SPECIAL
3 ADVENTURE ISSUE!
Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay • Middle-earth • Paranoia • Call of Cthulhu Zombies
The time's they are a'changing... and so is White Dwarf.

And part of this process is experimentation with what goes in Dwarf and the way it is presented. The 16-page adventure format, for example, allows us to put more material in than you might suppose - more than two smaller adventures put together, in fact. There's nearly as much in a WD 16-pager as in an ordinary 'module' you find sitting on a game shop shelves!

The 16-page RuneQuest adventure was a big hit - even with people who don't play RQ. The positive response to the RuneQuest adventure (even from non-RQers) has persuaded us that this size of feature is an idea worth carrying forward; not every issue, of course (well, not just yet), but on a regular basis. These (and the other extras that Dwarf will be including in future) are going to make the next year quite interesting.

And besides all that, the 10th birthday issue is coming up as well! This Dwarf, however, is special because we welcome a refugee and interloper from Warlock: Derek the Troll. I think you'll find this lovable little... erm... thingie from Lew Stringer a more-than-worthy addition. From now on, he'll alternate with Gobbledigook (see page 59 for more details!).

Now, I suppose, we need is somebody to write a 16-page Derek adventure with pull-out extra bits...
rules to a sophisticated fantasy game which has been tried, tested and revised over the years.

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

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

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

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

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

There are a few irritations with this edition: on a couple of occasions mention is made to sections of the rules which are just not in this version. The game works well without these sections, but being told to look for them is annoying and leaves you thinking that it is incomplete. A more thorough proofreading would have picked up these problems and left a much slicker product. RQIII will mean different things to different people. Beginners should perhaps leave it until they are familiar with a more introductory system. Owners of RuneQuest II will find it useful as a cheap means of converting to RQIII rules. Experienced players of other games will find much in RuneQuest to recommend it and at £8.95 it is superb value and well worth getting even if you never intend to actually play it.

Peter Green
For quite a few years now various people at Chaosium have been working on the rumoured British sourcepack for Call of Cthulhu. Nothing ever seemed to come of the idea, though, and the more everyone talked about it the less likely it seemed it would ever materialise. What a surprise, then, to suddenly see an ad for Green & Pleasant Land in last month's issue.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Robert Neville

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

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

cover. Note to TSR: sales of soft porn mags are in sharp decline, so can we have less of this offensiveness please?

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

Structural elements from Ravenloft are used here once again - variable NPC goals, variable locations for key objects and the likeso Gryphon Hill will play differently each time it is used. But the old tricks are given new twists. The old gypsy card-reader from l6 is a mesmerist in lO, for example. And this is no simple re-run. The plotline is very complex, PC/NPC interactions are much more important in lO, and key events are used to keep the action going and direct the adventure.

There are one or two quibbles: some of the allegedly minor encounters are rather over-the-top, reminiscent of the infamous 'wandering monster tables from Ravenloft (2-6 nights!!), and it's a lot of work for the GM. Forget the 'read through this and be familiar with it before you run it... spiel, you'll need to go through this at least three times. But there are some nice play - and time-saving aids (note that lO is a lot better value than l9 with more pages and a much better fold-out section), and the effort is well worth it. Lots of monsters, plenty of roleplaying, lots of offstage action, items and crucial information to be gathered, and stepped off with an excellent ending. What more could you ask? Excellent, highly recommended.

Carl Sargent
WYRDWORLD 1: WINTERSFARNE
Generic FRP Adventure
Strange Acorn Games
£5.50

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

The plot concerns itself with the prosperous island and market town of Wintersfarne. Cattle have been vanishing, and so have the people set to guard them. Is it rustlers or bandits? Has the long-dead wizard returned to haunt his tower? Actually, the rationale behind the events is novel and interesting, and the adventure is based on thought and role-playing rather than mindless mayhem. Wintersfarne

The plot of Wintersfarne is particularly well thought that was what the players to get their teeth into (erm... I say exactly where this area lies, and there are no points of reference to other adventure/campaign modules as has happened before. The three adventures are all static, but linked by the idea of a group of adventurers hired to clear a passage through a wood ready for a road-building team to follow, so that two strategic towns can be linked. For each adventure there are descriptions of NPCs (quite full, with notes on outlook, personality, motivation and so on), well-mapped and specified locations, and finally notes on the task involved and encounters which the GM can introduce. The maps, although well-drawn, are lacking in keys and labelling, making it a bit difficult to work out where different locations are. The first adventure is relatively simple (aimed at beginning level characters) involving the titular trolls, with one or two interesting twists. The second adventure is somewhat more involved with more meat for the players to get their teeth into (erm... I thought that was what the trolls were meant to do...) and some interesting characters. The third adventure is the big 'set piece' finale. The player characters must be strong and lucky enough to survive the descent into Maes Fao in search of long-lost treasure; there are sinister lurkers in the gorge.

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

Graham Staplehurst

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Phil Frances
Bad Dreams

I rolled the dice and looked up the Critical Hits table, under Spine. 'Your review smashes brutally through the book's spine and ploughs on to carve a jagged smoking trail of destruction from pages 17 to 231. The shattered volume lies sundered at your feet, its future sales potential pumping Uselessly forth from the severed arteries... This effort to make my prose more tasteful comes courtesy of Paul Cockburn and a freebie copy of Warhammer, but I don't think I've mastered it yet.

Publishers currently love raw-horror novels thick with severed arteries, steaming entrails, and mutilated parts of the body which your editor won't let me mention: numbingly over-the-top stuff which leaves no room for the spider touch of fear. Ramsey Campbell's The Hungry Moon (Century 293pp £9.95) is very different, full of that dim uncertain moonlight where terrors breed. It has unsavourily realistic roots, beginning with a moodland village taken over by the sort of fundamentalists who frighten me: authoritarian, intolerant, gib Biblical answers for everything, and no time for that soppy New Testament stuff about love and charity. (These are the people who want to burn your D&D kit, folks.)

As a few sympathetic characters struggle in the thickening web of paranoia, the stage is set for a fresh brand of darkness to seep in from the page. In the well, the author carefully laces Ancient Evil, with a taste for evangelists and full awareness of the possibilities of the nearby missile base... Even at his most apocalyptic, Campbell understates the horror and leaves your imagination to work, as in the epigraph: '...to fear the moon, to feed her as dim uncertain moonlight where tenors breed. She has enthroned the lunar vengeance, the whirls of the Locusts, the black phalanx of the Locusts... '

Campbell goes on to milk the Bubonic nightmare to the last. I liked his Dark Gods (Pan 259pp £2.50) — four stories at just the traditional length for flesh-creeping yarns about the accursed blind things which inhabit New York's sewers but actively clearly serves as the basis of a novel which looks like a black man in scuba gear and is closing in on an old literary acquaintance of H. P. Lovecraft's. The atmosphere of urban sleaze works well: as with Ramsey Campbell, the supernatural fear gets a leg-up from existing nervousness about (say) the parts of town where you wouldn't walk after dark. Low Pavement, for example, in terror-haunted Nottingham.

Does anyone remember when Roger Zelazny was a hot new author who could do no wrong? The 1973 collection The Doors of His Face, the Lamps of His Mouth (Methuen 271pp £2.50) brings it all back, with the famous title story and 14 more. Some are jokes or trivia, and a few personal favours are omitted ('The Graveyard Heart', 'For a Breath I Tarry'), but there are enough goodies here to prove this author had more for specialist collectors: a rare SF uptake from existing nervousness about (say) the parts of town where you wouldn't walk after dark. Low Pavement, for example, in terror-haunted Nottingham.

Chris Drum runs the smallest of small presses out in Iowa, producing neat and cheap booklets which are doomed to become sought-after collectors' editions: stories, essays, memoirs, and reviews. The latest is a tiny literary autobiography from Nebula-winner Richard Wilson: Adventures in the Space Trade plus A Richard Wilson Checklist (Drumm 16pp $5.50. Chris Drumm Books, PO Box 445, Polk City, Iowa 50226, USA). That's a post-free price (the John Sladek book Let Among the Xoids is only $1... If you can locate a couple of dollar bills in the first place!)

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

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

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

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

The Old World

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

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

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

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

Chaos

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

Good and Evil

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

The Careers System

It was decided from the start that WFRP would have a career system which avoided the usual Fighter/Cleric/Mage/Thief stereotypes of *D&D*, but which offered more in the way of colour and variety than the generalised 'Adventurer' of *RuneQuest*. The careers system was intended to convey the colour and variety of the Old World to the players, avoiding the state of affairs where one nth level Fighter is pretty much like another. Also, the careers system makes it easier for the GM to design NPCs - instead of everybody being a level 0 Fighter, as in *AD&D*, the GM can generate an NPC Rat Catcher or Grave Robber or whatever. We also tried to include different and interesting careers for the nonhuman PC races - Elves, Dwarfs and Halflings - to give them more personality than they have in some games, without overloading them with special abilities which make it a waste of time playing a Human character. For reasons of space, it was not possible to do this as thoroughly as we would have liked, but we hope in the future to develop this concept further. Trappings are included in basic careers to make character generation quicker and simpler, avoiding the need to spend half an hour poring over an equipment price list before the game proper can start, and for the same reason pregenerated characters are included in *The Oldenhaller Contract* and in each installment of *The Enemy Within* campaign, so that play can begin immediately if desired.
The Combat System
This was developed from the combat system in Warhammer Fantasy Battle, with a greater level of detail as befits a roleplaying game. One thing we wanted to avoid was turning WFRP into a hack-and-slay game; while this is possible if you like that kind of game, we have designed most of our adventures so that combat takes a back seat to thought, investigation and role-playing.

Not that combat isn’t important - there are some situations where it is the only choice - but we wanted to produce a game that was more than just a set of rules with a few skills and a world setting attached. We weren’t afraid to make combat dangerous - it is in real life, after all, and the possibility of death or serious injury should make players think about non-violent solutions to problems. Hence, also, the graphic detail of the critical hit system - Wounds or hit points can be recovered in time, but replacing severed arms and legs is another matter.

At the same time, we wanted combat to be fast and easy to play, without the need to spend several minutes of each combat round feverishly looking for tables and charts, and the combat rules are intended to reflect this.

The Magic System
At an early stage, we decided that the magic system, like other main systems in WFRP had to be compatible with the Warhammer Fantasy Battle rules. This created problems in some cases - the Magic Bridge spell, for example, started out producing something that you could march a regiment over - but with a bit of development here and a bit of tweaking there we produced something which we hope is adequate for roleplaying while remaining compatible with the battle rules. Again for reasons of time and space, it was not possible to add very many new ideas on the magical side, but we hope to expand the magic system in the Realm of Sorcery supplement, which should be released sometime in ’88. Watch this space.

OPEN BOX EXTRA

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jim Bambra, Graeme Davis, Phil Gallagher, Rick Priestley, and Richard Halliwell
DEREK the TROLL

Behold the Hunter! Muscles rippling... weapon gleaming... envied by many and feared by all!

He is known as...
The Trollslayer!
(...but actually his name is Julian).

My quarry, nearby.
I can sense it!

A Troll! Prepare to die!

Ooer!

Warlock magazine R.I.P.

'Ere, can't we talk abaut this?

Gah!

Thud!

Knocked stone dead by me bad Breff, eh? Must be the cozilla.

An' onion sarnies wot I ad last night! I could cash in on this!

Today in the Arena
Contest of Champions - Mighty warriors!

Bloodthirsty beasts from beyond!
Fancy your chances?
Big cash prizes!

I could knock a dragon dead at fifty paces wiv this Breff, I'll enter!

All o' you Wallies clear the arena 'cos Derek the Troll's gonna win this contest!

You? No chance - yir!

Cor! Wotta stink!

Go on, yer old goat - send in yer fiercest creature! I'll flatten it wivat lifting a finger?

Very well! Here it comes...

-The noseless nightmare from the Netherworld.

M. J. Noseless!

Furry bad breath but to no avail.

PRRRAAAAGH!

Champion or not, Derek's certainly not to be sniffed at!
A solitary figureslowly
wades its way across an
empty land,
with it lies the only hope
for the future of a dying race.

For a thousand years the
old ones had ruled this land
a kind and gentle race, their
shambles extending far away,
their blind intelligence.

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

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

The crystal, was the
burden of the blight on
his land, treachery,
across the desert, plains
and mountains of this
ruined land.

Oh wow man!
I'm getting some pretty
many vibes off those
two experts over there!

What a bummer,
I'll have to sneak past
this guard and try
heavily!

Ha! Sir - barracks now off the boys
now!
Zombies in Call of Cthulhu by Marcus L. Rowland

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

**'DEATH' IN LIFE - THE HISTORICAL ZOMBIE**

There are many tales of men and women becoming zombies by enchantment, passing from a living death without warning. Such creatures are slack-featured, emotionless, move slowly, and seem incapable of understanding anything beyond the most simple instructions. Their masters (usually powerful medicine men) use them for farming and simple labouring tasks where their slow reactions and clumsiness will not be a handicap, and may become immensely rich on the profits of zombie labour. Sometimes, but very rarely, such zombies will apparently recover and escape from their masters, though their recovery may never be complete.

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

If the process is primarily chemical, this ceremonial element is not an essential part of the process. It simply helps to 'program' the zombie for its role as a living automaton. 'Scientific' zombie masters may simply use hypnosis or other forms of conditioning instead. If control is enforced magically the ceremony is vital, used to gather power to suppress the victim's will. The initial drug leaves the victim docile and suggestible, and ready to follow the recruiters to their master. The mechanism of this form of zombie recruitment is fairly simple. Servants of the zombie master find a suitable victim and slip an initial dose of the poison into food or drink. It may also be delivered by poisoned arrow or dart, as a cloud of inhaled dust, or by more conventional injection. This initial dose leaves the victim docile and suggestible, ready to follow the recruiters to their master. Later the victim is given a larger dose under conditions designed to heighten suggestibility. For example, the victim might be taken to a prolonged religious ceremony, and fed the drug at intervals during the ritual. By participating in chants and rhythmic movements the victim falls deeper under the control of the magician.

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

**Game Mechanics**

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

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

If zombification is primarily chemical, the ritual which follows involves repeated doses of a more powerful drug, once every 5 + 1d6 minutes. The drug is a potency 10 poison, each dose reducing POW by 1d4 and DEX by 1d6, halved if the poison is resisted. Zombie masters who are experienced with these drugs can continue the ritual until the victim's personality is completely suppressed (POW drops to 1), and won't be fooled by attempts to fake zombification. As a by-product of the loss of POW all magic points are lost.

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

Once either treatment is complete there is a period of 2d10 + 10 days in which any POW can be regained. After this there is a cumulative 1% per day chance (to a maximum of 20%) of player characters...
regaining 1 POW; NPCs will rarely recover unaided. Once POW begins to return the victim can attempt to disobey orders or escape; only one attempt can be made per day, on a roll against 5xP. Naturally zombie masters are alert for signs of returning willpower, and will repeat the treatment as often as seems necessary. Magic-using zombie masters may even be able to cause permanent brain damage, removing a point of POW and 1d2 INT. Once this occurs the keeper should continue to roll for damage each week, but should not increase the chance of damage. Damage continues until POW and INT are reduced to 1.

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

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

Unexpected encounters with this type of zombie may cause the loss of 1d2 SAN, no less than 1d6 SAN if a SAN roll is successful, recovered if the victim can be rescued and cured. Statistics for such zombies are the same as those for any normal human, with the exception that POW is effectively reduced to zero, INT and EDU can't be used, and DEX is greatly reduced. Such zombies can't fight, and are more to be pitied than feared in themselves. If attacked they take normal damage, and can neither parry nor dodge.

**'LIFE' IN DEATH - THE TRADITIONAL ZOMBIE**

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

Superficially the traditional zombie resembles the living 'zombies' described above, and it's easy to confuse the two. However, the traditional zombie is permanently dead; if the spell which reanimates it is removed it will instantly 'die', and cannot be animated again. There are many variant forms, some hardly recognisable as zombies; if sufficient power is put into the spell the zombie will seem more normal than most normal NECROZOMBIES. In such cases it is still true that it is still alive.

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

Many legends suggest means of killing zombies of this type; the most common involves the use of salt, but there is little real evidence to support this. Of the ineffective methods of dispatched zombies, they will probably need to deal with the creatures on an individual basis, experimentally to find the best answer.

**Keeper's Notes**

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

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

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

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

**Game Mechanics**

The most common form of traditional zombie is described in the *Call of Cthulhu* Sourcebook for the 1920s (p30 in first and second edition copies, p121 in the hardcover edition). The distinctive features of these creatures are enhanced strength and resistance to damage.

Preliminary recruitment follows the same pattern described above, with the victim's POW and free will suppressed.

The zombification ceremony consists of three stages, the first being summoned magical energy as described above. Once the magician has some magic points in hand the ritual murder begins; the magician or an acolyte cuts an artery, and the victim begins to bleed to death, losing one point every 1d3 minutes. As blood is lost, the magician makes successive attempts to pit magic points against the victim's POW, at intervals of 1d6 minutes. If this attempt is unsuccessful the victim dies without becoming zombified; if the attempt succeeds a point of POW remains in the body after death, keeping it alive.

At this stage the magician must establish control. The zombie will still have INT, though the last traces of consciousness will fade in INT x 1d6 minutes. The magician must establish that he (or she) is the master, pitfalls magic points against the victim's single point of POW. This is a comparatively easy process, but may require several attempts (at intervals of 2d3 minutes) to succeed. Victims 'rescued' during this part of the ceremony will believe that they are still alive, and may join in to fight the magician. If the magician is killed or driven off without establishing control the zombie will eventually lose all INT and run amok.

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

The only alternative to violent zombification is the use of a variant of the Resurrection spell described in the *Call of Cthulhu* rules. For this spell the body need not be destroyed, but will be reactivated in the state in which it died, and can never amount to anything more than a mindless zombie. The spell costs 1d10 SAN on first casting, 1d3 SAN per casting thereafter, and 1d6 magic points per casting, plus a point for each day the body has been dead.

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

REANIMATION

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

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

Keeper's Information

Reanimation is an extremely complex procedure requiring years of research and study. Scientists wishing to perfect the process should have a minimum total of 200% skill in three or more relevant sciences, for example, Chemistry, Pharmacy, and Zoology. Given these minimum qualifications, such scientists must spend at least fifty percent of their waking time in studies and research work. For each six-month period in which this course of study is followed, the scientist should make a Library Use roll. If successful the scientist gains 16% knowledge in a new skill, Reanimation, and must make a SAN roll or lose 1d2 SAN. Certain rare books may be used to enhance this ability, in the same way thatMythos books can improve Cthulhu Mythos knowledge, with an increased chance of SAN loss. For example, Herbert West's research notes might give 15% Reanimation knowledge, if a successful Reanimation skill roll was made, but the reader would lose 2d6 SAN (1d3 SAN if a SAN roll was made). Often books containing Reanimation lore will also touch upon the Cthulhu Mythos, with consequent additional SAN loss. The exact nature of such works is left to the keeper.

Reanimation research also tends to be extremely expensive, as scientists learn more they will try to assemble more elaborate laboratory equipment, and junk old and discredited technology. Scientists involved in this research should expect to spend approximately $500 (50 x Reanimation rating) dollars per year in supplies, maintenance, and other expenses. For example, a professor with 50% reanimation knowledge would have spent $25,000 (£5,000) on equipment and other permanent facilities, over the course of several years, and would have running expenses of around £3,000 ($600) per year. On a professor's wages this could easily be a severe problem; devising a suitable grant application and cover story may be the hardest part of the reanimation research.

Reanimation experiments may be attempted at any stage of a reanimator's career, with the chance of success equivalent to Reanimation skill. Usually only one attempt is possible in any given six-month period; the rest of the time is spent on small scale and animal experiments, and in attempts to get hold of the components (such as freshly-deceased human corpses) needed for the work. Successful reanimation experiments don't necessarily lead to the creation of a complete zombie. In the early stages they are more likely to produce useful information which adds 1d1 to Reanimation knowledge for the next round of research and experimentation, and costs 1d6 Magic Points and 1d3 SAN (I SAN if a SAN roll is made).

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

POSSSESSION

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

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

Keeper's Information

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

Directed possession (summoning a Mythos creature and directing it to occupy a corpse) requires knowledge of the appropriate Summoning and Binding spells, and a ritual comparable to the creation of the traditional zombie described above. In this case there is no need to drain blood or suppress the victim's POW; the victim is simply killed as soon as the summoning is successful, and the summoned spirit takes control of the fresh corpse. For this technique the body needs to be as fresh and intact as possible, and the masters of this technique have perfected quick and painless methods to perform this operation. Usually this is permanent, though sometimes it's possible to swap back. The Great Race may occasionally swap personalities this way, swapping bodies with a younger host to achieve a form of immortality. Usually a prerequisite is a ritual or drug to suppress the victim's POW; exact details are beyond the scope of this article.

PARASITISM

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

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

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

Keeper's Information

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

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Keeper's Information

Infection is most effective in isolated areas with poor communication; in such areas the disease may get a firm hold before anyone realises what is happening. The disease will usually be vulnerable to some natural or synthetic cure, such as modern antibiotics; there's no need for the keeper to make such a cure easy to find. If the disease is cured

the patient dies, since the infection only affects dead tissues. Infection may cause the host body to become unnaturally strong, much like the traditional zombie described above.

AUTOMATISM

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

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Night of Blood is set in The Empire and can easily be used as part of The Enemy Within campaign. It can also be used as part of any other campaign or for a one-off game.

This adventure can take place at any roadside or riverside location away from the large cities. It can be used to add colour to either a road or river journey. The journey should have been uneventful, but as dusk approaches, a storm suddenly breaks. Soon the adventurers are wet through and their coach or barge is being buffeted by strong winds, making it very hazardous to continue. Unfortunately, this being The Empire, it is not safe simply to stop and wait for the storm to pass. Many strange creatures live in the forest, and few of these are likely to be sheltering from the storm.

The rain falls in torrents from the dark, roiling clouds. Overhead, lightning flashes across the sky. In the distance the strangled cry of some strange creature can be heard. It is a night to be indoors, for who knows what lurks under dark trees in The Empire's forests.

•THE HUNT•

Audible between the rumbles of thunder is a strangled baying. At first this seems to be in the distance, but soon it becomes apparent that the sound is heading towards the adventurers. A group of beastmen and mutants are hunting a stag in this part of the forest.

If the adventurers decide to halt their journey, the cries of the beastmen swing straight towards them after about half an hour and approach at a fast rate. The cries stop suddenly before they reach the adventurers as the beastmen pull down their prey, and the forest falls silent but for the sound of the storm. It is only a matter of time before the beastmen become aware of the adventurer's presence...

Sensible adventurers will continue their journey at this point. Those who stay notice strange shapes lurking at the edge of their vision. The beastmen and mutants observe the characters for a few minutes and take the opportunity to surround them if this is possible. They then rush into the attack. If the adventurers decide to retreat, they make Ride, Drive Cart or River Lore tests (as appropriate) to escape. Failure of these tests results in a battle with the beasts of Chaos. Unless the adventurers move on similar attacks occur throughout the night.

The Chaos hunters (two beastmen and four mutants) attempt to overpower the adventurers and then dispose of them in their own inimitable fashion. The mutants flee if both the beastmen are slain or incapacitated unless they succeed in a successful LD test.

•MOVING ON•

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

•THE HOODED MAN INN•

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

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

**THE FERRY**

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

If they check out the ferry building, the adventurers find that the door is open and there are signs of a struggle inside. The building's furniture is overturned and there is no sign of a ferry keeper. A close search turns up a bag containing 12 GC, 42 shillings and 15 pennies. A trail of fresh blood leads from the door; any character examining this who succeeds in an Int test realises that a body has been dragged out of the building. However, no sign of a trail can be found outside thanks to the heavy rain and the mud.

**THE INN**

The Hooded Man is a small inn along a road that crosses the river here at the ferry. It is similar to the one in the Warhammer Rule book, but is not as grand. See WFRP p328 for basic details regarding inns.

At one time the inn's site was a meeting place for the Writhers in the Dark to reconsecrate the shrine. Disguised as a Roadwarden, Hans entered the inn and at an opportune moment slipped kuts (a sleep-inducing drug, see below) into the evening's food. Once the Inn's staff and visitors fell asleep - or were too drowsy to resist - he opened the main gates for the mutants.

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

HANS JINKERST - CULTISTS

Hans is a Charlatan and a master of deception. He can easily carry off his part of a Roadwarden. Unfortunately for him, however, his uniform has a bloodstain at the base of his back where the original owner was stabbled. If this is noticed by the adventurers (a successful Observe test is required by someone in a position to notice it) Hans maintains that it happened earlier this evening when he was attacked by two bandits. On no account will he allow anyone to examine his 'wound' beneath.

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<td>Disguise</td>
<td>34 GC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>A glass phial containing 18 doses of kurts (see below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimic</td>
<td>Read/Write</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**THE MUTANTS**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mutants</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>WS</th>
<th>BS</th>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TW</th>
<th>WI</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Dex</th>
<th>Ld</th>
<th>Int</th>
<th>Cl</th>
<th>WP</th>
<th>Fel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grat</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otto</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>29</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Otto the 'landlord' is far too small to be of any help. He has no other noticeable mutation - and all landlords are a bit on the portly side - Otto adopts the role of landlord when the adventurers arrive.

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

Wilhem is the most repulsive and grotesque of all the mutants. He doesn't have a proper face, merely a skull. As a result, anyone viewing Wilhem for the first time must make a Cool test or become subject to fear (see WFRP p68).

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

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

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

The six horses in the stables are terrified by Grat's presence and flee from the stables as soon as the door is opened. A character making a successful Animal Care test will be able to prevent this happening, but any other character runs the risk of being trampled by the leading horse. A successful I test allows the character to leap out of the way. Anyone who is trampled takes one S 3 hit in
concealed attempt to hide his surprise, Otto invites the adventurers into the bar room. A fire burns in the inn to be secure against outsiders. Making an ill-impression that all is well. As soon as there is a knock at the door, however, the laughter dies away and there are sounds of movement (scraping chairs and the like). After the door, however, the laughter dies away and there are sounds of movement (scraping chairs and the like). After

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

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The Coach House - The door to this building is locked (CR 30). Inside there is a coach belonging to Cartak Lines of Altadorf. This coach arrived before the mutants attacked. Its passengers and crew were drugged and are now either dead or tied up in the cellar.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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"Don't panic, Otto. They are only travellers. Teenzrich will be pleased to have their souls as well. Use the kurts in their food and we'll deal with them later."

Hans then
passes Otto the phial containing the kurts. After this Otto has the phial in his possession.

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

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

**KURTS**

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

**GOOD NIGHT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

After the adventurers have finished eating, but before the bottles of wines and spirits. There is a trail of blood.

The door leading to the yard is unlocked.

unremarkable. However, the two beds in one room are stained and all the doors are locked (CR 20). The landlord's sound of Otto turning the key in the door lock (CR 20) is clearly audible.

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

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

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

The common room is dirty and the bedding is soiled. If the adventurers comment on this, Otto is unsympathetic as this is "the best he can do". From then onwards, looking up at Otto is like a man as keen to get away as soon as possible. The sound of Otto turning the key in the door lock (CR 20) is clearly audible.

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

**The Kitchen** - The kitchen is obviously designed for the inn's halfling cook. Fagor is in here unless the ceremony using the magical energy of the statue to summon a demon. Shortly afterwards the ceremony begins, and faint, discordant chanting fills the inn. This continues for half an hour, while Hans ritually sacrifices two humans as the summoning requires.

**The Ceremony**

Shortly after the Otto has shown the adventurers to their room the doses of kurts begin to take effect. Half an hour after the drug should have taken effect (the mutants know when this should be) Otto collects Grat from the stables. Anyone looking out of the common room window at this time sees Otto going out to stable and returning with a mutant (if Grat is still alive). The sound of Otto turning the key in the door lock (CR 20) is clearly audible.

Hans and the mutants assemble in the cellar to conduct a ceremony using the magical energy of the statue to summon a demon. Shortly afterwards the ceremony begins, and faint, discordant chanting fills the inn. This continues for half an hour, while Hans ritually sacrifices two humans as the summoning requires.

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

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

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

Against the wall is a locked (CR 30) wooden box containing 212 GC, 365 shillings and 26 pennies. A successful search of the room reveals a loose stone containing a potion of strength (WFRP, p186).

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

**The Cellar** - The cellar contains barrels of beer and bottles of wines and spirits. There is a trail of blood stains on the floor (unless Fagor has had the wit to mop them up as well - this depends on how much help the players are going to need in working out what is going on) which leads to the loose paving slab. This has been lifted to give access to the hidden shrine built below the level of the cellar. Depending on the circumstances, the slab is either raised or lowered. When the adventurers first arrive, it is closed, but it will be opened during the ceremony. The closed slab may be discovered with a successful Observe test or by following the bloodstains.
As the ceremony begins Fagor sneaks up to the adventurers' room and listens at the door. Characters not suffering from the effects of kurts who make a successful Listen test hear him approach the door. If Fagor becomes suspicious that the adventurers are not unconscious or, for example, the common room door is open, he returns to the cellar and warns the other mutants, who close the trapdoor and continue the ceremony. If given the opportunity, Fagor hides somewhere in the inn and attempts to attack a lone adventurer from behind.

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

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

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

### THE ROADWARDENS

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>WS</th>
<th>BS</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Dex</th>
<th>Ld</th>
<th>Int</th>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>29</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Skills
Ride - Horse

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

-REWARDS-

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

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

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

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

Quotations

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

The plot

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

Outline

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

1. The Arrival Of Taurefántó

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

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

2. Initial Reactions

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

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

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

3. Taurefántó's Last Journey

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

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

4. Transplanting the Valquetta-i-Olvar

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

5. Ilvëvel (Q: The End of it All)

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

**RUMOURS**

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

A. Singing

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

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

B. The Wake

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

If the PCs are present: Closer investigation of the plants and springs shows that the water is very pure but both poisonous plants and herbs are growing amongst the more usual plants of the region, for example: Bright Blue Eyes, Splayfoot Goodwort, Mullifana and Silmaana (see Southern Mirkwood p55 and MERP p85).

C. Evil Corpses

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

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

D. Odd Couple

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

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

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

E. Flying Tonight

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

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

**ABBREVIATIONS USED IN MERP**

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<th>Appearance</th>
<th>Armour Type</th>
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<th>Rigid Leather</th>
<th>Chainmail</th>
<th>Plate Mail</th>
<th>+S Shield</th>
<th>Constitution</th>
<th>Defensive Bonus</th>
<th>Intelligence</th>
<th>Intuition</th>
<th>Offensive Bonus</th>
<th>Power Points</th>
<th>Presence</th>
<th>Q: Quenya</th>
<th>Rh: Rhovian Tongue</th>
<th>RR: Resistance Roll</th>
<th>S: Sindarin</th>
<th>St: Strength</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
F. Crazed Priest
One of the Urdakyn priests performs a blood sacrifice near the vessel, to
honour the Urdakyn Mothers' return. Some telling this story will go on to say
how the sky turned black and thunder rolled in from the hills as if they were
in agony; others might also maliciously add that the priest was aided by an
invisible creature from the vessel (though how this was divined is not revealed).

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

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

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

---

**taurëlingëtëturûvañfan
törandovenëmbar**

_Taurëlingëtëturûvañfanëtorandovenëmbar_, an Enlish Quenya word which loosely
means wood-singing-great-wooden-whale-wandering-wood-home, is a huge
wooden vessel built by the Nolënorolvár to transport their own version of the
Valquetta-i-ólvar to the Brown Lands and heal them of the curse with which
Sauron afflicted them. It is known as the _Taurëfántó_ for brevity's sake.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Professor Tolkien described the Ents as being “the most ancient people surviving in the Third Age”. In his translation of the Red Book of Westmarch, he relates a conversation shared by the Hobbits Meriadoc and Peregrine with the Entmaiden of old... Hair parched by the sun to the hue of ripe corn and cheeks like red apples.

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

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

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

He later states:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

However, the most fearsome power of the Yavannen under the power of the Enadai is that of Churnring the Soil. All animal and plant life is sucked down below the soil by the spirits and buried there while being ground and shredded by stones, tiny animals and unyielding roots. All motionless creatures sink 12" each round while in the affected area (up to the maximum depth of the soil). If a creature can move, it sinks 1" less for each 10" of movement it has. Being attacked in this way is terrifying, and anyone witnessing it will also be afflicted with Fear. Death shortly follows burial, and even if rescued those who have been submerged may have earth blocking their nostrils and mouth. Anyone surviving burial must make a 10th level RR, with a penalty equal to the amount of damage they took; those failing are afflicted with a mortal fear of bare earth, roots and so on. This phobia will stay with them for 36dx10 years unless cured (needs Mental Cures spell).

The Enadai have a +25 to saves against spells of Channelling and have 1-2 x level Power Points from that realm to use in plant-affecting, weather-affecting and protection spells. A Unada is Extremely Hard (-50) to spot if there are any reasonable size plants in the area. They leave little or no trail and move Very Fast.

Individual Yavannen may be anything from 1st through to 10th level, and are only affected by magic. They will have 55-100 hits, with no 'armour'. They are immune to magic and mostly undetectable; if attacked with a magic weapon they will have an effective DB of 60-75.

**Notable Enadai:**

There are two notable Enadai on the vessel with whom the characters may come into contact during the course of the adventure. These are Cánirith, the leader of the Noliorolvar, and Singalót, a Unada who addresses the council of Urukain priests.

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

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

**Valquetta-i-Olvar**

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

In their battles, the Aratar had discovered just how monstrously Morgoth had manifestion of one of his phrases of the Song Ainulindale.

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

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

The Valquetta-i-Olvar has thus been duplicated on the Tauriel delimited land on the eastern borders and transported to the site of the Enadai's ancient dwelling places in the Brown Lands.

**Del-Durimbe**

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

**Babbad & Grattar**

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

**Faroth Morchaint (S: Shadow Huntress)**

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

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

**Vilagaur (S: Sky-werewolf)**

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

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

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

**Thendrik**

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

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

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

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

The Black Stone is a very potent magical item dating back to the days of the First Age when Morgoth fought the Elves in Beleriand. The Stone is a magically-bounded breath of fire from the arch-Dragon Ancalagon the Black, the mightiest Dragon ever to roam Middle-earth. It resembles a rough chunk of coal or volcanic rock, pitted and scarred. By chanting a certain verse, the power locked within the Stone bursts forth, unleashing a torrent of all-consuming fire which spews for 150 yards in every direction. Anything other than a servant of the Secret Fire or a wielder of the flame of Anor will be reduced to ashes instantaneously on contact with the blast: alternatively you could treat it as a +300 Fire Ball attack, with repeated heat criticals every round until the area is left.
One of the Del-Dirimbë possesses the Morgen - the one surviving at the end of the adventure, so that it can be released and destroy the Valquetta-i-Olvar, even if this means death or destruction for the carrier. Only if all the opponents have been removed will the Word of Power be set in place. This is necessary for the historical continuity of the works of Tolkien, since the Brown Lands do not regenerate before the Fourth Age (if then).

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

UERDAKYN

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

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

Communities where the Uerdakyn is observed rely on the ritual blessings of crops and festivals through the year to support them. They believe in a general deity of Nature, an aspect of Yavanna Kementari. More particularly, they believe that she is served by an unspecified number of Earth Mothers (their concept of the Enadai) who will look after - in a spiritual sense - the fields, hedges, homes and pastures of the worshippers. These spirits are revered with prayer (ritual chants at daybreak and eventide, ie, before and after harvest Home), and arguments with them, chiding them if they are non-believers and render little misinformation and annoyance. He is loud and unco-operative at all times, can cast a spell of stunning, and argues with them, chiding them if they are non-believers and render little help. He may be useful if the characters beg him for assistance and put up with his perorations for a little while. He scorns gifts other than food or useful clothing and items.

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

Two Uerdakyn Priests

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

Caldheir owns a magic staff and has special powers connected with Aerdtiscbm. In the vicinity of the spring, he has x2 PP and an additional 4PP which can be used to cast spells from the Spring Waters spell list:

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

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

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

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

statistics

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<td>Enadai</td>
<td>15-25</td>
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<td>c.100</td>
<td>CH</td>
<td>40-60</td>
<td>90+Gr/Cr</td>
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<td>Entwives; Large-Huge</td>
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<td>Cânirúth</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>CH</td>
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<td>100HGr</td>
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<td>Entwife; Huge</td>
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<tr>
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<td>38</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>CH</td>
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<td>UERDAKYN</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rural Man Animist; S76, Ag49,C65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caldheir</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40qs*</td>
<td>10sb</td>
<td>Ig58, Ig90, Pr91, Ap63;</td>
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</table>

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

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

- Animal Mastery
- Nature's Lore
- Spell Defence

Direct Channelling
- Plant Mastery
- Purifications
- Surface Ways

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

Two Uerdakyn Priests

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

Caldheir owns a magic staff and has special powers connected with Aerdtiscbm. In the vicinity of the spring, he has x2 PP and an additional 4PP which can be used to cast spells from the Spring Waters spell list:

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

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

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

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

statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>LEVEL</th>
<th>PP</th>
<th>HITS</th>
<th>AT</th>
<th>CH</th>
<th>DB</th>
<th>MELEE OB</th>
<th>MISSILE OB</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Enadai</td>
<td>15-25</td>
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<td>Protections (5), Nature's Lore (5), Plant Mastery (5), Purifications (5), Spring Waters (5)**; Westron (5), Gramuik (5), Éothrik (3), Bethelr (2), Logathig (2); MM +0, Herblore +50, Perception +45, Public Speaking +45, Use Items +40, Swim +35, Stalk/Hide +30, Ride +30, Read Runes +25, Leadership/Influence +20, Directed Spells +15, Base Spells +10; Quarterstaff +10 OB and detect water within 180'.</td>
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<td>Estrigell</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>25sp</td>
<td>Rural Man Animist, St79, Ag88, Co43, Ig56, Ig86, Pr80, Ap26;</td>
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<td>Protections (4), Surface Ways (4), Animal Mastery (4), Direct Channeling (4); Westron (5), Gramuik (5), Logathig (3); MM +15, Public Speaking +49, Ride +44, Perception +44, Use Items +29, Stalk/Hide +25, Disarm Traps +20, Directed Spells +23*; Base Spells +13*; Magic Belt and Ring of Stunning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grattar</td>
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<td>CH</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>162cl</td>
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<td>Faroth Morclaint</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9+12</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>79kn*</td>
<td>59da**</td>
<td>*Morgul-kine; **Poisoned Half-elf Scout; S86, Ag96, Co50, Ig90, Ig59, P78, Ap96;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>64sc</td>
<td>59cp</td>
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<td>Essence Hand (5), Spirit Mastery (5), Spell Ways (5); Sindarin (5), Westron (5), Morbeth (5), Quenya (2); Empathy with Great Bats; MM +15, Perception +81, Stalk/Hide +75, Use Poison +65, Ride +49, Track +44. Flying +40 (+65 with Daeramé), Leadership/Influence +5.</td>
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<td>Daeramé</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>SL</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50MBi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Great Bat; Spd VF</td>
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<td>75MBi/60MCl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Villaguir</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>65*</td>
<td>100HCL</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Vampire; Large, Spd VF*. 5 Spell Lists (% 10); *without magic cloak she is DB 40 and Spd FA.</td>
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<td>Thendrik</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12*</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>SL/+S</td>
<td>25/40</td>
<td>77kn**</td>
<td>62sp</td>
<td>* x2 PP mult; ** +10 ivory knife; Gramuz Ranger; S00, Ag91, Co92, Ig39, Ig83, Pr32, Ap35;</td>
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<td>67sp</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nature’s Guises (6), Surface Ways (5), Spell Defences (5); Westron (5), Gramuik (5), Morbeth (4), Éothrik (3), Sindarin (3); MM +5, Stalk/Hide +62, Ride +58, Perception +52, Track +48*, Climb +48, Swim +38, Acting +25, Ambush +15.</td>
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Everyone in Alpha Complex is Happy. The Computer says so. Can you doubt The Computer?

Besides, The Computer kindly ensures that all citizens' food is carefully laced with chemical additives to keep them Happy. This is an example of the kindness and wisdom of The Computer.

However, the evil Commies are forever seeking ways in which to make citizens of Alpha Complex Unhappy. Being Unhappy is Treason. It is a sign that you have succumbed to Communist Propaganda.

The whole of SBR Sector is currently Unhappy. Our Troubleshooters' mission is to root out the Commie Traitors responsible for this sabotage and terminate them.

The citizens of SBR Sector are aware that their Unhappiness is Treason, but many of them are so Unhappy that they have presented themselves for voluntary termination. The Computer realises that so many citizens cannot have become Unhappy by coincidence. Commie sabotage must be responsible. The Computer has mercifully granted a stay of execution for the citizens of SBR Sector.

The citizens of SBR Sector should not be Unhappy. If they are, it must be because the Commies have put Unhappiness drugs in their food. Interestingly, three citizens in SBR Sector are completely unaffected by the Unhappiness. They are the Director of the Food Vats, citizen Mal-B-ING-3, and his two chief technicians, Di-G-EST-2 and Bolton-G-ULP-5. One of these must be the traitor.

Sector SBR has been sealed off for Security Reasons.

THE TREASON OF SBR SECTOR

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

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

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

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

But there's one of those really wonderful complications that makes the life of the average Troubleshooter such fun. Can you guess? Yes, that's right - there are quite a few other people around who missed out on the food delivery. The Computer and his colleagues have noticed them as possible traitors yet because they haven't come to its attention. However, because of the new drugs they are about to become DELICEROUSLY HAPPY.

Of course, as the sector is sealed off, the Troubleshooters will be unable to get out without good reason. Unless they can find a safe source of food, they too will become DELICEROUSLY HAPPY. This may hamper their investigations a little, though probably no more than usual. This will be fun. But not for them.

**A PAIR OF BRIEFINGS**

As usual, the Troubleshooters will be summoned individually to their mission via messages from their friend and yours, The Computer. The general alert message is resonated throughout the office, together with an extra message for the team leader and briefings for the Troubleshooters from their Secret Societies and Service Groups. Internal Security have asked us to remind all GMs that the damaging of The Computer's property (to wit, valuable copies of White Dwarf) in any way is treason and will be punished in the usual horrendously painful fashion. The computer, to photoprint each item should first present form ISFD-1221-gtx/c-SEMICOM-s, reproduced elsewhere in this publication, to the appropriate authorities.

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

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

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

Peter-I explains the basic situation to the Troubleshooters, adding little to the information that The Computer has already given them in the Mission Alert. He says that the trouble began about an hour after the breakfast cycle (it is now two hours after breakfast) and shows no sign of improving. He does not pass on The Computer's comments about Mal-B and his colleagues; this information is cleared for the Troubleshooter leader only. Peter-I can, of course, take the leader aside and discuss this with him. That will give the rest of the team something to worry about, which should be encouraged at every opportunity (no point calling the Troubleshooters Go on, do it. You know your players will love it). Once the Troubleshooters have satisfied themselves that they can get no more out of Neil-R (or Peter-I has got bored with the pointless Interrogation and ordered them to get a move on) he'll tranquetter them (so fast their boots won't have time to smoke) they can head off to their local PL&C depot for some equipment. As usual, the depot staff are anything but helpful. A number of sales assistants on the fresh food counter of any supermarket, they shuffle around slowly but determinedly preparing things, cleaning things, filling in forms and rearranging shelves, seemingly oblivious to the fact that someone is trying to get served. When the team do finally force one of them to pay attention he immediately says that he is not qualified to deal with their enquiry and goes to 'fetch the boss'. This takes at least 15 minutes as the staff have to stop for a cup of coffee before returning to the counter under the new regulations imposed by the Computer not five minutes previously.

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

1 Model V Docbot (ie, a Docbot with Medical Skill 7)
1 Jackobot 350 with the following skills: Tech (1), Roboticics (2), Robot Operation (3), Operate Docbot (6), Robot Maintenance (3), Maintain Docbot (6), Maintain Jackobot (5), Engineering (2), Instructional Engineering (5), Chemical Engineering (5), Vehicles (1), Vehicle Operation and Repair (2), Autocontrol Operation & Repair (5).

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

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

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

After a good deal of frustrating interrogation, during the course of which you get to do lots of really impressive impersonations of people who have completely lost the will to live (just remember that the players are going to be stuck inside for two hours after breakfast) and shows no sign of improving. He does not pass on The Computer's comments about Mal-B and his colleagues; this information is cleared for the Troubleshooter leader only. Peter-I can, of course, take the leader aside and discuss this with him. That will give the rest of the team something to worry about, which should be encouraged at every opportunity (no point calling the Troubleshooters Go on, do it. You know your players will love it). Once the Troubleshooters have satisfied themselves that they can get no more out of Neil-R (or Peter-I has got bored with the pointless Interrogation and ordered them to get a move on) he'll tranquetter them (so fast their boots won't have time to smoke) they can head off to their local PL&C depot for some equipment. As usual, the depot staff are anything but helpful. A number of sales assistants on the fresh food counter of any supermarket, they shuffle around slowly but determinedly preparing things, cleaning things, filling in forms and rearranging shelves, seemingly oblivious to the fact that someone is trying to get served. When the team do finally force one of them to pay attention he immediately says that he is not qualified to deal with their enquiry and goes to 'fetch the boss'. This takes at least 15 minutes as the staff have to stop for a cup of coffee before returning to the counter under the new regulations imposed by the Computer not five minutes previously.

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

1 Multicorder I with the following programs: Recorder, Bot Damage Analysis, Lie detector
1 Com I communicator per Troubleshooter
Mal-B-ING is a very competent politician. As a Programs Group member he has quickly risen through the ranks to this prestigious office. He knows nothing whatsoever about food technology, of course, and his technicians can often run rings round him on this score. Nevertheless, he is quite capable of playing them off against each other and causing them to get the blame for his mistakes. Di-G and Boltan-G can't quite understand how this happens.

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

Di-G-EST is a devout member of Corpore Metal and as such is firmly of the opinion that the job of food preparation could be done much better by robots. In fact she is dead right, but if robots did all the work they would go away. If they prove too clever she will try to get rid of them, but she is fairly sure that they will be typically incompetent and, if left to their own devices, will get rid of themselves. You agree? We somehow thought you might...

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

John-R-CDK is very quiet and submissive, like a sad-eyed spaniel who knows the meager prospects she faces. He gets around by Fanny-O as he were an Infrared, spending most of his time stirring beakers of chemicals and cleaning spoons for Fanny-O who is very fastidious. Nevertheless, he is obviously Depressed and cannot prove them. He sees the crisis as an ideal opportunity to get rid of her.}

THE END IS NIGH

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

The Purgists are identified only by their nicknames. Their real names are not important, and in any case they will not answer to them even if the Troubleshooters could find out what they were (also we got bored with thinking up yet more silly names for a bunch of turkeys who are only going to be so much dead algae before the end of this adventure). Their tactics are not particularly intelligent, even for cannon-fodder: they will shoot back at whoever shot at them last, and will happily smash up machinery if no suitable target presents itself in any particular order. However, although few in number, they are much better armed than the Troubleshooters, who will need their wits about them. Any weaponry they manage to capture intact will serve them in good stead later in the adventure.

The area in which the fight takes place is the Food Vats production line. This takes the form of a giant conveyer belt taking huge vats of glutinous-looking (ie, squidy) grunge from one end of a very long room to the other. At various stages along the route there are large tanks of ingredients hung from the ceiling which pump
the storyline? Oh, alright then, but it's your...

While the Troubleshooters have been busy...
Jerry-B has at his disposal 2 Guardbots, a Model III Docbot and 4 Scrubots. He also has a Mk II Multicorder programmed with Recorder, Bot Damage Analysis, Radioactivity, Infrared and Radio/Radar.

Guardbot: 2 sonic pistols (50%); 2 stun guns (50%); a truncheon (50%); Kevlar armour.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Spiro: Red laser pistol (55%); hand-to-hand (23%); red reflec armour; Electroshock mutant power.

Al: Red laser pistol (42%); Flamethower (42%); hand-to-hand (25%); red reflec armour.

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

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

HAPPINESS RAINS

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

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

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

And we mustn't forget the bots, must we? Yes, it's time to put on your silly voice again and to roll out a whole collection of really cranky personality modules. Would you believe a barbot called Bruz-4-SYTH? Or a scrubot called Grouch-0 Mk X? The Troubleshooters should have just made Insanity Checks. It's up to you to make sure the players know what their characters are going through, so let your hair down and be really nauseating just for once.

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

THE NIGHT THEY RAIDED PLLC

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

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

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

In PLLC the Troubleshooters can find the following goodies:

1. **R&D'S GUILTY SECRET**

Getting out of SBR Sector might prove slightly problematical because The Computer is well aware of what is going on and has stationed five Vulture Squadron goons (Green laser rifles, 75%; combat armour) at the door to keep the happy loonies safely inside. Experienced Troubleshooters will either be able to convince The Computer of the urgency of their mission, or will simply set the Plasma Generator up behind the closed door and fire away. Inexperienced Troubleshooters will just yelp a little and turn black at the edges.

Getting into NTM Sector's R&D department is another matter entirely. The technicians have the approaches to their offices well under surveillance and are expecting trouble. At the first sign of anything looking like Troubleshooters (or Vulture Squadron goons) they throw caution to the wind and roll out everything they've got. Either The Computer is on to them, in which case what the heck, or the foolish Troubleshooters haven't yet told The Computer what is going on, in which case the sooner they fall foul of an experimental accident of the violent kind the better.

When the Troubleshooters first arrive at the door and demand entrance the R&D men aren't quite ready. There will be a small delay while the Troubleshooters argue over the comlink with the man on the other side of the door. Unfortunately all R&D departments are, by order of The Computer, surrounded by very, very thick blast-proof shielding (to stop explosions from getting out rather than enemies from getting in) and it would take the Troubleshooters many hours to burn their way through. However, after a few minutes the man on the other side of the door suddenly changes his mind and says he's opening the door straight away. Any Troubleshooters stupid enough to be stood directly in front of it when it does open deserve all they get.

On the other side of the door is an experimental plasma cannon. It is big. It is so big that it just cannot miss, unless the Troubleshooters happen to be hiding behind the door, in which case they are out of the cone of fire. It also has a +2 damage modifier. Fortunately, as is the way with experimental plot devices of this nature, it fires once, overloads, and promptly melts down into a heap of red-hot metal.

Did they survive that one? Yes? Well, let's try again, shall we? Behind the plasma cannon is a 100m long passage, the sort of building structure known in Alpha Complex as a 'shooting gallery'. After their experiences with Jerry-B the Troubleshooters should have more sense than to test this one. If they just sit it out for a few minutes the five (count 'em) warbots hiding behind a door at the other end wander down to see what is happening. That way the Troubleshooters get the fun instead. Well, it makes a change.

**Warbots**: 2 semi-automatic slugthrowers with HEAT rounds (70%); 2 sonic rifles (70%); laminated combat armour.

Once the warbots are out of the way the passage is quite safe, though you shouldn't give the team that impression. It leads, as might be expected, to the
equipment issue office. This is a largish room with a clear area at the front for demonstrating new devices and several racks of assorted junk towards the back. Right at the back are two doors, one leading to the director's office and the other to the research lab. Several R&D technicians, the latest in laser weaponry are hiding behind the racks ready to ambush anyone who makes it that far. They are assisted by 3 experimental combat bots.

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

Bunsen-B-RNR has 3 Dirt Gas grenades (40%). These are just like normal grenades except that whoever they hit gets coated in concentrated black slime which halves the effect of any reflect armour. Icky! Once he has used them he will only use lasers (55%). He wears ROYG reflect armour.

Uran-YUMM is wearing a variant of the Waldos/Mechano exo-skeleton. This gives him a damage bonus of +3 and acts as combat armour. He fights hand-to-hand (47%) with a giant bench top as a club (2 strength). He wears ROYGR reflect armour.

Gamma-R-AYE uses a highly experimental Model HPL Radflamer (35%). This acts on the silliest most dangerous thing the troublemakers do, but they do seem to be able to blow stuff up. A second issue is to make sure that this valuable collection is not convicted of treason during the sector's Food Vats. Corpore Metal has a valued operative amongst these technicians. She is working hard to promote the further mechanisation of food production. Your mission is to make sure that this valuable colleague is not convicted of treason during the investigation.

End of Troubleshooters. You may now be saying to yourself, 'Gosh guys, that's a bit of a tidy one, you'd be right, but so what?' You want happy endings you can write your own adventures. Good Troubleshooters (ie, live ones) should have learnt to shoot first and ask questions later. Or at least never to believe anything anyone tells them - and then shoot them.

**TRUST THE COMPUTER**

In which we come to the famous debriefing session. What have the Troubleshooters done that might conceivably get them into hot water? Wrecked a valuable food production line? Inflated a vacuum level accommodation corridor? Destroyed large numbers of valuable bots? (Did they retrieve the brains of any bots they sliced up?) Raided a PL&C depot and stole several high-clearance weapons? Murdered five valuable Vulture Squadron troopers? Caused severe damage to an R&D installation, including the massacre of several technicians and the director? Destroyed a number of irreplaceable experimental weapons? Stopped lots of citizens from being DELERIOUSLY HAPPY? Any GM who can't think up a way to have the whole bunch of them terminated on the spot is just not trying. Besides which, it saves having to explain it all.

This adventure has been beaten into shape with a large stick by Marc Gascoigne, who would like to apologise for the gratuitous octopus references. Games Workshop has always been a champion of cephalopod equality and such jolly tanks as described in the text are not intended to cause offence or distress to our underwater friends, even if they are all squiggly and rubbery and have evil little eyes and wriggle about and make people feel ill and have...

**EPILOGUE**

- **Pregenerated Troubleshooters**

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

  **Primary Attributes:** STR 9; END 16; AGI 9; DEX 5; MOX 8; CHU 16; MEC 13; POW 13

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

  **Service Group:** HPD&MC

  **Secret Society:** Death Leopard (rank 2)

  **Mutant Power:** Mental Block

  **Skills:** Basics 1 (20%), Aimed Weapons 2 (15%), Lasers 3 (20%), Melee 2 (23%), Knife 3 (28%), Personal Development 1 (-1); Mel -2%; AW 10%; Com -2%; Bel +17%; Rep +4%

  **Service Group Mission Information**

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

  **Unda-R-EST-1**

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

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

  **Service Group:** Technical Services

  **Secret Society:** Secret Society Mission Information

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

  **Service Group Mission Information**

  **Swiz-R-OLL-1 claims to be from Technical Services but you've never heard of him. There is something suspiciously odd about and make people feel ill and have...

  **Styko-R-OCK-1**

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

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

  **Service Group:** Armed Services

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

  **Mutant Power:** Superhuman Strength

  **Skills:** Basics 1 (20%), Melee 2 (35%), Unarmed Combat 3 (45%), Aimed Weapons 2 (32%), Lasers 3 (37%), Laser Pistol 4 (42%)
Note: Styko has confessed his mutant power. He knew that Armed Forces would be happy to keep him. Besides, it gives him a good excuse to kill people when they pick on him for being a mutie and having a yellow streak down his

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

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

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

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

Swiz-R-OLL-1
Primary Attributes: STR 15; END 10; AGI 12; MEC 18; POW 13
Secondary Attributes: Car 40; Dam +1; Mac 0; Rep -2%
Service Group: Internal Security (cover Technical Services)
Secret Society: First Church of Christ Computer Programmer (rank 1)
Mutant Power: Telepathic Projection
Skills: Basics 1 (20%), Meles 2 (30%), Aimed Weapons 2 (24%), Lasers 3 (29%), Special Services 2 (24%)

Secret Society Mission Information
A lot of high level politicking has been going on with regard to this mission. It seems likely that various self-interested groups are trying to exploit the situation in SBR Sector for their own ends. You must make sure that the interests of The Computer are correctly served.

Service Group Mission Information
As the Internal Security plant on this mission you are responsible for making sure that the mission is carried out smoothly. Your major responsibility is detection of traitors in the Troubleshooter group. Internal Security has reason to believe that the mission leader is a traitor working for the Mystics secret society. These people are all drug addicts. Interestingly The Computer suspects that drugs may have been used to perform the sabotage in SBR Sector.

Your cover is that of a Tech Services operative. Unfortunately Internal Security was unable to prevent another member of Tech Services being assigned to the group. He may be suspicious of you. This failure was due to concentrating on attempts to combat the suspiciously keen interest that both Armed Forces and R&D have been showing in the mission. Both have operatives in the Troubleshooter group.

Rowland-R-ATT-1
Primary Attributes: STR 15; END 10; AGI 12; DEX 12; MOX 17; CHU 14; MEC 9; POW 9
Secondary Attributes: Car 25; Dem +1; Mac 0; Mel +5%; AW -1%; Com -1%; Bel -5%; Rep +4%
Service Group: Research & Development
Secret Society: Pro-Tech (rank 1)
Mutant Power: Advanced Smell
Skills: Basics 1 (20%), Aimed Weapons 2 (28%), Special Services 2 (37%); Hostile Environments 1 (20%), Survival 2 (37%); Technical Services 1 (20%), Engineering 2 (37%)

Secret Society Mission Information
We have reason to believe that one of the Tech Services operatives on the mission is a

Corpo Metal member. The Sierra Club would like you to uncover him and arrange for his termination.

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

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

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

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

Alan Reid, Seaford: While very few would expect the scenario of The Price of Freedom to be literally about to come true (Open Box, W&D6), this does not mean the game is 'sheer fantasy' or 'tongue in cheek' and therefore as unremarkable and harmless as D&D, Traveller or RuneQuest. Not only are they 'fantasy' make judgements about real societies and real politics, these judgements form the whole basis of the game.

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

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

Simon Watts, Standish, Wigan: In W&D85, Allan Miles discussed the logic (or rather the illogic) behind races and classes in AD&D. This reminded me of a theory which I evolved during the height of AD&D playing in these lands, which seemed to explain elven MUs. The main benefit of the elf (and half-elf) class-wise is that they can operate as Fighter/Magic-users, which combine magic with armour. As you know, normal spells cannot be cast by anyone wearing armour. Therefore, we can assume that elves have their own type of magic, usable by those with elf blood, which allows the wearing of armour and the casting of MU spells, but which is limited in power - the level limit. Naturally this magic is usually favoured by half-elves also.

If this theory is adopted, then it naturally implies that single classed MU elves should be permitted to wear armour. This addition probably would make little difference at higher levels, where a cunning mage will have acquired enough magical protections not to need armour, but would aid the survival of elven MUs at lower levels.

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

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

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

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

These letters result from (mostly) complaints about the ethics of games such as The Price of Freedom and Twilight 2000 incomprehensible. Surely a great deal of the fun of roleplaying is playing a character different from your own. Not all PCs possess the morals of their player.

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

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

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

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

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

The Lawmaster bike

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speed</th>
<th>mph</th>
<th>kph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full speed</td>
<td>80 m/R</td>
<td>570 kph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max speed</td>
<td>480 m/R</td>
<td>720 kph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>80 m/R</td>
<td>114 mph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop speed</td>
<td>120 m/R</td>
<td>193 kph</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One round equals about 10 seconds. There-fore 6 rounds is 1 minute; 6x60 rounds is 1 hour. So the maximum speed should be 480 x 360 mites per hour, which is 172,800 mph, or 278.8 kph. You may agree that 172.8 kph is actually not very fast. It's nowhere near the full speed of 570 kph. Is this the fastest a 22nd Century bike can do? Of course, a skilled Judge can take this up to 570 kph. Where does this figure come from? Have I cocked it up, or have you?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Well, I'm glad someone likes something we print! The sequel to Hugh's Dredd adventure, A Night In The Death, will be in the next issue. Personally, I can't wait to see what'll be done with those adventures of this size again. There are also some tentative plans to actually include a complete game, in several parts, to pull out and collect. Add to this all the Angelic adventures coming for issue 89, (I can't bear it, you know) and the future's gonna be fun.

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

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

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

I agree completely, and I would expect more than a few fellow gamers to do the same. Rules-lawsy-ness (I find it amusing how the people who can completely ruin everyone's fun, because they haven't fully grasped what a roleplaying game is. Sure, in Monopoly you follow the rules, because if you do anything drastic the game wouldn't work - but even in that game people have their variants with lotteries, multiple hotels and so on. In a roleplaying game the rules should only be there to add a framework to the simulation of life, and not to be modified quite a bit with absolutely no effect on the game. In just about every roleplaying game there's ever been there has been a note somewhere which says "You are at liberty to change or ignore any single part of these rules if you feel they can be done better another way." Yet still we see the spectacle of these boring killjoys dragging down and
Work in Progress

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

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

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

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

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

Richard Halliwell

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

Among the unique features of this game are the No-Ship rules, whereby a player GI who is killed ends up as a Bio-Chip sitting in another player's rifle, helmet or backpack, and the two form a team for the rest of the game. This is going to be a must for all fans of the Rogue Trooper comic strip, and also (we hope!) an enjoyable and highly playable SF boardgame in its own right.

Graeme Davis

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

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

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

Phil Gallagher

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

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

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

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

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

Rick Priestley

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

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

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

Paul Cockburn

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GobbledyGook Competition

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

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

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

GobbledyGook Competition
White Dwarf
Games Workshop Design Studio
H-16 Lew Pavement
Nottingham NG1 7DL

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