politely challenged you to a duel so why not stab them in the back with a +5 dagger of slaying? It's quick and easy and relatively

Secondly these people are professional criminals, preying



painless for everyone involved. It doesn't make any sense to take unnecessary risks with your life to play fair with some scumbag who was probably planning to wear your teeth as a necklace anyway.

Situation two, you have decided that a certain critter/person must die so you pick a fight with them. Under these circumstances you have even less reason to "play fair". Presumably you have carefully considered your options and decided that this execution is necessary so why not make it an execution? Make it quick and clean and spare the critter the pain and fear of a drawn out death. Just because you have good reason to kill something does not mean you should torture it by hacking it to bits when you can just blow it up or chop its head off. By way of analogy, if I were to propose the proper way of killing a cow I wanted to eat would be to beat it to death

examine the options, if he is primarily Chaotic or Neutral there is absolutely no reason why he shouldn't try to slit our throats over dinner. It's what I would do in his position. If in the best-case scenario he were some type of Good he would still be perfectly justified in turning on us. After all, what he was doing was a tribal norm, condoned by his deity and allowed him to provide for his family, and we killed a third of his tribe. A "good" character could be justified in killing us to avenge his fallen brothers.

So now we all have to sleep with one eye open in case our new adoptee gets it into his head to set us on fire or something. If we had just left him to die it would have been much simpler, now I might just have to kill him so I



with my bare hands because that would be a fair fight, you would call me a savage. The humane thing to do is to get the killing over with fast so you can get on with your other business, rescuing maidens or similar.

Alignment assignment

Two of the Uthgard I shot were still alive when Briana found them and healed them. She has evildar (an cleric ability to detect evil) so she was able to ascertain that one of them was evil and the other one not. For some reason she released the evil one (mark my words fifteen years from now our characters will be killed in our sleep by his son seeking revenge for the humiliation of his tribe) and invited the "not evil" one to join our party.

I can see how this is a nice gesture but I am concerned about the implication of this "not evil" assessment. If he's not evil, what is he? He sure as hell isn't Lawful Good or Lawful anything. Which leaves some combination of Chaos, Neutrality and maybe Goodness. So lets

can get a good nights sleep, and that, even Lia wouldn't feel good about.

You know you're in CLAWS when... Someone says something with only one PURELY INNOCENT meaning and you create a dodgy alternative.

SBD: SHORT, BUT DEADLY

- A Dwarfish how-to guide

In the confusion and chaos that characterises modern university life, students often find themselves unable to fully indulge in those prime pleasures of tertiary education: heavy drinking and obscene behaviour. In response to this shocking tendency towards well-socialised, alcohol-free behaviour, we have drawn on the essence of all that is offensive, loud and seriously hammered to help us rechannel our energies: The Dwarf.

Now the unenlightened among you may believe that a Dwarf is defined solely by his height, bad hair and offensiveness. This is *totally* untrue. Austin Powers possesses all of those characteristics and is *not* a Dwarf.

There are in fact many subtleties too True Dwarfishness. It is our hope that by the fine art of Dwarfishness to the world, we can help in some small way to rekindle the spirit of debauchery and ignorance that made this university great.

Height

Height is obviously the most obvious Dwarfish characteristic (Though some scholars might argue the beard's pre-eminence. See **Beard**). Unfortunately, size is often a bit of a problem for those of us whose mothers failed to take hard drugs while pregnant.

There are several remedies to this:

- 1) Special Effects budget to the tune of several million: Unfortunately beyond the means of most students, plus there's the added inconvenience of never appearing in person but only on a suitably-sized video screen. The easiest way to accomplish such an endeavour is by joining the cast of Lord of the Rings, though this does require movie-star good looks. Sadly, many CLAWmembers may have to invest nearly as much in plastic surgery as in special effects.
- 2) Sawing your own legs off at the knees: While it shows a definite enthusiasm to get into the spirit of Dwarven toughness, the resulting extreme blood loss and probable death may put a damper on such an attempt. But if you have a fully-equipped medical centre within easy walk, er, crawl, go right ahead!
- 3) Standing on your knees with your legs bent out of sight and getting shoes glued to your kneecaps: A

relatively cheap and injury-free way to get that genuine Dwarfish height, it does have the considerable disadvantage of making you look like a dickhead. (See **Looking like a dickhead**). Best to avoid.

Faced with these options, you may be feeling somewhat disheartened. But never fear! Height is a state of mind. The key is to imagine yourself smaller physically, while larger emotionally. (Note that emotionally in this case refers to suitable Dwarfish emotions as rage, rage, rage and drunkenness - not technically an emotion, but close enough. Your capacity for weak, Elf-like emotions such as pity, sorrow and inner peace should be shrunk to the size of a walnut. A small walnut, at that.)



Whenever faced with a large or otherwise intimidating man, focus less on his height and more on the fact that you are ideally placed to castrate him with a meat cleaver (see **Fights**). That analogy should greatly aid the building of that trademark Dwarven temper.

Beard

The pride and joy of any Dwarf is of course, his (or her) bread. The average human female may find herself somewhat stumped at this obstacle, though I am given to understand that false beards get more comfortable and luxurious every day. This route may also be of use to hormonally challenged males.

Obviously, beards also tend to be on the itchy, scratchy side, especially during summer. However, such constant discomfort should only help to develop that Dwarven temper. Beards should be tangled, messy knots of hair. Braiding your beard, while considerably neater, will only lead to looking like a dickhead (see **Looking like a dickhead**).

Vocabulary

It is a mysterious convention of fantasy films and literature that all Dwarves sound Scottish. Obviously, the two groups are easily confused. The one group drinks heavily, shouts loudly, and is notorious for its battle-mad warriors and tendency to wear women's clothing. The other group drinks heavily, shouts loudly, is notorious for its battle-mad warriors, and would never dream of showing unpleasant hairy knees in public.

And height is another clue, of course.

However, as a result of this confusion, most people assume that Dwarves are, somehow, Scottish. So it falls to the intrepid Dwarf-imitator to develop the best, most convincing Scottish accent possible, by any means short of swapping vocal cords with Sean Connery.

Kilts remain a definite no-no. The Cape Town winds are not kind to such garments. (see **Looking like a dickhead**)

Once the accent has been firmly established, the next step is to pepper one's conversations with suitable Dwarvish phrases. The thicker your accent becomes, and the more phrases enter into your words, the harder you should be to understand. This is entirely desirable, since it provides a convenient excuse for starting fights with stupid friends/lecturers/tutors/colleagues/innocent-bystanders/waiters who simply can't understand plain Dwarvish. They're obviously just morons, and you're perfectly within your rights to bash them with an axe/club/fist/knee/cleaver/chair/table/anything-else-within-reach (see **Fights**).

To start you off, here are some useful Dwarvish terms: Damn – Good. Bad. Everything in between.

Stumpy – Deadly insult.

Elf – Deadlier insult.

Dead – What you will be, if you call a Dwarf either “Stumpy” or “Elf”.

Gruff – A Dwarf's natural state

Drunk - A Dwarf's other natural state.

Homicidal Rage – A Dwarf's other, other natural state.

Ale – Good stuff.

Brandy – Good stuff.

Whiskey – Good stuff.

Wine – Useless, pathetic grape juice with the kick of a quadriplegic mule.

A Real Dwarf – A gruff, drunken Dwarf in a homicidal rage.

Violence – An interesting form of recreation which tends to occur when a Dwarf is bored, angry, frustrated or, indeed, present.

Fights

Obviously, in order to be a Dwarf, you have to learn how to fight. You don't have to be an especially gifted combatant (Gimli, a Dwarf among Dwarves, spent a lot of the Two Towers getting his ass handed to him, didn't he?), but you must not lack enthusiasm.

A Dwarf does not know the meaning of the word “retreat”. Or the meaning of a great deal of other words, due to brain damage from excessive alcohol consumption and *far* too many bar fights, but that is neither here nor there.

The key facet of any Dwarven combatant's repertoire is pain tolerance. While Elves, Humans and those sissy Hobbits may choose to parry or dodge blows, Dwarves

take them unflinchingly and then snarl, “Is that all you got?”

Obviously, this is an aptitude that requires careful training and conditioning. To begin said conditioning, ask the largest friend you have to punch you in the kidneys.

Assuming said friend is in fact a true friend of yours, they may question such abnormal behaviour and refuse to strike you. It may be necessary to repeatedly insult their girlfriends/boyfriends, mothers and personal hygiene.

Eventually, even the most loyal friend will lose it and smack you one. Your behaviour at this point is crucial. Stand with legs slightly apart and hands on hips, chest thrust out, and take the blow.

Then snarl, “Is that all you got?”

The first few of such attempts will most likely end with you curled in a ball on the floor, whimpering “Is...that...all...yo – Oh god, this hurts.” You will, most probably, look like a dickhead. (see **Looking like a dickhead**)

Persevere! Get up again, and yell your insult again. Repeat until unconscious.

When you wake up, apply disinfectant to your wounds, put an icepack on your concussion and find your probably-no-longer-so-friendly friend again.

When you can take a few good punches without flinching, arm your by-now-bitter-enemy with a baseball bat. Be sure that your fridge is fully stocked with ice before proceeding. Gradually increase the severity of these assaults, eventually moving onto edged weapons.

IMPORTANT SAFETY TIP! Be sure to don armour before commencing, or else these exercises may result in death. A last Will and Testament may be advisable in the event that your armour proves defective.

At the end of this procedure, you will be extremely hardcore, or you will be dead. If you do die as a direct result of these exercises, CLAWS accepts full liability and will pay out R500 000 upon personal application by the deceased.

Looking like a dickhead

Unfortunately, despite your best efforts, your attempts to create an aura of true Dwarfishness may cause you to end up looking like a dickhead. This is sadly an inherent risk of the procedure. Your best response to this situation is to clobber anyone who points it out.

If you're going to be look like a dickhead, at least be a *mean* dickhead.

You know you're in CLAWS when... One of your friends is a gothic, transvestite wombat.

CLW303S Supplementary Examination January 2003

Multiple-choice questions are worth one mark per question component. Negative marking will be enforced for hopelessly incorrect answers. Deadline for submission of answer sheets is high noon on the Friday of Orientation week.

Section 1. Classics

- Name three founding members of CLAW.
- CLAW had its origins in a dingy room in which UCT men's residence?
- In 1992, CLAW operated from a converted in the Student's Union (choose one)
 - first aid station
 - fire escape
 - lift shaft
 - stationery room
- In which year did the first Dragonfire roleplaying convention take place?
- In which year were the following modules or LARPs first run at Dragonfire?
 - When Dragons Die*
 - The Sultan's Tear*
 - Thirteen Ways to Die*
 - Black Coffee Blues*
 - A.C.I.D*
 - While the Hunt's Away*
- How many years has CLAW been sending teams to ICON/GENCON in Johannesburg?

Section 2. Political Studies

- Name three CLAWthings who have slept with their predecessors.
- In which year did CLAW almost convert from a committee to a collective model?
- Name one CLAW member who has served on both the committee and the UCT SRC.
- In which year was Jessica Tiffin awarded honorary life membership of CLAW?
- In which year was the Duellist position added to the CLAW committee?
- Who, or what, was CRACK, and what was CLAW's relationship to them or it?

Section 3. Mechanical Engineering

- Name three role-playing systems in which you inflict a 'B Puncture Critical'.
- Which systems feature the following unique terms?

- THACO
 - Flip-flops
 - Blood Pool
 - Paradox
 - Grit
 - Karma
 - Mental Balance
 - STAMINA
- How many Sanity points do you lose for encountering the following cthulhoids?
 - Nightgaunt
 - Dhole
 - Ghoul
 - Mi-Go
 - What does a third level Cleric with Str 15 need to roll to hit AC 18 in D&D 3rd Ed?
 - What is the probability of rolling an 18 on 4d6 if you only count the three highest results?
 - What feats do you need if you want both *Spirited Charge* and *Whirlwind Attack*?

Section 4. Chemical Engineering

- How much did three SAB beers cost at Gandalf's during Happy Hours in 2002?
- What alcoholic drink features prominently in both *From Hell* and *Bram Stoker's Dracula*?
- Alastair is drunk. He insists on buying you a drink. The drink he is most likely to buy you is:
 - Apple Sourz
 - Tequila
 - Hunters' Dry
 - Schnapps
- Arrange the following in order of closure: Lloyds, Abigail's, The Playground, Springfield.
- Dermot frequently enthused on the properties of which brand of Irish whiskey?
- List the name and ingredients of one cocktail available on the Cool Runnings menu.

Section 5. Media and Popular Culture

- Complete the lyric: "There is a house in New Orleans they call the rising -
 - dead." ii) damp."
 - iii) moon." iv) sun."
- Complete the lyric: "Marianne I call you -
 - herring." ii) trout."
 - iii) darling." iv) frequently."
- Complete the lyric: "Finland red, Egypt white, Germany -
 - sandy." ii) yellow."
 - iii) black." iv) gothic."
- Complete the lyric: "Who is this irresistible creature who has an insatiable love for the -
 - couch." ii) gothic."
 - iii) trout?" iv) dead?"

You know you're in CLAWs when... Jeffrey Archer is the name of a game, not a novelist.

- e) "Game over, man, game over!" Name and rank of this cowardly character?
- f) Complete the phrase: "My name is You killed my father. Prepare to die."
- g) What colours did Sarah's little brother Toby wear throughout *Labyrinth*?
- h) "Because it's *dull*, you imbecile - it'll *hurt* more." Said by whom, and to whom?
- i) Name three characters from *Willow*, indicating which of them is the tallest.
- j) What was the particular curse under which the lovers in *Ladyhawke* had been placed?

- v) Purity test
- vi) Janet's thong

Section 8. Medicine

- a) Link the following medical events to CLAW members past and present:
 - i) dislocated knee at house party
 - ii) slashed tendons after stabbing a street sign
 - iii) broke arm during SCA dancing
 - iv) whacked on head with champagne bottle
 - v) mauled by surfboard skeg
 - vi) developed titanic dermoid cyst

Section 6. Historical Studies

- a) "Blow me!" was shouted by Reuel Miller during a 1993 *Aliens* once-off in which context?
 - b) Match up the famous characters in CLAW gaming history (i-vii) below to their players (t-z):
 - i) Sundry, time-travelling syker
 - ii) Morgann White-eye, barbarian trader
 - iii) Lupe Sanchez-da Silva, FBI sniper
 - iv) Tempus, Black Hobbit necromancer
 - v) Doc Mansell, cultist in agent's clothing
 - vi) Kerrick, crusading paladin of Tyr
 - vii) Morninghttar, lisping faerie dragon
 - t) Austin Chamberlain
 - u) Jessica Tiffin
 - v) Giles Embleton
 - w) Lara Davison
 - x) Michael Streatfield
 - y) Dylan Craig
 - z) Wayne Human
- c) Which long-serving CLAW member ran a campaign set in the UK that featured pyramidal starships, evil techno music, and a shape-shifting Britney Spears concert in Brazil?
 - d) Which DM once took over six hours of 'bullet time' to deal with just 90 seconds of action?
 - e) Who, or what, was the *centralised power vortex*?
 - f) What are you doing, in the roleplaying context, if you are *pulling a Shaun Gibson*?

SPACE FOR ROUGH WORKINGS:

You know you're in CLAWS when... When you beat someone at anything, you use the phrase, "Suck it down" or "What a raping".

Section 7. English Language and Literature

- a) The following terms all refer to something. But the question is: who or what?
 - i) the wiki
 - ii) Skank10rd
 - iii) sedstock
 - iv) Bognor party

Dragonfire 14:

Steam Punk

- Mark Ferry and Mike Dewar

"Hey grampah! Tell us the one about Dragonfire 14"

"Hooboy, now that's going waaay back!". Grampah shifted in is comfy chair and rubbed his forehead with a wrinkled, spotted hand.

"Ain't nothin' been seen like it. Not before or since. Kids, those were heady days... Ah yes. That was one of the best ever. 'It was a very good year' as Frank Sinatra might say".

"Frank who?"

"Heh, never mind. Now let me tell you how it all started".

At that very moment an anorexic nurse, her uniform starched to stiffness - her manner stiffer still, loomed (not lurked) in the doorway and all heads turned toward her.

"It's enema time for you Mr Charlton" she said, not at all kindly.

"Oh sod it..." grumbled Grampah.

As he's wheeled out of his ward room and down the lime green corridor of the Monte Cook Memorial Home for Aged Gamers, Grampah Charlton fondly recalls a weekend back in August '02...

On 8 August Dragonfire 14 kicked off with a gathering of gentles from lands near and far - a medieval banquet held with the local branch of the SCA (the Society for Creative Anachronism) known as the Shire of Adamastor.

We were fortunate this year to have a public holiday (Womyyn's Day) fall on the Friday, giving us three uninterrupted days of mayhem (hell-bent-for-leather-last-minute-organising). Truth be told, though, it wasn't really that bad at all. In fact, we had a perfect venue (the foyer of the Kramer Law Building on Middle Campus), all the modules printed at least a day in advance (*thanks for the use of your photocopier, Dad*), and an enormous bundle of prizes from our faithful SPONSORS, Chaosium and

We squeezed in six modules, four LARPs, three wargaming events, two Magic: the Gathering events and a partridge in a pear tree. All without a hitch. Oh, and did we mention the big-screen Animé theatre? And SUPER-limited edition muggs? Are we impressed yet?

Dragonfire was conceived with a SteamPunk theme - a fusion of Victorian innocence and industrial era technology. Think *Wild Wild West* and you're pretty much on the right track. Like most Dragonfire themes it never quite extends to the modules. Don't get me wrong - this is a good thing.

We ran quite a variety of modules: "bodice-ripping" action-adventure-mystery-romance (*The Highwayman* - a rerun of an older Dragonfire module written by Jessica Tiffin for the Falkenstein setting); gritty nineteen-thirties detective noir in the bloated-boneless-scaly-fluid form of Mike Dewar's *Noir Nightmare* (Call of Cthulhu); wintry, wolf evasion in the wild North in Simon Cross and Adrianna Pinska's *Brothers in Arms* (D&D 3rd Ed). Austin Chamberlain and Dylan Craig contributed *Out of the Mud*, a grim portrait of war from the perspective of a small band of Soviet soldiers at the Polish front line. Also in the line-up: *Darksouls* by Brendan Quinlivan and Dylan Craig and a Romans-with-Guns module from the *Terra Fvlminata* system written (just for a

DRAGONFIRE 14 LARPS

REVENGE OF THE YAK

SIGN OF THE STAR

IN THE SHADOW OF THE STAKE

FRAGMENTS OF VERSAILLES

change) by Mr Craig.

The LARPs all run quite successfully. I helped DM *In the Shadow of the Stake* - Warrick Brown's medieval LARP brought down from ICON 2002, and although it was initially quite difficult to juggle twenty-odd players, the feedback we got was quite positive.

Even though some of the LARPs ran overtime we managed to keep starting times at least close to the times advertised in the brochure. Someday we will

run a Dragonfire where every event starts on time - but this will probably not be within my lifetime.

By midday Sunday, excitement was building among the organisers - whether this was in expectation of a well deserved rest or due to Dragonfire 14 having run so smoothly and successfully was not known. The speed at which people disappeared when it was time to clean up, however, was somewhat suspicious.

Despite this high-speed exodus, people somehow managed to regain enough strength to attend the post-Dragonfire Gandalf's party, more than likely in the hope of winning something as tangible evidence that the convention was something other than a sleep-deprived hallucination.

Prizes were awarded and prizewinners were duly forced to drink shots of Apple Sourz - possibly in an attempt to please the bitter non-winners. Drunk people are easier to beat up and rob, after all.

On that note, this year's committee will be hiring a hitman to cut out Austin Chamberlain's vocal cords so that SOMEONE ELSE can win the next Best Cthulhu Module DM. Contributions will be gratefully accepted. Anyone wishing to extend the contract to Russel Goldman will be gladly accommodated.

But aside from said plans, there seems to have been general approval of the winners.

WARNING: Next year, the bribes go up. Please consult your local committee member.

Aside from the roleplaying and LARPing, there was also the usual brutalising, slaughtering, extermination and....painting going on at the Wargaming tables. The Mageknight game in particular appeared highly successful in attracting the younger gaming demographic. Ah, the happy sounds of children playing...at trying to rip each other to shreds. Who says CLAWmembers aren't sentimental?

After Dragonfire concluded, we did some totally random polling of attendants. Here's what they said in response to CLAWmarks reporters.

Not-Mark Ferry: "Well, I really think the committee did a stupendous job. Particularly the CLAWthing."

Still-Not-Mark-Ferry: "I was very impressed with the time and care the committee put into the convention. Particularly the CLAWthing."

In-No-Way-Mark-Ferry: "I thought the committee were all very sexy. Particularly the CLAWthing."

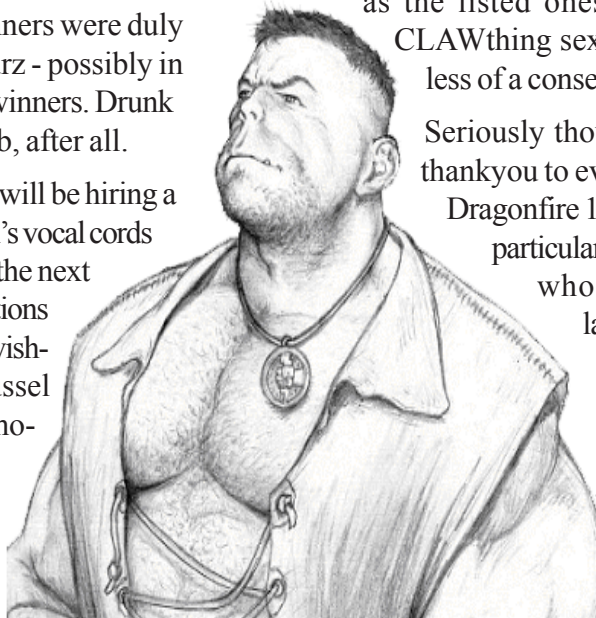
Not-Mark-Ferry-In-A-Funny-Hat: "I believe that the organisers of Dragonfire deserve large six-figure bonuses. Particularly the CLAWthing."

Certainly-Not-Mark-Speaking-In-A-Spanish-Accent: Ai, Senior. I theenk si committee do very well. Particularly si CLAWtheeng.

After our reporters beat Mark unconscious and tied him up, we were able to get some responses from *other* people. Surprisingly, they were much the same as the listed ones. Except for the CLAWthing sex appeal. That was less of a consensus.

Seriously though, an enormous thankyou to everyone who made Dragonfire 14 such a success, in particular Simon & Adrianna who coordinated the largest proportion of convention.

Moving slowly, with a curious expression on his face, Granpah returns from his enema.



"Ooh! That was frisky! So that was Dragonfire 14. You know, roleplaying really meant something in those days..not like you modern kids with your shiny matching dice and black leather dice bags. In my day, we used to have to make our dice out of knucklebones and spit. O' course you could only roll one-handed then, but it was more fun that way. And if we played Aberrant, we'd have to pick 'em up in our teeth! Ah, those were the days..."

One of Granpah's Charlton's ankle-biter audience raises his hand. "So Grampah, what's an enema?"

"Uh....now Dragonfire 15...that was a STRANGE one...."

...sounds like a plausible idea.

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Elder Gods

You know you're in CLAWs when...Starting a

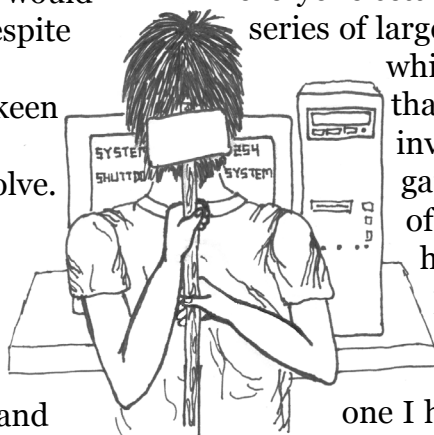
SEDSTOCK 2002 - THE REVIVAL

After the dismal showing at Sedstock 2000, I swore to myself that I would never do it again. However, despite everything I told myself, the constant barrage from super-keen people wanting another eventually wore down my resolve. So, with very little time to organize before the end of the 2002 Varsity year, and even less time to prepare for exams, I set about trying to gather the equipment, people and venue that would be needed.

With the day having been set as the first weekend after the exams (the date eludes me right now) I set out to get everything ready.

Eventually, all the phone calls, meetings and badgering behind, the sun rose on what would be day 1 of Sedstock 2002. As people began to stream in to the hall I had rented, I realized that this Sedstock would indeed see close to the number of people I had anticipated (25+). In fact, we saw 26 computers over 2 days, with lookers-on drifting in at various stages to make for a lively atmosphere.

Unfortunately, as with most networks, equipment problems plagued us for most of the first day, hampering our ability to have any large-scale games at first. But thanks to Marcus and Mark (no relation), we had the network up and running quickly and efficiently (I owe those 2 a big thank-you). The only other major mishap occurred when a network-transmitted virus reared its nasty head, infecting several computers and resulting in Dylan Craig's PC having most of his executable files corrupted. I still can't apologize enough to Dylan for the mishap, which prematurely ended his Sedstock.



With the network now running smoothly, everyone settled down for the 1st of a series of large-scale Quake III games, which were awesome. The fact that virtually all of the players involved were very skilled gamers indeed lead to some of the most awesome games I have ever had the fortune to play in. One in particular will always stand out in my mind as the most insane one I have ever been involved with (16 players + 1 small map + 16 machine guns and shotguns = 7 minutes of carnage).

Several matches of QIII capture the flag and team-assault followed, as well as several Warcraft III, Starcraft games (in which Meyrick reminded me why Dragoons are so damn hard), Unreal Tournament (Normal and 2003) and some daft racing game that several people were playing. The sounds of death, destruction, winning and losing filled the air for the entire night (even attracting some outsiders to see what the heck was going on)

By Sunday morning, most people had drifted off to find sleep, leaving only a few stalwart players still running till about 2 that afternoon. By then, nobody had the stamina or willpower required to stay awake for any further period of time, so we called it quits, ending on 30+ hours of PC-powered devastation.

I would like to personally thank all the people that came along and made this one of the best Sedstocks ever. Hell, after this I may even do it again next year. Maybe next time I can finally break the 30-computer mark. Ahhhh to scheme the improbable scheme.

You know you're in CLAWS when... You can spell and pronounce Cthulhu.

J-THO 3: ITS A MAD, MAD WORLD

Once a year, a group of **CLAW** members decide to deny the stigma and spend a Weekend of drunken debauchery in the Wilds of **Lains kloof**. This year the trek started under a cloudfilled sky, with a fine drizzle rounding out the picture. Organization of lifts led to much swearing and repacking followed by phone calls to the latecomers, but we all finally got underway to our Venue for the Weekend. After about an hour and a half of beautiful scenery and winding roads that led many to fear for their lives, we arrived at the beautiful Tweede Tol. Let the fun and games begin

Surrounded by beautiful rivers and fynbos, we set about creating our own little harbor of peace. Until we



discovered the campsite had been invaded by screaming kiddies. Rohypnol, shotguns, cocaine overdoses, and drowning became accepted topics of conversation in reference to our fellow inhabitants, but aside from that it was peaceful.

Days found us attempting to cook breakfast on a skottel with minimal gas. The rest of the daylight hours were spent trekking up the river to the various waterfalls with ledges for diving. Some didn't seem to fit the bill but of course we all know **CLAW** members are suicidal. Deep pools and many a rock for sunbathing. Most of the attempted suicides were committed by Piotr, who became famous when an ad company scouting sites, requested someone to dive off the ledges. His memory will now live on only in the vaults of their company. The days also led to many an evening of continuous swearing by those who hadn't put on enough suntan lotion. **Jo** will forever be known as **The Lobster**. Let us not forget the trips into town, made even more interesting by the failing of **Trigs** brakes on the way in.

Nights were spent crowded round the campfire, listening to stories from previous years and relating

many anecdotes about the company we were keeping. These tended to turn dodgy as the alcohol content of our livers increased and finally culminated in an erotic Mills Boone reading, with various campers playing significant parts. This occurred when people decided to crowd into a person tent though. Go figure

We were even able to host our own musical concert with the discovery of **Stevie's** guitar and the fact that he could actually play it. Among the many cries of,

Are those really the words. However, I don't think the other inhabitants of the site appreciated the caterwauling at in the morning. Those that stayed till the end were treated to the first reading of **Trigs** book in progress. When it's done, it's going to be great. No, I'm not being bribed, but anyone that wants to, may.

Between the sacrifices of vodka to the earth mother, Piotr, we know you're lying. The choosing of the campfires and the cries of, its mad and... Pass the Schnapps back this way. **JTho** went extremely well, no one died, few hangovers were experienced and **Trig** didn't bleed to death after checking the sharpness of **Piotr's** blade. Stupid

Well, to next year and all that it holds, may the alcohol taste better, the water be more refreshing



and more like this to be factual

The last time writer

Ian Kitley sunbathed. **Green Peace** received a record number of false reports about a beached whale. Coincidence. We think not.

THE CAPE TIMES

War Clouds Muster

Cape Town - As the berg winds of early February sweep across the cracked paving of Jammie Plaza, an eerie calm settles upon the famous steps. A calm before the storm you may say. And what a storm that may turn out to be. This reporter has learned that the four families of university crime are squaring off to decide who controls the drug, alcohol and exam memo trades on our sweet little campus. At great risk, this reporter vows to deliver the story behind the vicious war, which can not be too far off.

But to understand the circumstances, you must understand your enemies. We begin with the modern day czar of Russian crime. Andrea 'The Bear' Petronov, born into a poor working class family, quickly clawing her way into a position of power. Despite her diminutive stature, this vicious firecracker has had many family members killed for less than forgetting to bow in her presence. Well known for her ability to shrug off wounds that would fatally wound most, this woman is a force to be reckoned with. Never mock her and never disrespect her.



Erica 'Scimitar' Amul, daughter of a British mother and an Arab sheik, overcame social prejudices to advance to the top of the Arab syndicate.



Proficient in the art of wheeling and dealing, the supply of arms has greatly increased since her rise to power. A tough nut and entirely insane, she was once known to have sliced the balls off a man for destroying a flower and the next minute ordered a napalm strike on a pre-primary school. She is Cape Town's own Joker.

Cassandra 'Dragon' Soo, though only having spent a year on our beautiful shores, has integrated herself into our criminal underworld. After



the widespread acclaim she received for the Kung Fu kwoon she started up in Mitchell's Plain, she used these resources to train up her army of followers. Her deadly kung-fu skills have led to the unfortunate deaths of many an unlucky assassin.

Michelle 'Trickster' Fernelli never wanted this kind of life. Studying as an attorney, her father's contacts quickly became hers and she eventually slipped into the family mould of bribery and corruption. Now with most of the city's officials in her pocket, her father's influence has finally led to her darker side's emergence and the birth of a major player in the criminal community.



Add to this a number of small time hoodlums who wish to make a name for themselves and you have

a deadly mix. None of them like each other and they all want the other's slice of the pie. Uneasy alliances and back alley deals are the name of the game, but all can fall apart at any time.

The dam is at breaking point and no one is safe. Beware, and never let your guard down. I will be there to cover the story and keep you up to date as the story unfolds. Sleep well my dear readers, and remember, paranoia is a way of life, not a condition.

- Sophie Zane

Wanted

Do you wish to be in a high-powered drop? Good pay, fast cars and faster girls. Do you have great agility, accuracy and an eye for detail? Well, then you should apply to the KAOS Employment Agency. Providing sharpshooters, bodyguards and assassins to the top families for years. Many opportunities available at present. Contact Ian at 072-348-0313 or apply at our Orientation Week stand next to the CLAW counter. You never know how good you are till the families have a price on your head. Offer closes 21 February 2003.

Classifieds

RIP Sixty gnolls and one surprisingly high-level gnoll barbarian (eventually). This is why we never underestimate the enemy.

RIP An ettin, with one blow of Tokim's Lawful Scythe of Doom.

RIP Baby frost dragon. Not that we're dragon slayers or anything, really.

RIP Some would-be-thieves from the Cult of the Dragon, single-handedly dispatched by Thora.

RIP Some ogres. Maybe this Secure Shelter things attracts too much attention in the wild.

RIP Silfri, M.I.A. after stealth mission to Ascor.

RIP Another ettin and two weird goat things.

RIP Many, many curious marshmallow demons.

RIP One dire displacer beast. Hurrah! Cloaks of displacement for everyone!

RIP One large band of gnolls, a party of underdark drow, and a horde of goblins, all on the same night. Most inconvenient.

NOTICE: Somebody set up us the dragon.

RIP One green dragon. Accidentally. We're not dragon-slayers. Honestly, we're not.

RIP One poncy demon-elf, in single combat with Tokim.

RIP One annoying quasit. We are vindicated.

RIP One icky gibbering thing with many, many teeth and eyeballs. Scarp, get away from the eyeballs. Eeewww!

RIP Several werewolves, lizard skeletons, medusae and one mad cleric of Cyric, thrown into her own Blade Barrier.

RIP Some more drow and a draegloth.

RIP Some orcs looting a gnoll camp.

RIP (a while back, apparently) One adult frost dragon, done in by a cunning exploding orc and distributed over a wide area. We are seriously not dragon-slayers at all.

BIRTH: To Brianna Sheperd's Daughter, a bouncing baby gnoll.

RIP Many Elk clan Uthgart bandits, most rather unsportingly shot dead by an invisible flying Lia while running away.

FOR SALE: Mentem vis (lots). Will swop for any other kind of vis, esp. Corporem. Contact Covenant of Waldenstein.

RIP One English knight, in the course of a valiant but almost certainly misguided quest. We didn't kill him; we just found him.

RIP One large stone construct. With the help of an arbalest.

RIP A whole lost of Moorish slavers off the coast of France.

RIP A dodgy mage in league with Moorish slavers. Passed away of natural causes (bleeding to death) while we were deciding if we should finish him off. We hope he wasn't well-liked in the Order.

RIP Some weird demonic dogs

RIP (Nearly) Two guild thugs who tried to kill us in an inn in Regensburg. Nice try.

WANTED: Corporem mage to install new eyeball. Will provide own eyeball. Will pay in Mentem vis. Contact Vladimir of Bonisagus, c/o Covenant of Waldenstein.

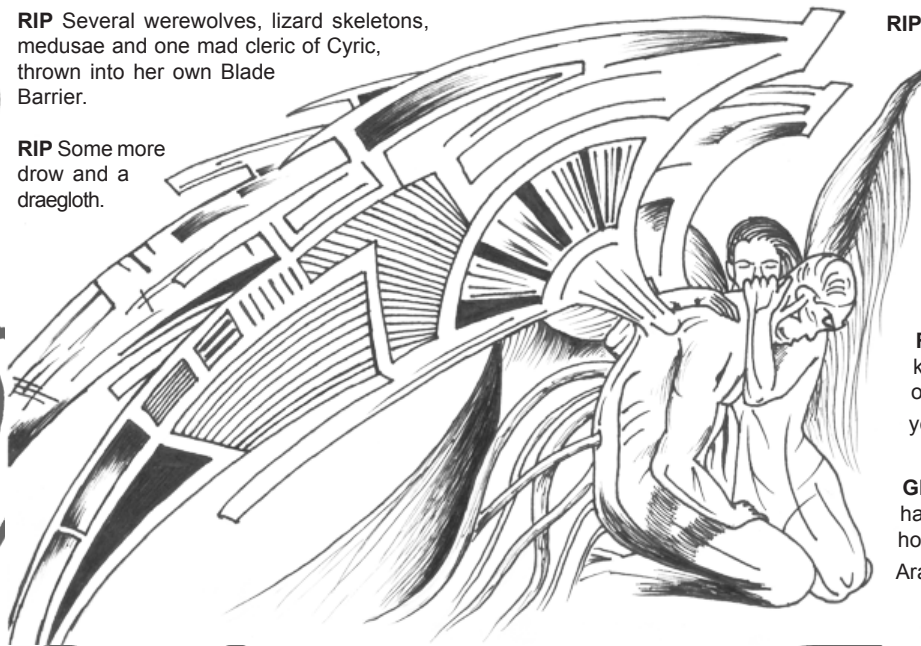
RIP Some koalinth harassing a baby whale.

RIP One mutant male kelpie. A surprisingly dangerous opponent.

RIP A moray eel and a zombie. The waters are safe again for the good people of Firina.

RIP A dodgy merman and some koalinth, caught in the possession of Sahuagin young.

GIVE-AWAYS: Four Sahuagin hatchlings, free to a non-evil aligned home. Contact Aramiatyrene, c/o Happy Badger Inn.



EMPLOYMENT WANTED: Honest, loyal koalinh mercenary seeks work which does not in any way involve small children. Contact Vronk, c/o Happy Badger Inn.

RIP Jericho's entire team. (Method of Death I: Bullets, Method of Death II: Too many fatty foods.)

RIP Steve's Coach (death by "assisted suicide")

RIP Marek Koslovich by exploding computer in classic Wiley E. Coyote fashion. (Commemorated in a slew of really lame jokes by the players.)

RIP An unlucky traitorous employee of Jericho's (Gunned down by said employer. In front of a police station. Jericho had no problems with this. Steve did.)

RIP Big Win Pestoni, Mafia Boss, caught in the crossfire.

RIP Lotharian, Hermetic elder and his followers - killed by a team of HIT Marks Jericho inadvertently led to their sanctuary. Oops

DURING A TIME LOOP (?!)...

RIP Clyde DeVille, shot at EXTREMELY point blank range by Agent Smythe.

RIP Agent Smythe, shot in the chest and back by Neil Jericho.

RIP Neil Jericho, shot in the back by the sheriff of Greenhope, who'd just seen him shoot Smythe

RIP Steve Thompson, shot by Agent Martinez while he was trying to reload his AK-47 after an ill-advised ammo-wasting burst of gunfire

RIP Ricky Welsch, bled out from gunshot wounds. But very slowly, thanks to his use of Time Magic.

RIP Chrissy Carpenter, shot in the face when distracted by a falling tree branch.

RIP Donny Reed, shot in the throat while distracted by the same branch.

RIP Agent Eichmann, Technocratic crisis response operative, shot and hanged by an angry mob.

RIP The entire town of Greenhope, Iowa. JUST DON'T ASK.

RIP Timmy Wallace, six-year-old child...and insane time-warping Maruader, hit by the players car.

RIP Agent Eichmann (again), hit by the same car.

END OF THE TIME LOOP

RIP Chrissy Carpenter (again). Distracted (again), by Clyde's miraculous healing of Jericho.

RIP Donny Reed (again). Fried by a energy blast from a HIT Mark.

RIP Ricky Welsch, gunned down by Smythe during a ill-fated quick-draw gunfight. In classic OK corral fashion, no less.

RIP Markus Anderton, written out of the Quantum wavelength of the universe.

RIP Winifred Sawyer, scientist, melted by an assassin's Quantum Blast

RIP A ton of unlucky security guards. Catalyst walked into a building, claiming to be a member of Greenpeace. The guards looked at his gunfilled trenchcoat, the two Katanas on his back, and

deduced that he was lying. So he (and the rest of the team) killed 'em all. It doesn't pay to be a smart security guard.

RIP Tricia Morowitz, Betty and Albert Noble and Samantha Walsh, caught in a restaurant explosion. Served well done.

RIP Toby Walsh, accountant, shot in the head by an unidentified rifleman.

RIP (nearly) Vincent Bernelli, Mob Boss. Poisoned pasta.

RIP (nearly) Luco Bernelli. More poisoned pasta. (It's not my fault they didn't notice the "waiter" was wearing combat boots!)

RIP Peter Bryant, Occultist. Gutshot by Chris Morowitz, but rushed to hospital. Unfortunately, in hospital he was poisoned by Mr Dale to prevent him talking to Morowitz. Non-disclosure agreements, indeed!

RIP Bucu, Mafia assassin. After Bucu's failed poisoning attempt, Luco got his own back with a 9mm.

RIP Lauren, manager of the Samson Shelter. Shot by two employees of the Bernelli family.

RIP (possibly) Winston, Luco's assistant. Went missing, suspected that he was kidnapped by the Fisherman, a professional hitman.

RIP Jasper "Jazz" McCormett, an unlucky Kwikimart robber and hostage-taker, who wasn't prepared to deal with hostages, the Mafia AND police connections and one in particular who happened to be able to freeze time.

RIP (almost): Will Dexter (Mike), run over by a car in the first session; Father Michael (Sean Louw), run over by the same car, at the same time.

Wanted Another hobby for Ian's character. Defusing bombs isn't good for insurance premiums. Really, it's not.

RIP The Traffic Man - assaulted and had his neck broken by a homicidal maniac (Benedict) in a back-alley

RIP Doctor Brandis - Donovan really needed a disguise. A nurse disguise just wouldn't do.

RIP The weird guys who held up Monolith Burger and started their weird ritual. Well, you can't beat SWAT team efficiency.

RIP Nail - no matter how insane an Entropomancer you are, a double sawed-off to the back of the head will *still* kill you.

RIP Remus, angsty fighter/mage who got gangbanged by eight ogres while his group all turned invisible or flew away, was risen as an undead and then soon eventually destroyed.

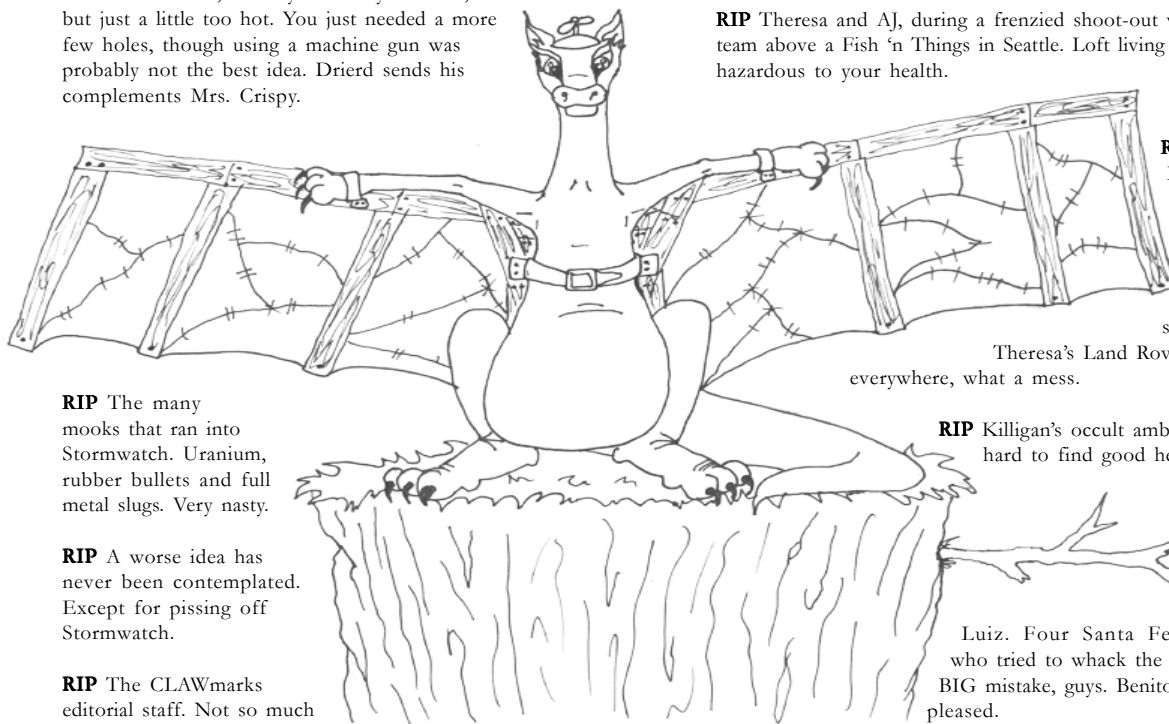
RIP Rask Deltorr, who is still living in waterdeep somewhere, but might as well be dead when, after just joining the same group after the loss of his predecessor, Remus, was confronted, at level 3, by a werebear with 7 levels in ranger and one party member that turned out to be half-demon. Rask was last seen heading downriver with a wake forming behind him.

BIRTH Bob and Dave - two bouncing blobby sacks of teeth and hair - to Adrianna. Don't try this diet at home.

You know you're in CLAWs when...You start your own church of evil as a way to create your own harem.

RIP To the sadly departed Senka Bhiku, not all your speed could help you to avoid those 30mm depleted uranium shells.

RIP Serena Ferat, damn your booty was hot, but just a little too hot. You just needed a more few holes, though using a machine gun was probably not the best idea. Drierd sends his complements Mrs. Crispy.



RIP The many mooks that ran into Stormwatch. Uranium, rubber bullets and full metal slugs. Very nasty.

RIP A worse idea has never been contemplated. Except for pissing off Stormwatch.

RIP The CLAWmarks editorial staff. Not so much departed as gibbering in Arkham Asylum. Say hi to the Joker.

RIP Bruce Onika and Nadja Cmcovick. You don't need your enemies to kill you, just your fellow team-mates.

RIP (Not quite) Reth, or as you might know him, the Scab. What a bunch of novas couldn't accomplish, a fuel-air round almost did.

RIP Remus, angsty fighter/mage who got gangbanged by eight ogres while his group all turned invisible or flew away, was risen as an undead and then soon eventually destroyed.

RIP Rask Deltorr, who is still living in waterdeep somewhere, but might as well be dead when, after just joining the same group after the loss of his predecessor, Remus, was confronted, at level 3, by a werebear with 7 levels in ranger and one party member that turned out to be half-demon. Rask was last seen heading downriver with a wake forming behind him.

RIP One poor Shargugh (badly burned) after much squeaking from Bronwyn.

General Notices

Wanted A new program to do CLAWmarks in. PageMaker will cause the Committee to have a collective hernia, while killing everyone in sight. With a blunt, rusty spoon.

Wanted Some answers from Mike. Not knowing who you are and having strange people walking up to you and telling you things you don't know is always fun! (By the way, that was sarcasm.)

Wanted A Fountain of Youth for Bronwyn. He he he...

Wanted Sleep for the Committee. Berocca is ineffective. Sorry, Piotr.

You know you're in CLAWs when... Bright colours offend you.

RIP Anyone near Tich Stetson when the duct tape and manacles come off.

RIP Theresa and AJ, during a frenzied shoot-out with a SWAT team above a Fish 'n Things in Seattle. Loft living may be hazardous to your health.

RIP One Llangrith Girl Guide. Went *mano a mano* with the Wicked Pack - or, more specifically, with Theresa's Land Rover. Cookies everywhere, what a mess.

RIP Killigan's occult ambitions. It's so hard to find good help these days.

RIP Roberto, Juan, Eposito, and Luiz. Four Santa Fe pachucos who tried to whack the Wicked Pack. BIG mistake, guys. Benito will not be pleased.

RIP Gary Caldin. The sub-dural haematoma got things off to a good start, but the sunstroke was the clincher. At least he didn't end up as a snack for the locals..

RIP Griffith "Doctor Death" Haldane, Katinka Tesla, and Richard Bly. Disappeared by the Feds.

Notice I saw the Flat Men.

Notice The part of Katja Thorne (the little old 15th-century Polish lady), will now be played by Ben Tuddy (Avatar of the Dark Stalker and general bad-ass). Expect more talcum around the crime scenes for a while, Llangrith PD.

Notice McDonalds is a Liberationist front. Long live the Celestial Succession!

Notice Have YOU visited the Museum of Time and Timekeeping in Landon, Illinois? See the wonders of the past, present, and future, enjoy lunch at the base of our infinitely high rooftop tower, and try out random combinations of keys in the famous Apocalypse Clock. Special discounts available for New Inquisition operatives. Phone 1-800-ARTIFACT now to book your ticket!

Wanted Queenie. Let's "talk." Tich

Wanted Jack Daniel's. Contact the King of the Road, anywhere in the tarred Southwest.

For Sale Plate 'o Shrimp, \$1.99 at the Desert Sweet Shrimp Farm Diner, Gila Bend. Fresh from our freaky vats to you.

For Sale Timeshare opportunity at the King of the Desert Motel, Arizona. Going cheap. Would suit strong swimmer or experienced exorcist.

The Archbigots World Tour

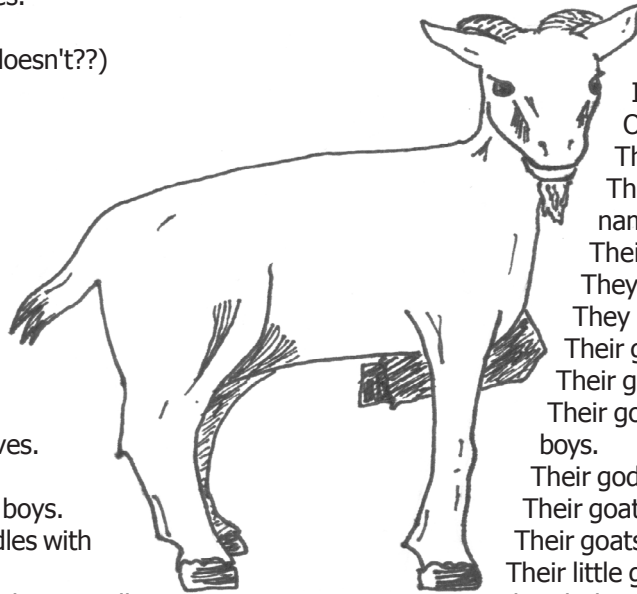
Πορτ οφ Χαλλ Ονε: Γρεεχε (202 Ρεασονσ Ωηψ Ι Ηατε Τηε Γρεεκοσ)

Subtitle: Port of Call One: Greece (202 Reasons Why I Hate the Greeks)

They are Greeks.
They are hairy.
They have islands.
The men have armpit hair.
The women have armpit hair.
The poodles have armpit hair.
They make salad.
They put olives in the salad.
They put olives in their sandwiches.
They put olives in everything.
Including their orifices.
They smell of olives.
They smell of fish.
They put olives in fish.
They put fish in sandwiches.
They put poodles in sandwiches.
They don't have sandwiches.
They have pitas.
They have poodles. (who doesn't??)
Their poodles eat olives.
They wear togas.
Their poodles wear togas.
Their olives wear togas.
They wear olive togas.
Their togas wear olives.
They have feta.
Feta is made from goats.
Goat cheese makes feta.
Their poodles like goats.
Their poodles like olives.
Their poodles butt-fuck olives.
They like butt-fucking.
They like butt-fucking little boys.
They like butt-fucking poodles with tridents.
Their little boys like butt-fucking poodles.
They butt-fuck olives.
Their olives enjoy it.
Olives are stupid.
They made a stupid movie about fat people and weddings.
They have weddings.
They shouldn't.
They smash plates at weddings.
They're not smashed at weddings.
So why do they smash plates?
Someone should smash them at weddings.
I am not smashed.
Really.
Fuck you for judging me.
They are fat.
They are sweaty and fat.

You know you're in CLAWS when... Everyday you want to declare "National Hate Sear Day"

They wear open-collar shirts which show hair.
They wear stupid gold chains.
They are sweaty, hairy and fat.
They eat too many olives.
They eat too many goats.
They eat too many little boys.
They eat lambs.
Mary hates them for it.
They eat poodles.
Their poodles eat goats.
Their goats suck poodles.
Their goats blow poodles.
Their poodles blow goats.
Their olives blow themselves.
Olives = bananas.
They are bananas in disguise.



I hate undercover bananas.
I hate bananas.
I hate olives.
Olives look like freckles.
Their gods have freckles.
Their gods have screwed-up names.
Their gods are screwed-up.
They have too many gods.
They have too many goats.
Their gods have too many goats.
Their goats have too many gods.
Their gods have too many little boys.
Their gods like too many little boys.
Their goats like too many little boys.
Their goats like too many little gods.
Their little gods blow goats.
Their little gods are goats.

Ergo, their little gods blow themselves.
I am jealous.
Eerrm...
They have a stupid country name.
They have big noses.
They're greasy.
They're Greece-ey.
They watch Dawson's Greek.

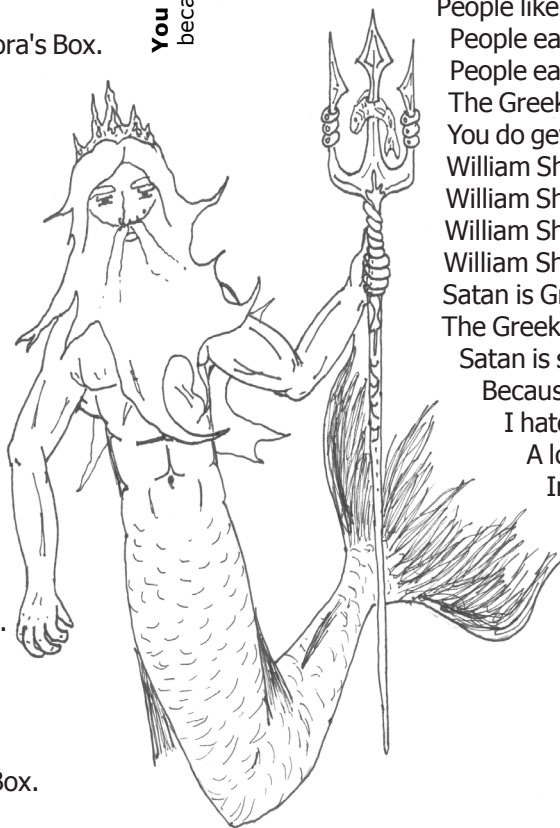
They watch poodles butt-fuck Dawson.
They watch Dawson butt-fuck poodles.
They run shops.
They rip you off.
They are responsible for Kuzmas.
Bastards.

Goats blow Kuzmas.
 Kuzmas blows...
 Olives.
 Ouzo tastes like shit.
 The Greeks drink shit.
 Like Austin Powers.
 The bastards.
 They are bigots.
 They're stealing my show.
 They have stupid buildings.
 They don't.
 Their buildings are all in ruins.
 They had stupid buildings.
 Their buildings have stupid names.
 They still have the names.
 They named rubble.
 They don't have a Necropolis.
 They have an Acropolis.
 They have a Pantheon.
 Their Pantheon doesn't have any gods.
 Their Pantheon doesn't have any goats.
 Their Pantheon doesn't have any olives.
 Their Pantheon has phallic symbols.
 They have too many columns.
 Columns = phalluses.
 They have a god of phalluses?
 It sounds Greek.
 The Greeks are a bunch of phalluses.
 Really.
 They opened Pandora's Box.
 They shouldn't have.
 Pandora wouldn't like it.
 Especially since they're greasy.
 Pandora's Box isn't greasy.
 Pandora's Box isn't Greece-ey.
 The Greeks probably liked Pandora's Box.
 Their goats probably liked Pandora's Box.
 They probably wanted to keep olives in Pandora's Box.
 Pandora wouldn't want olives in her box.
 They have an oversized wooden horse.
 Many Greeks have entered the wooden horse.
 The Greeks now have splinters.
 Serves them right.
 Pandora wouldn't like the horse.
 Pandora wouldn't like the horse near her Box.
 Pandora's Box now has splinters.
 Pandora hates the Greeks.
 Pandora hates splinters.
 Pandora hates Hercules.
 Hercules tried to get Pandora's Box.
 Hercules is a jock.

You know you're in CLAWS when... You don't accept food or drink from anyone. Just because KAOS isn't being played, it doesn't mean that you're safe.

Hercules is a jerk.
 Hercules is a jerk-off.
 Hercules was in a Disney movie.
 Hercules is gay for being in a Disney movie.
 Hercules works out too much.
 Hercules works out getting Pandora's Box.
 That's why he has big arms.
 There was a Goatman in the Disney movie.
 Hercules liked the Goatman.
 This is because Greeks butt-fucked goats.
 Goats blow jocks.
 There were lots of jocks in the Olympics.
 They ran around naked in the Olympics.
 Jocks are gay.
 They throw phalluses in the Olympics.
 They have a phallus-passing relay.
 They touch phalluses.
 They throw balls in the Olympics.
 Greeks are gay.
 They have stupid names.
 Their women have stupid names.
 They have stupid surnames.
 They all end in "-populous".
 There are too many Greeks.
 There is a Greek conspiracy.
 Greeks are taking over the world.
 With KwikSpar.
 Bastards.
 KwikSpar has olives.
 And feta.
 Which is made from Goat cheese.
 Isn't feta goat cheese?
 Goat cheese is made from goat milk.
 Eeeeeeeeeewwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwww...

People like feta.
 People eat feta.
 People eat Goat milk.
 The Greeks eat Goat milk.
 You do get "Goat milk" don't you?
 William Shatner drinks "Goat milk".
 William Shatner looks Greek.
 William Shatner is Greek.
 William Shatner is Satan.
 Satan is Greek.
 The Greeks are stupid.
 Satan is stupid.
 Because he is Greek.
 I hate the Greeks.
 A lot.
 In case you didn't notice.



Fridge Quotes

"I'll leave a cowpat in your lab." - Simon

"You generally don't get warped by dark magic to positive ends." - Adrianna

"So you jam it." - Sed

"Yes, so you use radar." - Gareth

"Well, the whole point of white noise is to jam radar." - Sed

"Yes, so you use *lots* of radar." - Gareth

"It's a Wand of Poking." - Adrianna

"Range: Touch." - Simon

"Give me two concentration checks." - Wayne

"Poes." - Duncan

"It's not evil; it's just against good." - Simon

"Eww. Post-coital prayer." - Lara

"Aaarrrrgh!" - Duncan

"Urk! Blergh!" - Simon

"Are those real?" - Wayne

"No." - Adrianna

"How're you holding your breath? Just not breathing?" - Simon

Jessica: "So, how did the fish get to the top of the volcano?"

Neil: "Interdimensional giant beetles put them there."

Andrew: "Aaah! Violence makes me horny!" Tracy:

Bleeeuuuuurgh!

"She tried to climb on me once, but I got all stiff so she didn't anymore." - Austin

"I'm wondering why your big blue boyfriend isn't doing the goo-gathering." - Jessica

"What have you got that's not a dead cat?" - Lara

Austin: "He has a stamina of -2."

Adrianna: "Well, guess who's on top, then."

"I don't mind the evil, but the lawful bit freaks me right out!" - Lara

"They'll be sorry they messed with us!... Er, no, they'll be dead... We can leave one alive just so it can be sorry." - Lara

"Tree-licking scum!" - Duncan

"Yeah, it's a horn of ever-blowing. So you blow it, stick it in his pants and run." - Wayne

"Aren't you supposed to lick Poles or something?... Telephone poles! Telephone poles!" - Austin

"Bugger." - Austin

"If I'm not here tomorrow, it's because my Dad is on holiday again and wants to do some kind of family bondage activity. Uh...I didn't mean that." - Mike

"What's wrong with 'Demon Plagued?'" - Duncan

"You're plagued by a friggin' demon!" - Austin

"How's your ass, is it okay?" - Brendan

Austin: "Fuck other people!"

Simon: "What, as opposed to fucking yourself?"

Duncan: "Well, the latter is more fun... uh, wait."

"You can stick it that side." - Ian

"Young people fucking everywhere!" - Erica

"...and he leaves a trail of barfing fieldmice." - Simon

"Well at least now I don't have to worry about my anus." - Sean

"Can we please stop talking about Uranus rings and gas giants?" - Wayne

"Conrad said he doesn't want to rape me anymore." - Sean

"Don't worry, Sean, you'll find the right man someday." - Mike

"You're marginally above Conrad." - Sean

"Piotr was with you." - Andrea

"You make that sound so romantic." - Sean

"I know where he hides his syrup." - Piotr

"Rat of Abysmal Flame! See, it's just a normal rat until you pull the tail..." - Wayne

Look! I found a place to put my thing! - Mike

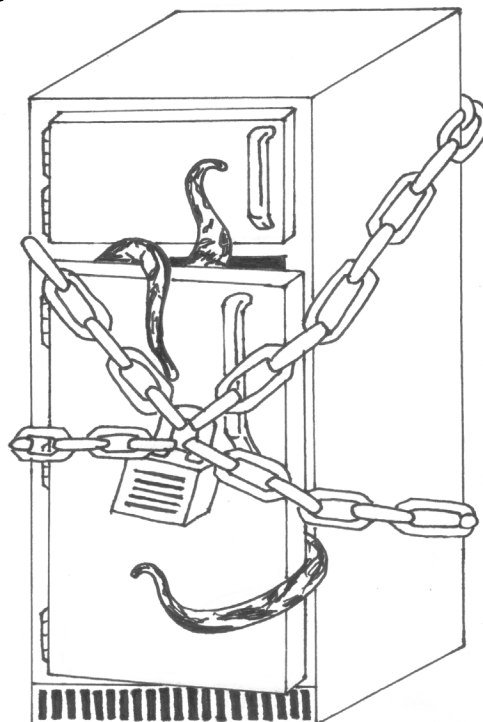
Mom, but last time I saw a dead body, you gave me candy! - Sean

He's just an innocent kid who likes dead bodies for candy. - Marc

"Ooh, that's really tight there!" - Mike

"Yeah, we live by tight." - Ian

You know you're in CLAWS when...You understand the term BTS.



You know you're in CLAWS when... Your four food groups consist of caffeine, sugar, MSG and Steers.

