

CLAW MARKS

29





"... ALL YOU EVER DO HENRY IS TALK AND TALK AND TALK AND I CAN NEVER GET A WORD IN EDGEWAYS OR VOICE MY OPINION OR SAY ANYTHING BECAUSE ALL YOU EVER DO HENRY IS TALK AND TALK AND..."

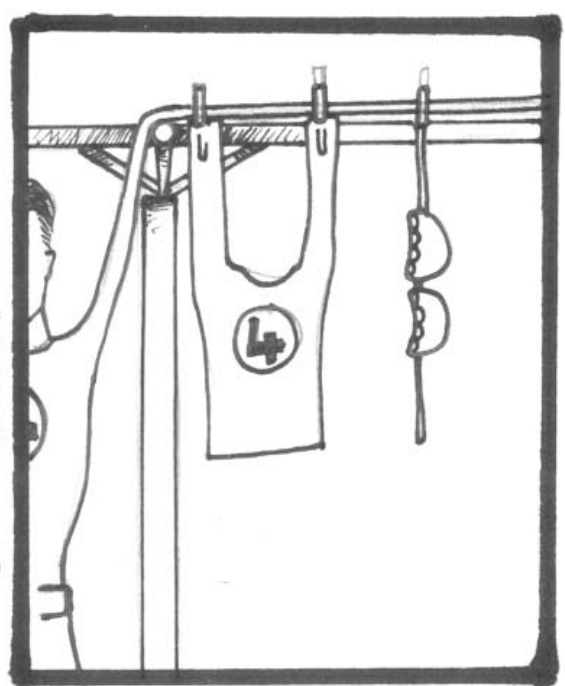
sooper zeroes



BY brendan

WOLVERINE THANKS HIS LUCKY STARS HE HAS A REGENERATION ABILITY

sooper zeroes



BY brendan

"REED, DARLING, WILL YOU HELP ME WITH THE LAUNDRY, PLEASE?" SHE SAYS! HMPH...



ALTHOUGH SHE NOTICED MANY MORE BUSHES IN THE MEADOW, LITTLE BO PEEP COULD NOT FOR THE LIFE OF HER FIND HER SHEEP.

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Thanks must go out to everyone who made this edition of Clawmarks possible.

To those who wrote articles, we appreciate them, but next time, get them in a little bloody earlier.

To Michelle 'Delusions of Grandeur' Haward, Brendan 'You all know him by now' Quinlivan, Erica 'Finally, my pictures can rule the world!' Rasmussen and Yanke 'The line!!!' van Tonder for all the great artwork that you did for us.

Finally, to the committee for all the work that was put in and the endless nights of toil and bubble. May you forever more have nightmares about editing. We will remember their names as they appeared on their grave stones:

*Brendan 'Avatar of Brendan' Quinlivan
Mike 'Article Guru' Dewar
Ian 'Pagemaker is the Devil' Kitley
Andrea 'Small, but Deadly' Hickman
Tai 'Serene Being' Steyn
David 'Gonzo' Sharpe*

EDITORIAL

PS: DO NOT FUCK WITH ME!

i'm REALLY MAD!

PPS: THANKS TO THE GUYS @ HRL 4 THE INSPIRATION

DISCLAIMER
BRENDAN IS GONZO MAD AS A SHITHOUSE RAT. Madder than a balloon + 12 times as DANGEROUS! AND BY THE WAY, WHO SAID THIS WAS A FAMILY MAG ANYWAY!!!

I HATE CLAWMARKS EDITING!

[NO, REALLY, REALLY]... GET OUT OF MY FACE ALREADY!

S-C-R-E-W U GUTS! I FUCKING HATE YOU ALL!

Side note: hi mom!

AS IN

F*CKING BIG, SUCH AS: BUBBA THE NASTY MAN WHO SITS IN THE CORNER OF THE CELL PICKING HIS NOSE AND GRINNING AT YOU!!

[THAT'S LOS HE WANTS DE ASS!]

DEAD WHATSIT

[i killed it]



CLAWMARKS EDITING IS FAIRLY **STRESSFUL**!! AS YOU HAVE NO DOUBT GUESSED. OF COURSE, COPIOUS AMOUNTS OF COFFEE DOESN'T HELP MUCH. NEITHER DOES SLEEP DEPRIVATION. NOR GALLONS OF ALCOHOL. BUT HEY, WE ALL MAKE SACRIFICES, FOR YOU BUNCH OF

INCONSIDERATE

MAGGOTS!

OH, I'M SORRY. DID I MAKE YOU COY? **JEEZ**, WHAT A BABY! LIKE YOUR MOM.

SUCK THE BABY!

! 8 KINO

! 6 OK! OK!

8. THINGS

7. STUFF

EVERYWHERE! FUCK!

6. GABLES... GABLES

PEOPLE!

LIKE TEETH FROM

5. PULLING ARTICLES

4. STUPID COCK-UP-ASS

3. TOO MUCH COFFEE

2. CHOCOLING DAMN FONTS

1. USING FCs!

10 THINGS I H8 ABOUT EDITING!
THIS THING!
[IT WARRANTS A SIGN UP ITS OWN!]

SO, YOU HAD BETTER LIKE THIS!

{AHEM} I SINCERELY HOPE YOU ENJOY THIS ISSUE OF CLAWMARKS, AND HAVE A GREAT DRAGONFILE. SEE YOU AT THE GAMING TABLES! I'LL B THE ONE WITH THE

MWA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

BREATH!
Brendan
[R.K.A. CAPTAIN WACKY-PERSON II]



SPIKY, POINTY BIT... JUST 4 U! MR SPIKY [HE GO BREEM]

Roleplaying : What were we thinking?

By TaiOne

I am a roleplayer, I like pretending I am someone else, in someone else's lounge, eating someone else's food and rolling someone else's dice. Someone else is getting tired of me popping round unannounced and so far the ploy of ignoring the doorbell and hiding under the couch has failed, I always spot them through the window; but I digress. Taking up roleplaying was probably one of the biggest mistakes of my life. It takes up obscene amounts of time, it requires a huge amount of effort for very little payback, it stops you from having a real social life and I'm sure it's responsible for my hair-loss. Why didn't I take up rowing, or photography, perhaps amateur porn?

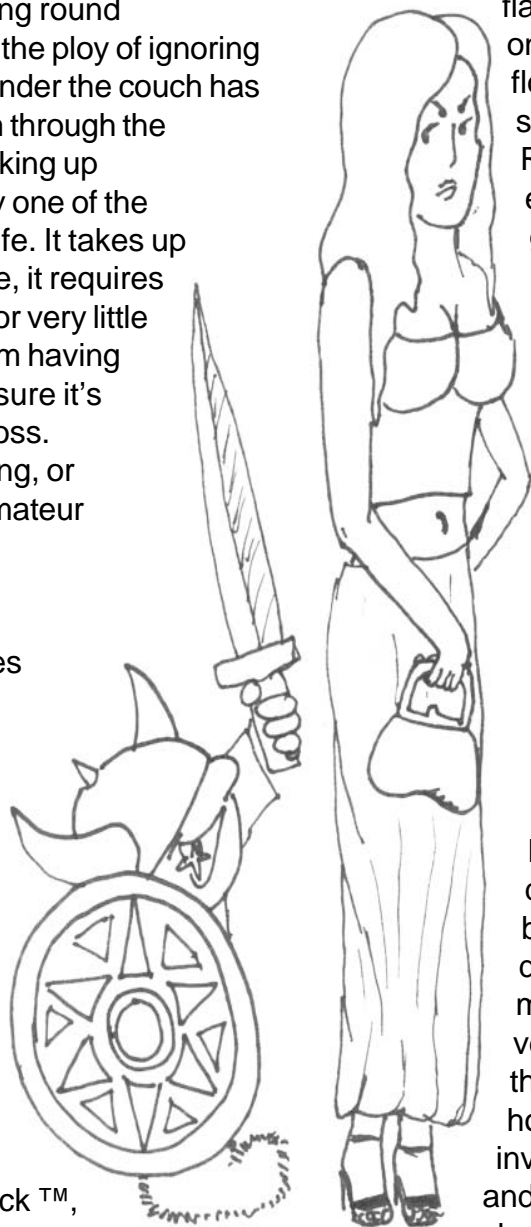
There are so many other hobbies out there besides roleplaying. A veritable smorgasbord of hobbying goodness: Stamp collecting, S&M, track and field, these hobbies are easier, give you a better chance of meeting the opposite sex, and won't get you in trouble with your pastor.

According to Jack T. Chick TM, roleplaying will stunt your growth, grow hair on your palms and condemn you to eternal damnation. But then again Jack T. Chick TM says that about premarital sex, masturbation, gender and race equality, dresses that are above the knee and Switzerland, so he probably isn't an impartial judge on the subject.

But, roleplaying is probably the most misunderstood and reviled hobby in the world, besides yodelling (see above). So why do it? Why put yourself through all that pain and annoyance? It came to me in a

flash of light: I spent 38 hours on a train, I slept on a tiled floor, in the same room as a snorer who registers on the Richter scale and I woke up early, after 4 hours sleep to get to a roleplaying tournament that starts late and ends after dark. After going up to Icon and seeing what long-term roleplaying does to otherwise intelligent people, I realise that deep down all roleplayers are **masochists**. We like the pain, the long hours, the social ostracization, because to our twisted and abused brains, it is fun.

But, it isn't fun, I swear. I don't enjoy being ridiculed by society, I don't enjoy the dread when a woman asks me what's in my little black velvet pouch, I don't enjoy the smell of burning flesh (a horrible childhood accident, involving a dog, a rubber hose and a crate of asparagus). I roleplay, not because I enjoy it (it often leaves me strangely empty inside), because I must. It's a psychological disorder, a disease, a condition and I hope they never find a cure for it.

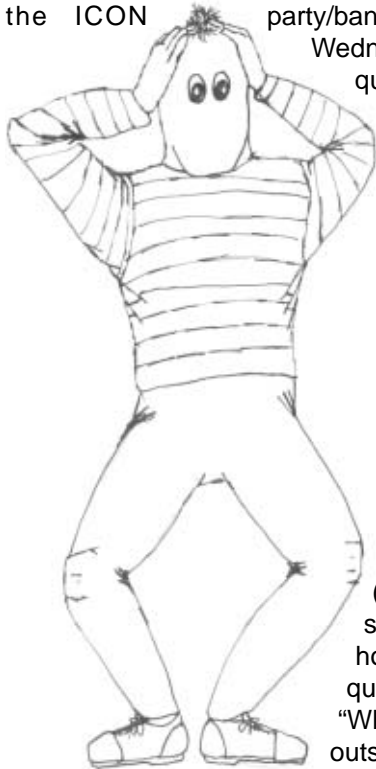


Tales from Jo

By Cassandra Soo

Good evening and welcome to another horrific episode of "Tales from Jo." In tonight's show, you'll be swamped (or joked, whichever you prefer) by the vapours of city pollution and terrified beyond reason by the sounds of highway road-rage ... Prepare yourself for a tale that'll frighten your gonads into sterility and turn your tongue to goop.

Enough bullshit. I figured I'd relate the last day of my vac to you, the general (or generally weird) public. Sunday ... while most you were enjoying the ICON party/banquet thing, I,



Wednesday le Fey, was quietly relaxing in front of the television. (Yes, TV will turn your brain to goop – it's the freaky static)

So, I'm chatting (yes, chatting) to my cousin whom I hadn't seen in yonks. Come half 10, I'm unlocking the gate to let him out, when I'm (rather rudely) shoved back into the house and told to be quiet. So I'm thinking, "What's going on outside? Is it World War III? Why doesn't the

domestic seem familiar to me?" Then my cousin, whom we'll call Dennis (cause that's his name), gestures to the gun. "Oh," says I, "now I understand. It's a break-in!"

Thabo (see, I'm naming my robbers, because I can) stands nervously shaking, with his left hand in his jacket pocket (yes, he had a gun, but I felt lucky). I locked the gate behind him, by reflex, and flashed him a huge grin (I think this unsettled him just a little bit).

Meanwhile ...

My stepmother (evil, useless Thai-lady) was asleep, or not ...

My little brother, Chang, was watching TV (his eyes glued to the screen. Was he watching Will & Grace?) and my sister, Tamara, was on the phone (16 year-old-old girls, sigh).

Much to my dismay, (and continuing amusement) Thabo had friends. Siphos arrived (much to his dismay the gate was locked) and a gesture was made for me to hand over the keys. I complied. Poor Siphos proved incapable of opening the gate and when I offered assistance, we played a nice (for lack of a better word) game of yes-no. As so :

Thabo : Sit down!

Me : Okay.

Thabo : Open the gate! I told you to sit down!

Me : How am I to open the gate while I am seated?

Thabo : (Flabellate : the condition of a helium-filled balloon when it can no longer touch your ceiling :) Sorry.

The next ten minutes were rather entertaining. Siphos whips out (no, not what you're thinking)

CABLE-TIES!

(If you've never been to a bank, it's a thin plastic strap that when you slip one end through the hole and pull, it forms a pretty good, and cheap, bondage restraint) Unfortunately (once again) Siphos proves himself rather inept.

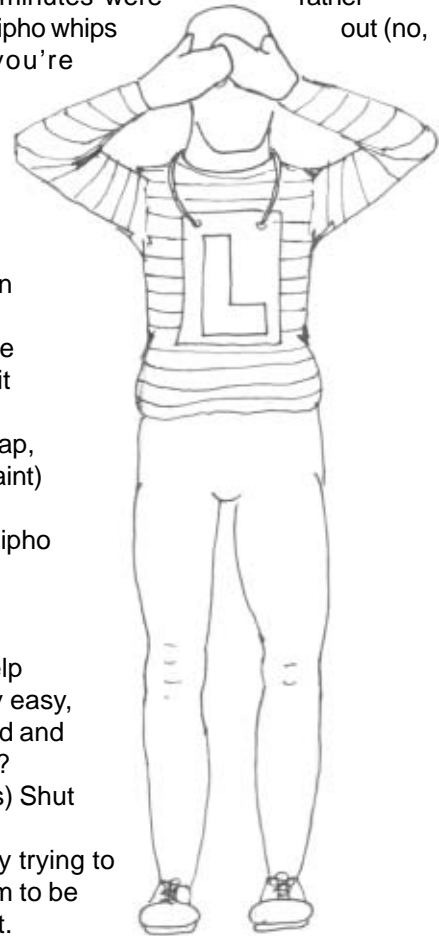
Me : Shall I help you? It's really easy, I'll hold this end and you pull, okay?
Siphos : (grunts) Shut up!

Me : I was only trying to help, you seem to be struggling a bit.

Thabo : Stand up.

Siphos : Sit down.

Me (to Dennis, rather loudly, hoping Tamara will hear me) : I honestly thought armed robbery would



be more exciting than this. Guns, – sorry, your guns are nice too – screaming (not my style), and a fair amount of swearing. Sigh, let's give them a chance and not resist.

In comes Philemon (dramatic music), the only robber to cover his face (with what looked like a pillow case) and his hands (he obviously watches too much TV – what did I tell you). Ushered to the lounge, Chang was told to sit down with us on the couch. To the burglars absolute horror, he shrugs, sits down and continues to watch TV (You go, lil brother!). Thabo stands guard while the other two search the house.

Dennis (who still had his cell phone and wallet after being pulled down) takes out his phone and as I'm about to tell Chang to phone my dad, the car pulls into the driveway.

Meanwhile ...

My stepmother (having hidden in the en-suite bathroom) slowly made her way to Tamara's room. After getting over the language barrier, Tamara tells her lil' friend to call my dad (no! Angst! He's already home). Siphon and Philemon (heh, you cannot identify me) barge into the room – Siphon looks like he's going to shit a brick – as Tamara continues her conversation. Philemon points the gun in her face and yanks the phone out of her hands. She administers "the death glare" and Siphon whimpers. She strolls casually out of the room towards the lounge.

Thumb wars for Dennis and I (Chang's still watching TV) while Thabo sweats like a woman in labour. He keeps asking us for our guns, (as if all Chinese people are in the mafia) much to my confusion. He's hit a house filled with kids, are we really supposed to be armed?

All three ambush my dad and hold him on the floor. Dennis struggles to hold me back (I hate it when people are disrespectful to their elders), so I just simmer and growl. Shit, my dad's phone starts ringing. As a collective we all ignore it – the house breakers don't hear it (that was close). "God damn, I knew I should have moved Tamara's phone," I thought as Thabo pocketed it.

Me : Ahem. May I please have the sim card back, because it's a real hassle to regain your directory?
Thabo : Sure, no problem, I'll leave it on the table.
Me : Thank you! (Grinning rather maniacally)

My dad's phone rings again. They hear it and take the phone. They're afraid, I can see it. Thabo's repeatedly telling us that his gun is real and that he's not scared to use it (Who's he trying to convince? We don't care). They finally lose it and bale. Siphon grabs a cookie on the way out.

The chase is on! My dad looks like his gonna drive over pedestrians, birds, dogs and buildings (I wouldn't want to be part of that trio tonight). He pulls out of the driveway (tires not enjoying that), Dennis and I, in the other car, right behind him. We go one way, dad goes the other. It's a hunt!

Unfortunately they managed to get away (by running like mother-fuckers) with two cell-phones and a cookie. I was disappointed, I felt robbed (mind the pun) – that wasn't exciting at all! :(

So kids, it may be possible for you to sleep safe in your beds tonight. It seems that even in Jo'burg, criminals are living too far over on the stupid side. Good night children, but I must warn you not to attempt to overpower armed men – unless of course you're part of my family!



Evil Overlord

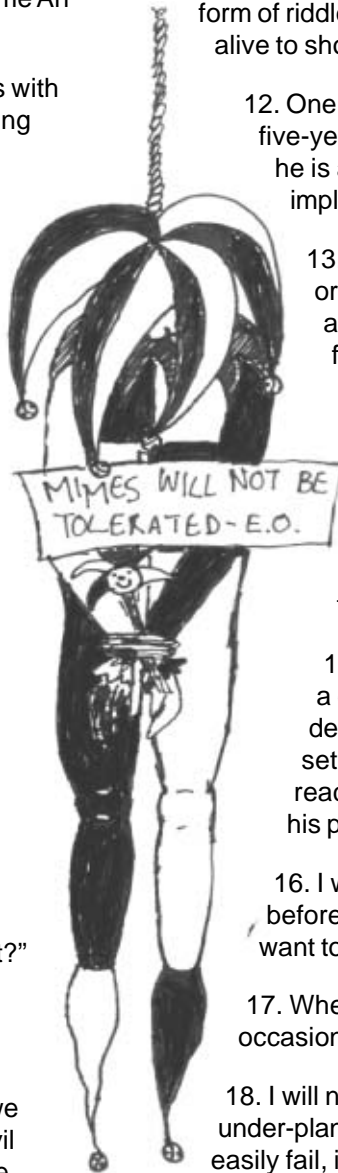
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The Top 100 Things I'd Do If I Ever Became An Evil Overlord

1. My Legions of Terror will have helmets with clear plexiglass visors, not face-concealing ones.
2. My ventilation ducts will be too small to crawl through.
3. My noble half-brother whose throne I usurped will be killed, not kept anonymously imprisoned in a forgotten cell of my dungeon.
4. Shooting is NOT too good for my enemies.
5. The artifact which is the source of my power will not be kept on the Mountain of Despair beyond the River of Fire guarded by the Dragons of Eternity. It will be in my safe-deposit box. The same applies to the object which is my one weakness.
6. I will not gloat over my enemies' predicament before killing them.
7. When I've captured my adversary and he says, "Look, before you kill me, will you at least tell me what this is all about?" I'll say, "No." and shoot him. No, on second thought I'll shoot him then say "No."
8. After I kidnap the beautiful princess, we will be married immediately in a quiet civil ceremony, not a lavish spectacle in three weeks' time during which the final phase of my plan will be carried out.
9. I will not include a self-destruct mechanism unless absolutely necessary. If it is necessary, it will not be a large red button labelled "Danger: Do Not Push". The big red button marked "Do Not Push" will instead trigger a spray of bullets on anyone stupid enough to disregard it. Similarly, the

ON/OFF switch will not clearly be labelled as such.

10. I will not interrogate my enemies in the inner sanctum — a small hotel well outside my borders will work just as well.
11. I will be secure in my superiority. Therefore, I will feel no need to prove it by leaving clues in the form of riddles or leaving my weaker enemies alive to show they pose no threat.
12. One of my advisors will be an average five-year-old child. Any flaws in my plan that he is able to spot will be corrected before implementation.
13. All slain enemies will be cremated, or at least have several rounds of ammunition emptied into them, not left for dead at the bottom of the cliff. The announcement of their deaths, as well as any accompanying celebration, will be deferred until after the aforementioned disposal.
14. The hero is not entitled to a last kiss, a last cigarette, or any other form of last request.
15. I will never employ any device with a digital countdown. If I find that such a device is absolutely unavoidable, I will set it to activate when the counter reaches 117 and the hero is just putting his plan into operation.
16. I will never utter the sentence "But before I kill you, there's just one thing I want to know."
17. When I employ people as advisors, I will occasionally listen to their advice.
18. I will not have a son. Although his laughably under-planned attempt to usurp power would easily fail, it would provide a fatal distraction at a crucial point in time.
19. I will not have a daughter. She would be as beautiful as she was evil, but one look at the hero's rugged countenance and she'd betray her own father.



20. Despite its proven stress-relieving effect, I will not indulge in maniacal laughter. When so occupied, it's too easy to miss unexpected developments that a more attentive individual could adjust to accordingly.

21. I will hire a talented fashion designer to create original uniforms for my Legions of Terror, as opposed to some cheap knock-offs that make them look like Nazi stormtroopers, Roman footsoldiers, or savage Mongol hordes. All were eventually defeated and I want my troops to have a more positive mind-set.

22. No matter how tempted I am with the prospect of unlimited power, I will not consume any energy field bigger than my head.

23. I will keep a special cache of low-tech weapons and train my troops in their use. That way — even if the heroes manage to neutralize my power generator and/or render the standard-issue energy weapons useless — my troops will not be overrun by a handful of savages armed with spears and rocks.

24. I will maintain a realistic assessment of my strengths and weaknesses. Even though this takes some of the fun out of the job, at least I will never utter the line “No, this cannot be! I AM INVINCIBLE!!!” (After that, death is usually instantaneous.)

25. No matter how well it would perform, I will never construct any sort of machinery which is completely indestructible except for one small and virtually inaccessible vulnerable spot.

26. No matter how attractive certain members of the rebellion are, there is probably someone just as attractive who is not desperate to kill me. Therefore, I will think twice before ordering a prisoner sent to my bedchamber.

27. I will never build only one of anything important. All important systems will have redundant control panels and power supplies. For the same reason I will always carry at least two fully loaded weapons at all times.

28. My pet monster will be kept in a secure cage from which it cannot escape and into which I could not accidentally stumble.

29. I will dress in bright and cheery colors, and so throw my enemies into confusion.

30. All bumbling conjurers, clumsy squires, no-talent bards, and cowardly thieves in the land will be pre-emptively put to death. My foes will surely give up and abandon their quest if they have no source of comic relief.

31. All naive, busty tavern wenches in my realm will be replaced with surly, world-weary waitresses who will provide no unexpected reinforcement and/or romantic subplot for the hero or his sidekick.

32. I will not fly into a rage and kill a messenger who brings me bad news just to illustrate how evil I really am. Good messengers are hard to come by.

33. I won't require high-ranking female members of my organization to wear a stainless-steel bustier. Morale is better with a more casual dress-code. Similarly, outfits made entirely from black leather will be reserved for formal occasions.

34. I will not turn into a snake. It never helps.

35. I will not grow a goatee. In the old days they made you look diabolic. Now they just make you look like a disaffected member of Generation X.

36. I will not imprison members of the same party in the same cell block, let alone the same cell. If they are important prisoners, I will keep the only key to the cell door on my person instead of handing out copies to every bottom-rung guard in the prison.

37. If my trusted lieutenant tells me my Legions of Terror are losing a battle, I will believe him. After all, he's my trusted lieutenant.

38. If an enemy I have just killed has a younger sibling or offspring anywhere, I will find them and have them killed immediately, instead of waiting for them to grow up harboring feelings of vengeance towards me in my old age.

39. If I absolutely must ride into battle, I will certainly not ride at the forefront of my Legions of Terror, nor will I seek out my opposite number among his army.

40. I will be neither chivalrous nor sporting. If I have an unstoppable superweapon, I will use it as early and as often as possible instead of keeping it in reserve.

41. Once my power is secure, I will destroy all those pesky time-travel devices.

42. When I capture the hero, I will make sure I also get his dog, monkey, ferret, or whatever sickeningly cute little animal capable of untying ropes and filching keys happens to follow him around.

43. I will maintain a healthy amount of skepticism when I capture the beautiful rebel and she claims she is attracted to my power and good looks and will gladly betray her companions if I just let her in on my plans.

44. I will only employ bounty hunters who work for money. Those who work for the pleasure of the hunt tend to do dumb things like even the odds to give the other guy a sporting chance.

45. I will make sure I have a clear understanding of who is responsible for what in my organization. For example, if my general screws up I will not draw my weapon, point it at him, say "And here is the price for failure," then suddenly turn and kill some random underling.

46. If an advisor says to me "My liege, he is but one man. What can one man possibly do?", I will reply "This." and shoot the advisor in the face.

47. If I learn that a callow youth has begun a quest to destroy me, I will slay him while he is still a callow youth instead of waiting for him to mature.

48. I will treat any beast which I control through magic or technology with respect and kindness. Thus if the control is ever broken, it will not immediately come after me for revenge.

49. If I learn the whereabouts of the one artifact which can destroy me, I will not send all my troops out to seize it. Instead I will send them out to seize something else and quietly put a Want-Ad in the local paper.

50. My main computers will have their own special operating system that will be completely incompatible with standard IBM and Macintosh powerbooks.

51. If one of my dungeon guards begins expressing concern over the conditions in the beautiful princess' cell, I will immediately transfer him to a less people-oriented position.

52. I will hire a team of board-certified architects and surveyors to examine my castle and inform me of any secret passages and abandoned tunnels that

I might not know about.

53. If the beautiful princess that I capture says "I'll never marry you! Never, do you hear me, NEVER!!!", I will say "Oh well," and kill her.

54. I will not strike a bargain with a demonic being then attempt to double-cross it simply because I feel like being contrary.

55. The deformed mutants and odd-ball psychotics will have their place in my Legions of Terror. However before I send them out on important covert missions that require tact and subtlety, I will first see if there is anyone else equally qualified who would attract less attention.

56. My Legions of Terror will be trained in basic marksmanship. Any who cannot learn to hit a man-sized target at 10 meters will be used for target practice.

57. Before employing any captured artifacts or machinery, I will carefully read the owner's manual.

58. If it becomes necessary to escape, I will never stop to pose dramatically and toss off a one-liner.

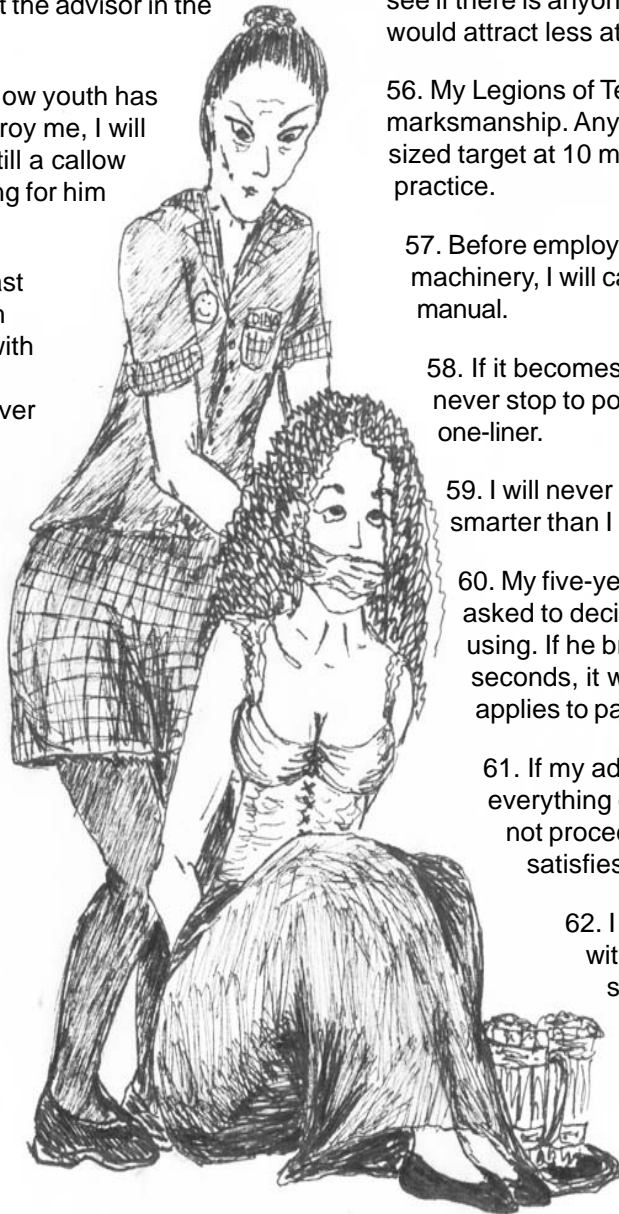
59. I will never build a sentient computer smarter than I am.

60. My five-year-old child advisor will also be asked to decipher any code I am thinking of using. If he breaks the code in under 30 seconds, it will not be used. Note: this also applies to passwords.

61. If my advisors ask "Why are you risking everything on such a mad scheme?", I will not proceed until I have a response that satisfies them.

62. I will design fortress hallways with no alcoves or protruding structural supports which intruders could use for cover in a firefight.

63. Bulk trash will be disposed of in incinerators, not compactors. And they will be kept hot, with none of that nonsense about flames going through accessible tunnels at predictable intervals.



64. I will see a competent psychiatrist and get cured of all extremely unusual phobias and bizarre compulsive habits which could prove to be a disadvantage.

65. If I must have computer systems with publicly available terminals, the maps they display of my complex will have a room clearly marked as the Main Control Room. That room will be the Execution Chamber. The actual main control room will be marked as Sewage Overflow Containment.

66. My security keypad will actually be a fingerprint scanner. Anyone who watches someone press a sequence of buttons or dusts the pad for fingerprints then subsequently tries to enter by repeating that sequence will trigger the alarm system.

67. No matter how many shorts we have in the system, my guards will be instructed to treat every surveillance camera malfunction as a full-scale emergency.

68. I will spare someone who saved my life sometime in the past. This is only reasonable as it encourages others to do so. However, the offer is good one time only. If they want me to spare them again, they'd better save my life again.

69. All midwives will be banned from the realm. All babies will be delivered at state-approved hospitals. Orphans will be placed in foster-homes, not abandoned in the woods to be raised by creatures of the wild.

70. When my guards split up to search for intruders, they will always travel in groups of at least two. They will be trained so that if one of them disappears mysteriously while on patrol, the other will immediately initiate an alert and call for backup, instead of quizzically peering around a corner.

71. If I decide to test a lieutenant's loyalty and see if he/she should be made a trusted lieutenant, I will have a crack squad of marksmen standing by in case the answer is no.

72. If all the heroes are standing together around a strange device and begin to taunt me, I will pull out a conventional weapon instead of using my unstoppable superweapon on them.

73. I will not agree to let the heroes go free if they win a rigged contest, even though my advisors assure me it is impossible for them to win.

74. When I create a multimedia presentation of my plan designed so that my five-year-old advisor can easily understand the details, I will not label the disk "Project Overlord" and leave it lying on top of my desk.

75. I will instruct my Legions of Terror to attack the hero en masse, instead of standing around waiting while members break off and attack one or two at a time.

76. If the hero runs up to my roof, I will not run up after him and struggle with him in an attempt to push him over the edge. I will also not engage him at the edge of a cliff. (In the middle of a rope-bridge over a river of molten lava is not even worth considering.)

77. If I have a fit of temporary insanity and decide to give the hero the chance to reject a job as my trusted lieutenant, I will retain enough sanity to wait until my current trusted lieutenant is out of earshot before making the offer.

78. I will not tell my Legions of Terror "And he must be taken alive!" The command will be "And try to take him alive if it is reasonably practical."

79. If my doomsday device happens to come with a reverse switch, as soon as it has been employed it will be melted down and made into limited-edition commemorative coins.

80. If my weakest troops fail to eliminate a hero, I will send out my best troops instead of wasting time with progressively stronger ones as he gets closer and closer to my fortress.

81. If I am fighting with the hero atop a moving platform, have disarmed him, and am about to finish him off and he glances behind me and drops flat, I too will drop flat instead of quizzically turning around to find out what he saw.

82. I will not shoot at any of my enemies if they are standing in front of the crucial support beam to a heavy, dangerous, unbalanced structure.

83. If I'm eating dinner with the hero, put poison in his goblet, then have to leave the table for any reason, I will order new drinks for both of us instead of trying to decide whether or not to switch with him.

84. I will not have captives of one sex guarded by members of the opposite sex.

85. I will not use any plan in which the final step is horribly complicated, e. g. "Align the 12 Stones of Power on the sacred altar then activate the medallion at the moment of total eclipse." Instead it will be more along the lines of "Push the button."

86. I will make sure that my doomsday device is up to code and properly grounded.



87. My vats of hazardous chemicals will be covered when not in use. Also, I will not construct walkways above them.

88. If a group of henchmen fail miserably at a task, I will not berate them for incompetence then send the same group out to try the task again.

89. After I capture the hero's superweapon, I will not immediately disband my legions and relax my guard because I believe whoever holds the weapon is unstoppable. After all, the hero held the weapon and I took it from him.

90. I will not design my Main Control Room so that every workstation is facing away from the door.

91. I will not ignore the messenger that stumbles in exhausted and obviously agitated until my personal grooming or current entertainment is finished. It might actually be important.

92. If I ever talk to the hero on the phone, I will not taunt him. Instead I will say this: his dogged perseverance has given me new insight on the futility of my evil ways and that if he leaves me alone for a few months of quiet contemplation I will likely return to the path of righteousness. (Heroes are incredibly gullible in this regard.)

93. If I decide to hold a double execution of the hero and an underling who failed or betrayed me, I will see to it that the hero is scheduled to go first.

94. When arresting prisoners, my guards will not allow them to stop and grab a useless trinket of purely sentimental value.

95. My dungeon will have its own qualified medical staff complete with bodyguards. That way if a prisoner becomes sick and his cellmate tells the guard it's an emergency, the guard will fetch a trauma team instead of opening up the cell for a look.

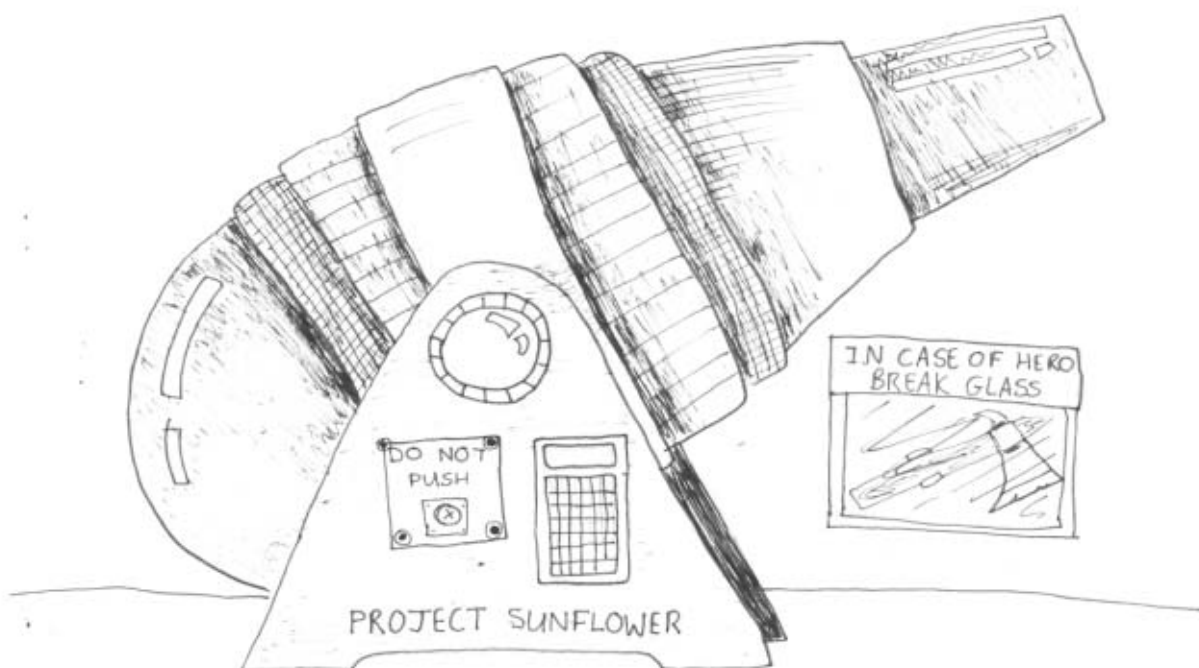
96. My door mechanisms will be designed so that blasting the control panel on the outside seals the door and blasting the control panel on the inside opens the door, not vice versa.

97. My dungeon cells will not be furnished with objects that contain reflective surfaces or anything that can be unravelled.

98. If an attractive young couple enters my realm, I will carefully monitor their activities. If I find they are happy and affectionate, I will ignore them. However if circumstances have forced them together against their will and they spend all their time bickering and criticizing each other except during the intermittent occasions when they are saving each others' lives at which point there are hints of sexual tension, I will immediately order their execution.

99. Any data file of crucial importance will be padded to 1.45Mb in size.

100. Finally, to keep my subjects permanently locked in a mindless trance, I will provide each of them with free unlimited Internet access.



The Twelve Hours Of Clawmarks

By Michael Dewar, Brendan P. Quinlivan, Michelle Haywood and Ian Kitley

On the first hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: a big cuppa black coffee

On the second hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: two enormous deadlines, and a big cuppa black coffee.

On the third hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: three twisted photos, two enormous deadlines, and a big cuppa black coffee.

On the fourth hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: four nervous twitches, three twisted photos, two enormous deadlines, and a big cuppa black coffee.

On the fifth hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: FIVE POWER OUTS, four nervous twitches, three twisted photos, two enormous deadlines, and a big cuppa black coffee.

On the sixth hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: six Steers boxes, FIVE POWER OUTS, four nervous twitches, three twisted photos, two enormous deadlines, and a big cuppa black coffee.

On the seventh hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: seven dodgy drawings, six Steers boxes, FIVE POWER OUTS, four nervous twitches, three twisted photos, two enormous deadlines, and a big cuppa black coffee.

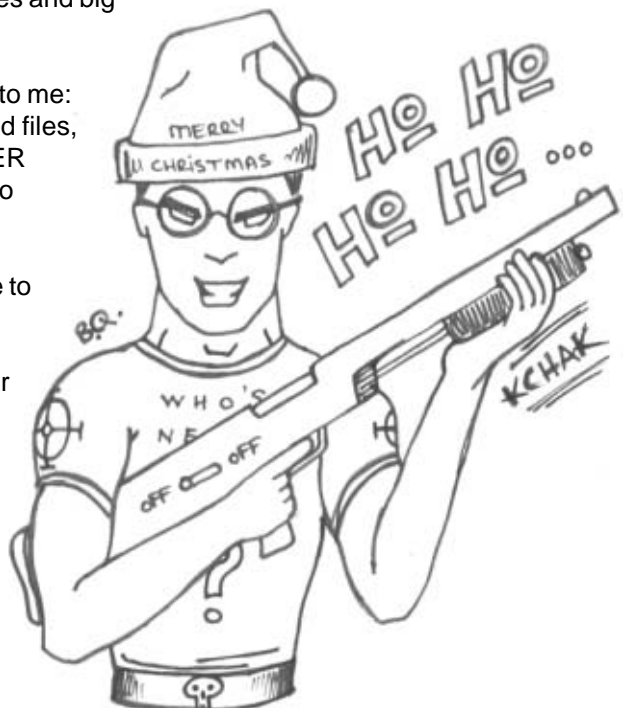
On the eighth hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: eight deleted files, seven dodgy drawings, six Steers boxes, FIVE POWER OUTS, four nervous twitches, three twisted photos, two enormous deadlines and big cuppa black coffee.

On the ninth hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: nine shots of vodka, eight deleted files, seven dodgy drawings, six Steers boxes, FIVE POWER OUTS, four nervous twitches, three twisted photos, two enormous deadlines and big cuppa black coffee.

On the tenth hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: ten sleepless nights, nine shots of vodka, eight deleted files, seven dodgy drawings, six Steers boxes, FIVE POWER OUTS, four nervous twitches, three twisted photos, two enormous deadlines and big cuppa black coffee.

On the eleven hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: eleven more deadlines, ten sleepless nights, nine shots of vodka, eight deleted files, seven dodgy drawings, six Steers boxes, FIVE POWER OUTS, four nervous twitches, three twisted photos, two enormous deadlines and big cuppa black coffee.

On the twelfth hour of Clawmarks, the committee gave to me: twelve-gauge shotguns, eleven bloody splatters, ten scorch marks, nine-mill UZIs, eight shells a pocket, seven maimed victims, six big explosions, FIVE POWER OUTS, four dead writers –



Notes from the Small Kingdom

(Or Durbanites Actually Roleplay)

ud@vid seaward udlala imidlala eThekweni

Believe it or not roleplaying happens in Durban. Regularly.

Missing Mass Hysteria

I have heard tell of two actual gaming societies that lurk on the boundaries of everyday Durban existence, waiting until the stars are right and their deadly masters awaken. The stars haven't been right for me and I still haven't got round to visiting either of them...

TollySoc of UND, legendary in beerguzzling prowess. Apparently still around. Other than that I know nothing, so quit with the thumbscrews whydoncha. No contact details, not even the King, just roam around UND and look for a mountain of beer with a dragon inside.

WHAMM (Westville Historical and Military Miniatures Society) meet on alternate Sundays at the Westville Library (which has a pretty decent fantasy and science fiction section now that I mention it; and the reason that public libraries in SA don't keep roleplaying books is because they're too expensive, so get donating already). As the name suggests their interests extend beyond just Warhammer variants, although I'd like to see a Zulu impi pitted against some Warhammer Fantasy armies (can you spell Isandlwana?). Get in touch with Mervyn Mathee at mattheem@mweb.co.za

Various gaming groups (with characters of excellent nature, and players even ;) float about and attend Imbolcon, but I feel a persistent organization, even a mailing list, would do well (although the defunct Durban Comics and Gam-

ing Society webpage reflects an earlier attempt). Similar thoughts apply to Cape Town, really, for roleplayers beyond CLAWs (gasp). I guess that's why we sort of have the RPGA sort of.

[sidebar]

Assimilate this...

Not all acronyms roll off the tongue or evoke insidious fear like "CLAWs" does. Be that as it may, SASFA promises great things for the science fiction community in South Africa, where "science fiction" is a very broad term that includes fantasy, medieval re-creation, anime and gaming of all sorts, and "community" includes fan clubs, university societies, bookclubs and the people what sell the stuff we like.

The idea behind the South African Science Fiction Alliance is simply to create a forum for these various groups to communicate, with mutations, growth and viral cybernetics as necessary. CLAWs is already aligned; check out sasfa.org for more developments or to contact the chairperson (I know, I know, they need a better title) Michele Santos.

[/sidebar]



DEAR HAROLD. I'M WEARING YOUR FAVOURITE LITTLE RED NUMBER. IF YOU MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE BEDROOM, YOU'LL GET A BIG SUPRIZE.

Inventory

Short of buying everything at cons, a gamer needs somewhere to buy his weighty tomes, dice, miniatures and Harry Potter cards. Pending my article on how to squeeze anything you want out of any decent bookstore, current worthies are...

Wizards Bookshop,
Windemere Centre
031 312 8271

Gaming and esoteric

books. The Durban branch of the store Capetonians know all too well. Also the venue for most Magic events in KZN. (Organised by Aroon Patel, the KZN Magic guy who also runs Molimo's Outpost at molimosoutpost.za.net)

Blaze Gaming
herospawn@hotmail.com

Warhammer specialists. I think they have physical premises, but I have no idea where. In the meanwhile, catch them at Imbolcon or drop them an email.

Adams & Company, West Street
031 304 8571 / west@adamsbooks.co.za

General & technical bookstore. The gaming stock doesn't reach to the rafters, but most any book can be ordered in 2-3 weeks. Known to bring in obscure but worthy titles. Various branches, but gaming stock held at West Street. And that sales clerk with the big hair deserves a raise even if he does order the Harry Potter CCG.

Spring Gods

The Durban gaming event to calendarise is Imbolcon, mighty successor to Oublette. The brainchild of Deric Knox (now haunting a basement in Joburg) and Paul Cowan (who avoided a similar fate), Imbolcon features roleplaying, LARPing, wargaming and the best hamburgers found at any con, ever.

Imbolcon is theoretically run as near as dammit to the Spring Equinox, coinciding with the birthday of one Perry "I'll hold the con party, you bring the presents" Dace, ex-CLAWmember and all-round insane swordsman. (This year an early October date looks more likely, though. Perry is currently have his birthdate legally corrected.)
Smaller games days are held in other seasons.

While exiled in Durban for crimes against the state, I had the pleasure of attending the both the convention and several games days. Games days are supported exclusively by the Durban crowd, so are roughly equivalent to SchpatCon, but without Patrick's d20 trick

(bonus!). Some have been small enough that exhibitors were forcibly roped playing. I love getting paid to attend cons.

The Imbolcon convention itself was well-attended by Joburgers and beings from the planet Pretoria, but a distinct lack of Capetonians (Capetonians from Cape Town, expats don't count ;) But more of that later. The pre-con party was great fun as long as you were a L5R player or avoided those conversations. Durbanites seem to have enjoyed extensive campaigns of L5R and Trinity (the game where the Aberrants are in fact aberrant). There was much posturing between Russel and Perry about the infamous naked LARP, since then I hear that Russel has in fact written it.

On the roleplaying side there was some AD&D, D&D, Werewolf and an excellent Cthulhu two-parter, "Gray House on a Hill". Warhammer 40K raged on in the background. No one bought damn roleplaying books, but Grant bought a million sale books so I earned a salary. Thanks Grant!

The LARP, In the Shadow of the Stake, was great fun except for a lack of catering. Admittedly I may have been too busy being stabbed in the back (thanks Jem!) to notice. Durban LARPs written by real Durbanites are in the pipelines, so expect to see imports to Icon and Dragonfire soon. (Including the well-crafted "Shadow Play", which I playtested recently. Finally a fantasy LARP for Tim to play in rather than write.)

So, if you're ever in Durban by chance, fate or exile, fear not, for your dice will not go unrolled. I'll post any amendments and updates to these details on the Wiki and in the next CLAWmarks (it'll help those Durbanite Bobs like me who go home and wonder where all the gamers are).

In the meanwhile check thee out gaming.iwizards.co.za and get thee down to Imbolcon 2004. Verily.

Campaign Summaries

Matrix: Revelations

The world of the Matrix is spiraling out of control as the Artificial Intelligences launch a heavy crackdown on the resistance, apparently with information gleaned from inside the human city. Meanwhile, a city block of the Matrix is summarily wiped from existence, creating an electrical backlash which devastates the ranks of Zion's ships.

Something is loose in the Matrix.
Something that shouldn't be there.
Something relentless.

Something deadly.

Madison: The soft-spoken former captain of 'Halycon Day' is an unobtrusive warrior. But despite his quiet manner and thoughtful attitude, he's a quick-witted man whose gift for the Matrix's warped physics makes him a formidable foe. Trained by the Oracle, he's the only crew member who's managed to hold his own against the deadly Agent White. But Madison is only human, and humans tire. Machines do not.

Corvette: In the aftermath of an electrical pulse, Corvette's beloved ship is a smoking wreck. Despite her best efforts to attain perfection, she is slowly coming to realize that no level of practice can guard against every threat. But that doesn't mean she won't stop trying.

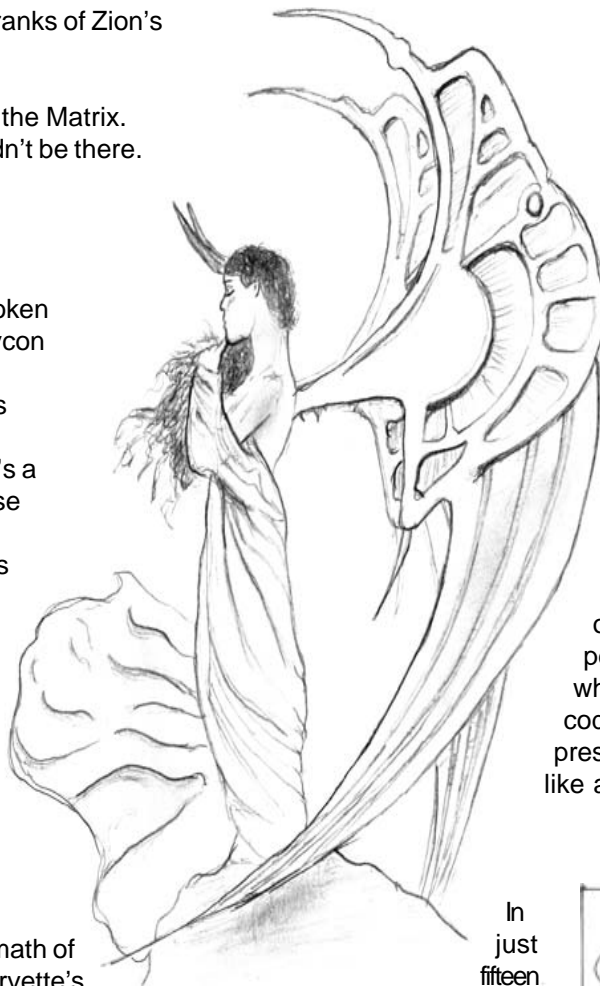
Lockheed: After being temporarily abandoned in medical bay by his crew, Lockheed has had a wild ride indeed. He's uncovered treachery within Zion and fought a whirlwind battle with the Merevingian and his troops. Now Lockheed finds himself an unlikely knight riding to rescue his crew. His steed: a Lamborghini Diablo, his lance: an RPG.

Carter: Carter has just been having a bad run of things. Nearly terminally so, after some ill-fated encounters with Agents. Even in the Real World, he just can't catch a break. Despite his brilliant gift for shipboard repairs, Corvette's ineptitude (as he sees it) creates work for him as fast as he can fix it.

Prophet: Prophet's impassive façade hides many secrets. Now, those secrets are being dragged into the light by Madison, and Prophet's life hangs in the balance as a result.

Agent White: The ebony-skinned prototype Agent hunting the crew is the first of a new generation of soldiers. Given his current high success rate, White's continued existence is a threat to the entirety of Zion. But as anyone knows, even normal Agents are near-impossible to delete. White may prove simply unstoppable.

The Girl: And another horror overshadows even the constant perils of the machines. A creature who seems able to warp the very code of the Matrix, her mere presence burning through the code like acid.



In just fifteen

hours, these terrifying events will come to a head. Fifteen hours to save the Matrix and everyone connected to it...or die trying



AND NEO CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT SOMETHING HAD GONE HORRIBLY HORRIBLY WRONG.

The End Of All Things To Come

GM / Supreme GM Deity-thing: Brendan

Conrad: Seethriel, Power Choir, Angel of

Purification

Ian: Ezra, Angel Choir, Psychopomp

Marc: Belar, Angel Choir, Guardian Angel

Mike: Camael, Angel Choir, Angel of Vengeance

Sean: Celeriel, Angel Choir, Angel of the Sword

Piotr: Epignosis, Angel Choir, Guardian Angel

System: Children of Fire
[www.mimgames.com/cof]

For a fuller description of the setting, see the Wiki entry (<http://claws.uct.ac.za/ClawWiki>).

The Falling. Possibly the single greatest earth-changing event since the World Wars. The angels and daemons that Fell have adjusted to their new lives among the mortals, but there are also many who have not.

The 6 angels who are intertwined in this story are currently "...very f@*ked..." (players' quote): they have been feeling the presence of several very powerful Celestials (they haven't been able to determine whether they are Angels or Daemons) around them, and have witnessed the recent murder of Uriel, one of the Seven Angels of Divine Grace, and Leader of the Angels of Purification, angels charged with cleansing Heaven of those angels who have become errant in their ways.

Uriel has been busy lately, and is now known (by the 6 angels) to be responsible for the series of killings dubbed "The Sword Killings": a series of seemingly random grisly killings with very religious overtones. The 6 angels also witnessed the murder itself, and know not who killed Uriel, although he was aware of them but took no interest.

While hiding in one of the angels' flower shop (with Uriel's sword hidden in the shop), they have been visited by a strange vagrant calling himself Job, and he seems to know them all from a very, very long time ago...

Current Affairs

Life off the coast of Carragyn continues to be perilous for Our Heroes - shalarin cleric Tu'Ara'Kya, malenti cleric Aramiatyrine, half-elven ranger Lilia and mermaid fighter Milaena - who were last seen accidentally stealing the most contentious horse in the Known World and wiping out a small sahuagin warband. Recent game highlights also include mysterious elven remains, unpleasant revelations about dodgy family history, an evil tribe of lycanthropic merfolk and a morkoth's loot-filled lair.

Curveball

They've been through a lot, they have. Through warped time, mystic attacks, government interrogation, their own collective subconscious, and even *Space*, to name just a few.

And yet they're still standing.

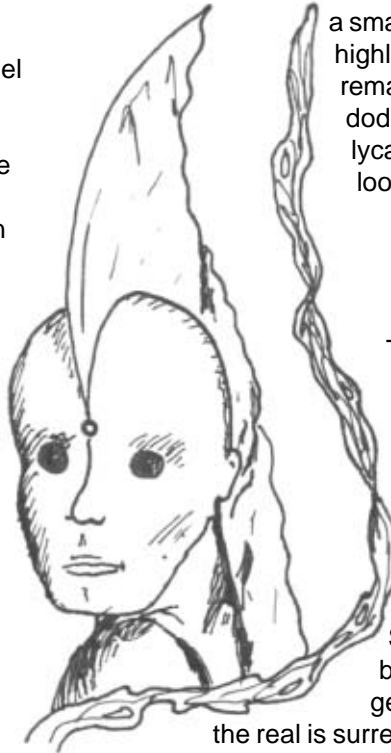
Standing on the deck of a spaceship borne of the dreams of a Star Trek geek, in a spiritual dimension where the real is surreal and the normal non-existent ... but still standing.

Neil Jericho – *Former Bank Robber turned Entropic Gambler*: Jericho was a cynical, unpleasant bastard at the beginning of this tale. He still is, but now chance and happenstance are his weapons, weapons far more subtle than a 9mm pistol and far more dangerous.

He still holds on to the pistol though. For sentimental reasons.

Clyde DeVille – *Former Psychiatrist turned Drug-using Psychic*: Clyde's comfortable little world has been exploded by the arrival of his magical powers, and the former Doctor has essentially broken his personality down and rebuilt himself from the bottom up. Once a calm, rational man, Clyde is now given to bizarre flickers of intuition and psychic echoes which he studies as carefully as he once studied medical dossiers and case files.

Ricky Welsch – *Former Mafia Snitch ... turned ... Former Mafia Snitch and part-time Neo (bullet-dodging using Time magick is really great, Ricky, but Paradox smackdown still hurts like a bitch. Don't quit your day-job just yet!)*: There's something fundamentally changeless about Ricky. Whether



he's being leaned on by the Mafia, the Technocracy, or a giant Demon Lord, Ricky reacts in much the same way. Frantic gibbering terror combined with a razor-sharp wit.

And now, a little magick, too. Ricky is possibly the most and the least adapted to this new world of magick. He has an eager enthusiasm regarding the mystical world, but still lacks the combat experience and skills of his companions. Hell, even the *psychiatrist* is more hardcore.

Agent Adam Smythe – Formerly believed to be pursuing the PCs, Smythe has in fact been revealed to be their mystic Avatar, a consensual hallucination who is the apparent source of their magick. Sardonic and world-weary, Smythe is an invisible narrator and advisor to this band of unwitting sorcerers.

Now unwilling crew members on the Umbral ship Wayfarer, they find themselves caught up in a quest to uncover a mystic prophecy which could unlock the secrets to their own lives and the Ascension War itself.

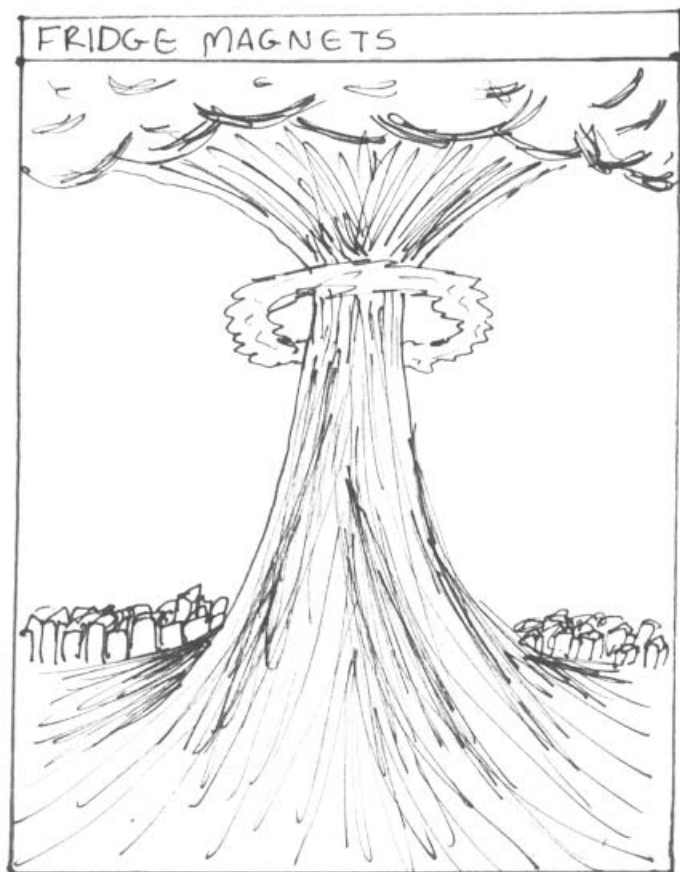
As the barriers between their own dreams and the world around them crumble, they descend deeper into the spiritual realms and further away from the world they know. And while the Technocracy may have its iron fist wrapped around reality, there are things in the Umbra that make a HIT Mark's depleted uranium round through your head seem almost pleasant by comparison.

Children of The Apocalypse

Children of the Apocalypse is a roleplaying campaign set in a post nuclear world two hundred years after the fall of civilisation. Think *Fallout* with promiscuity, questionable morality and weirdoes who want to end the world...and those are just the players. The players, a threesome from an obscure tribe who believe that they must bring about final judgement to humanity, have set out into the blasted lands of the far future. The players are: an unlucky hunter with a technology fetish (played by Dave), a sluttish scout (played by Shelagh), and an insane and drug dependent shaman (played by Lucas).

They've encountered, attacked and had their asses kicked by a variety of interesting, characters including: evil slavers, killer babies with sharp pointy teeth and a psychotic cyborg with

personality issues. They've been to many exotic locales, many of them underground, and obtained high tech weaponry that they don't understand. The campaign has been going for several months and the players have progressed past being a loose group of incompetent country bumpkins into a finely tuned team of psychologically scarred country bumpkins. Notably they've witnessed the destruction of a peaceful settlement by bloodthirsty marauders, run out of a town by killer robots, discovered a hidden bunker, complete with nuclear missile silos, met their god and vanquished a schizophrenic cyborg that was replacing humans with robotic impostors. Unfortunately Dave's character has been mortally wounded, Shelagh has a permanent limp and Lucas is now questioning his faith.



FRIDGE MAGNETS

PUTTING HIS TUNA SANDWICH NEXT TO HIS EXPERIMENT PROVED A COSTLY MISTAKE FOR DR. MARBERG AND THE CITY OF VANCOUVER.

THGIN TSAL MAERD TSEDDO EHT DAH I

BY MICHAEL DEWAR

I had the oddest dream last night.

That is your first warning sign. Nothing good ever starts with “I had the oddest dream last night,” or words to that effect. In fact it’s a guarantee that you’re about to enter an earnest dialogue in which someone pours their heart out to you while you nod vaguely and try to think of insightful things to say. It just doesn’t work. Dreams are intimate and intensely personal things, and trying to explain them to other people doesn’t really wash. If you weren’t actually dreaming it at the time, you’ll never understand exactly why rabbits with purple noses were so terrifying to the dreamer (or perhaps dream-ee?), or exactly how helpless they felt when their pen wrote only in invisible ink during their final Maths exam. Or any of the other daft, scary things that routinely saunter through the average human’s subconscious.

So how exactly do you verbally “explain” dreams in a RPG scenario? Because after all, as plot devices, dreams do rock. From the standard “ominous-prophecy” dream to the “mysteriously-symbolic” dream, we’ve seen them a hundred times in movies and books. And they are cool. They’re weird, freaky ways to dispense clues, baffle the audience and generally mind-f*ck the punters into oblivion.

But DMs have an automatic disadvantage. While the movies have expensive CGI to back up their weirdness, and books have characters who are by definition contained within the writer’s imagination, RPGs have no budget, no FX, and the characters are controlled by bored players who may well fall asleep themselves if a dream isn’t gripping or interesting enough. So just how can DMs feature interesting and freaky dream sequences?

I’ve spent the last couple of months thinking carefully about this. I have come to no worthwhile conclusion, but since that would make for a dull article, I’ve made up some based on prior experiences. Some of them may actually be accurate. Some may not. And some may simply be the product of rich food on an over-stressed imagination.

Now that I’ve disclaimed my way out of anything relevant, let’s run down the list.

1) “What the &*(%\$#?”

Before choosing to run a dream sequence, you should decide what exactly you’re hoping to accomplish. If the story you’re telling has a supernatural element, maybe the dream has a prophetic air to it or reveals clues which the players wouldn’t normally know. A prophetic dream is a great way to get around the “Basil Exposition” factor required to explain some plotlines or concepts. Rather than tell the PCs what’s happening, you show them. Of course, you don’t need to do so easily or simply, but it gives them something to work out while still imparting a lot of data.

Or let them dream something that is about to happen and then let them come up with ways to prevent/facilitate it in reality. One of the best mini-campaign concepts I ever heard, was that of a Vampire module in which the PCs were sent to rob a facility of some kind (I forget the details) by a powerful elder. One by one, the under-prepared PCs were picked off and slaughtered by the facility’s defences and a variety of unexpected horrors.

Only to wake up in their beds, the phone ringing. On the other end of the line, that same elder with an important (and disturbingly familiar) mission for them. They then had to handle the same scenario again, but while trying to avoid the “prophecy” they’d created,

Dreams can also simply be scary. Nightmares are fun, people! Well, for the DM, anyway. You can freak the hell out of your innocent PCs, wreck their characters’ sleeping patterns and in games with suitable Sanity-based systems, dream-based horror can be as damaging to a character’s long-term survival as reality.

2) Free your mind

Like I could resist using a quote from *that* film in an article about dreams and hallucination. When working out a dream sequence, things don’t have to be linear or logical ... or make any bloody sense whatsoever.

Whereas normally DMs tiptoe carefully around the laws of physics and plausibility, living in constant dread of comments like “Wasn’t the bad guy’s limousine grey last session?” and other continuity-

related remarks on the relative size and dimensions of buildings (Damn you, Conrad – signed Anyone Who’s Ever DMed for a Bloody Architect), here you can freely say, “Bugger this. It’s orange now. And the building’s a million stories high. Anyone got a problem?”

In fact, dream sequences are often more effective if they *do* make less sense and defy continuity. If I dream about going to varsity, I never logically dream that I get my keys, start my car and drive to varsity. I’m just at varsity. And there are goats everywhere. Or not. I refuse to share my Goat Dream with you people.

If the PCs wander down corridors which turn back on themselves, or lead into rooms which are larger than the buildings they’re in, or abruptly become waterslides, so much the better. Liberate yourself from the chains of physics, continuity and logic!

After all, it’s all just a dream, right?

3) It’s all about the symbology, Greenly.

Sigh. Two movie references in a row – am I on a roll ... or just a very sad human being? Don’t answer that. Dreams are fun because they don’t have to view things rationally. You can give grand, spankily-important clues, but then cloak them in a heavy fog of symbology...ism (...er...) and interpretation.

Change things around and twist them into more menacing forms. Let’s say you want to show the character’s fear at being too closely affiliated with a mob boss PC. Yawn. So replace the mob boss with an enormous spider spinning a golden web out of blood money from the deaths of hundreds of innocent citizens – and then stick the PC in the middle of the web. Heavy-handed? Certainly. But fun. And if you complicate the dream with more such images, some with actual meaning, some just there as red herrings, you can create a really freaky series of scenes which the player might spend a good while trying to puzzle out after the fact.

4) Transitions ... from here to there and back again

Because of the aforementioned lack of regard for physical laws which dreams traditionally show, you can have a lot of fun moving from event to event in a dream. Why have the PC walk through a door to get to your next scene, when the floor can pull them down into it like quicksand and then you have them scratch and dig their way back to the surface ... to find they’ve clawed their way out of their own graves in a dark, eerie cemetery filled with the bodies of everyone they’ve ever killed.

Can’t you just smell the formaldehyde already?

One of my favourite ever dream sequences I ran in terms of transitions, was a dreamquest in a Certain Mage Game of mine. The PCs had taken a healthy dose of hallucinogens and were in the middle of a trance to contact their “mystic selves.” Unfortunately, the spell went wrong mid-way through, when the shaman leading them was incapacitated in the real world. They ended up switching back and forth between the dream world and the real world (in which a full-pitched battle was raging, by the way), trying to stay alive and complete their dreamquest at the same time. Events in the real world would bleed into the dream world and vice versa, making the whole experience a lot more disorientating and dramatic than if they had finished the trance and then had a big fight later.

5) More real than real

Description-wise, you can amp up the sensations. Make your dream seem more real than normal game ‘reality’!

Because a dream doesn’t need to include any ‘boring’ sections, like picking up supplies or interacting with arbitrary NPC shop-owners/ waitresses/salespeople, you can focus much more on the detail in the important scenes. The more involved the PCs become in the dream, the more they react to it, as opposed to going: “Oh. It’s just a dream. I pinch myself.”

Try using unusual details to describe your scenes as well, or contrasting different senses with one another. For example, the dreamer is sitting in a coffee shop that he frequents regularly. All around him are people eating their meals, relaxing. He can hear them laughing and talking and see the smiles on their faces ... but he can also smell the sickly scent of rotting flesh overlaying everything.

6) Don’t be passive. Damn it.

It’s all too easy to come up with a thousand brilliant freaky scenes, and then stream them out in front of your players and watch them doze off. Why? Because they’re not interactive enough. You may have a cool idea for a demonic merry-go-round, in which they see politicians and businessmen dancing in an endless circle of bribes and kickbacks, but how do the PCs interact with that? It may be studded with metaphors and clues, beautifully described, but if there’s nothing to do but watch it go around and around, the players will be bored stiff.

So what can players do in their dreams? Combat is always a possibility – some kind of symbolic battle against their fears and uncertainty, but there’s probably enough combat in the PCs’ waking lives as it is. Also, every time you roll your little plastic dice, you break the suspension of disbelief just one more time, ruining the dream’s atmosphere. A better choice is exploration and investigation. Give the PCs input from their freaky subconscious and then watch them adapt and respond to it.

To return to the coffee shop example. The PC is sitting there, smelling the rotting flesh, but maybe he can follow the scent to the kitchen, where it is strongest, and then when he levers up a loose tile on the kitchen floor he finds a ladder leading down into a cellar full of bodies. Then in reality, when he visits the same coffee shop and looks under the tile, he finds where the coffee shop’s “bodies” really are “buried” – a set of documents tucked under the loose tile which implicate the coffee shop owner in a fraud scheme with the spider-mob-boss from earlier.

7) Too many brains

Obviously, without a supernatural explanation of some kind, each PC has to dream a different dream. If everyone has the same dream, it’s certainly freaky (and appropriate in the right kind of game), but if you’re playing a magic-less sci-fi game it just doesn’t make sense.

Still, you can run individual dream scenes for each character. On the one hand, this is *much* more

work. On the other, it really lets you focus on that character and get inside his head. If the dream features things that are specifically relevant to him and his background, it’ll be that much more interesting and effective.

Want to *really* meet your inner child, anyone?

8) Steal blatantly from the Masters

I firmly believe that no decent dream sequence can be written without some kind of David Lynch videothon before it. Or something similar, anyway. Watch or read things with the kind of atmosphere you’re trying to create for your game. There are tons of books and movies out there with really classy surreal moments – look at how they create them and then let that shape your ideas.

And yes, if you want, steal blatantly. Just make sure none of your players have seen the same movie/book. And remember, if there isn’t a backwards-talking dwarf in it, it’s just not weird enough!

Conclusion

In case you weren’t paying attention earlier, I already said I thought about this for a couple of months and got diddly. So there.

There isn’t really some ‘trick’ to running dreams, in the same way that there’s no ‘trick’ to DMing well. It’s a matter of practice, technique and imagination. Some people really don’t like dream sequences, and obviously for those who don’t – stay away. But if you learn to love them, you’ve got another weapon

in your DM’s arsenal of Blatantly Sadistic Tricks. Er... I mean Narrative Techniques, of course.

Oh, and the odd dream I had last night: I was writing a final Accounting paper, and the examiner handed me

a laptop and told me to write a CLAW Marks article in two hours for 300 marks. While I was typing, Brendan and Ian took turns yelling in my ears and Andrea tried to hug my head off, while screaming “I must have more LARPs!” reaaally loudly.

I just can’t figure out what it might have meant...



How to Maim/Kill/Destroy/ Incapacitate/Torture Your Players - The GMs guide

by Brendan "Sadistic Bastard/
DemonMaster(read DM)/Bitch" Quinlivan

Disclaimer:

Warning One - What is contained in this article is very bad for your health, especially if you're a player in someone's game. I will not be held responsible for any maiming or death that you may suffer as a consequence of your GM reading this article. I'm just spreading the love. Honestly.

Warning Two - This is meant to be for GMs. If you are a player 90% of the time, please don't read this. I detail the various GM tricks-of-the-trade I've picked up over the years of GMing I've done. They might make you even more paranoid, and play you right into the GMs hands, or they might make you just very blasé about it all. You have been warned. If, however, you're one of those people who can forget most of what you've read, then go ahead.

Mwa ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. (In-joke. Don't worry.)

The way I see it, there are several kinds of torture that you can inflict on your players: Physical Violence, Emotional Scarring, Mental Anguish, Rampant Paranoia, Complete and Utter Fear, Out-of-Character Dread and Self-Inflicted Suffering. I will deal with each in turn and if I get carried away and start gibbering madly and incoherently, it's because I really do enjoy my job. Bite me... On second thought, don't. No, really.

Physical Violence

This is the easiest tool in a GMs arsenal of character death, but is also the most double-edged. Trust me on this one, I've been on the receiving and giving end (wait, that sounds bad... err, sod it). Physical violence in graphic detail is great, especially in a gritty, real-world / post-apocalyptic kind of game, like Unknown Armies, Twilight 2000 (if anyone still plays it), and any other systems where you've decided to be "realistic". It's not cool to use this device frequently though - this is where the double-edged bit comes in. Players get frustrated quite quickly if their characters are constantly mutilated and wounded. Players will begin to feel helpless, and inevitably the violence will become blasé to them, and will therefore lose the intended effect. Getting shot is an unpleasant experience (not speaking from personal experience, but it's not that hard to believe... is it?).

Effective tools... wait, that also sounds very bad. Graphic description of injuries. Removing hit points and keeping the tally of it yourself (that way they don't know how badly wounded they really are), realistic healing times and wound effects - for instance, getting shot in the leg will definitely impair your ability to run away - He he he he.

Emotional Scarring

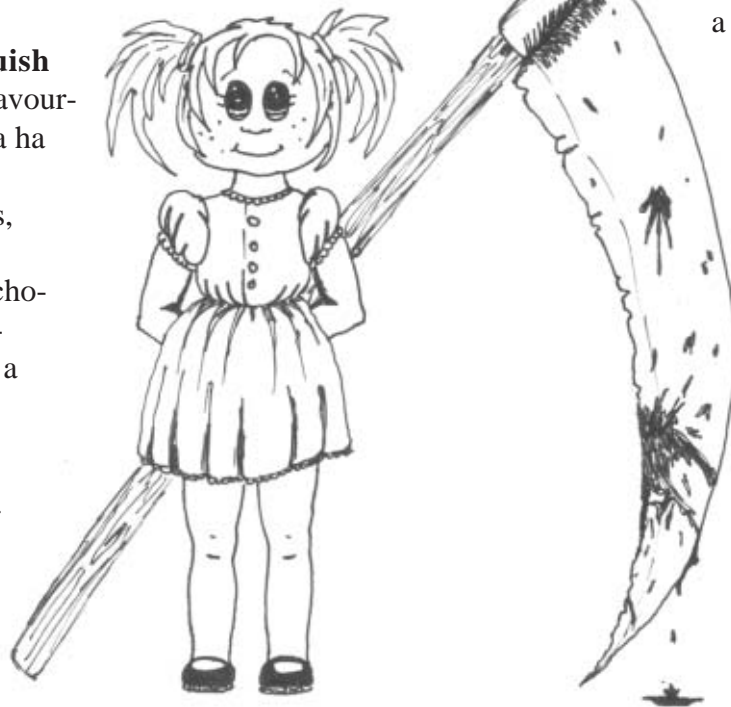
Now here's where it's at! Overt as well as brutal, but something that most players will not take too harshly or personally. It's also a lot more subtle. (Remember, kids, subtle is GOOD.) What makes you human? Your emotions! (don't you dare get all philosophical on me). So what do YOU as a GM want to fuck with? Exactly! Do the players have

spouses, children, girlfriends, special friends, etc? Putting them in the firing line will definitely get the characters motivated (unless you have an entire party of DnD-hardened combat sluts, in which case that's your fault anyway). Playing with their emotions is a good motivator, and a great source of entertainment for you. It also mirrors what happens in the real-world. However, over-use can also turn the players against it, or render it ineffective. It will turn them into cardboard cutout characters, since they will not have families or personal connections ("...no, my character is a hard-ass vigilante who kills bad guys at night and has no girlfriend or anything because he doesn't have any feelings...")

Effective tools: putting families in the firing line, but NOT maiming them (that's for the players!) - subtle threats or danger work (yes, that word "subtle" again); having them forced to do things that go against their characters' beliefs/values; NPCs screwing them over emotionally, like screwing them literally, for their own benefit. You know, fun stuff like that.

Mental Anguish

My personal favourite. Mwa ha ha ha ha ha! Sanity-rending events, mind-scarring creatures, psychological horror - all the tools of a truly evil GM. Putting weird, surreal shit in your games (if suitable, and ONLY if suitable - suddenly putting surreal happenings in your dungeon-crawl DnD game will seem very odd. And fake.) is fantastic, as it will make your players feel on edge, but not overtly so. Again, surreal stuff loses its weirdness if it is used too often. You know what the



keyword is, don't you? So, what do I mean by "surreal"? Look to the masters of the surreal for an answer: David Lynch, David Cronenberg, Gore Verbinski, Terry Gilliam, Stanley Kubrick (in some of his movies), etc. You know what I mean. This *will not* work if your game is not inclined this way, really. So, what can you do instead? Have uncanny things happen instead: phones that ring and stop as soon as the players answer, door unlocked when they KNOW they locked it, black cars following you but suddenly disappearing when you look again. Stuff like that.

Effective tools: Take something normal or everyday, and make it weird. Very weird. Nothing will scare people as much as something that appears very ordinary and bland, NOT being very ordinary and bland in reality. Really subtle but very creepy stuff (like the use of water in "The Ring", for instance). Lynch is also very adept at doing this.

Rampant Paranoia

My other personal favourite! "Paranoia isn't a disease, it's a way of life!" If your players start saying this, then you're onto a good thing. However, what I'm talking about here is character paranoia, not player paranoia. Player paranoia and dread is a separate thing. Character paranoia can be achieved by techniques achieved in the Mental Anguish paragraph; the two categories pretty much go hand-in-hand. Once characters start doubting reality or who they interact with, then

the paranoia starts flowing (so to speak). The question is how to get the paranoia going: The X-Files is, for me, a great source of paranoia tips - for example, mysterious men showing up who seem to know your every move and

"advise" you in a very careful way to change certain things; TV vans that sit outside your house for ages, and then fiddle with the cable box and leave; towns that seem to be normal, except for little things that are just not right, like hanging washing-out in the rain and chopping wood in the rain. It's really subtle little things that disturb the characters and make them slightly afraid of anything they might need or do later. When you've got this, you've got slight paranoia. Your work is now done, because all you have to do is put something slightly odd in, and they'll freak out. The best bit is that the thing freaking them out need not be truly odd, but just coincidental: for example, a genuine TV van doing legitimate repairs to a neighbour's cable will freak the player's out, even though there's no basis for concern in reality. Your work is done.

Effective tools: anything slightly off-kilter - this will cause them to get very jittery, and will get them paranoid fairly slowly, the way it should be. Of course, one could also use dramatic and blatant events, and create paranoia this way. However, these must be kept to an absolute minimum. The trick to creating paranoia here is to have everything else allude to that one event, or remind them subtly of it.

Complete and Utter Fear

Fear. A wonderful motivator. It causes rash decisions to be made, and players to generally screw themselves over, which is the best bit, because they simply can't blame you for anything - even though they probably will. Unfortunately, scaring people is a very tricky thing to do, since you need to know what makes them scared, but not exploit that fear to the extent that they become uncomfortable - roleplaying *is* a social and enjoyable activity anyway, not a psychological torture session. So how do you scare your players and their characters? Again, one can look at movies for inspiration: horror movies prove a valuable breeding ground for ideas, but I must issue a word of warning - horror movies have a very high laughable:scary ratio, so movies you use for inspiration must be carefully selected. The Ring, Session 9, The Alien trilogy and the

childhood favourite, It (which doesn't seem as scary when you watch it now, but hey...) are all examples of genuinely scary movies. Take tips. Being chased by forces you cannot stop, watching your body do things against your will, being stuck in a dark well with things that want to eat you and you can't see shit... that kind of thing. Genuinely scary.

Effective tools: Isolation. Characters (and players) hate being left alone. It forces them to do something or die (in a horrible way, usually). It also cuts them off from any form of security, idea dispensers and any other form of help. Isolating characters is quite tricky, though, and leaves other characters doing nothing. So, the answer is group terror: repeat the above, but cut all the characters off from any outside help, and make sure they have personality clashes, or forced to do things they don't want to, or forced to stand and fight a potentially lost battle... Things like that.

Out-of-Character Dread

This one is potentially the most fun, because all characters have a human player at the helm, so if you have the player scared, you'll have the character scared (most of the time: excellent roleplayers will slot into their characters, and not be afraid because their characters are not afraid). How do you get your players scared? Simple, and many will claim that I have this bit down-pat: psychological warfare. Killing your players in the first session, and bringing them back as some form of undead (as part of the PLOT, not for fun!); writing campaign notes and cackling maniacally every so often (with a strategic "Hmmm, oh, nothing..." for effect); making allusions to the RPG's Big-Bad-Guys as potential enemies; showing how powerful your NPCs really are (on other NPCs, for demonstration purposes); running solo sessions that really harrow/freak out/screw the player involved, thus making the others think a bit too long and hard about *their* characters. Stuff like that. It's great fun, really. Building a reputation for being this way is also quite good, because you then attract players who want to a) experience the real deal themselves, b) be GMed by this GM

The Things About Stuff

(Or Recruiting Difficulties of Your Common or Garden Elder God)

By Michael Dewar

CLAWS presents an article...about nothing very much. For cunning editing purposes, we need to take up about 900 words on here. We could just leave a blank space or put down a picture of some sort, but it's far too early and I've slept far too little for anything so logical.

So instead: the Things About Stuff. Have you ever noticed that the opposite sides of a dice add up to one higher than its maximum or one below it?

Hey, it's a Thing. About Stuff. Work with me here. I think the walls might be watching me. They have that shifty look.

Admittedly, they don't have any eyes to watch me with, but it looks like they might want to. If they had eyes...like say, a Many-Eyed Horror that Man Was Not Meant to Know (About).

But if one sticks with the standard perspective on inter-dimensional horror, eyes aren't really a theme. Tentacles are. And has anyone really considered why exactly HP Lovecraft's creations are so tentacle-heavy?

I mean here's the Ultimate Evil and what does it look like? The offspring of an octopus, a bicycle and at least three crocodiles. And the ever-present Cthulhu cultists worship these things? And will we're on the topic, how exactly does one become a Cthulhuist (if that's the right term anyway)?

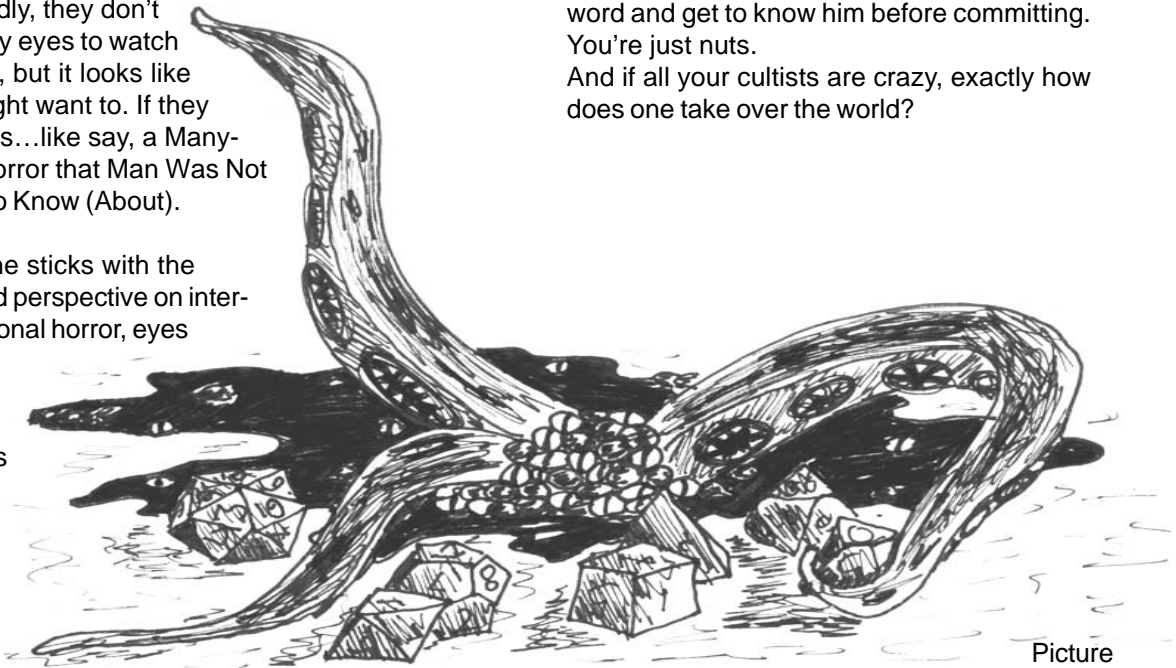
It's not like joining a prayer group. Are there pamphlets? Do cultists distribute pamphlets saying, "Cthulhu saves"? It would technically be true, too. Maybe Cthulhu is a very frugal evil deity. If you're stuck on the bottom of the ocean for thousands of years, you're gonna get a hell of a lot compound interest.

In fact, that would be a far more efficient way to take over the world. Take your combined 5000-year Investment Portfolio and just buy everything. Humans can be very tolerant of you if you're rich enough. Just look at Bill Gates.

But back to the matter of the cultists. So somehow you're recruited to the Cult of some deity who's name you can't pronounce. "This is Nygatheleptomathengakrensti, your new lord. Yeah, it's hell trying to get than on the letterheads." And you see your brand new tentacle-faced god (or a manifestation thereof) and lose 1d100/1d10

SANITY! Immediately. No chance to have a quiet word and get to know him before committing. You're just nuts.

And if all your cultists are crazy, exactly how does one take over the world?



Picture

Nygatheleptomathengakrensti, sitting alone in his temple on the bottom of the sea, contacting his servants magically.

"I WANT YOU TO SACRIFICE 500 VIRGINS SO THAT I MAY AWAKEN AND WALK THE EARTH ONCE MORE," growls Nygatheleptomath – ah, fuck it.

His servants (with a total of 1 SAN point between all fifty of them) "La..la...la...do you hear the butterflies? They're whispering little secrets in my ears..."

"BUGGER. NOW SEE HERE, I AM YOUR GOD, AND I COMMAND YOU TO OBEY."

"I feel like my brain is full of turpentine...I like coats."

"PAY ATTENTION! AND TAKE YOUR UNDERWEAR OFF YOUR HEAD WHEN YOU ADDRESS ME!"

There's an administrative nightmare for you. Makes running CLAWS seem positively simple. And what if you pass your SAN check? So you see your new God, and you realise that everyone around you a few bricks short of an Evil Temple of Doom. And you decide *this* is a crew to sign on with?

Accountants have better recruiting procedures than that.

Oh, but there's the *magic*. Serve the Elder Gods, get magic. But what are the commercial applications of being able to turn people to sludge or summon Ye Ultimate Horror? Okay, so it's a convenient way to dispose of those annoying Mythos investigators who turn up every now and then – but what else, exactly?

And every time you use a spell or read a tome, you lose more SAN. This isn't hard for a relatively intelligent Cultist to pick up: "Gosh, I just turned a man into sludge, and now the shadows have started whispering my name and there's a giant armadillo where my friend used to be. Funny how that always happens..."

So why bother with magic if it makes you crazy? What, people think it's FUN to be crazy? Yeah, those wild electroshock treatments...the lovely feel of Thorazine running through your veins...oh, baby.

Nine times out of ten, if a cultist is working some kind of magic, what is he trying to do? Bring Cthulhu or one of his wacky pals into the world. And then what's his reward, exactly? Cthulhu eats the world.

Gee, what a neat incentive package. Okay, so maybe the God in question lies to his servants

"So Dark Lord, why exactly do you want to come to our realm?" asks one of Nygatheleptomathengakrensti with about ten SAN points still remaining.

"ER...A CHANGE IS AS GOOD AS A REST, YOU KNOW."



THEY COME IN PEACE
WELCOME THE
ELDER GODS!

"That's not technically an answer. Oh Malignant One."

"UH...I WANT TO PROMOTE WORLD PEACE. AND WORK FOR THE BENEFIT OF MANKIND. AND EAT EVERYONE."

"What was that last bit? Didn't quite catch it. Sir."

"SAY, IS THAT THE TIME? I HAVE TO SEE A WHALE ABOUT A STARFISH ISSUE. SEEYA."

"No, you won't. Because then I'll go nuts."

"GOOD POINT."

Uh-huh. These creatures have no social contact with anything or anyone for thousands of years. Mother Theresa gets to go to more parties than that. And she's DEAD!

And as of this sentence, I'm on 900 words. Thanks.

Random Encounters For Horror Settings Or Horrible DMs

A sequel to "Disecting NPCs" from Clawmarks 22 by Lara Daidson and David Maclay

It is often the case that most encounters in rpgs are relevant to the central plot of the campaign. We think that even the most far fetched horror game should feel real, and for that to work the players must encounter interesting events that have nothing to do with them. A game setting needs to have multiple layers and players need to learn to treat their world with caution and not just assume that everything the DM shows them is relevant to whatever mission they are on. In real life we get distracted and sidetracked by incidental happenings, so why should unreal life be any different?

Some of these might be best used as dream sequences to serve as red herrings but most of them are just likely to get the characters and players interested in something other than "the quest" and perhaps encourage people to indulge in a bit of role playing rather than roll playing. Many of these would best be used when only one player makes a "spot" or "notice" roll.

- 1) You are in the coffee shop where you and your team usually meet. Glancing around at the other patrons you

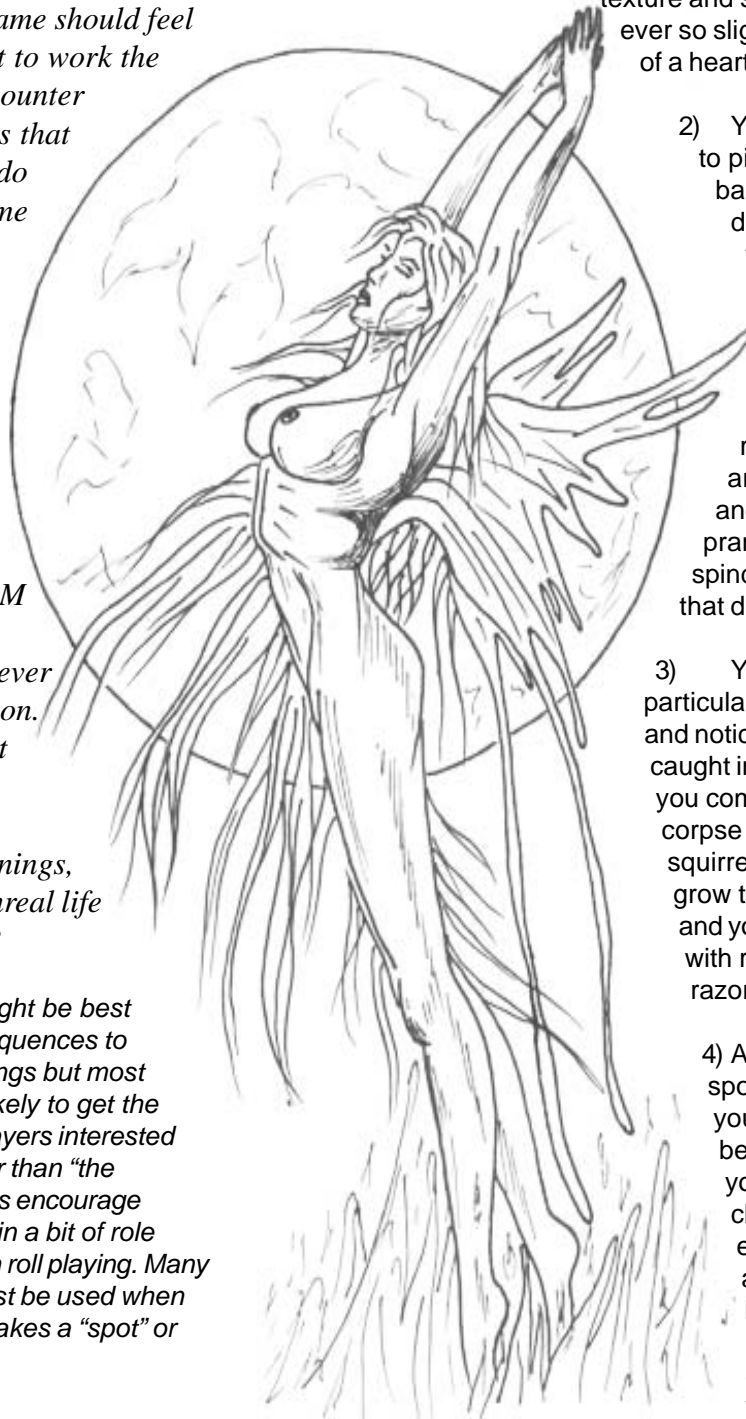
notice a man by the window who has his briefcase on his lap. If you look closely you'll notice that the briefcase has a fleshy texture and seems to be pulsating ever so slightly, as with the beating of a heart.

- 2) Your headlights struggle to pierce the mists of the back roads that you are driving through. Up ahead the pale tendrils part to reveal a pram, apparently pushed by a severe matronly looking woman. Drawing closed you realise that the woman's arms are primly folded and the occupant of the pram is paddling it with spindly amphibious arms that drag on the tarmac.

- 3) You stop to admire a particularly attractive sports car and notice something large caught in the grill. Bending over you come face to face with the corpse of what you think is a squirrel. But no, squirrels don't grow to be as large as cats and you've never seen one with red eyes or so many razor sharp teeth.

- 4) As you raise another spoon of soup to your lips you notice in it what may be a small eye, but before you can inspect in more closely a tentacle extends from the bowl and snatched it back beneath the surface.

- 5) While on stakeout you notice on old lady on a park bench who appears to be talking earnestly to a Siamese cat. Your



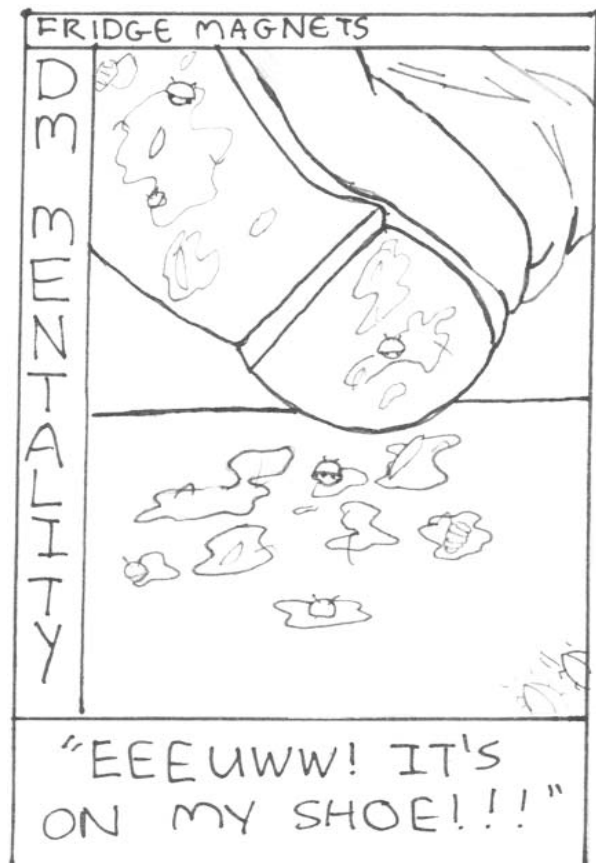
stomach knots when you realise that the cat is talking back.

monstrosity that is carrying it through the night.

- 6) The old man with his goatee and safari suit seems out of place in the mall. You imagine yourself emerging from the jungle to greet him with the words "Dr Livingston, I presume?" But you are shaken from your reverie when he abruptly wheels on you and says..."But you presume wrong!"
- 7) As you walk past the glass front of a barber's shop, a client getting a shave catches your attention. Most of his upper body is obscured by the bib, but his knuckles are white as he grips the armrests, and his heels are kicking against the chair spasmodically.
- 8) Glancing at the TV that is on in the background you notice that the continuity announcer is trembling and there are tiny beads of sweat running down her face – her smile does not falter.
- 9) You shake his hand and his grip is dry and firm. You feel rather unsettled by his touch but at the time you can't quite figure out why. Later you realise that as he pumped your arm his elbow had bent the wrong way.
- 10) While in the public bathroom you hear sounds of a violent struggle from the stall at the end of the row. Rushing to open the door you find only a flushing toilet, a pair of shoes and a few drops of blood on the toilet seat.
- 11) You stop at the mirror in the lobby to adjust your tie. On your way out the door you glance back and see that there is no mirror, just an ornately framed photograph of a figure, hand to their tie.
- 12) You are awakened in the middle of the night by the voice of your lover talking in her sleep. The language sounds familiar but all you can make out are your name and the word murder.

And this one might be a campaign ender....

- 13) The transatlantic crossing has been hell. Staggering back to your cabin you realize that while you can feel the swell the sounds of the ocean are notably absent. Throwing open a port hole you can see the white crests of waves miles below as the ship rocks in the grasp of the tentacled



Warhammer 40K Race Overview

(or How to really understand the race you're playing)

By TaiOne

When you look at people playing Warhammer, you see boys playing with little plastic army men. However, if you look deeper, you can unlock a wealth of role-playing opportunities. There is a rich history behind each race in the Warhammer 40K universe, what follows is a simple primer for those who are entertaining the notion of starting WH40K. Simply choose your race, get into character and hilarity ensues.

Humans

Humans can be broken down into two factions: Chaos and Empire

Humans of the Empire are bigots, zealots and breed like rats, and those are only the good points about them.

They worship a corpse and enjoy, among other wholesome behaviours, inquisitions, planetary bombardment, institutionalised racism and genocide. They're the good guys as well. The empire has three distinct armed forces: The Imperial Guard, the Space Marines, and the sobs.

The soldiers Imperial Guard are the Vietnam vets of the 41st millennium, forget high tech weapons and sturdy armour, these foot soldiers of the empire are given

flashlights and a warm overcoat and then sent out to fight horrors unmentionable. Fortunately for them, they have big tanks to back them up. To play like a real Imperial Guard player, watch *Platoon* and the final battle scene from *Saving Private Ryan* at least ten times, until you start seeing tanks and severed limbs in your dreams.

Space Marines are genetically enhanced super soldiers with big guns and surly dispositions, they excel at lightning fast forays and decisive strikes at enemy positions. Clad in powered armour and self-

importance, they're a bit like the noisy

neighbour on the

block who

beats his

wife. No

one likes

them,

everyone

thinks

something

should be

done

about it,

but they're

all too

afraid to

do

anything.

To be a real

space marine, pump iron, beat up on those smaller than you, and then proclaim you have divine right to do so.

The third faction of the Imperium is the Sisters of Battle, fevered nuns (chicks) with powered armour, a penchant for flamethrowers and a divine mission. No one plays the S.O.B's and there are virtually no female Warhammer players.



The forces of chaos are evil humans who have had a lovers' spat with the empire a while ago and just can't let it go. They sold their soul to evil gods that dwell inside the warp in return for revenge and power. Now they have supernatural powers, daemons for allies and personal hygiene problems. There are four flavours to chaos depending on your particular sexual deviation: Khorne for snuff, Slaanesh for S&M, Nurgle for necrophilia and Tzeench for bestiality. To really understand Chaos Space Marines, get tattoos, lots of tattoos, become a member of an obscure religion (Jehovah's witnesses will do), stop washing, and spread the love.

Orks

Orks are essentially the green skinned bullies that every D&D player loves to cleave with a broadsword transplanted into a science fiction environment. Orks live to fight, and they do so with gusto. Their technology works on belief, if they really want it to work, it will: a bit like C++ programmers. Think apes with a speech impediment and large guns and you've got Orks down. To get into an Orkish persona dye yourself green and bang your head against a wall until it doesn't hurt anymore.

Eldar

The remnants of a powerful galaxy-wide empire the Eldar cling to their remaining traditions while their culture slowly decays. Sounds fun. They live in huge space ship cities and enjoy meddling in the affairs of others. Think Space Elves there's nothing more to it. So what's the first thing that comes to mind, no not Legolas, think limp wristed dendrophiles with depression, that's the Eldar way. Eldar have some naughty relatives in the form of Dark Eldar, everything said above applies to them too, but add a dose of Hannibal Lecter, a fetish for spandex and spikes, and then you'll be ready to raid with the darkies.

Tyrranids

The Tyrranids are the greatest threat to humanity since the boy band. A race of biogenetically engineered killing machines with one purpose, to consume all other life forms to feed their soulless expansion. The tyrranids aren't particularly complex to figure out. Watch *Aliens* a couple of times, buy an ant farm and feed them other animals and you'll soon want to become one of many.

Tau

The Tau are the communists of the WH40k universe, everyone has their place, work for the good of the empire, and try to be friends with everyone else. A bunch of naïve blue skinned aliens with severe penis envy, they really wish everyone could just get along. And if they don't, they have the biggest guns in the galaxy to back them up. Unfortunately they are wimps: a small tap and they bruise like a peach. If you really want to be a part of the Tau collective, read the *Little Red Book*, buy a Magnum .45, preach goodwill and happiness, and then shoot everyone who doesn't agree with you.

Necrons

Necrons are the mechanical shells of a long dead empire, who worshipped beings of such immense power that they fed off the power of suns, or the life energies of sentients, whichever was easier to get hold of. They look like extras from the latest terminator movie and have about as much personality as Arnold Schwarzenegger. As a race, they have lost all sense of humour and the ability to reproduce; but as one of the oldest races in the galaxy they qualify for a number of exciting senior citizen discounts at many fine retailers. If you want to embody a soulless machine, become a waiter. If you want to be a Necron, sell your soul to an uncaring god and replace your body with artificial enhancements, a bit like a fashion model.

Follow these exciting tips and you too could be embroiled in a galaxy-wide conflict involving little plastic men and a severe lack of scruples.

1 MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

OVERVIEW

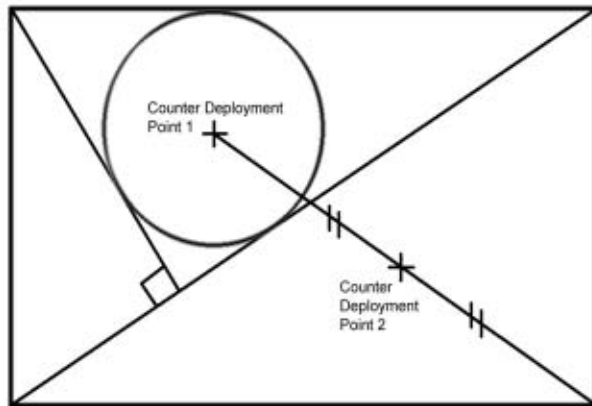
Two armies have stumbled into one another's front lines, while interrogating/ consulting the native population of the planet for directions. The army commanders, being of low rank and unsure about their respective race's alliances and current political situation, are at a loss for what action to take (no exceptions). An artillery misfire sparks a sporadic exchange of fire, harsh language and general confusion.

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES

This mission uses Deep Strike, Uber Rulemonger (White Dwarf #1), Night Fighting, Day Fighting, Obstacles (D8 sets, randomly placed), Preliminary Bombardment, Reserves, Sentries, Tactically Disadvantaged, Sustained Attack, Random Game Length, Infiltrators, Badly Trained And Confused Conscript Relief Forces (Sun Tzu's "The art of war - the big print, with pictures version."), Bad Paint Job and Victory Points scenario special rules.

SET-UP

- Both players total up the number of units in their opponent's army. If that number, less the roll on a D12, is even, then that player is an even player otherwise that they are an odd player, if the number is negative roll again.
 - Both players roll a dice. The winner, if he is even, goes first. The winner, if he is odd, goes second. Left-handed players may re-roll the dice.
 - Deployment zones are decided by placing two sets of counters in the positions indicated in the diagram. Each token then scatters 2d6 inches in a random direction. If a hit is rolled on the scatter dice, the token is lost, forever (edible tokens are advised for this purpose). If one complete set of tokens is lost this way, that player loses automatically, unless they are left-handed.
 - The winner gets to choose his or her (unlikely as this may seem) deployment zone tokens, unless they are an odd player, or left handed or male. Female players get to swap armies with their opponent. Units may be deployed up to 12" away from their tokens, but no closer than the total number of units in the combined armies in centimetres to their opponents (see WD #33761.a).
- 庚 Roll a d6 for all units in each army. Only units that get a roll which matches that player's oddness or evenness may be deployed at the start of the game. The rest are reserves. All units that are deployable must be deployed in alphabetical order, except those that have a leadership of 5 or less. These are deployed on alternate Sundays.
- THERE IS NO RULE 6!
△ After a game of Paper, Scissors, Rock; the winner may choose who goes first.



MISSION OBJECTIVES

Both players must roll a d6 for each unit in their army. On a 1-3 that unit must try to claim the objective (To curry favour with their commander), on a 4+ that unit must attempt to escape the battle, avoiding enemy contact where possible (to curry favour with opponents commander). The player that carries the most favour with his opponent's general, gets traitor points, that may be redeemed at the end of the game for victory points.

The player that obtains the most victory points in accordance with the Warhammer 40K rule-book, less his opponent's traitor points is the winner. Unless that player is left handed, or female (bribe are encouraged) These players win only on a D6 roll of 5+, or the game lasts for one more turn. See oddness rules above.

RESERVES

Rules which apply to reserves apply as reviewed in White Dwarf #426 - Badly Trained And Confused Relief Forces - and the D&D 3rd Ed PHB.

GAME LENGTH

The game lasts a random number of turns or until all the blue IRS form 8452.1c fields have been filled (in triplicate (requires pink form 27a)) or until one player is female (including any operation recovery periods (consult White Dwarf #2)) or until one side is broken, flees the battlefield or gives up in disgust.

LINE OF RETREAT

Troops which are forced to fall back or think they left the oven on at home will retreat towards the nearest board edge closest to a random deployment counter of their opponent's (if playing against an odd player) or towards of their deployment zone, using the normal fall back rules.

1 The Orcs and the Pie

ATTACKER'S OVERVIEW

You are leading a raiding party to liberate a tasty pie from the clutches of a greedy orc warband deep in orc held territory. The aim of this mission is to obtain the pie and escape as quickly as possible. Unfortunately the orcs have become aware of your approach. The attacking force must be 400 points or less and may not include vehicles, models with 2+ armour saves or models with more than 2 wounds.

DEFENDER'S OVERVIEW

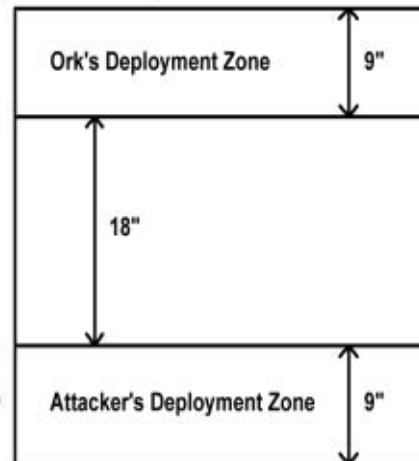
Your band was just settling down to eat a tasty pie (well, you would eat the pie, your underlings would fight over the scraps). Unfortunately you have recently spotted an enemy raiding party entering your territory, heading directly for the location of the pie. The aim of your mission is to defend the pie at all costs. The orc force must be 400 points or less and may not include vehicles, models with 2+ armour saves or models with more than 2 wounds.

SCENARIO SPECIAL RULES

The Orc and the Pie mission uses the Infiltrators, Hidden Setup, Reserves, Random Game Length special rules.

SET-UP

- 1 The orc player sets up first, in the orc deployment zone, using Hidden Set-up rules. The orc leader that costs the most points has a token which represents the pie. At least one orc squad must be set up at the start of the game along with the leader with the pie. All units not set up at the start of the game count as being in reserve.
- 2 The attacker then sets up all his forces in their deployment zone.
- 3 Infiltrators get a free move before the start of the game.
- 4 Roll a D6. On a roll of 1-5 the attacker goes first. On a roll of 6 the orcs get the jump on the attacker and may decide to go first.



To be played on a 36" square table

MISSION OBJECTIVES

The side that controls the pie at the end of the game wins. To gain control the pie, the attacker must kill the orc with the pie, then control of the pie swaps to the closest attacking model to the pie. To regain control of the pie - if lost - , the orcs must kill the attacker model who controls the pie, then control of the pie swaps to the closest orc model to the pie.

RESERVES

When orc reserves become available, they enter from the orc's table edge.

GAME LENGTH

The game lasts for a random number of terms.

LINE OF RETREAT

Units which are forced to fall back will do so towards their board edge by the shortest route possible, using the normal Fall Back rules.

The Archbigot of the Necropolis' World Tour

250 Reasons Why I Hate The US!

- ... They have a stupid flag
 - ... Their flag has too many stars
 - ... Their flag has too many stripes
 - ... Their flag has too few stripes
- ... I **am** being difficult!
 - ... They love their flag too much
 - ... If you wear it you look fat
 - ... They are fat anyway
 - ... They are all fat
 - ... Wearing their flag won't help
 - ... They eat too much McDonalds
 - ... McDonalds tastes like shit
 - ... McDonalds is shit
 - ... The Americans eat shit
 - ... Americans are shit
 - ... So is their President
 - ... They have a Bush for a president
 - ... Bill Clinton was between the Bushes
 - ... He was also between the bushes
 - ... Especially Monica's (ha ha ha ha)
 - ... He smokes cigars
 - ... Monica smokes his cigar
 - ... He talks shit
 - ... Bush talks shit
 - ... Bush is dyslexic
 - ... Bush is a moron
 - ... Bush is a redneck
 - ... Bush is a Southerner
 - ... Bush is shit
 - ... He has shit for brains
 - ... He has no brain
 - ... He's from Texas
 - ... Texas is in the South
 - ... All southerners are inbred
 - ... He's inbred
 - ... He had sex with his family
 - ... They all play family games
 - ... They have no teeth
 - ... Their names start with Billy-Bob, Mary-Sue or Darryl
 - ... They wear flannel and boots and Stetsons
 - ... They say "y'all"
 - ... They are all illiterate
 - ... They smell funny
 - ... It's 'cos they fuck animals
 - ... Like goats
 - ... And raccoons

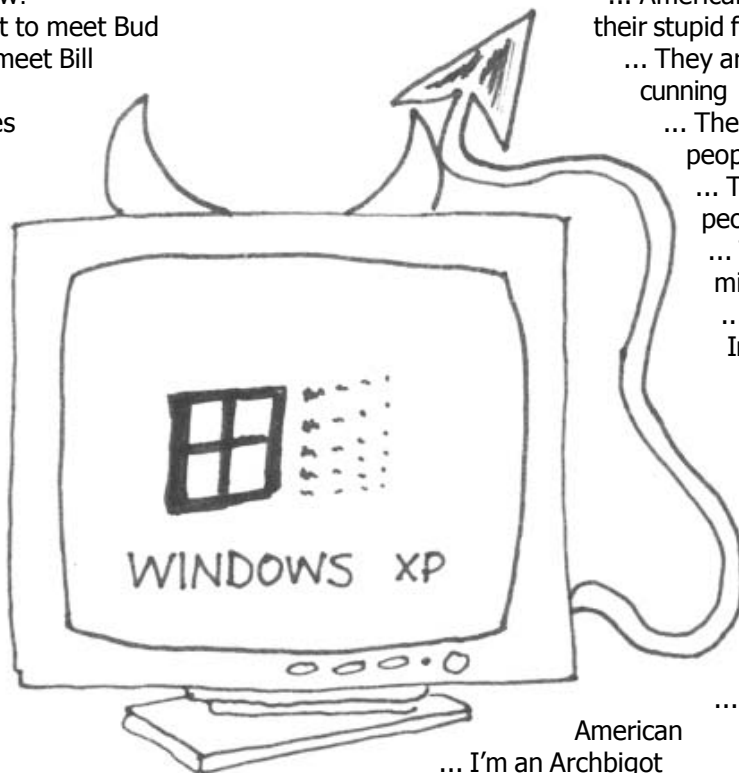
- ... And dogs
 - ... They eat them 'cos they're rednecks
- ... Rednecks eat anything
 - ... Goats eat anything
 - ... Goats eat McDonalds
 - ... Goats eat Southerners
 - ... Goats blow Southerners
 - ... Southerners eat goats
 - ... Southerners blow goats
 - ... Goats blow rednecks
 - ... Rednecks blow goats
 - ... Rednecks blow Southerners



- ... And cattle – no wait, they ride cattle.
 - ... They have to ride cattle for 8 seconds
 - ... It's a national sport
 - ... They get prizes for riding cattle
 - ... Cattle are stupid
 - ... Like Americans
 - ... They have... had the World Trade Centre
 - ... Their buildings don't last
 - ... They blow up their own buildings
 - ... They blow up other countries
 - ... They blow up Iraq
 - ... They blow Iraq
 - ... They blew up Afghanistan
 - ... It's now Lake Afghanistan
 - ... They blow up Osama
 - ... They blow up Saddam
 - ... They blow Saddam
 - ... Saddam doesn't like

- Americans
 - ... Saddam is a dictator
 - ... They blow up dictators
 - ... They hate dictators
 - ... They blow dictators
 - ... They are dictators
 - ... Ergo, they blow themselves
 - ... They hate Arabs
 - ... They ate Arabs
 - ... Arabs taste bad
 - ... McDonalds tastes like shit
 - ... McDonalds is therefore ground-up Arabs

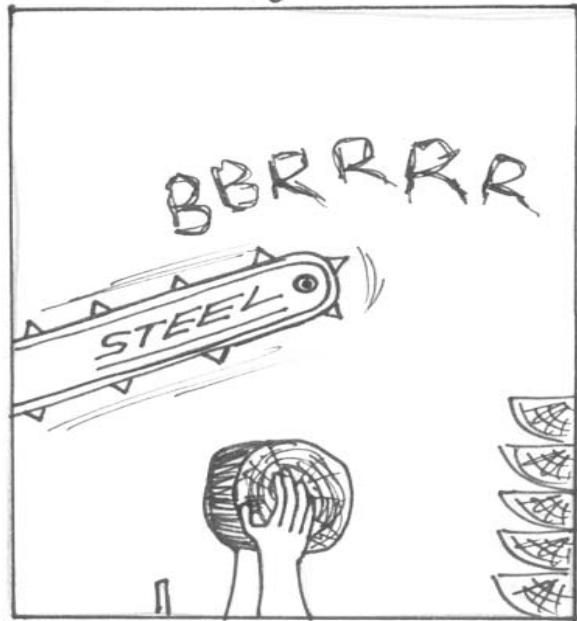
... They have McDonalds all over the world
 ... Americans are trying to take over the world
 ... Using ground-up Arabs
 ... They want Iraq for the Arabs
 ... There were Arabs in America
 ... There were Indians in America
 ... There aren't anymore
 ... The Americans ate them
 ... With McDonalds
 ... And beer
 ... Their beer sucks
 .. Their beer tastes like piss
 ... Their beer is piss
 ... Their beers have stupid names
 .. They have stupid names
 ... Like Bud
 ... When they drink Bud, they get pissed
 ... Ewwww!
 ... I don't want to meet Bud
 ... I don't want to meet Bill
 Gates
 ... I hate Bill Gates
 ... Bill Gates is rich
 ... Bill Gates made
 Microsoft
 ... Microsoft is the
 devil
 ... Bill Gates is
 the devil
 ... Bill Gates
 makes money
 `cos he is the
 devil
 ... Bill Gates'
 products suck
 ... Bill Gates sucks
 ... Bill Gates
 sucks goats
 ... Goats suck
 Bill Gates
 ... Goats suck
 Microsoft
 ... Goats program at Microsoft
 ... Goats program Bill Gates
 ... Goats = Gates
 ... Gates = Goats
 ... Gates = Satan
 ... Goats = Satan
 ... I hate math
 ... Americans can't do math
 ... Americans can't spell
 ... Americans can't spell America
 ... Americans can't spell "colour"
 ... Southerners hate colour
 ... Americans hate colour
 ... Americans can't speak English
 ... Americans speak American English
 ... Americans think they have a history
 ... Americans have no history
 ... Americans can't spell history



... They think they have a history
 ... They have no history
 ... They have no brains
 ... They have no thin people
 ... They only have fat people
 ... They eat too much McDonalds
 ... They eat too much shit
 ... They are shit-eaters
 ... This amuses me
 ... Americans amuse me
 ... Americans children are fat
 ... American children go to school
 ... American children go to college
 ... American children shoot each other
 ... Americans lie.
 ... Americans steal.
 ... Americans steal land
 ... Americans steal land with
 their stupid flag
 ... They are not dashed
 cunning
 ... They steal it from
 people with freckles
 ... They steal it from
 people with no freckles
 ... They steal it from
 minorities
 ... They steal it from
 Indians
 ... Indians are
 minorities
 ... Americans
 fucked minorities
 ... They still do
 ... They are
 bigots
 ... I'm a bigot
 ... They...
 ... I'm a bigot
 ... Oh shit... I'm
 American
 ... I'm an Archbigot
 ... They're not
 ... I'm not an American
 ... Hah! Thought you had me!
 ... They are trying to steal my job
 ... They are trying to be me!
 ... They are trying to be cool!
 ... Eat me!
 ... They are trying to eat me...
 ... This is not a good thing
 ... Damn.
 ... Bastards!
 ... They are bastards
 ... They are ugly bastards
 ... They are just ugly
 ... They need plastic surgery
 ... They have plastic surgery
 ... They like plastic surgery
 ... Their models like plastic surgery

- ... Their models are made of silicon
- ... Their models have silicon valleys
- ... Like Microsoft
- ... They have botox and chemical peels.
- ... To get rid of freckles.
- ... Americans hate freckles.
- ... I hate freckles.
- ... I hate Americans.
- ... Botox is poison.
- ... They inject themselves with poison.
- ... Good.
- ... It's a chemical weapon.
- ... They use chemical weapons on themselves
- ... Told you they were stupid
- ... They have nukes.
- ... They don't want others to have nukes
- ... They want to use them.
- ... But nobody else can.
- ... They are bigots.
- ... Not again...
- ... They have trailer parks
- ... They have trash in their trailer parks
- ... They have trash in their trailer trash
- ... They have trailer park trash
- ... They exploit trailer park trash
- ... On Jerry Springer
- ... Wait, this is a good thing
- ... I can laugh at them
- ... I can laugh at Americans
- ... I can laugh at their police
- ... Their police are fat
- ... Their police eat donuts
- ... Their police beat donuts
- ... Their police beat people
- ... Like Rodney King
- ... They have no kings
- ... They have no queens
- ... Wait, they do...
- ... In San Francisco
- ... And Queens
- ... Queens is in New York
- ... They have New England
- ... They want to be English secretly
- ... They have no English flag
- ... They have their own stupid flag
- ... They have their own stupidity
- ... They are naturally stupid
- ... They aren't natural
- ... They think they are
- ... See, they are stupid...
- ... They think they're smart
- ... Because they have rocket scientists
- ... Chicks dig rocket scientists
- ... Why don't chicks dig me?
- ... Because they're stupid
- ... They dig rocket scientists
- ... They are leaving all the smart ones for me
- ... There are no smart ones in America
- ... Damn.
- ... Damn them to hell

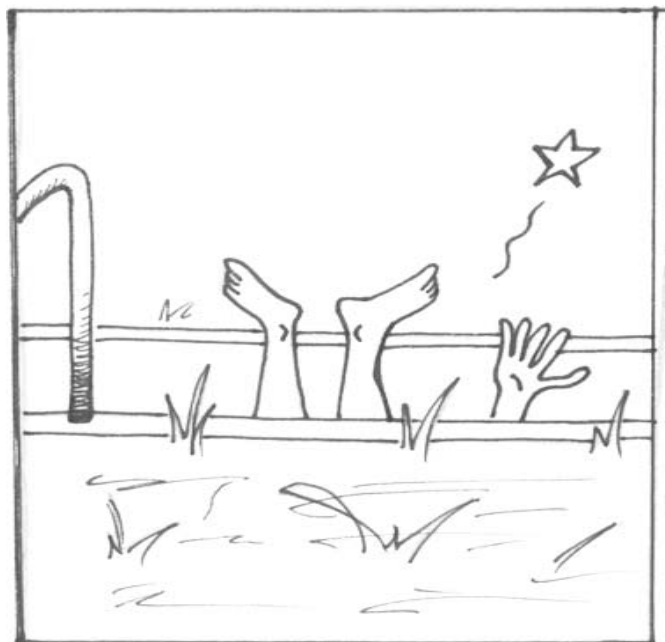
the Rednex



NOW YOU JUST HOLD THAT
LOG REAL STILL-LIKE WHILE
I SAW IT, OK, JIMMY-
RAY ?

- ... They're in hell
- ... They made it hell
- ... Ha ha ha ha
- ... Maybe I should visit Australia...

the Rednex



WAIT, BILLY-RAY, IT'S MY
TURN TO DIVE! I'M A-
COMIN' !

Fridge Quotes :

The Fridge is Back!

"Philip likes to bang things for fun." - Simon
 "Doesn't everyone?" - Philip

"I show Pisu my true form somewhere private." - Lara

"Does anyone else want me to do anything with their parts?" - Jessica

Austin: "This is D&D. Everything can breed with everything."
 Lara: "Fuck!"

Simon: "Jim's balls are nice and warm."

Alastair: "Those are my balls."

Lara: "Fuck!"

Jessica: "Well, yes."

Lara: "You're petty!"

Austin: "No, I'm not!"

Lara: "Yes, you are!"

Austin: "Am not!"

Lara: "Are!"

Austin: "Not!"



Duncan (regarding a suggestion to have girls lifting their tops on the sidelines during frisbee): "Then I might start coming."

Simon to Adrianna: "it's obviously your fault, for not sucking hard enough."

Mike: Speed Porn! Speed Porn! (You had to be there)

Lucas to Shelagh: Your body is my canvas.

Jim: How can a god of luck be male?

Dave: Being male doesn't stop a god from being a fickle bitch.

Austin: "'Everything's going wrong,' he shouts."

Lara: "In Common?"

Austin: "No."

Jessica: "In Abysmal."

Lara: "Command..."

Austin: "Shit!"

Adrianna: "That would be a very unfortunate command."

Jessica: "What is a collection of consonants called?"

Eckhard: "Polish."

"WE BELIEVE THAT, WHEN HE FOUND THAT THE CUPBOARD WAS BARE, THE PERP BEAT OLD MRS HUBBARD TO DEATH WITH AN UNIDENTIFIED BLUNT OBJECT"

Michelle: I was not sexually frustrated as a child!

Amy: I want to do Adeeb in bubbles.

Adrianna to Jessica: "Do you have a long poky thing? Because then I can extract your balls."

Amy: Go get yourself a pope and cockporn.

Lara: "You're a cleric of Jergal! You don't need charisma!"

Simon: "Yes, I do! Undead don't respect you unless you're hot!"

Michelle: I was so drunk that a leg over was enough to keep me down.

Mike: I don't want to hear about anyone getting a leg over.

"You're not allowed teeth! You're only allowed to suck!" - Simon

Amy: I'm going to go and play with Mike.

Mike: Excuse me?

Conrad: I'd like to reiterate that. Excuse me?!

"Aaah, religious people just lay themselves wide open for that sort of thing." - Jessica

Simon: "Russian! Specialised to courtship!"

Wayne: "Nyet! Do not put that there!"

Conrad: It was a good toss.

Sean: Amy's finger is always in Brendan's ring.

Sean: It depends on which point of view you're coming.

Green Eggs and Ham

(with apologies to Dr Seuss)

I am Sam
I am Sam
Sam I am

That Sam-I-am!
That Sam-I-am!
I do not like
that Sam-I-am!

What do you like?
Do you like green eggs and ham?
Or would you rather have Tam or Pam?

I do not like them,
Sam-I-am.
I do not like
Pam or Tam.

Would you like them
here or there?

I would not like them
here or there.
I would not like them
anywhere.
I do not like
Pam or Tam.
I do not like them,
Sam-I-am.

Would you like them
in a house?
Would you like them
with a mouse?

I do not like them
in a house.
I do not like them
with a mouse.
I do not like them
here or there.
I do not like them
anywhere.
I do not like Pam or Tam.
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.

Would you eat them
in a box?
Would you eat them
with a fox?

Not in a box.
Not with a fox.

Not in a house.
Not with a mouse.
I would not eat them here or there.
I would not eat them anywhere.
I would not eat Pam or Tam.
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.

Would you? Could you?
In a car?
Eat them! Eat them!
Here they are.

I would not,
could not,
in a car.

You may like them.
You will see.
You may like them
in a tree!

I would not, could not in a tree.
Not in a car! You let me be!

I do not like them in a box.
I do not like them with a fox.
I do not like them in a house.
I do not like them with a mouse.
I do not like them here or there.
I do not like them anywhere.
I do not like Pam or Tam.
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.

A train! A train!
A train! A train!
Could you, would you,
on a train?

Not on a train! Not in a tree!
Not in a car! Sam! Let me be!

I would not, could not, in a box.
I could not, would not, with a fox.
I will not eat them with a mouse.
I will not eat them in a house.
I will not eat them here or there.
I will not eat them anywhere.
I do not eat Pam or Tam.
I do not like them, Sam-I-am.

Say!
In the dark?
Here in the dark!
Would you, could you, in the dark?



I would not, could not,
in the dark.

Would you, could you,
in the rain?

I would not, could not, in the rain.
Not in the dark. Not on a train.
Not in a car. Not in a tree.
I do not like them, Sam, you see.
Not in a house. Not in a box.
Not with a mouse. Not with a fox.
I will not eat them here or there.
I do not like them anywhere!

You do not like
Pam or Tam?

I do not
like them,
Sam-I-am.

Could you, would you
with a goat?

I would not,
could not,
with a goat!

Would you, could you,
on a boat?

I could not, would not, on a boat.
I will not, will not, with a goat.
I will not eat them in the rain.
I will not eat them on a train.
Not in the dark! Not in a tree!
Not in a car! You let me be!
I do not like them in a box.
I do not like them with a fox.
I will not eat them in a house.
I do not like them with a mouse.
I do not like them here or there.
I do not like them ANYWHERE

I do not like
Pam or Tam!

I do not like them,
Sam-I-am.

You do not like them.
So you say.
Try them! Try them!
And you may.
Try them and you may, I say.

Sam!
If you will let me be,
I will try them.

You will see.

Say!
I like Pam
I like Tam!
I do! I like them, Sam-I-am!
And I would eat them in a boat.
And I would eat them with a goat...

And I will eat them in the rain.
And in the dark. And on a train.
And in a car. And in a tree.
They are so good, so good, you see!

So I will eat them in a box.
And I will eat them with a fox.
And I will eat them in a house.
And I will eat them with a mouse.
And I will eat them here and there.
Say! I will eat them ANYWHERE!

I do so like
Tam and Pam!
Thank you!
Thank you,
Sam-I-am!



Claws Deathmatch III War of the Fanboys!

By Adeeb Balla

Guildernstern: Good evening ladies and gentlemen, and welcome back to the one and only CLAWS Deathmatch! Tonight for your amusement we proudly present what promises to be one of the most exciting battles in the history of Deathmatch, namely: War of the Fanboys!

Rosenkrantz: That's right Gill, not only do we continue in the proud tradition set by "The Last Dave Standing" but we also offer the chance to witness a living legend in action as Adeeb, Fanboy guru and ass kicker supreme steps into the ring to defend his title as Greatest Fanboy of them all!

G: Living Legend my Ass! So he can bust heads, he's not half as hard as some of the older CLAW guys, he don't even have a black belt or nothing. You sound like you want to bear his children.

R: May I remind you that Adeeb is CLAWS' living grandmaster in the art of Fanboy-Fu. And even the older CLAW guys respected Adeeb's ability to kick ass. Besides I thought you were pumped up about this event?

G: Sure, the whole thing is cool, what with the prospect of six fanboys duking out for the title, but I don't think Adeeb has got what it takes to be number 1. Personally, I'm more interested in watching the other guys. Between Nick Hanslo, Brendan Q., Paul Jacobson, and the young guns Matt Beets and Ian Kitley, I think Adeeb is gonna have his work cut out for him. Besides, He's just a biig Caramello Bear.

R: Don't let him hear you say that, man. Anyway here come the contestants from the dressing room, being led to our brand new beefed up arena. The renovations were necessitated by the nature of tonight's battle, as the sheer power and superhuman ability derived from the practice of Fanboy-Fu required the extra space and protective barriers for the audience.

G: Listen to them roar their support for our contestants, they're anticipating quite a match up. How does that Fu power thing work anyway?

R: Fanboy-fu is fuelled by the frustration caused by celibacy, a natural by-product of following the way of the fanboy. This allows the Fanboy to develop tremendous Psychic force, channeled according to his particular series of obsessions.

G: What, no nookie?

R: None whatsoever for a true fanboy, what with buying comics and collecting info o there simply is no time for a real life. Anyway, lets run the stats and prepare for War of the Fanboys.

G (Sotto Voice): No nookie at all! That's inhuman!

Ian Kitley

Height: 6' 1"

Weight: 110 kg

Reach: 76,5 cm

Style: Fanboy-fu, Bare knuckles, bar room brawling

Quote: "What if I Hurl?"

Nick Hanslo

Height: short on height, long on mean.

Weight: low on weight, heavy on attitude

Reach: you can run, but you can't hide.

Style: Fanboy -Fu

Quote: "Are YOU interrupting ME punk??!! Do YOU feel THAT lucky??!! HUH??!!"

Brendan Quinlivan

Height: 1.92m

Weight: 80kg

Reach: 68cm

Fighting Style: Fanboy-Fu, Karate / Aikido

Quote: "I'll kill you in a variety of means: law lectures, Philosophy brain meltdown, economics boredom, my music taste of aural destruction, pointing you in the direction of Duncan's hentai links, breaking your arms with my I33t aikido sk33lz, or just getting Chuck Dixon on your ass! So, which would you like?"

Paul Jacobson

Height: 1.7m

Weight: 75 kg

Reach: 70 cm

Fighting style: Fanboy-Fu, aikido, yoga, annoying one-liners

Quote: "Beneath this sexy Jewish exterior beats the heart of a true engineer. No really, I mean that."

Matt Beets

Height: 6ft
Weight: Undisclosed, but believed to be several planetary masses.
Reach: 76cm (from fingertip to shoulder... think it's right...)
Fighting Style: Fanboy-fu, Matrix-Fu
Quote: "Sweet Zombie Jesus!!!"

R: And Last but certainly not least,
G: Oh brother

Adeeb Balla (and the crowd goes wild)

Height: 1.8m
Weight: 100 kg
Reach: 75 cm
Fighting Style: Fanboy-Fu, Zen and the art of asskicking.
Quote: "I AM NOT A FUCKING CARMELLO BEEAAAARR!!!!!!!!!!!! ADEEB SMASH!"

G: Guess we heard that loud and clear.

R: no kidding anyway, looking at our stats, the contestants pretty evenly matched physically, except for Nick, who's the smallest. However size doesn't count in Fanboy-Fu

G:(interrupting) why am I not surprised

R: Ahem, as I was saying, in Fanboy-fu, size matters not, and Nick, the physically weakest, has studied the way even longer than Adeeb.

G: Long time no nookie huh?

Nick: You got a problem with that, BITCH?

G Um, guess not

R: Anyway, once everyone has powered up we'll be able to gauge their power levels with our S.F. scanner.

G: S.F. Scanner?

R: Sexual Frustration scanner.

G: Oh. Now we go to ring side as we listen to our regular referee Ryan Kruger, give the pre-fight schpiel;

Ryan Kruger: All right bitches, when this is over I only wanna see one survivor. May the best Adeeb sorry, best man win.

Matt: Hey, you're biased! That's not fair.

Ryan: What can I say; you losers are up against Adeeb you're fucked.

(Exits ring)

(Suddenly the contestants light up like bonfires as they power up their Fu.)

R: Wow!! As we expected, Adeeb's SF rating is off the scale. A quick look at our other contestants reveal that of them all only Nick and Brendan even come close to approaching his power level, is it gonna be enough though?

Adeeb (melodramatically): My students, it is time to walk the rice paper, prepare to be tested as you have never been tested before.

G: What's this!!!! Ian can't seem to power up. What the blue blazes is going on?

Ian: (VRnnnn VRnnnn VRnnnn) Oh Bugger!

(In the crowd, Ian's Michelle comes to a realization): Oh Dear, I warned him we shouldn't before a match, I told him we shouldn't.

R: Great Scott, it seems that Ian's having a girlfriend has broken a cardinal rule of the way of the Fanboy, leaving him powerless! What ever can he do now?

Ian: Time for plan B. (rummages in cunningly concealed utility belt, produces cardboard box) Oh Adeeb...

G: Holy Cow, is that what I think it is?

R: Yes it is Adeeb's secret weakness, a box of chocolate donuts!! The Horror!!!!

(Ian tosses box at Adeeb, backs away slowly)

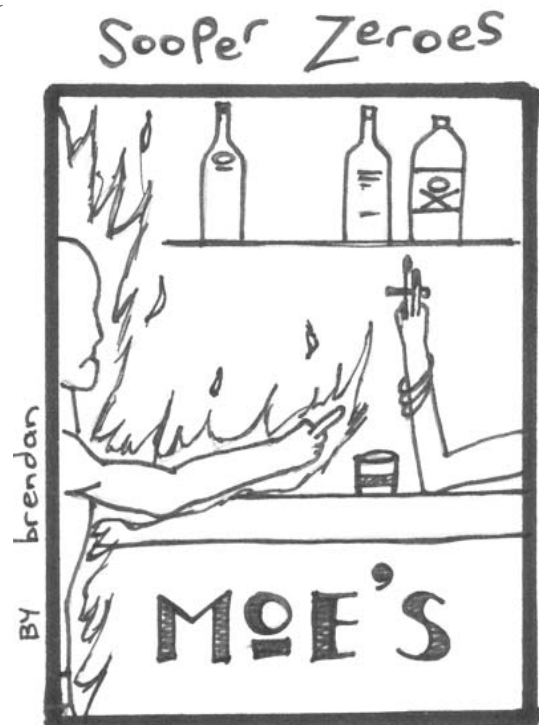
Adeeb: NOOOOO!!! I cannot resist the chocolaty goodness!! I am wea(MUNCH MUNCH MUNCH !!!) (Sentence lost in orgy of eating)



Ryan: But, but I got money on that bitch!!
 (While Ryan contemplates financial ruin, Michelle sneaks to the ring handing Ian a steel chair)
 R: By Odin's beard is there no end to Ian's perfidy!! He's now attempting to brain Adeeb with that chair. That BASTARD!
 G: Man those engineers are mean, but wait. Now that Ian seems to have neutralised Adeeb, the other Fanboys have started up on one another. Brendan has taken Nick in an aerial firefight;
 Nick (Shooting off a Fireball): Alan Moore!
 Brendan (Dodging and then doing a Dragon Punch): Frank Miller!
 Nick (flying spin kick): Alan Moore!!
 Brendan (flying helicopter kick): Frank Miller!!
 Nick (etc): Alan Mooore!!!
 Brendan (etc): Frank Milleerr!!!
 Meanwhile, at the other end of the ring
 Matt (Sees Paul distracted by the Nick vs. Brendan duel): Hmm, what would John Constantine do? Right, attack from behind. (Jump kick) By the Power of Hell blazer!
 (Runs right into a Dhalsim stretch kick)
 Paul: Fool, you thought I was easy meat, but I do yoga, erm, and Aikido too. Now I'm gonna get Steven Seagal on your ass.
 Matt: That's what you think. Send in the clones!!!
 R: By George!! Matt's started dividing into copies. He's going all Agent Smith.
 G: But, Paul's holding his own against the clone army. Geez, haven't I seen this movie before?
 R: Yeah, but no Monica Belluci bit here, sigh

(Meanwhile at the other other end of the ring)
 Adeeb: Mmm, donuts good. (Finishes the last one even as Ian repeatedly hits him on the head, with no discernible effect.)
 Adeeb (catches the chair): Hey Ian, got milk?
 Ian (panting, checks his utility belt): Um, no sorry.
 Adeeb (stands up): YOU.GOT. CHOCOLATE DONUTS. BUT. NO. MILK!!!! RAARRGH!!! (Hulks out) ADEEB SMASH NOT-SO-PUNY IAN!!
 R: Sweet Jesus in a Smoking Birch Bark Canoe!! Adeeb just shoved that chair where the sun don't shine!!
 G: You mean that amusingly named village in Terry Pratchett's Discworld?
 R: Umm, no, the other place where the sun don't shine.
 G: Oh. Oooh, that's gonna sting.
 R: Having taken care of Ian, Adeeb has smashed into the Paul-Matt battle flattening all of them in microseconds.
 Adeeb: Reloaded NOT AS GOOD AS ORIGINAL ANYWAY!!
 ADEEB HATE BAD SEQUELS!!! (THOUGH MONICA BELLUCI MOST BABE-ALICIOUS)
 G: Great Rao, now he's turned his attention to Nick and Brendan.
 Adeeb (delivers multiple mega shockwave): FOOLS!! NEIL GAIMAN GREATEST WRITER, SO THERE!!
 (As Nick and Brendan hit the canvas, Adeeb assumes a more normal aspect, turns to face his crumpled students.)

Adeeb: You have been tested and found wanting, none of you are worthy, prepare to die!
 Nick, Brendan, Ian, Paul, and Matt: NOOO!!!!
 Ian: Guys, it's time for plan C.
 The 5 of them together: CTHULHU AG-AGAY AG-GAINAY U-AY SEDAY !
 (Palpable Darkness gathers in the arena, gleaming with an unspeakable horror!!)
 R: OH SHIT! Don't tell me these guys sold their souls to Cthulhu too
 G: Fuck me; can't anyone come up with an original idea?
 (Great Cthulhu appears at the side of the defeated Fanboys, accompanied by Austin, High Priest of Cthulhu, and Norman, scullery boy of Cthulhu)
 G: Geez, like we haven't seen this one a million times before, huh Rosy?



OK, THE "NEED A LIGHT?" TRICK IS *REALLY* OLD NOW ...

R: Wugga, Wugga Wuggs
G: Failed your SAN Roll again Huh? Here take your medication.
Austin: As we have agreed, for the price of your souls we shall defeat Adeeb.
Cthulhu (sounding like James Earl Jones underwater): Prepare to be consumed mortal.
Adeeb: Oh no you don't, I was expecting something like this, therefore, by the power invested in me by Stan "the Man" Lee and Jack "King" Kirby I humbly summon a true cosmic power in the universe, I Summon GALACTUS!!
(Behind Adeeb, a sound like King Kong farting played backwards, as a Boom tube opens, and Galactus, all 50 feet of Him steps thru.)
G: Qui a coupe du fromage?
GALACTUS (sounding like Orson Welles, with bass turned up as high as it'll go): In the name Cosmic Stability, in the name of they who created me, I hereby unleash my most dreadful power; Ultimate Nullification. Farewell Cthulhu, I never liked seafood anyway.
Austin and Norman: NOOO!!! His Fictional Deity is more powerful than our Fictional Deity!! CURSES!!!
Cthulhu: Bugger.
(A flash of light and sound like an atomic explosion, backwards as Cthulhu and friends dissolve into nothing.)

Adeeb (Gloating): Who will save you now my students? Huh?
Nick: Plan D?
Ian: We don't have a plan D you schmuck.
G: It seems the Fanboys are doomed. No one can save them now from Adeeb.
R (sounding much better now that Cthulhu's gone): Look, up in the sky!
G: Is it a bird (I can't believe I just said that)?
Adeeb: Is it a plane? (Man, I've always wanted to say that)
R: No it's Michelle Wiehahn, CLAW rocket queen and, oh my gosh, it's number 1 fanGIRL!!!
Adeeb (Sotto Voce): Oh bugger.
Michelle Wiehahn (landing in the ring in front of Adeeb): Well looks like someone forgot to invite me.
Adeeb: Umm, well I meant to but well you see it's just that
Michelle (smugly): It's just that I'm a girl and therefore have access to your other weakness, COOTIES!
Galactus: COOTIES!!! Erm, well Adeeb, this has been a lot of fun but I have to get going, worlds to blow up and stuff.
Adeeb: Lord Galactus, you cannot leave me to face her alone!
Galactus (opening up a new BOOM TUBE): Adeeb, even I, Galactus, Devourer of Worlds, Godslayer, Starkiller, even I am powerless before the wrath of Cooties. Be cool Dawg. (Turns and leaves)
(Michelle powers up)
G: Not to interrupt, but how does she have Fu?
R: Well, her boyfriend, the always-scrumptious Markus Van Heerden has been in England the last 6 months
Michelle: 5 months, 29 days, 6 hours and 13 minutes to be precise.
G: No nookie for you either huh?
Michelle: Not even a little bit. Now, to business, Adeeb. In the name of the Phoenix Force, and Chris Claremont, I declare this battle over. Do you yield?
Adeeb: NEVER!!
Michelle: Very well, take this!!
R: Oh My GOD!! Michelle just unleashed the Kiss Of Death on Adeeb!
Adeeb: I'm Melting, I'm meltinbrbl brbl sclp.
G: Fatality!! Flawless Victory!! Michelle Wins!
(AND THE CROWD GOES WILD!)
Michelle (Walking over to the puddle that used to be Adeeb): Tastes like caramel.
The 5 Fanboys; we're not worthy (Bowing and Scraping)
Michelle: No, you're not, but I need some new flunkies till Markus returns, so you'll do.
The 5: Schwing! Excellent!
(Exit stage left)
Ryan (staring at Adeeb's remains): But I had money on that bitch.
G: Sing it with me now:
(Crowd joins in)
THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES IS
DEADLIER THAN THE MALE!
And with that we bid you good bye, I'm Guildenstern;
R (A little put out): And I'm Rosenkrantz, and this is CLAW's DeathMatch Saying Good Fight
G: Good night.

Classifieds

RIPS

Agent Martinez, popped by a lethal pistol shot from...Ricky?! Definitely the most...unexpected cold-blooded execution of all time.

Simon Thistle, psychic psycho, ruthlessly gunned down by...Ricky?! AGAIN!

An extremely unlucky bystander, mowed down by...guess who? The man was on a roll of death, okay? And the victim was a vampire, so that's okay.

Two Mafia henchmen who discovered that the odds on both their Uzis simultaneously jamming were...pretty high. At least while they were aimed at Neil Jericho.

Legios, a Marauder who took Multiple Personality Disorder to its logical extreme. A misplaced sneeze spelled doom for this magical maniac.

The entire Chantry of Doists. But it wasn't their fault, Really. It wasn't, I promise.

TJ and his anonymous partner, the world's unluckiest muggers. Never try to rob a bunch of "construction workers" digging in Central Park at midnight. Seen off by the Brothers Bernelli.

Duke Richards and his gang of gunmen fell afoul of the world's most lethal lawyer, Dale & Hodgkins. They'll take care of your legal problems, one way or another.

Orenson McKensie, aka Morrison Gaunt, aka the Dark Brother, torn apart by his own nightmares. Five hundred years of planning and bargain, ending in a bloody instant. And he got so close too.

The Veil Riders, Stratosphere-favoured warriors betrayed and murdered five hundred years ago.

Mooks. Lots and lots of God-damn mooks. They're part of the system. And they could turn into Agents, damnit!

Agent White. 1 1/2 times. Damn that reloading thing.

(Soon to be) Prophet. By his own teammates. Or possibly Agent White. Or possibly he'll be unplugged. Let's put it this way, the man's going down.

(Almost) Carter. At least

once a session. Some people (Madison) can go head-to-head with Agents. Others just... can't.

Derek Templar, Occult Investigator: Missing and presumed dead.

Many evil mutant Uthgart tribesmen. We got their spear.

A drider, a purple worm, several unfortunate cursed animals, some lamias, salamanders and elementals, a few lizard folk, a slaad, a golem, many undead, a bunch of kamikaze chickens, a mimic, a yochlol and a hydra - all really just in the wrong places at the wrong times.

A demonic golem, pounded flat with a wall of iron by a dragon. Evil sister-napping balor demon.

Something that left big frog-like footprints. We never actually saw it, thanks to a timeous application of mud-to-rock.

A hobgoblin, a bugbear and many flaming babies, en route to a brown dragon.

A brown dragon. A red dragon, with a little help from our friends. Wiggly white worms, many undead and two vampires.

A visiting monk, whacked by a serial killer and buried in the forest in a shallow grave. We're somewhat embarrassed to admit that we only noticed three years later.

Some mercenaries, in what later transpired to be an unfortunate misunderstanding.

Unlucky underwater and seafaring nasties, including undead, koalinth, goblins, lycanthropic merfolk, a morkoth, some mudmen and a group of crystal oozes.

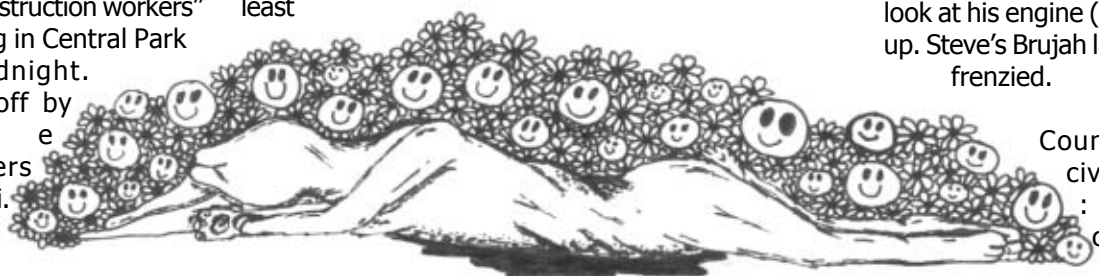
A warband of Sahuagin outside the village of Misery. Also most of the male population of Misery.

Lots and lots of zombies. Even zombie coyotes. Too many zombies...

One guy on the street - "Stutters" really wanted his car (with no drive skill).

One irate driver got to look at his engine (close-up. Steve's Brujah lawyer frenzied.

Countless civilians : multi-c a r



pile-up. Sabbat and Dominate don't mix.

All six players, in the first session. They had to become vampires, dammit! What? No trend here! Honest!

Uriel : Where's Mister Big-bad-can-of-whup-ass now, huh?

LARP: Tai, by Mike. Twice! There's always next time. And the next, and the next, ...

Births

The Veil Riders, reborn in the bodies of five amnesiacs New Yorkers. So *that's* what it was all about!

Notices

Foiled: Plot by shadow wizards to take over the High Forest. They went and took over the Great Desert, which we don't like as much, instead.

Confiscated: Evil giant magical throne of doom. By celestials.

Notice: Tir Redrikov - We got your faerie iron, your jewellery and your sausages too!

Notice: Beware of the scary invisible mage.

Notice: Covenant folk are advised that they accept food or drink from Clara at their own risk.

For sale: A large amount of mentem vis, going cheap. There is nothing wrong with it whatsoever.



AND LITTLE TIMMY REALISED THAT CALLING THE OWNER OF BILLY-BOB'S SHOOTING RANGE A RED-NECKED HILLBILLY WAS NOT A GOOD IDEA.

Majesty
Amon

Wanted: Highly educated Jew with healing touch and evil eye, for private tutoring of small children.

Wanted, Dead or Alive: The Fearsome Band of Miscreants responsible for the Dastardly Abduction of the Fine Hippocampus Lusifon from the Royal Emissary to Tamaridru on the 17th day of Cadar 1640 N.E. A Bounty of 20 000 Green Pearls is offered by His

XVI of Halidru for the Safe Return of the Horse and the Heads of the Perpetrators.

Any Information leading to the Apprehension of the Criminals will be Generously Rewarded.

Notice: The Magical Academy of Cadarintal seeks specimens of the following rare magical beasts of Alabrantar Forest: blue-crested

warbler, squamous tetrapod, bipolar macrophage, great kelpie, forest bunyip. A bounty of 1500 green pearls will be paid for each intact corpse, and 3000 green pearls for each live specimen in good health. Apply at the Faculty of Natural Sciences.

Wanted: Fluffy, pink handcuffs for my girlfriend Susan. Contact Theodore.

Wanted: Gyromancer for rave/orgy. Must have experience with prophecies. Please contact Neo or Morpheus in Zion. Urgent!

Wanted: Live Rabbit!



