

# CLAWMARKS 46

February 2012



# LETTER FROM THE CLAWTHING



Welcome, my new minions! Welcome to CLAWs, the one and only role-playing society at UCT. We are glad to add you to our ranks, and hope that you not only enjoy our events, but also enjoy the company.

We hope to have a very successful year and I hope that you will be introduced to new and wonderful things. This year we will be running boardgames and modules every week, we will run organized KAOS, Quake KAOS, LARPs up the wazoo, and of course our annual convention, Dragonfire.

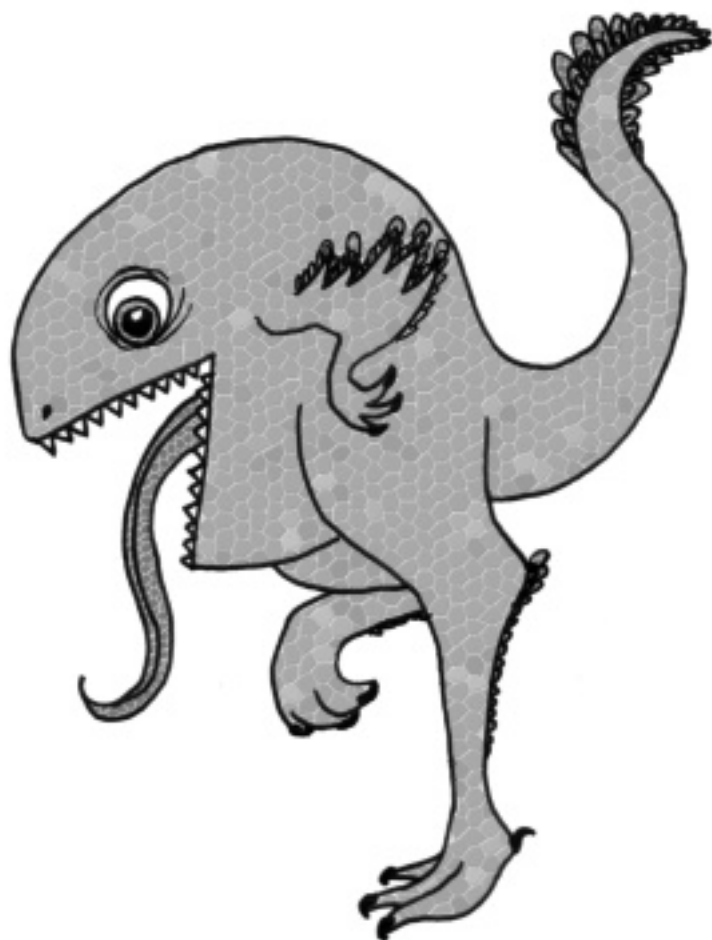
This may be our last year around (those crazy Mayans say so, so it can't possibly not be true), and so we will attempt to end things off with a bang; we will try to be bigger and better than ever before.

I hope that you enjoy your time with us, and that you will learn that to be a part of CLAWs is to be a part of something so much larger than that.... I will leave you all to decide what that something is.

*Your Clawthing,  
Kristen*

# SPON TENTS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| What is roleplaying? _____                | 4  |
| <i>Kristen Meyer</i>                      |    |
| Dealing with new players _____            | 4  |
| <i>Anna Malczyk</i>                       |    |
| Gaming conventions in South Africa _____  | 5  |
| <i>Yvette Wray</i>                        |    |
| Special briefing _____                    | 6  |
| <i>Michael Dewar</i>                      |    |
| LA by night _____                         | 8  |
| <i>Anna Malczyk</i>                       |    |
| Escape from Glennga _____                 | 8  |
| <i>Adrianna Pinska</i>                    |    |
| How to play ThunderStone _____            | 10 |
| <i>Reuel Miller</i>                       |    |
| LARP-writing workshop _____               | 14 |
| <i>Camilla Christie</i>                   |    |
| The destiny of Obsul Amon _____           | 18 |
| <i>Warren Russell</i>                     |    |
| CthulhuTech: Malawi _____                 | 20 |
| <i>Simon Cross</i>                        |    |
| Beyond the Card Mountains of Mythos _____ | 21 |
| <i>Mark Ferry</i>                         |    |
| Vampire: the Eternal Struggle _____       | 24 |
| <i>Simon Cross</i>                        |    |
| Classifieds _____                         | 25 |
| Why I hate the Mayans _____               | 27 |
| <i>The Archbigot of the Necropolis</i>    |    |



# EDS & CREDS



**Editing:** Berndt Hannweg, Rikus Marais, Adrianna Pinska

**Art:** Stacy Fabre, Reia White, Kristen Meyer, Adrianna Pinska, the internet fairy

**Layout:** Adrianna Pinska

**Care and feeding of the editorial team:** Kristen Meyer and Warren Russell

**Warez:** Scribus, LibreOffice, the GIMP, Inkscape, Kate, Subversion & TortoiseSVN

**Fontz:** Divide by Zero, Averia, Mike

**No thanks to:** the sun

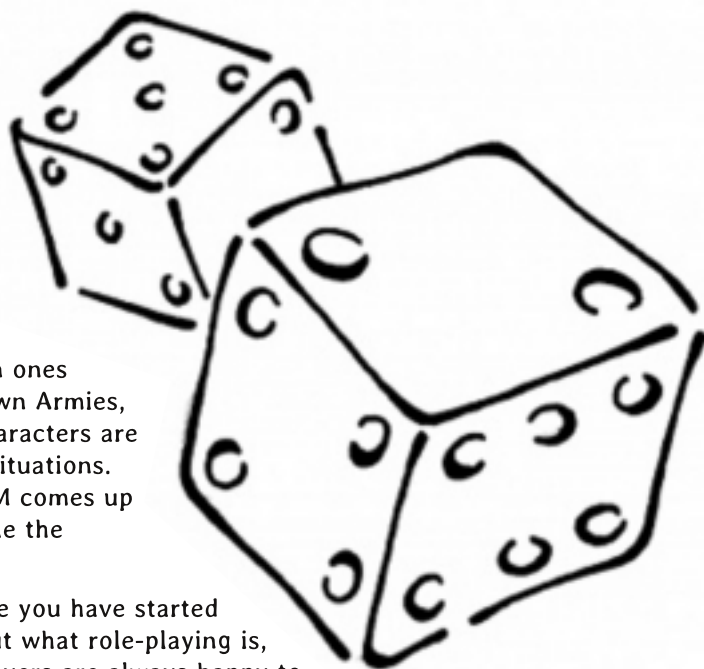
# WHAT IS ROLEPLAYING?

*Kristen Meyer*

Role-playing is “a game in which players take on the roles of imaginary characters, usually in a setting created by a referee, and thereby vicariously experience the imagined adventures of these characters”, or at least this is what the Oxford English Dictionary defines it as being.

Role-playing games are stories, the players are the characters, and the Game Master (GM) is the narrator. They are choose-your-own-adventure novels taken to the next level. Most of all, role-playing is about gathering friends around a table, or anywhere really, and having fun. There are hundreds of systems that keep gameplay in check; well-known ones are Dungeons and Dragons (D&D), World of Darkness, Unknown Armies, Call of Cthulhu, to name a few. These systems dictate how characters are constructed, possible settings, dice rules and how to resolve situations. The system makes up the framework for the game, and the GM comes up with the storyline that the characters will be thrown into, while the players mess everything up.

All of the above may sound very complicated, but once you have started it is easy to grasp, and very addictive. The best way to find out what role-playing is, is to throw yourself into the deep end; GMs and other role-players are always happy to lend a helping hand.



## DEALING WITH NEW PLAYERS

*Anna Malczyk*

As another O-Week rolls around, a brand new crop of players appears on campus. These Bobs come from far afield (Mowbray, George, or even Brakpan) and most of them have only heard vague tales of “this role-playing thing”. Having always felt that such a hobby must exist somewhere, they are suddenly thrust into a world of imagination and wonder. But, alas, over-eager DMs can easily lose these budding gamers in a maze of house rules and intricate plots.

To avoid this, try these four tips:

### **Rules light**

Knowing all the rules for a system is a tall order even for seasoned players, so don't expect the newbies to grasp any of them. Instead of launching into an epic, rules-crunchy running of DnD 3.5, start with something light and simple. The Window system is a good option here. Alternatively, take over all responsibility for the rules and produce pre-created characters and rule cheat sheets. The last thing you want is a new player getting bogged down trying to decide if they need to roll Charisma or Appearance instead of, well, actually playing the game.

### **Ease in**

Many new players don't actually start off knowing they want to play RPGs – they just seem to be in the right place at the right time. If you have a newbie on the fence about this whole gaming thing, get them to sit in on a session and just watch. Soon, you will probably find they're itching

to get involved from the sidelines; as soon as they “get” the idea of how RPGs work, they want to dive in. This is why so many girlfriends, boyfriends and random hangers-on get into gaming – they want in on the fun.

### **Start small**

With everything else being so new and scary for the lowly newbie, try to keep the actual game session simple and straightforward. Your gaming group might love intricate political machinations, but if you're joined by a newbie who still hasn't grasped that “I can talk to characters? Really?” all of your careful plotting will go right over their heads. Start them off on a really basic quest or mission – fetch item X from place Y, or investigate haunted location Z. Once they pick up the gist, you can add more complexity.

### **Be flexible**

You want the player's first experience to be fun and positive, which means winging things in their favour. DMs are pretty good at backpedalling and retrofitting game developments to existing plots, and this should be no different for the newbie players. Yeah, they'll probably come up with some bizarre and unrealistic explanation for what's going on, but that's okay. You can mold their brains later, once they've signed up for real. For the beginning, though, make them feel special for figuring out that, golly gee, the butler did it.

# GAMING CONVENTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Yvette Wray

Regardless of whether we have just started roleplaying or have been playing for years, most of us are aware of the big gaming conventions (or cons as they are called) in the USA - GenCon Indy, PAX and DND XP to name a few. What you might not know is that South Africa actually has three gaming cons of its own, spaced neatly throughout the year so as not to break your budget all in one go!

## UPCon

**Where:** Pretoria

**When:** usually April, sometimes early May depending on when Easter Falls

**Length of con:** 2 days

**Who hosts it:** Tuks Krygspel Vereniging (TKV, the University of Pretoria gaming society) and the GGC (Great Geek Collective)

**UPCON 2012:** Classic Horror (April 14-15)

This is South Africa's biggest University con and boasts a number of different attractions including: anime screenings; at least 5 different shops and a tuck shop; Warhammer and Warmachine tournaments; Magic: The Gathering, Legend of the 5 Rings and Vampire: The Eternal Struggle card competitions; as well as roleplaying and sometimes LARPs too. There are prizes for the different games groups but the experience is worth more than that as the TKV crowd are warm, friendly and willing to offer couch/floor space to distant travellers.

## ICON

**Where:** Johannesburg

**When:** 3rd weekend in July (dependent on the Gauteng school holidays)

**Length of con:** 3 days

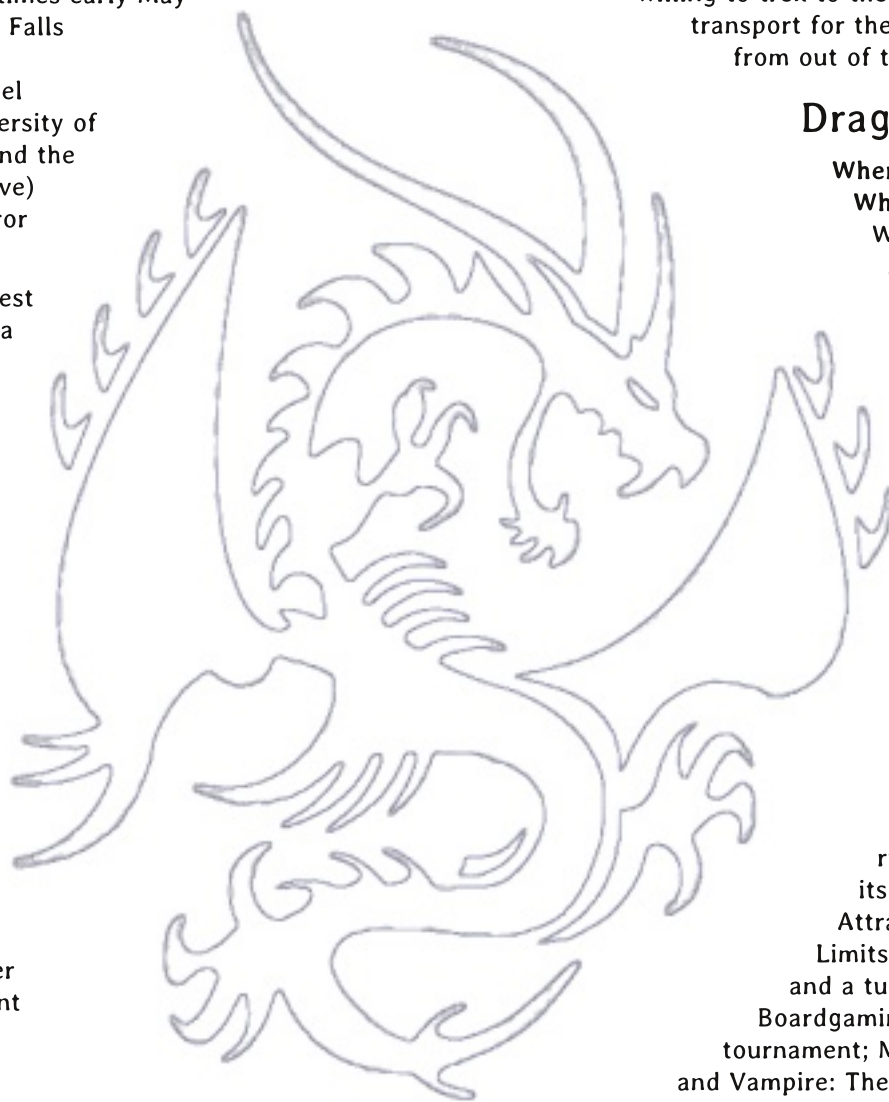
**Who hosts it:** Games Emporium (The "Grants")

**ICON 2012:** Raiders of the Last ICON (July 13-15)

South Africa's biggest con (at one time known as GenCon SA) turns 21 this year! Attractions include: anime screenings; a hall of shops and a tuck shop; boardgaming;

costume/cosplay competition; Warhammer and Warmachine tournaments; Magic: The Gathering, Legend of the 5 Rings and Vampire: The Eternal Struggle card competitions; LAN and Xbox gaming; roleplaying, LARPs and even comedy thanks to local comedian, roleplayer and DM Vittorio Leonardi.

This is the *big* con and many people make the effort to go from all over the country. Accommodation can be found with local residents who happily welcome distant travellers into their homes for the weekend. Most are even willing to trek to the airport and provide transport for the weekend for those from out of town.



## Dragonfire

**Where:** Cape Town

**When:** weekend around Women's Day (9 August for those who don't know)

**Length of con:** traditionally 2 days but sometimes longer

**Who hosts it:** Cape Legion of Adventurers and Wargamers (CLAWs, the University of Cape Town gaming society)

**Dragonfire 2012:** Details to follow

This is South Africa's longest-running con, going on its 24th year of running! Attractions include: Outer Limits, Skycastle Games and a tuck shop; Boardgaming; Warhammer tournament; Magic: The Gathering and Vampire: The Eternal Struggle card competitions; roleplaying and LARPs.

Unfortunately not many out-of-towners attend this con given how close it is to ICON, but it is still a well-attended con with many members of the "old" CLAWs putting in an appearance. Travellers are of course welcome and hospitality can be organised.

So there we have it, three cons close to home! The perfect way to avoid your parents and have some fun, or even just meet new gamers.

# **SPECIAL BRIEFING: THE NEW INQUISITION**

## **INVESTIGATION STATUS: TEAM "BAD COMPANY"**

*Found in a filing cabinet by Michael Dewar*

### **SUMMARY**

The Special Operations Field Team designated BAD COMPANY was formed in the aftermath of the destruction of the Chicago safehouse. In response to concerns raised about the unreliability of magickal operatives, BAD COMPANY was one of a number of teams formed entirely of mundane, but highly-trained, field operatives in the hope of improving operative loyalty and reliability.

Subsequent events have proven this theory to be in error. Despite their lauded mission record (including directly saving the life of Alex Abel on one occasion - see operational file T-17891), it is now clear that BAD COMPANY has gone rogue and has been operating against the interests of TNI for some time.

### **INCIDENT REPORT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT**

In short, the team used an authorised front company (a PMC established by David and Cooper called SMITH AND SMITH) to misappropriate shipments of TNI weapons and equipment for private use and resale. They are also suspected to be responsible for distribution of a classified TNI N.O.C. list.

The BAD COMPANY team overplayed their hand when they attempted to gain remote access to the TNI Forecasting server (see project file MANA) The team triggered the local MAILER-DAEMON defences during their attempted break-in and escaped the field team sent to bring them in. Their access to the server was brief and minimal data was compromised. They have subsequently gone underground.

Their details and areas of specialisation are briefly summarized below (see personnel files for more detail)

**MATT BLANCO - ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE AND INTRUSION** (Known Alias: Wayne Human): Blanco has known proclivities for recreational hacking and blackmail. He appears to have been instrumental in covering up the team's treachery and his mercenary nature and love of the forbidden suggest could easily have been convinced to participate in such activities.

**BYRON COOPER - DEMOLITIONS AND CLOSE-QUARTERS BATTLE** (Known Alias: Conrad Martin): Cooper is known to be psychologically unstable, suffering from

periodic PTSD episodes. This combined with his recent facial burns may have contributed to his abandonment of TNI. He was in medical recovery during many of the team's unauthorised activities, including their raid on the Forecasting server. However, when he was brought in for questioning, he killed the assigned retrieval team and escaped.

**TROY DAVID - CLOSE COMBAT AND INTERROGATION** (Known Alias: Warren Russell): David's defection is a particular surprise. His psych profile indicates an uncompromising ideological framework as opposed to some of his more mercenary team members - he is even reported to have allowed himself to be shot and arrested while in the field to preserve the life of a civilian witness.

However, David has also been noted to have maverick tendencies and may have had unauthorised contact with various parties to conduct personal vendettas without approval.

**PAMELA MORRISON - SABOTAGE AND SOCIAL ENGINEERING** (Known Alias: Lara Davison): Morrison was a known terrorist before joining TNI, and may simply be returning to her roots. Interestingly, her profile suggests a particularly strong personal loyalty to Abel, though she is reportedly skilled at rationalising necessary behaviours and may have convinced herself that Abel was not directly being harmed by the team's actions.

**GIL GUZMAN - RECONNAISSANCE AND INFILTRATION** (Known Alias: David Maclay): Guzman is known to be highly antisocial, with a tendency towards sudden and abrupt changes of allegiance if he feels the circumstances merit it. He has worked for both Spanish Special Forces and Spanish terrorists before joining TNI, and has betrayed both sides with no apparent remorse.

**MALIK AL-ASSAD - SNIPER AND FIREARMS SPECIALIST** (Known Alias: Zac Crumley): Al-Assad has betrayed former employers before, having embezzled money from his old terrorist cell and their Russian arms-dealer compatriots. His profile suggests disillusionment with causes and ideals, indicating that abandoning TNI was probably no great hardship if a better opportunity presented itself.

**STEVEN TAYLOR - TRANSPORT AND SURVEILLANCE** (Known Alias: Alastair Pearson): Taylor is a

recent addition to the team. He is not believed to have been directly involved in many of their crimes; however his strong sense of personal loyalty to the team (who were instrumental in his promotion to C-clearance) appears to have outweighed his loyalty to TNI. He is to be shown no leniency if encountered.

### **SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATION**

The team officially went off the grid in San Francisco after their failed attempt to compromise TNI servers, presumably to obtain data to sell through their SMITH AND SMITH contacts.

None of their TNI cover identities have subsequently been used, and the trackers implanted in the team members appear to have been surgically removed before their disappearance, suggesting an element of premeditation. They were later recovered from a civilian vehicle where they had apparently been planted.

They appear to have done a brief freelance mercenary job in Mexico to raise funds to leave the country. Use of improvised explosives to destroy a civilian yacht is consistent with Morrison's background, and the timeline fits. We have been unable to identify their employer or motives.

Subsequently, they are believed to have left the country with their available funds, presumably having arranged new identities through alternate contacts. The most likely source of these documents is one Daniel Webbing in Los Angeles, who was a known associate of the team and was found dead shortly before their disappearance.

### **PRIORITY ONE INTELLIGENCE UPDATE**

New intelligence has been received from our London assets - Pamela Morrison reportedly contacted a local Bibliomancer, Sir Richard Hall, to request a divination spell. Hall was paid by an anonymous delivery of rare books. Hall subsequently informed TNI of the contact.

The divination question asked by Morrison was: "Is Rita Williams in LA and still alive?"

The answer was "Yes."

This intelligence suggests that the BAD COMPANY team may be back in America and active in the Los Angeles area. This is to be investigated. Team designated "THE HIT SQUAD" and support teams to be deployed on receipt of verifiable intel confirming their location.



# Campaign summary

## LA BY NIGHT

Anna Malczyk

The Eighth Plague, a notorious band of fixer-uppers, is hired by parties unknown to stage a Camarilla takeover of the Anarch-controlled (and Sabbat-threatened) Los Angeles of the early 90s. The idea is to go undercover and break the Anarchs from the inside, while simultaneously repelling Sabbat incursions.

Svetlana (gun-nut Toreador), Evelyn (pith-helmeted Tremere) and Ezekiel (old-West Gangrel) arrived in LA under cover of night, having stopped on the way to rescue the hapless Lucky, a Kindred who'd gotten into a disagreement with some Sabbat. There they met Josie, their Malkavian contact, who had little in the way of useful information to share. With Ezekiel's wolves Annabel (fluffiness 8), Michael (fluffiness 10) and Sullivan (fluffiness 2) in tow, the trio set out and promptly assaulted a prominent local Baron, getting off on entirely the wrong foot.

Undaunted, the group decided it would be easy enough to find other allies. They soon ran into Louis Fortier, proprietor of Club Zombie, who suggested they bump off "some Camarilla guy" who's been causing a bit of a fuss in town. Loath to shed their cover, the group decided to go ahead and staged a kick-ass assassination (though some diablerie may have been involved). They triumphantly presented the severed head and then merrily skipped off to their Hollywood Hills mansion-slash-porn studio, their reward for the mission.

The gang got cozy in and around town. Some hijinks

ensued. In a bid to get some mortal leverage, Evelyn ghouled local Republican mayoral candidate Sunny Johnston, who has so far turned out to be rather terribly bad at being a politician (but no worry, the group's copious funds and bribes have pretty much bought the election for him). Svetlana formed an attachment to downtown IT geek Ned, whom she'd scoped out as a potential technology wrangler; since all three hailed from the 18th century, this kom-pyu-tar stuff was a bit out of their league. But suddenly shit hit fan, Ned got assaulted by some suspected Sabbat and Svetlana was forced to embrace him (prompting many cries of "Ned's dead, baby, Ned's dead").

Oblivious to many rather dire behind-the-scenes developments, the trio befriended a bunch of high-ups and staged a semi-successful ambush on an infiltrating band of Sabbat. The success didn't last. A few nights later, they got a mysterious phone-call from said high-ups, in which it was revealed that the assassination was actually just to blackmail them (it was filmed) and that everyone knew they were Camarilla all along. As it turned out, that hapless victim was in fact the child of the Prince of Phoenix - who was now rather miffed and was sending in the Justicars.

Things took a turn for the complicated when the gang found themselves rescuing a newly created shovel-head, Eleanora (med-student-become-Ventrue-antitribu). Now stuck with two brand-new vampires, neither of whom accepted "It's magic" as an explanation for what they were, the three decided on a drastic change of plans. Forget cover-ups; screw subtlety. It was time to get dirty.

A recent unlikely ally in the form of Miss Mella (a Malkavian who converses with inanimate objects) and her patron Edward Westbridge have stopped the downward spiral. Currently, the plan is to fuck some Sabbat shit up, consolidate power and declare openly as Camarilla. Now, if only there weren't some Justicars on the way...

Escaped from

Glennaga

*A condensed summary of a science fiction campaign inspired by Farscape and Blake's 7*

Adrianna Pinska

Our protagonists are a mismatched group of fugitives on the run from the despotic Empire: Atallat "Latte" Vool, a revolutionary from a backwater planet who is very bad at negotiating under pressure; Bnach-Tarssski, a devious diplomat exiled by the lizard people of the Tribe; Nik-chub Ceb, a Warrior caste technician and communications specialist; Shar Marceav, a once-celebrated military test pilot and alcoholic; Tsaijix Qal, a smuggler with a secret and a loathing of gravity; and Utan Grenwod, a drug smuggler and engineer.

Together they escaped the icy prison planet Glennaga to get away from a very unpleasant new governor, the notorious Star Captain Shihov -- discovering an ancient derelict organic spaceship made of wood, which had escaped notice for centuries in orbit near the planet.

They made friends with the treeship through a slightly disturbing avatar cloned from genetic material harvested from an unconscious Nik-Chub and the meat of a yak-like Glennagan herbivore. This "Ambassador" was soon revealed to be a hive entity, able to synchronise many physical bodies using some kind of telepathy. It attempted to share this method of communication with Nik-Chub by transplanting alien tissue into his brain, but was frustrated by the inefficiencies of human biology. Nik-Chub was mostly gifted with the ability to have really bad headaches, and his surgical misadventure was the beginning of a pattern of bad luck.

While obtaining parts to repair the ship's damaged hyperspace drive, the party rescued a cargo cult of monkey-like protohumans (who are very good at carving things) from an abandoned mining station. They attempted to deliver a mysterious hypnotape to the monkeys'



homeworld, Mugorok, where they became embroiled in local mob politics - acquiring illicit random number generators for a city boss from her rebellious younger sister - and narrowly escaped being captured by an Imperial Inquisition dreadnought. After hopping to the next system, At-Yaj, they discovered a stowaway - a defecting Inquisition operative known as 62 and quickly renamed to Ardotya.

In the crocodile-infested swamp of At-Yaj - and in the tiny square of urban civilisation which was free of crocodiles and other murderous fauna - they found the intended recipient of the hypnotape, some interesting smuggling contacts, mushrooms which could be fermented into lucrative narcotics, an abandoned bunker full of mysterious equipment, and (in the case of Latte) a girlfriend.

After another hurried departure, they visited semi-independent Anadrask Station, where Tsaijix had some old family contacts. There they were tasked with investigating the unexplained disappearance of several cargo ships, and the ships which had previously attempted to find them. They briefly rented a lab and investigated a cylinder which they had found in the bunker -- it turned out to contain another hive entity, which was named KC (Killer Calamari) because of its unsettling spider-squid-like appearance and sharp claws.

While in search of the missing ships, our heroes uncovered both a new and sinister enemy lurking in the system and a more mundane conspiracy to destabilise Anadrask and pave the way for an Imperial intervention. They took on a massive organic bone ship which was home to the Convergence - an entity much less friendly than the Ambassador - and managed to survive, rescue an abductee (Nik-Chub) and perhaps even strike a blow against it, with the help of the Ambassador and their new tentacled friend.

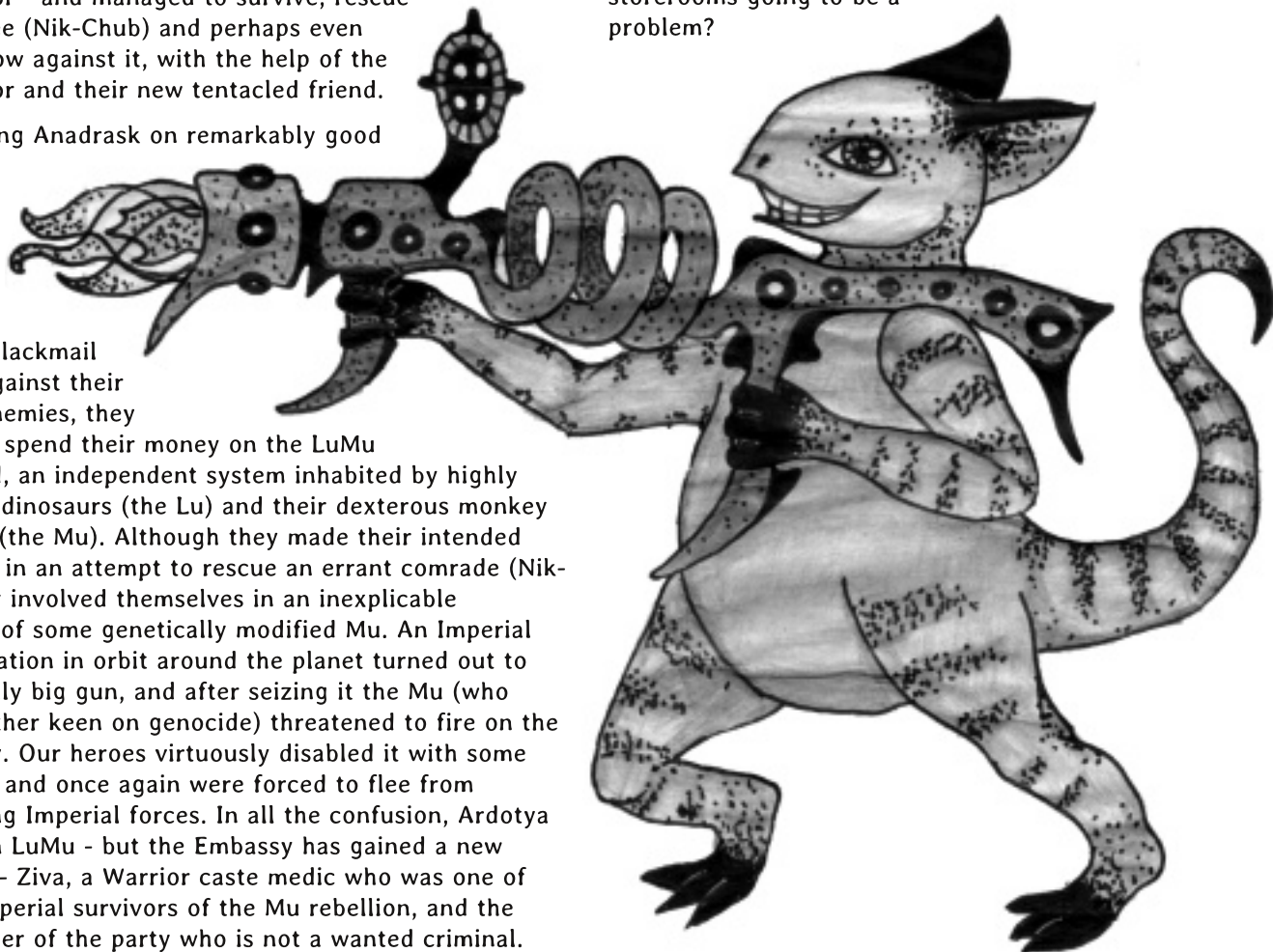
After leaving Anadrask on remarkably good terms, having provided their contacts with some excellent blackmail material against their political enemies, they decided to spend their money on the LuMu homeworld, an independent system inhabited by highly intelligent dinosaurs (the Lu) and their dexterous monkey symbiotes (the Mu). Although they made their intended purchases, in an attempt to rescue an errant comrade (Nik-Chub) they involved themselves in an inexplicable revolution of some genetically modified Mu. An Imperial hospital station in orbit around the planet turned out to have a really big gun, and after seizing it the Mu (who seemed rather keen on genocide) threatened to fire on the capital city. Our heroes virtuously disabled it with some torpedoes, and once again were forced to flee from approaching Imperial forces. In all the confusion, Ardotya was left on LuMu - but the Embassy has gained a new passenger - Ziva, a Warrior caste medic who was one of the few Imperial survivors of the Mu rebellion, and the only member of the party who is not a wanted criminal.

Yet.

After resurfacing in Oovooloo -- a watery tourist resort which is rather miserable when the hemisphere with all the beaches is experiencing its long winter -- the fugitives discovered that footage of their recent exploits in LuMu had been creatively edited and used as anti-terrorist propaganda by a Consul eager for an excuse to crack down on subversive elements within his sector. Those affected included Latte's homeworld Jerunat and the hidden smuggler stronghold Gephke (Tsaijix's home).

On the bright side, the resort turned out to be a haven for smugglers during the off season, and the recent crackdown had left some of the smugglers without transport for an important shipment of weapons. In exchange for their services, our heroes were able to purchase a lot of equipment at a bargain price although Tsaijix also discovered that some of his Gephken compatriots were a little upset about his recent high-profile activities.

Latte hatched a plan to set up a front company through which the party could operate semi-openly, most of them in disguise and with new identities, of course. After a very long discussion, everyone agreed on the name "Dark Matter Holdings". So far, after arriving in Acajidat, the agrarian system to which the weapons are being delivered, they have purchased a very flashy ship and become tabloid celebrities for a day. Now they must offload their shipment, to get rid of the crates which are piling up all over the Embassy, but the rendezvous has just developed some kind of complication. What does the impending high-profile wedding have to do with the delivery? And is the discovery of a dormant AI in one of the ship's forgotten storerooms going to be a problem?



# How to play ThunderStone

## and how to play it well

*Reuel Miller shares his secrets*

In its essence: ThunderStone is a deck builder game. It falls into the same category as games like Nightfall and Dominion. The difference between the three games can be boiled down as such:

**Dominion:** [ <http://www.boardgamearena.com> or <http://dominion.isotropic.org> or <http://www.brettspielwelt.de/Spiele/Dominion> ] - almost zero player interaction. You play your strategy and if the right cards come out, you prevail.

**ThunderStone:** [ <http://www.yucata.de> (multiplayer) or <http://pithunderstone.appspot.com> (for Single player mode) or <https://apps.facebook.com/thunderstone> (play versus the computer and your friends; though with limited cards) ] - Limited player interaction. Certain heroes (and monsters) do cause your opponents to lose cards from their current hands, thus impairing their next move's options.

**NightFall:** (No online version) - Total PvP game

Of the three, I prefer ThunderStone.

### So, what is ThunderStone?

The back story is that you are the leader of a band of Heroes and Mercenaries living in a town and you battle monsters coming up out of the dungeon. No surprise that the Munchkin King of Chicago is a fan ;-)

### What is the aim of ThunderStone?

The aim is to have the most number of Victory Points at the end. Victory points are earned in 3 different ways:

- 1) Each Monster that you defeat is worth a certain number of victory points (VP). Defeat the monster and put the monster card in your deck. If the monster is still there at the end of the game, it will be worth the victory point printed on the bottom right hand corner of the card.
- 2) Each level 3 Hero is worth some victory points. Level up (or buy) these heroes to get the VP.

3) Certain items available in the village are worth VP. Buy them and add them to your total at the end.

### How do you play ThunderStone?

Using the Random Select cards (or you can go to:

<http://www.asmor.com/scripts/tsrand> which is smartphone friendly, and can setup a randomised game depending on which expansions you have available) select 3 Monster types, 4 heroes and 8 village stacks.

There are 10 monsters in each type so there are 30 monsters in total. Each hero stack is (normally) made up of six level 1 heroes, four level 2 heroes and two level 3 heroes. There is also a ThunderStone card which is used to determine the end of the game. Shuffle up the monster cards together. Then take off the top 10 monster cards. Shuffle the ThunderStone into those 10 and then place them at the BOTTOM of the deck.

Each player is then given a starting deck of 12 cards. There are 6 Heroes (Militia), 2 Weapons (Daggers), 2 light sources (Torches) -to help you see further into the dungeon- and 2 Food items (Iron Rations) that make your heroes stronger so they can equip heavier weapons. Each of the non-militia cards has a gold value in the top left hand corner (the militia also have a gold value, it is just zero; this is important for cards that let you destroy cards with a coin value, even if that value is zero). Draw six cards from your deck and begin.

For your turn, you have three main choices of actions to take. You lay your hand open on the table so all other players can see what they are and then you state what choice you are making. You can either REST, GO TO THE VILLAGE or ENTER THE DUNGEON.

#### Rest:

When you rest, you are allowed to destroy one card from the cards in your hand and take it permanently out of your deck. You want to do this to get rid of cards that hinder you (like in the case of Disease cards) or cards that are weak (like any of the 12 starting cards). Then discard your remaining cards and draw another 6 cards from your deck (shuffling your discard pile when you have run out of cards to draw).

#### Go to The Village:

When you go to the village, you are allowed to buy 1 card. Look in the top left hand corner of each card in your hand. Any card with a number (shown inside a gold coin) is valuable in the village. The total of those numbers is your budget for buying a card for that round. Essentially, this means that you can purchase a card provided its cost is less than or equal to



the sum your hand's value. Some cards have an effect when they are in the village and you play them before you buy your card. The newly bought card is put directly on your discard pile.

Once all effects have been played and all cards have been bought (some cards allow you to buy multiple cards during your village action), you can use any Experience Points gained by defeating monsters to upgrade your heroes. The rule is that you are only ever allowed to BUY the top card in each stack. By using Experience Points, you can upgrade Heroes to their next level without the next level hero card being at the top of the stack. Since all bought cards are put directly onto your discard pile, it is not possible to buy a hero and level it up in the same turn (that was a nice Munchkinly idea, too bad). Then discard your remaining cards and draw another 6 cards from your deck (shuffling your discard pile when you have run out of cards to draw).

#### Enter The Dungeon:

When you enter the dungeon, you calculate your total attack value by adding all your heroes, weapons (each hero can only wield ONE weapon at a time, and can not change weapons during combat) and spells together. You then look to see if this value is better or equal to any monster's health value. You then subtract any modifiers. For every level of the dungeon you need one light source. If you do not have a light source for the level you want to attack, you are at a -2 penalty for any missing light sources (so if you want to attack level 3 and you only have 1 light source, you are missing 2 light sources and are thus at a -4 penalty). You also subtract any other penalties (like -1 attack from a Disease card).

You will also need to check if there are any dungeon effects on any of the cards or heroes that you have played and resolve the ones you choose to resolve. You do NOT need to do every dungeon effect, they are all optional. But, if you have started doing a dungeon effect, you must complete it (if A card says that you may re-arrange the dungeon, then destroy a card and then pick a card from your deck once you re-arrange the dungeon you MUST destroy one card and draw one card).

Finally: once all dungeon effects have been resolved any battle effects on the monster card are resolved (any heroes or items that get destroyed by a monster's battle effects occur at the END of the combat; so they still stick around long enough to kill the monster, but then die at the end of the combat). If your battle total is equal or higher than the monster's health you are victorious and you put the monster card on your discard pile (and



any other cards it may have generated) and collect your XP token (which are kept separately). If, however, your battle total is NOT higher than the monster's health, you effectively "scare" the monster and it goes to the bottom of the dungeon deck. Whether a monster has been defeated or not, refill the dungeon by putting the new monster into level 3 and moving any monsters up to fill the gap. Then discard your remaining cards and draw another 6 cards from your deck (shuffling your discard pile when you have run out of cards to draw).

#### **The end of the game:**

The game ends when the ThunderStone would be moved into the first level of the dungeon. If a player defeats a monster in level 1 while the ThunderStone is in level 2, the player gets the ThunderStone as well. If the monster is not defeated but scared away, no-one gets the ThunderStone but the game still ends.

Easy to learn and you pick it up the rules of play pretty quickly.

Now for some Tactics (since you can only play the first base set on [www.yucata.de](http://www.yucata.de) I am going to tailor some of these suggestions for the site, but the essence is true for ALL flavours of ThunderStone):

1) Smaller decks for the win. This is the main aim in practically ALL deck builder games. You want to rid yourself of all your starting cards (that are normally very under-powered) and get a deck that always draws a hand of win. This means buying up Trainers, Pawnbrokers and

Town Guards (to get to the trainers and pawnbrokers faster). Do NOT be tempted to go into the dungeon early to kill a weak monster. Monsters are nothing but chaff in your hand, especially during the early part of the game so all they will do is clog up your hand while you are trying to whittle down your deck to fighting weight.

There are other, sneakier ways to clear your starting hand early on. Look at the initial monsters. If there is a monster that reduces a hero's strength by 2 then go into combat with it. All militia are strength 2, so they will go down to strength 0 and be destroyed. So, instead of resting and destroying one militia card, you can effectively go into combat, lose 1-6 militia (depending on how many are in your hand) and have faster access to cards with gold (this is a good strategy when there are no trainers available; if there are Trainers, rather destroy your militia for the 2 XP). Personally, I do not buy heroes or weapons for at least the first 4 rounds if there are any two of the trainers, pawnbrokers and town guards available.

2) Do not buy anything you do not need. If you have 12 gold, and there is nothing in the village you need, do NOT buy something "just to use the gold, otherwise it's a waste of gold". That extra card you don't really need just means that a card you really do need will not be hand when you need it. Rather look to destroy a card while resting. There are, however, some cards that are definitely more useful than

others. In terms of effectiveness, the order of desirability for certain cards are as follows: Selurin, Outlands, Elf, Fireball, Regian, Chalice, Dwarf, Banish/Magical Aura/Arcane Energies.

Most desirable are the Selurin Wizards. At first level, they are +2 magical attack with additional +1 magical attack for all items (like your useless Iron Rations and Torches) and battle spells. At second level they DOUBLE all magical damage. At third level, not only do they DOUBLE all magical damage, they force each opponent to discard 1 hero from their hand which you can use in your combat (and if the monster needs to kill a hero, you can kill off the borrowed hero... I do that often). With Selurins in my deck, I have been able to get up to 120+ points of damage (the biggest monster I have ever seen in ALL the ThunderStone expansions is a Guardian with 25 health, which goes up to 31 at level 3 of the dungeon). If you can grab both Selurin Theurges (the name of the third level Selurin), the game is effectively over and you have won. This is why Yucata offers an option of playing a game of random cards BUT WITH NO SELURIN.

The next best hero is the Outland Warrior. At first level, he does +3 attack and is also able to destroy a food item (like your useless Iron rations) for an additional +3 attack. At Second level, he does +5 attack AND he is still able to destroy the food item AND he gets +1 attack for any monster card in your hand. At third level, he is doing a standard +7 attack with an additional +2 per monster. Potentially, an Outland Khan can do +17 attack if it is him and 5 monsters. Suddenly, the monsters that are normally dead chaff in your hand become very useful.

The Elf wizard is interesting for more experienced players. The Elf, along with its Magical Damage is a light source and lets you banish monsters from the dungeon to the bottom of the deck. This allows you to play a complex strategy of killing what you can and banishing higher level monsters to keep your opponents from catching up with you. At level 2 he is a Fireball that can carry a small weapon (+3 Magic Attack and +2 Light) and at level 4 he is better than a Fireball, that can banish a monster before combat starts so you can try get access to higher level monsters faster.

Fireballs are +3 magical attack AND a single light source. Three Fireballs and you are pretty much killing almost any monster in the game.

Regian Clerics are pretty useless at level 1. They are only worth +1 Magical attack, but they can destroy one disease to draw another card. At second level, they start getting better as they are worth +2 Magical attack, let you draw a card AND let you destroy as many diseases as you

have to draw one card per destroyed disease. At third level they start to really rock. They give +3 Magical attack, allow you to draw TWO cards and each disease destroyed lets you draw ANOTHER TWO cards. If you have a small deck of Regians, Fireballs, diseases and monsters it is sometimes possible to scroll through your entire deck for most combats.

Chalice clerics are similar to Regians, except that you are only ever able to draw 1 card. Weirdly, their second level is actually slightly better than their third level as he is worth +2 Magical attack, gets an additional +1 non-magical attack per item with light (like a Torch, Lantern or Lightstone Gem), he draws one card and can destroy diseases to let you draw a card. At third level, he loses his ability to destroy diseases, but does let you shop in the village if you are successful in a dungeon attack.



The Dwarf is good, but he is in need of an Edged weapon to make him better. This means that Dwarves are only as good as the weapons you draw with them. So you need to stack your deck with dwarves AND swords. Later in the game, this might make it more difficult to make him effective (unlike the Outland warriors, who will almost always have monsters with them).

Banish/Magical Aura/Arcane Energies are all spells that allow you to draw an extra card. This is almost always good as it allows you to scroll through your deck faster. Of the three, Banish is the best (though the hardest to play) as it allows you to scroll through your deck faster AND allows you to clear out the chaff and disease cards as well. It also lets you rearrange the dungeon so that the monster you want is in the position you want it in.

3) Once your deck is down to fighting weight, do not go back to the village unless you absolutely have to. Keep going into the dungeon whenever you can. The only time I would suggest against this is

when there are three VERY low VP monsters in the dungeon. You can use this time to clear out your deck and stock up on things you might need.

4) Do not be afraid to kill off some of your heroes to get higher level monsters. Once the dungeon deck gets lower than 14 cards left I am even willing to kill off my third level heroes (as long as the VP I lose are less than half the VP I gain from killing the monster... so I would be willing to kill my Outland Khan to kill an Ebony Fume.. -3 VP for the lost hero but +8 VP for the monster).

## So, tactically, how do I play ThunderStone?

Firstly, I look at the village cards. My first question is "How do I get rid of my initial 12 cards?" If there are Pawnbrokers, this is easy as all 12 starter cards have a gold value (even the militia, though their value is zero gold). If you can buy 2 or three pawnbrokers you can get rid of ALL the starter cards really quickly (and the pawnbrokers can be self destroyed to get rid of themselves). Otherwise, a Trainer is able to destroy all your militia in exchange for XP, which will help you upgrade another hero faster. Also, in a 2 player game, if there is a trainer, do NOT upgrade a militia to a level 1 hero as the actual cost is FIVE XP (3 XP spent and a loss of 2 potential XP had you destroyed the militia with a Trainer; I often win against inexperienced players as they upgrade a militia to get a powerful hero early, but then I storm past them and get both level 3s of that hero as I still have the XP to spend).

Weirdly, in a 4-5 player game, the exact opposite is true. If there is a trainer, you should kill off a maximum of 4 militia before upgrading at least 2 militia to level one heroes and getting into the dungeon as soon as you can. If there are no pawnbrokers or trainers, look at the three initial monsters. Does any one of them reduce a hero's strength by 2? If so, go into combat against it and it will kill off all the militia in the fight (this feature is not implemented on the Facebook app, so be careful).

If there are no monsters that reduce strength, the next 4-5 moves are going to be just resting and killing militia (in a 2-3 player game; in a 4-5 player game you will only really have time to kill off about 2 militia before other players who have not killed any militia will start to try get into the dungeon... you will have to see how many high cost cards you want and try get them even with a few militia in your hand). Also, certain heroes can destroy some of your starting items (like the Outlands warrior or Thyrian Knight that can destroy the iron rations, or the Blind Clerics that can destroy your torches). Try get at least one of those heroes so you can destroy the starter cards.

So... once you have figured out how you are going to get rid of most of your starting cards, what next? What is next is looking at the monsters and seeing what they will be doing.

Are they going to give a lot of diseases? If so, you will need to get some Clerics or Banishes to get rid of them.

Will they be killing Fighters? If so, you may want to stock up on some thieves, clerics and wizards.

Are there strength requirements to kill them? If so, you will want to concentrate on stronger heroes, or aim to get some food to bump your strength.

Will they require Magic to be defeated? If so, you need to get some wizards or clerics; or get some food or spells that turn regular attack into magical attack.

Are they immune to magic? If so, you will need fighters, thieves or archers.

Once you have an idea of the effects of the monsters, you already have an idea of which cards will hopefully be more useful. Now you need to look to see how you will be able to scroll through your deck faster.

Look for cards that let you draw more

cards. Heroes like Clerics are normally great for destroying diseases AND letting your draw more cards.

Once you have decided which cards you are going to concentrate on, **STICK TO THOSE CARDS**. If you can not beat anything in the dungeon, and you can't buy a card you want rather rest and destroy a card you don't need rather than buy another card you might need. Smaller decks are more powerful as the important cards get drawn more often.

### **OK... now comes the higher grade stuff...**

There is a HUGE difference between playing a 2 player game and a 4-5 player game. The difference, mainly, is how many rounds you have to prepare your deck. In a 2 player game, you have all the time in the world to get a nice lean and mean deck. Never go into the dungeon before you are ready. You will have time to catch up if your opponent takes an early lead (but do not let him get more than 6 - 10 points ahead, otherwise if he gets one of the bigger monsters later on, you might get pipped at the post).

In a 4-5 player game, you will not have this luxury. Getting rid of cards while not picking any up is a recipe for disaster later on, as your opponents will have picked the village clean

of heroes, weapons and spells and there will be nothing left for you to buy. In a 4-5 player game, you should look to see which hero is the very best, obvious choice to grab first... and avoid it. Four other players will be killing themselves to get that hero leaving you alone to grab some lesser heroes. but you will get more of the ones you want. In one three player game I played in, two players made a bee-line for the Selurins at the cost of everything they had. The third player quietly started picking up the only fighter available. And she was able to kill all the Magic Immune monsters and ended up winning the game in the end, as she was able to consistently go into the dungeon with a variety of heroes and always do damage. Playing against the AI on Facebook in multiplayer games will give you a good idea of how much time you have to get a deck ready in games with lots of players.

Also, in a multiplayer game, there may come a point where there are three really low VP monsters in the dungeon that nobody wants to kill (as they will just clog up your deck). During this time, there is normally a round or two of shopping or resting which will help you pick up an item or destroy some useless cards. During this time, it is a good idea to make a mental note of the VP you currently have by keeping a running total in your head of the VP points you have in your deck as you are scrolling through. There is roughly 80-100 VP per game so you can divide that by the number of players to see around what number you should be trying to get. 25 - 30 points often wins a 5 player game. Unlike on Yucata (which shows you each person's VP total), it is difficult to know where you are in a game. I once played in a game where I had the choice of buying a village item for 1 VP or scaring away a monster and ending the game. I chose to buy the village item and the next player killed the monster. When we totalled up the VP, she had won by just less than the VP on the card of the last monster she killed. Had I scared it away, I would have won. Learn from my mistakes ;-)

### **So, to sum up:**

Smaller decks for the win.

Do not buy unnecessary cards (rather destroy them).

Go into the dungeon whenever you can.

More ThunderStone theory can be found here:

<http://boardgamegeek.com/forum/407716/thunderstone/strategy>

Really good posts are:

<http://boardgamegeek.com/thread/628373/bluetorchs-complete-guide-to-thunderstone>  
<http://boardgamegeek.com/thread/627021/thunderstone-strategy-series>



## Overview of the LARP-writing process

The initial phase involved in the construction of any given LARP is, naturally enough, the “idea” phase. It is generally the longest, but may last for several months, during which time the general themes, character and setting are developed in the writer’s mind. Research may be begun at this point – it is often a good idea to draw inspiration from aspects of reality, particularly when one is writing a historical scenario.

Once the actual writing process has gotten underway, the importance of continuity and conformity cannot be stressed enough. Working in a team is often the best way to ensure that each facet of the LARP is checked for continuity as it is produced, but if one works alone, one must make use of a proof-reader (or two, or three) who would be willing not only to read for typos and other such errors, but also to review the logistics of each plotline and the compositions of the characters involved therein. Timelines can be of great use here.

In terms of idea generation, it can be useful to attempt to establish relationships first, as this will help to build up characters (naming, which is quite difficult, can often be left until later). If you have forgotten an idea in between writing sessions, it probably wasn’t all that exciting or worthwhile to begin with. Try, in general, not to write too large a LARP, so as to avoid the danger of creating characters without solid plotlines – there is nothing worse, from the perspective of a player, than ending up with too little to do. Bear in mind that from a technical perspective, the LARP differs from the majority of other genres of writing in that there are no supporting characters – while characters may vary in terms of power, influence and plot-involvement, every character should be vital to at least one plot in some way.

Furthermore, when writing characters, try to bear in mind the constraints of casting. If one has a well-established LARPing circle, it can be useful, and indeed quite enjoyable, to write certain characters with specific players in mind. However, be aware thatLARPs may still be played quite some time after their initial running, and that similar players cannot always be found – avoid tying one character to any one specific player, and ensure that there is some leeway for interpretation. Do try and supply one or two characters suitable for newer players (i.e.,

characters that have clear, fairly simplistic goals, and that, by virtue of their specific traits, are either difficult to be misinterpreted or under-utilised, or that won’t have too much influence on too many major plotlines). It is also often expedient in terms of casting to include one or two characters that can be played as male or female.

## LARP planning

In terms of structuring power relations, a heavily imbalanced character is not necessarily a problem so long as one trusts the player to whom it is assigned not to attempt to abuse it in such a way as to break the LARP entirely. This is one instance where writing casting suggestions into the DM’s notes might be advisable. In order to avoid the game being broken, one might also try to give particularly powerful characters unachievable or near-unachievable goals. Costuming hints on individual



character sheets and one or two suggestions as to how the character might be played are also a great help, and can often provide the player with just the right amount of information required to create strong, believable character.

Although the number of players involved in a LARP can range from anything from two to eighty, for our purposes, we would consider eleven or twelve to be a fairly small LARP, and twenty and upwards to be fairly large.LARPs with too few characters often see implausible connections formed between all of them, while LARPs that are too large are a challenge for the DMs to oversee effectively, and can also lead to difficulties with venues and catering. In general, however, smaller LARPs should be more finely polished, as a single inconsistency can derail them entirely – the larger a LARP, the less fragile it tends to be.

Hierarchical structures can also help to stabilise very large LARPs – for example, one might make use of three social tiers, each confined to its own room, with limited mobility between the three.

### Selecting a Setting

The employment of a generic or archetypal setting is acceptable, and in fact often preferable, as it allows the

characterisation and build up a clear idea of their character's environment; similarly, the worldbuilding involved is likely less prone to inconsistency. Standard high fantasy or science fiction settings, for example, are therefore very useful. If, however, one's setting is novel, one might include details on money, travel, jobs, and all the general details supplied by worldbuilding.

If one has selected a historical setting, or is making use of a particular story or theme with a well-known or predetermined outcome, one might consider using "fate play", which makes use of certain triggers (either dramatic (i.e., actions performed by another character) or chronological (i.e., an action required to happen at a certain point in time during the LARP) in order to dictate the course of the LARP. This should be used sparingly, however, in order to avoid railroading.

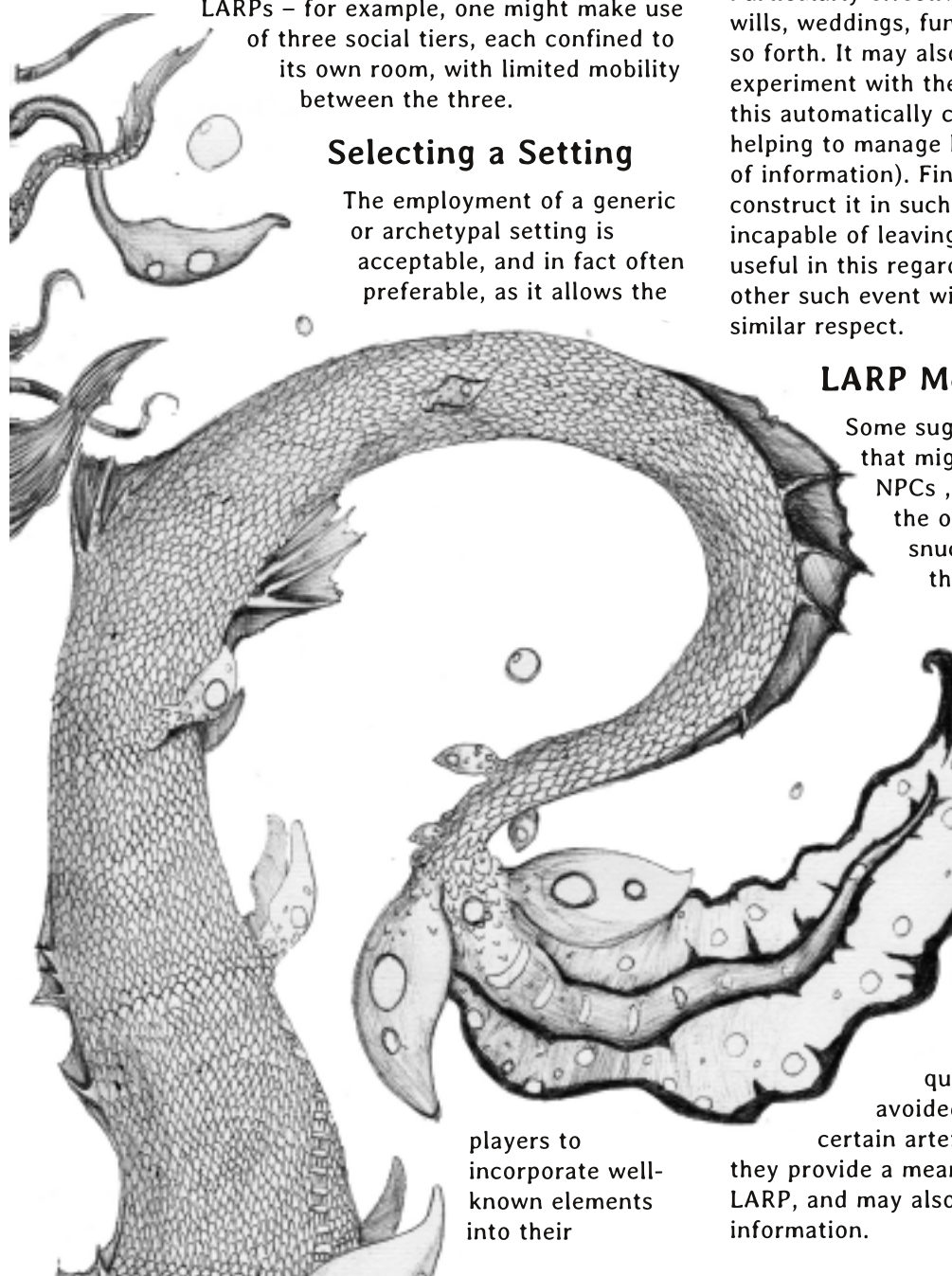
Particularly effective settings include auctions, readings of wills, weddings, funerals, negotiations, dinner parties, and so forth. It may also be interesting, if possible, to experiment with the idea of bilingual LARPs (here again, this automatically creates a split between two groups, thus helping to manage larger LARPs; it also controls the flow of information). Finally, whatever the setting, do try and construct it in such a way as to render the characters incapable of leaving it – an island, ship, cave or prison is useful in this regard, while a banquet, marriage, funeral or other such event with set parameters can be used to a similar respect.

### LARP Mechanics

Some suggestions as to mechanisms or gimmicks that might be incorporated into a LARP include NPCs, who may be planted in the LARP from the outset, disguised as player characters, or snuck into the LARP mid-play; either way, they can be utilised as catalysts for certain events, or to supply new information to the characters.

Cards are also useful when cleverly employed, particularly as they can often be used to introduce extra information or regulate encounters between characters without requiring the intervention of a DM. However, they are sometimes seen as a crutch for roleplaying, and as such should be used to represent abilities rather than characteristics; they tend to work well in non-serious LARPs. In general, card-regulated telepathy powers tend to be quite difficult to pull off, and are best avoided. Envelopes containing details about certain artefacts, for example, are also useful, as they provide a means of feeding new plot points into the LARP, and may also be used to regulate access to information.

players to incorporate well-known elements into their



Notes taken at the

# CLAWS LARP-WRITING WORKSHOP

Camilla Christie

With regard to DMs, in general, a good ratio to employ is one DM to every five characters, with additional DMs assigned to specific items or objects as necessary. One might consider splitting up the DMs' responsibilities by plotline, item, character or combat.

## Anti-Tropes

While not expressly forbidden or frowned upon, tropes involving time-travel, hostage situations, character switches, and telepathy tend to be quite difficult to pull off, and should be used sparingly and with caution, if at all.

Be very careful when writing romance into a LARP – it is often best simply to avoid it, both because it is rather difficult to role-play passionate romance with a stranger, and because one is never aware of the real-life subtleties of any given casting pool. Established relationships such as long-standing marriages work best. Always be aware of what may or may not be offensive to players. One is writing for a general audience that must by necessity become fairly heavily emotionally involved in the storyline, and some players may find certain plotlines or characteristics disturbing, unpleasant, or simply uninteresting.

When employing poison as a plot point, try and find some way to allow the players to eat regardless of whether or not their character is attempting to avoid poison, which, just generally, requires very careful DM regulation. If one is writing in a non-fantasy setting, do try and do some research into the mechanics of poison, and allow them to affect the plot in a realistic way (i.e., don't try to write in a poison that kills instantly and untraceably).

Never allow any real weapons to be used in a LARP.

## Gimmicks & Venue Planning

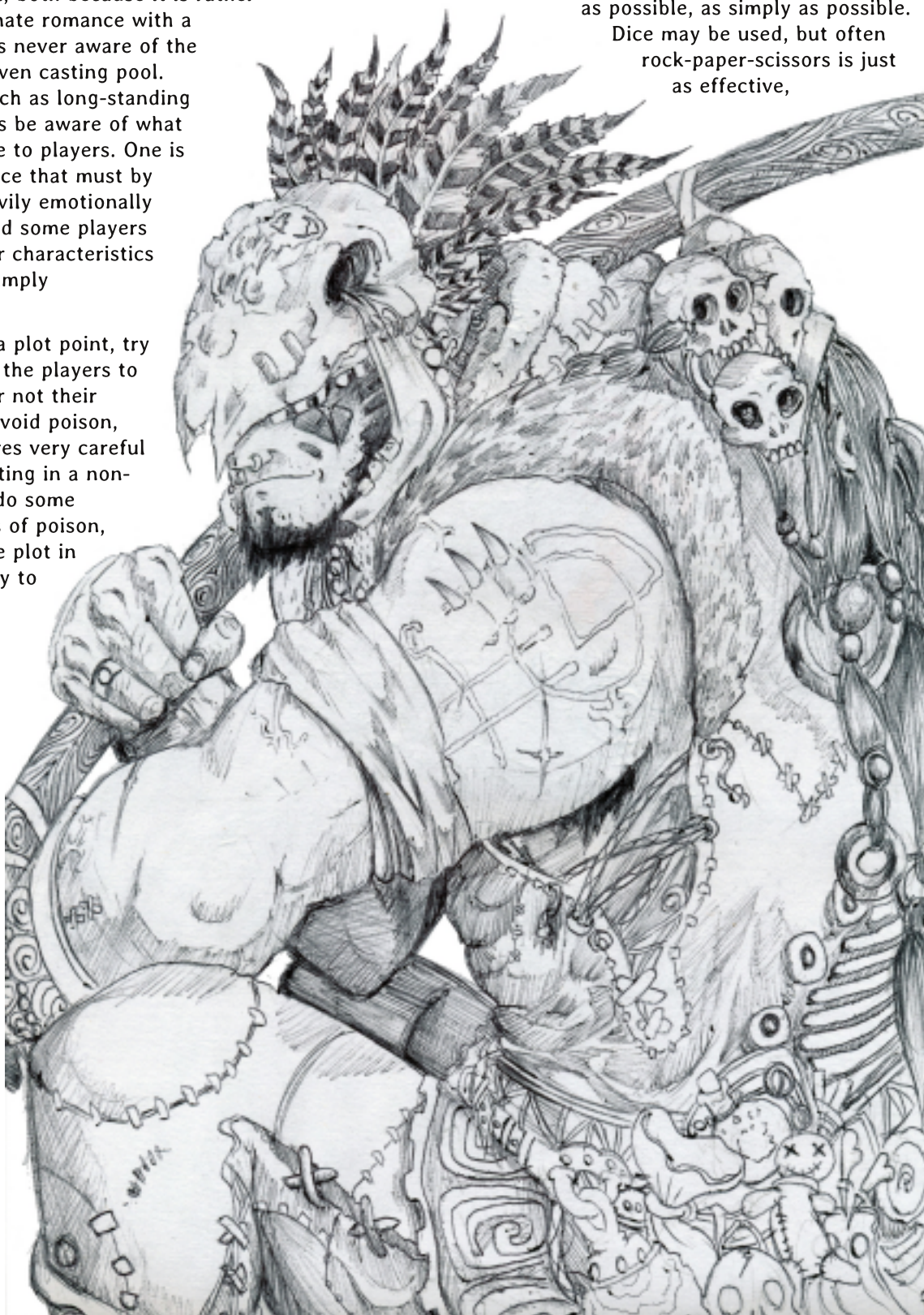
Public announcements, delivered every so often over the course of the LARP, help players to stay informed – they can easily be framed as radio announcements, proclamations delivered by heralds, or even, in a science-fiction or technologically advanced setting, blackboards, projectors or makeshift view-screens.

Don't become too attached to any particular venue, however. While the setting does help with immersion,

it is impractical to make it too involved – often a few items of décor, cleverly used, can be highly effective. LARPs can be run from houses, although one ought to make sure to forbid the use of locks, and possibly to cordon off a downstairs or upstairs area in order to facilitate the DMs' jobs. Sound clips often work well – a simple recording of a thunderstorm, the sea, thematically-appropriate music, or ambient noise in general, played in the background, sets the scene nicely, and has the added benefit of reducing the distance from which conversations between two characters can be overheard by other players.

## Combat

Combat should be effected as quickly as possible, as simply as possible. Dice may be used, but often rock-paper-scissors is just as effective,





provided that the players are not too familiar with each other's habits. Characters should have some impression both of how skilled they are and how skilled others are – and if they don't, it should be a plot point.

It is permissible for DMs to rig combat, either to preserve gameplay or so as not to break the LARP, so long as the characters are not made aware that this is being done (as it detracts from the

characters, the intention to convert characters to any cause, or a strong personal philosophy that has the potential to set up interesting debate (but be aware, once again, of what may or may not be seen as offensive to the players themselves, and try and avoid touching on any real-life issues).

Check to see how many allies each character has – everyone should have at least one or two. If a character is without allies, the LARP experience will not be enjoyable for the player, who will feel as though the entire LARP is against them; and if any factions are not carefully balanced, the LARP may break.

## Onto the Actual Writing Part!

In terms of presentation, try and view the production of your LARP as a professional endeavour – having invested so much time into it, ensuring that the finished product looks good, holds together and is easy to read shows respect both for your own writing and for the players. If you invest a good deal of time and effort into the LARP, your players are likely to, as well. Sheets should, generally speaking, make use of 1,5 spacing, and should be free of typos and grammatical errors – this is where a proof-reader must be used. Pictures, diagrams, maps, costume ideas and quotes all help to make each character sheet feel professional, and can be a novel and intriguing way of providing extra information.

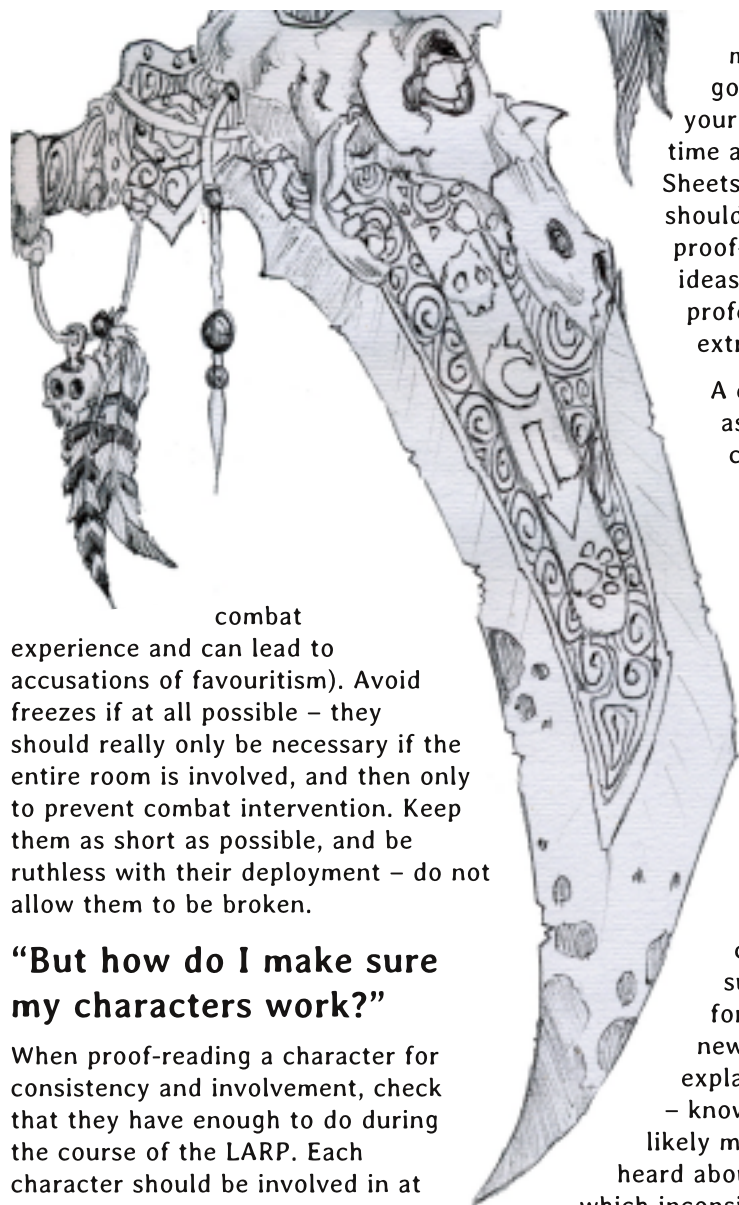
A character sheet should contain the character's name and age, as well as a brief introductory description that may be semi-in-character, followed by a character history. Stick to a strict chronology here, and try making use of sub-headings for each paragraphs – so, have an 'Early History' paragraph, followed by a section on 'Later Career', 'Involvement with X Faction', 'Influence Over Specific Event', etc. Try not to make them too short – these are the inspiration for the player's character development – but don't include too much irrelevant information. Characterisation hints may be applied sparingly.

Background sheets, by contrast, are generally faction specific. Convey how widely known any information is, and be both consistent and insistent – it is far better to overexplain than to underexplain. Put any very important information into at least two character sheets so as to ensure that even if one player forgets it, or doesn't quite catch hold of its implications, others will remember it and supply it. Deliberate inconsistencies are often difficult to write, for while experienced LARPer's will pick up on the trope, newbies may not. It is for this reason that it is often useful to explain how a character has come to know any given information – knowing that one's character witnessed an event first-hand will likely make one more certain of it than knowing that one's character heard about it from a friend, and will lead to less confusions as to which inconsistencies are deliberate, and which are simply authorial errors.

Finally, with regard to naming, try hard not to make them too unpronounceable or difficult to remember. Rely on matching names to stereotypes. Titles – Queen, King, Commander, Doctor, Sir, etc. – are also very useful mnemonic aids.

## Writing the Blurb

The blurb may be included on the actual character sheet if one chooses, and should include the LARP specifications out of character – for example, "This is a very silly LARP," or, "This LARP should generate lots of drama." This is also the place to include any content warnings or age restrictions that may apply, if you feel that it is necessary to do so.



combat experience and can lead to accusations of favouritism). Avoid freezes if at all possible – they should really only be necessary if the entire room is involved, and then only to prevent combat intervention. Keep them as short as possible, and be ruthless with their deployment – do not allow them to be broken.

## “But how do I make sure my characters work?”

When proof-reading a character for consistency and involvement, check that they have enough to do during the course of the LARP. Each character should be involved in at least three or four plots – major characters with strong influence will require fewer, seeing as they will often be roped into others regardless, while minor characters require more, as their part in each will be smaller. If a character is not vital, they will be ignored, so make sure that each character is vital to at least one plot.

Other ways of making sure that characters have enough to do include kleptomania, greed, the desire to prevent certain plotlines or events, extreme dependence on the actions of other

# SINGULARITY

## THE DESTINY OF OBSUL AMON

*Warren Russell*



Things haven't been quite right since reality tore itself into pieces. Different realities coming together, crashing into each other and causing chaos... this is simply the backdrop to our tale. Legend tells of Obsul Amon, a woman who longed to help others and teach them enlightenment. Enter the Singularities, the primal forces of reality that strip the humanity from some, and show the true nature of others. For Obsul, this was but a step in the road.

Tales speak of her unending quest to find the truth behind the Singularities; some say that she succeeded. What is known is that during her quest her name was known only in whispers. Shadows dancing in midnight were more common than the knowledge of who she was and what she did. But a few knew; a few twisted priests knew she sought to bring enlightenment to all and they decided that this could not be. Striking out to find Obsul, they bound her and called forth her power to fuel their designs. Granting enlightenment to everyone is a fool's dream in the view of the priests. If all have ascended, then to what end is it done?

Bound and captive, Obsul's powers were used to forge beings of nightmares. Unchecked, the priests had appeared to warp the various realities around them. Singularities occurred more and more frequently, and should they have continued, all of those realities would have been destroyed. But there was an intervention. A group of beings, far more powerful than the priests, seemed to be taking a hand in matters. Not directly, but by guiding. Guiding a small group of nomads wandering the Singularities.

Taking them in hand, across several realities, the beings guided the group to begin working against the designs of the priests. Arriving in a small town surrounded by desert, the the group encountered a robotic sheriff, who directed them to the mayor of the town. The mayor was a younger woman, lost in her sorrows as the children of the town had been taken captive by the cult that lived in a nearby enclave. Some of the group, being stout of heart and strong of morals, decided that this could not stand and set off to find the children. Others simply followed along hoping to steal some valuable items. Having "borrowed" a rocket sled, the group set out towards the priests' enclave, where they discovered the steel doors blocking their way. After much fiddling with the controls it was determined that none of them could really control the contraption, which suited them just fine as it ploughed into the aforementioned gates and turned them into slag.

Moving forward, our brave party cautiously moved into the darkened entranceway of the enclave... only to find themselves rendered unconscious/deactivated. Shortly after this they awakened, separated, in small little rooms which appeared to block their various abilities to some degree or another. Luckily, it was only a short while later that they managed to free themselves and discover that they appeared to be in some form of large research structure. Various traps and other devices attempted to impede the progress of the group, but they would not be swayed. Moving deeper into the facility they discovered that a large zeppelin was being used to transport supplies to a distant battlefield.

Sneaking on board the zeppelin, the group was able to render the various guards and engineers on the ship unconscious. While this seemed to be a good idea at the time, they would soon regret it. Halfway to their destination, various alarm bells began ringing and none of the group knew what was broken, or how to fix it. In the end, the carriage was accidentally separated from the balloon. The carriage crashed to the ground, a fall which was luckily softened by the marsh it landed on. This was only part of their problem as it appeared that they had landed in the centre of the war that was going on.

The group attempted a quick escape but were soon captured and placed in a prison in the priests' encampment. This having proved to be but a minor inconvenience, the group escaped their bonds and freed the remainder of the prisoners. The jailbreak managed to provide the group the distraction that they needed to destroy the devices being used to build the monstrous creatures of the priests. Having destroyed the devices, the group decided to follow the lines of energy being fed to the devices,

where they discovered the missing children. All of them, sound asleep in a small circle around an altar... or they would have been if the circle wasn't several children deep and covered in their blood.

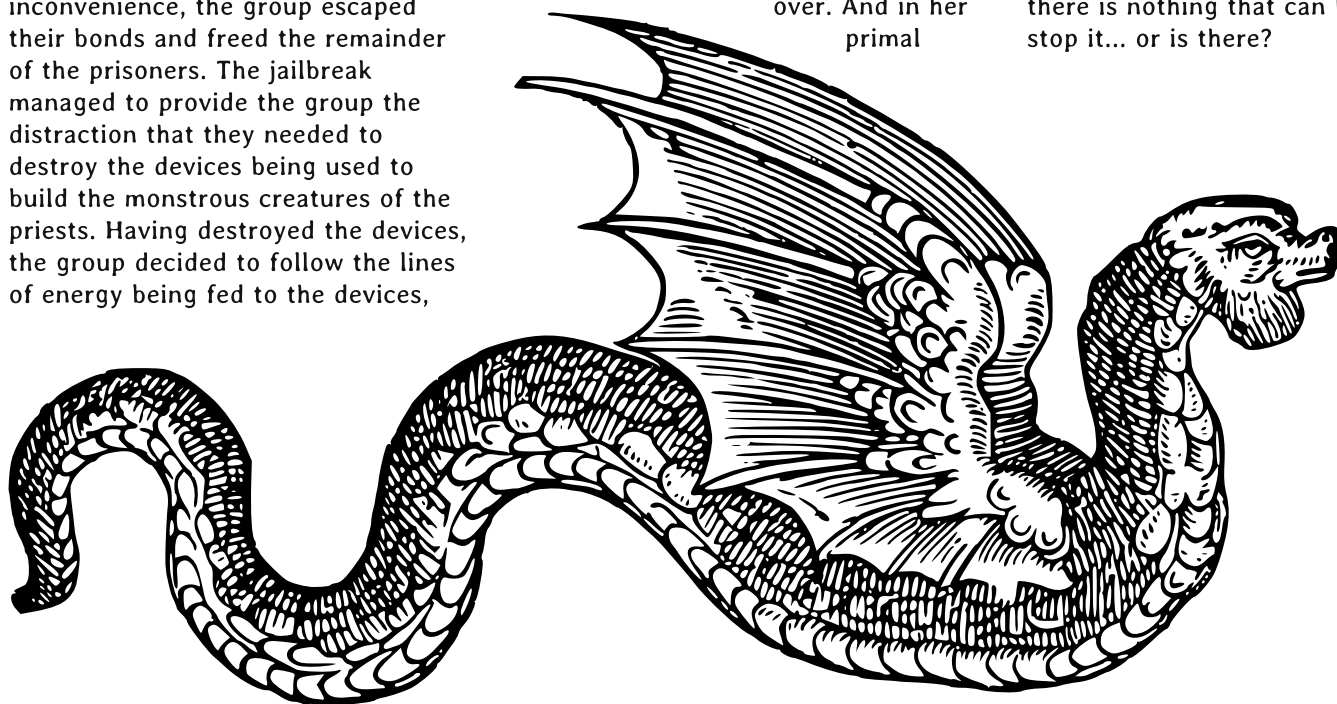
The children had been sacrificed in some dark ritual, directing power into a woman bound in agony to the altar. This scene was the last glimpse that the group would see of Obsul Amon in the mortal plane. The scene shifts for the group and they are pulled downwards into a realm of dream and nightmare. Blackened trees, and silver light filtering through the branches sets the backdrop for the fight of Obsul's soul.

Moving deeper into the dreamscape the group discovered a small child weeping. Being kind of hearts they took her under their wing in order to protect her from the creatures which could be heard moving in the trees. This one act, a simple gesture of kindness, may have been the stepping stone that launched the destiny of Obsul Amon to where it finally rested. Obsul Amon was found, a woman bound in her own mind, captive to her pain. The priests' having stolen her power to transform dream into reality had caused her to force herself to a place of nightmares rather than face the truth of the monstrosities her power was awakening. And then she transformed. Unable to deal with the assault on her body and the intrusion of the group into her mind, she withdrew her conscious mind and let her primal mind take over. And in her primal

mind she was no pushover, no small animal to contend with. In the mind of Obsul Amon, she was a dragon. And so it was that a dragon she became.

A great blue dragon, breathing fire and ice as it tried to devour the group. As they were mildly preoccupied with Obsul, none of the group noticed that the small girl that they had rescued was Obsul herself. And she was growing. She was growing to her full height and age. Joining the battle, she used her powers to help calm the dragon, giving one of the group the time he needed to place a shot into one of the dragon's eyes. With the primal mind subdued, and accepting the fate of what her powers had been causing, Obsul willingly transformed herself into the dragon, and pulled about her the mantle of Amon Draconis.

Being released from the dreamscape, the group would find themselves on the floor surrounding the altar. An altar which had a distinct lack of a woman's body on it. In the final moments, before releasing the group, Amon Draconis was finally able to ascend. With her new-found enlightenment and powers, will she still seek to aid the peoples of the various realities? Will she become as the other ascended beings, and leave the matters of lesser beings in their own hands? Or will she step in and fight, help and guide the nomads so that they too can reach their destiny? Only time will tell, but one thing is for certain. The Singularities are real, they are ripping our worlds apart and there is nothing that can be done to stop it... or is there?



# CTHULHUTECH: MALAWI

Simon Cross

It's 2085 and mankind is engaged in a terrifying war against horrors from the Cthulhu Mythos. Scaled Deep Ones control the depths of the Atlantic and Pacific and tentacled Migo rule outer space from their headquarters on Pluto. Asia has fallen to the formless hordes of the King in Yellow and even the New Earth Government's (NEG) own arcologies are rife with cults and Migo infiltrators.

Malawi, and indeed much of sub-Saharan Africa, remains nominally under NEG control although there is little government presence to speak of. The recent disappearance of a crack infiltration team within the streets of Mzuzu encouraged the NEG to send in a larger task force to establish a more permanent foothold.

The high-ranking members of the task force are: Vreta, its occasionally brittle leader with a vicious streak and a healthy fear of Hastu-; Hawk, the head of a mysterious and even more vicious special-forces unit; Limpet, an ex-naval officer whose hatred of Deep Ones is matched only by her accuracy with a laser rifle; Spider, hacker-and-drug-user extraordinaire and Rey, occult specialist with many good reasons for caution.

Since arriving in Mzuzu the task force has had its share of successes and setbacks.

Madondo, the sorcerer responsible for torturing the previous team and ripping their souls from them in an unspeakable ritual has been identified (and his methods confirmed through a recreation of the ritual with the assistance of four stray dogs and a street child) but he is proving difficult to apprehend.

A mysterious organization known variously as the Malawi Corporate Bank Research Division and The Sphere has been found to be the driving force behind a number of seemingly unrelated scientific projects involving portals, but luckily have proved to be quite friendly, and Rey and Spider are well on the way to collaborating with them on the development of these

exciting new technologies.

Last but not least, the brave NEG soldiers have weathered the sudden appearance of a Deep One city within Lake Malawi and having recovered from the initial assault are now engaged in an attempt to lure Mother Hydra within range of one of The Sphere's pet projects -- a city-sized battery of plasma cannons. If that doesn't work, plan B involves an old Soviet nuclear bomb. Plan C is a lot of running.

Despite the daily encounters with unspeakable horrors, many of the task force have found time for romance.

Vreta has developed a tempestuous relationship with one of Hawk's subordinates (who may or may not have the ability to shapeshift into something with tentacles -- neither Hawk nor Vreta is telling). Limpet and Spider have hooked up after Spider was replaced by himself from an alternative reality in which Limpet had lied to him about them hooking up while he had amnesia. Limpet promptly cheated on Spider with two prostitutes of indeterminate gender. Rey, not to be left out, entered accidentally into a romantic tryst (although he claims he was simply too embarrassed to refuse) and had his mind thoroughly read and seemingly restored.

Currently the majority of the task force are in what remains of the Dreamlands attempting to rescue the soul of the object of Rey's affections and hopefully strike a significant blow against Madondo, and wondering whether they have unwittingly become Lt Colonel Korova's latest friendly fire victims.



# beyond the card mountains of mythos

Mark Ferry

When a traveller on the electric inter-tubes takes the wrong fork at the junction of BoardGameGeek (.com1) and Sourceforge (.net) he comes upon a lonely and curious country. The ways are rough, untrodden in recent time, in parts of a curious formation, and guideposts brusque and sparsely scattered. Without knowing why, one hesitates to ask directions from the gnarled solitary residents spied now and then in crumbling IRC channels or on the troll-strewn forums. One feels somehow confronted with forbidden things, with which it would be better to have nothing to do.

Twice before I dreamed of a marvellous city, an electric Shangri-La, and twice before it was snatched away while I paused in contemplation of the vast and lofty peaks of imperception betwixt us. All polished and lovely, it blazed in the radiation from dense constellations of data, as busy shining avatars described stories of terrible complexity with decks of mystical figures.

At length, sick with longing for that glittering utopian world I resolved to go with bold entreaty to where unknown tongues speak cryptic oaths which manifest from antediluvian scripts the realms where long-dead card games rise again.

## Mystical Figures

Soon after *Magic: the Gathering* appeared, the gaming world was consumed by a collectible card-game hysteria. Wizards of the Coast, the creators of *Magic*, were raking in profits of hideous dimension (for the gaming industry at least) and every struggling publisher wanted to sip from that cardboard chalice at least the *promise* of financial stability.



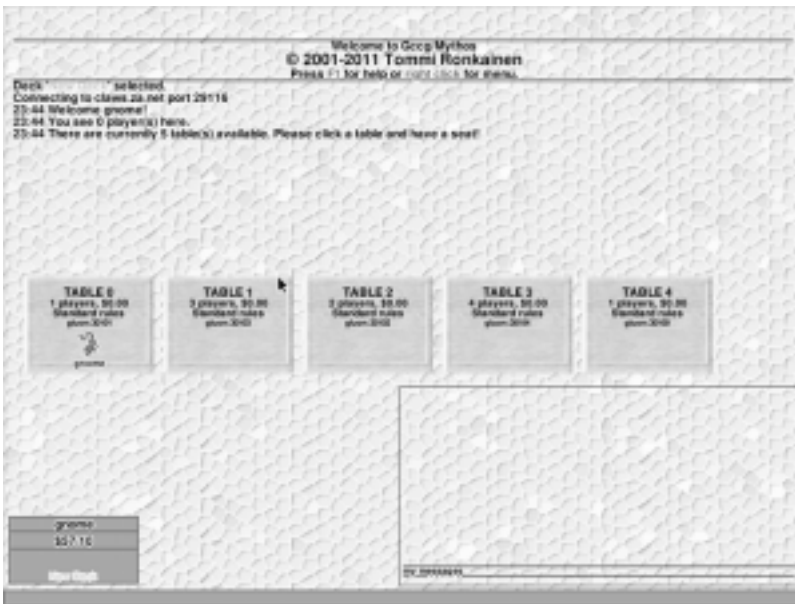
In 1996 Chaosium, publisher of the *Call of Cthulhu* RPG released the Lovecraft-inspired *Mythos* CCG<sup>2</sup>, designed by Charlie Krank. At almost the same time the CCG boom turned to bust and piles of unsold inventory, of the non-collectible *Mythos Standard Game Set*

especially, tied up hundreds of thousands of dollars and nearly destroyed the company. Two more expansions were released in small numbers before Chaosium gave up on CCGs entirely.

That's rather a shame, because the game itself was engaging and brilliantly original. It still retains a cult following, and sets of the earlier cards appear from time to time on eBay though that still doesn't make them cheap to obtain in SA. Online play then might be a more convenient alternative.

1. <http://boardgamegeek.com/>  
2. <http://www.chaosium.com/mythos/>

## Electric Shangri-La



For a time it was possible to play *Mythos* online. The CCG Workshop Project<sup>3</sup> gave birth to the Gatling Engine - software that allowed real-time online play of many CCGs, both modern and ancient. *Middle Earth CCG*, *Rage*, *Deadlands*, *Star Wars CCG* and *X-Files* were amongst the notables.

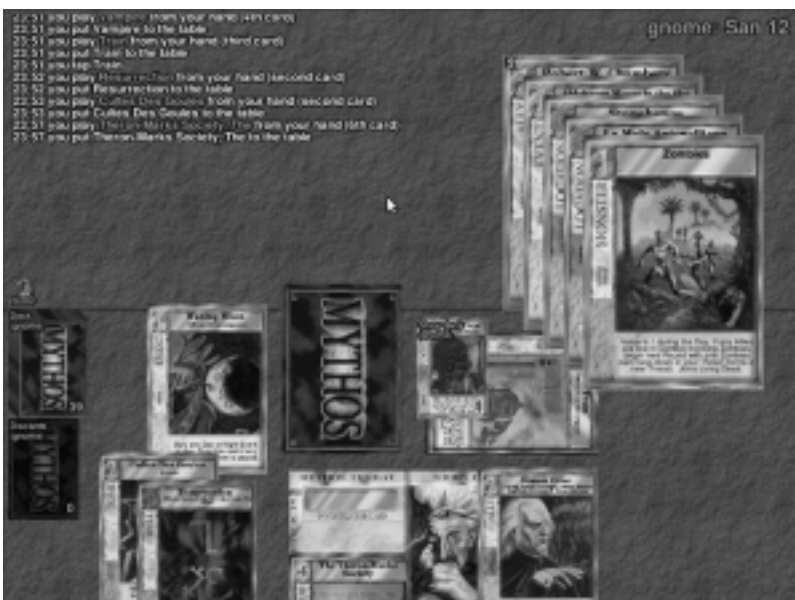
I never did have the opportunity to play using the Gatling Engine - at the time it was Windows only - though its loss did not go unmourned, so I suppose it may have been a friendly environment. It sank in 2008 - and now lies, cadaverous, in the lightless depths of some forgotten server.

## Reanimator

I stumbled across the *Generic Collectible Card Game*<sup>4</sup> one lazy evening last year. I can't recall what rekindled my interest in playing *Mythos* online, but being a gentleman of leisure over that heady English summer surely helped turn my thoughts away from mundane matters.

GCCG is another online card gaming engine. It is free and cross-platform (though it originated on Linux), and supports a number of card games, not least *Magic: the Gathering*, *V:tES*, *Netrunner* and *Pokémon*, through its scripting engine.

So in the black small hours exhumation of the stiff form and vacant face of *Mythos* began, gathering data and images from dread corners of the inter-webs. To three weeks of gruesome scripting add some ghoulish image magick to graft card text back on to 950 cleaned card specimens and the result was a reanimation - a GCCG plug-in for *Mythos*<sup>5</sup>.



3. [http://boardgamegeek.com/wiki/page/CCG\\_Workshop](http://boardgamegeek.com/wiki/page/CCG_Workshop)

4. <http://gccg.sourceforge.net/>

5. <http://github.com/markferry/gccg-dev>

## Installing and Running GCCG

Installation is described on the GCCG site where you can download a Windows installer or a **gzipped** archive for Linux i386.

Beyond the base install it makes use of a script called **gccg\_package** to install plug-ins and card data, though for the default plug-ins there are simple installer executables.

The Mythos plug-in, being rather new, must be installed separately. Following the short guide included on my site<sup>6</sup>, add a new source<sup>7</sup> from which to download the **mythos**, **mythos-data** and (to see the cards in all their hideous glory) **mythos-graphics** plug-ins.

6. <http://markferry.net/Code.GccgMythos>

7. <http://markferry.net/gccg/>

## Hallowmass on Sentinel Hill

GCCG may not provide the friendliest of welcomes. To eyes accustomed to pleasant landscapes it may appear an indescribably angled mass of alien-hued substance. But pick beneath the surface and you discover a system for efficient card play.

On logging in to the CLAWs test server<sup>8</sup> you are presented with the lobby, a kind of Antechamber if you like.

Though everything can be accomplished with a mouse there is a command-line interface and typing **/help** while in the lobby will display a list of available commands.

Your first task will be to load or construct a deck. Right click in empty space for the main menu and choose either **Create New Deck** (command line: **/newdeck**) or **Import Deck**. Every published *Mythos* deck I could find on the internet is already included in the plug-in.

You can browse every *Mythos*

card ever published (and a few that haven't!), by selecting **Show/Hide Collection**.

Now, having perused the cards and prepared a deck, choose a table to sit at (left mouse click on the table) and then to play at (middle click the table). If no one else is around you'll just have to pick one of the single-player tables.

## Beyond the Card Mountains of Mythos

From here you need to know how to play *Mythos* itself. GCCG is intentionally light-weight: it doesn't attempt to enforce any game rules, providing only simple mechanics for manipulating cards, decks and game state. Enforcing the game rules is left to the players.

Though it may not be the electric Shangri-La of our dreamlands, we can at least now go gibbering towards madness without having to be either in the same place or laden with a backpack full of cards.

8. [claws.za.net](http://claws.za.net)



# Vampire:

## the Eternal Struggle

*Vampire: the Eternal Struggle* (or more commonly, *V:tES*) is a collectible card game for four to five players. As the name suggests, the game focuses mostly on vampires, because, well, they're just cooler than other supernaturals. Werewolves, mages, ghost, ghouls and humans feature in suitably minor supporting roles. *V:tES* is based on White Wolf's original World of Darkness setting and many of the game elements draw heavily on the *Vampire: the Masquerade* (*VtM*) roleplaying setting. Over the years expansions have added vampires from almost all of *VtM*'s clans and bloodlines.

Although *V:tES* is currently out of print, cards are available from numerous sources and there is a small but obsessed group of players in Cape Town who are more than willing to enthusiastically introduce you to the game. There is also a fan-made expansion in the works -- and a few of the local players have the honor of being official playtesters for it.

Players are generally happy to loan decks to newcomers and there are starter decks available for new players who would like to buy their own. There are socials and league games about once a week and we'll be playing at CLAWs boardgame evenings once those start up again.

If you're interested you can visit the local *V:tES* website ([vtes.za.net](http://vtes.za.net)) and subscribe to the local mailing list ([vtes-ct@yahoo.com](mailto:vtes-ct@yahoo.com)). If you join the mailing list, please send an email to say "hi".

Simon

Baron of Cape Town





# Ye Olde Classifieds

## Births

**CONGRATULATIONS!** To Lord and Lady Trempton on the birth of their third son, Percival Montgomery Glastonbury the Second. Best wishes to him, in the hopes that he predictably outclasses his two older brothers. – The Seer

**BLESSINGS BE!** To Their Majesties the King and Queen of Great Easton on the arrival of their daughter Felicia Margaret. May she have health, wealth and beauty! – The Three Good Fairies

**BUGGER THEM!** To Their Maggotries the King and Queen of Great Easton, who didn't invite me to the christening. The spinning wheel is in the mail. – The Pissed Off Fairy

## Deaths

**IN REMEMBRANCE OF:** Count Orth von Strubenberg 1614 – 1723, 1746 – 1793, 1799 – 1804, left this cruel world in a veil of sunlight 23rd of Helmsdays. In the certain knowledge of a full and total resurrection. –Igor

**SORELY MISSED:** Derdrick the Dragon Slayer 1776 – 1809. Slain by a dragon in the marshes of Fulbright in the second week of Samhain. We will miss him as much as he did the dragon. – Guild of Dragonslayers

**GODS BLESS:** The Invulnerable Gergor of Tright 1754 – 1809. Loved by all who knew him, the world will be poorer without the slayer of the Dread Monster of Ky'lee, the only man to survive the Labyrinth of a Thousand Traps and one of the few to last seven rounds in the Bloodcages of the Golden City. Choked to death on a fish bone 13th of Helmsdays. – The good people of Ky'lee

**PROVISIONAL CONDOLENCES:** To the family of the Red Mage 1739 – 1809 (Possibly). A well-known experimenter on the arcane and mystical planes in his determined quest to find a safe portal to the

Underworld. Having vanished in a shower of sparks during his latest experiments, we can only assume he got there, one way or the other. – The Brotherhood of the Occult.

## To Let

**LARGE CASTLE AND SURROUNDS:** 26 bdr, 4 bthr. An established and elegant property located in the Mountains of Foreboding, this is a must-have for those seeking the elegance and sophistication that only a craggy keep can provide. Comes complete with a fully-furnished torture chamber, and the battlements provide views of the beautiful surrounding mountains, as well as approaching enemies. Interested parties to contact Graal the Bloodthirsty.

**MAUSOLEUM IN NERULL'S GRAVEYARD:** 2400 m<sup>2</sup>. Damp, dark and dingy warren of passages and crypts, perfect for the lich looking for a place to start a family or plague of the undead. Pitfalls and spider webs inclusive. Necromancers under level 10 need not apply. – Nerull Graveyard Association.

**WIZARD'S TOWER:** 10 stories tall (outside), unknown amount of floors (inside). Previously owned by a confederation of sorcerers, this property is replete with all the mod-cons the modern arcane practitioner requires. A portal to the City of Sigil provides easy access to any planeswalker, whilst the more chemically minded will find great joy in the alchemical lab. Real fixer-upper! – Sole survivor of the Brotherhood of Mages

## Lost

**VECNA'S LEFT EYE:** Last used in the storming of the White Vale, currently misplaced in a storeroom of some kind, between a mangle and a rusted pitchfork. Sunrise and sunset times seem to indicate a town in the south. Return to the owner for a reward.

**THE MEDALLION OF BINDING:** Urgent! Four inches in diameter, gold, embossed with the Rune of Sealing. Lost in a tavern in Derllin. Desperately required to prevent the apocalypse! Possible reward.

**CLAY GOLEM:** Lost at the Fulbright Fair. Eight foot-tall, ochre-coloured, responds to the name "Maurice". Loved as a member of the family, owners desperate to be reunited. Reward offered.

**SWAT:** The personal effects of a SWAT team. If the SWAT team is currently alive and attached to these, we can find a work-around. – Gil Guzman, LA Brokerage Office.

**MORALS AND ETHICS:** Some of; lost in an attempt to do the right thing. – Troy David

**ABOUT 3 MONTHS OF MY LIFE:** If you find out why I ran for president, please let me know. – Candidate Lightshow

## Found

**SOULS OF THE DAMNED:** Found whilst travelling through the Thousand Hells, stoppered jar containing the writhing, screaming souls of the damned. Owner will have to proof ownership by revealing number of poor souls therein. – Grey Magi

**SINGING SWORD OF VISH-TAR:** Accidentally picked up on the shores of the Brightwater. Two foot-long silver sword, platinum hilt. Knows an endless collection of showtunes. Will not shut-up. Reward offered to owner, payable on collection.

**OH BALL:** Shriveled dwarven testicle in my left pocket, following the brawl in the Heavy Lode. If anybody is missing one please contact me. – Grossed Out Jah'thiss

**SLIGHTLY MOIST:** All of the plans the Decorator had to take over the world. They appear to have been flushed down the toilet. – Governator

## For Sale

**CLEARING HOUSE SALE:** Bargain dungeon equipment for the starting-out adventurer. 9-foot poles, nineteen-sided dice and three-pointed caltrops half-price! – The Straw Shield, corner of Long and Suet Streets

**UNCURSED ITEMS SUPER CHEAP:** Rare gems, magical swords and other one-of-a-kind items, for dirt-cheap prices! Absolutely guaranteed no curses! – Vernon the Unlucky

**BONES, BONES, BONES:** Complete set of human remains for ritual uses – unused. All forms of hard currency and loot welcome. Price Negotiable – Captain Stewart, The Fair Mary, Tortuga

## Seeking Employment/ Employee

**TEN THOUSAND ORCS:** Orcs seeking gainful employment as part of a raiding party, horde or evil army. Come equipped with own swords and weaponry. Experienced in killing, razing, war chants and synchronized swimming displays. Previous employer stabbed and thrown off a tower.

**BATTLEMECH:** Wanted Lance sized Battlemech Mercenary command to defend forward supply depot on world threatened by imminent House Kurita raid. Salvage negotiable relative to command rights and mission performance. – Comstar Mecenary Review Board, Kurita Department

**ITEMS APPRAISER:** Highly skilled diviner, adept at detecting magical effects, both positive and infernal. Previous employers unreachable at this time. Super-cheap hourly rates! – Vernon the Unlucky

**CASTING CALL:** The Director is looking for extras for his latest film! Anyone wanting to be captured on film forever should apply for their chance at celluloid immortality. (Applicants without immediate family and friends in the Los Angeles area will receive preferential selection) – The Director

**GNOME TINKERER:** Experienced

mechanic, glass-blower, metal smith, watchmaker, scroll-binder, ink-mixer and footman. Looking for odd jobs and similar. No task too strange, no chore too boring. – Finnegan Fixit

**HENCHMEN:** Morally grey superpowered individuals for unspecified work in the private sector. Applicants to send through full power listings. – Temporary Powers, Henchman temping agency

## Fridge quotes

**Adeeb:** "I'm 'a ride her"

**Kelvin:** "What does she eat? Crewman spunk?"

**Kaitlyn:** "Yes." *\*laughter\** "Wait! What?"

**Adeeb:** "Are you going to have a wireless cock then?"

**Garrick:** "It starts talking to you"

**Kaitlyn:** "Just 'coz you can't feel it doesn't mean I'm not sticky"

**Brent:** "You are overcome by babylust"

**Rikus:** "And I'm all lubed up so I probably explode in a ball of fire"

**Kelvin:** "Work the shaft Kaity, work the shaft"

**Kristen:** "Sorry for leaking on you"

**Adeeb:** "They are fascinated by your gigantic gun. It is huge"

**Warren:** "Candy, Roxy and... I can't remember her name, she usually hits me with a crop"

**Garrick:** "Zat would be Cupcake"

**Kelvin:** "The pegasus is the hydra's mullet"

**Garrick:** "No one has better abs than the abdominal snowman."

**Warren:** "Five fucking years"

**Adeeb:** "How much do you owe to the swear jar now?"

**Kelvin:** "Uuuuummmm.... Lord Hades... You're the best boss ever"

**Adeeb:** "Number of gods outlived: \*snikt\* 17" ... (later) ... "Number of gods outlived: 18 \*shing\*"

**Warren:** "Shut the fuck up you pussy, insemination speed!"

**Warren:** "You've gotta aim for the re-entry"

**Garrick:** "The octopus at the back goes: 'Take it! Take it bitch! From both of us!'"

**Reuel:** "If your deck is too big, it's not very effective."

(Later) **Reuel:** "Great, now my deck's too small!"

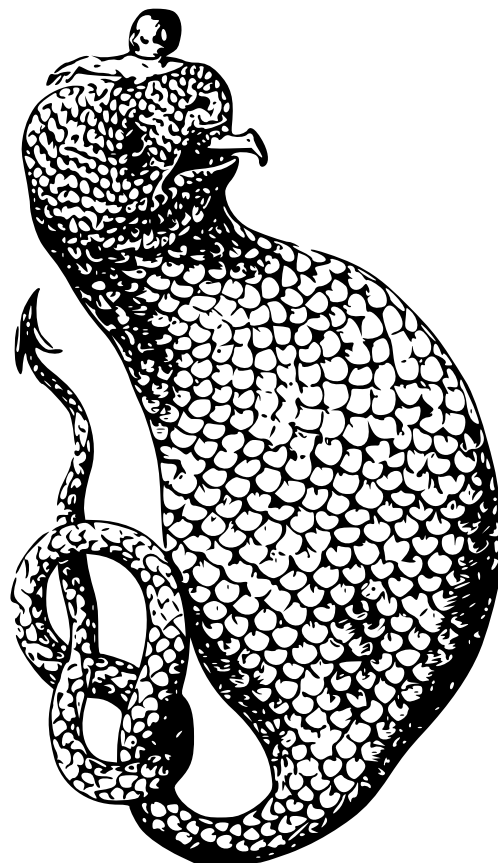
**Garrick:** "All you can hear is 'slurp, slurp slurp'. The octopus is humping your leg"

**Warren:** "I'm going to be demonstrating my talent, it's prehensile now."

## CLAWs online

Visit our website: <http://claws.za.net> or <http://claws.uct.ac.za>

Subscribe to our announcement list: [claws\\_uct+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:claws_uct+subscribe@googlegroups.com)



# The Archbigot of the Necropolis hates

THE ARCHBIGOTS

They wrote a stupid calendar  
Their calendar has an end  
The end of the calendar is the end of the world  
The calendar ends in November this year  
I hate the end of the world  
I hate the Mayans for predicting the end of the world  
I hate predictions  
I hate the movies made of the Mayans ending the world  
The Mayans didn't end the world  
People think the Mayans said the world is going to end  
People are wrong

And stupid  
I hate people  
If the world ends  
then the people will  
be gone  
Then I have no one  
to complain to  
The world is not  
allowed to end  
Because I said so.  
The Mayan calendar  
is wrong  
So are all the movies  
I hate movies  
They always lie to me  
They said the world  
was going to end lots  
of times  
It didn't  
I want the world to end  
For everyone except me  
I'm special

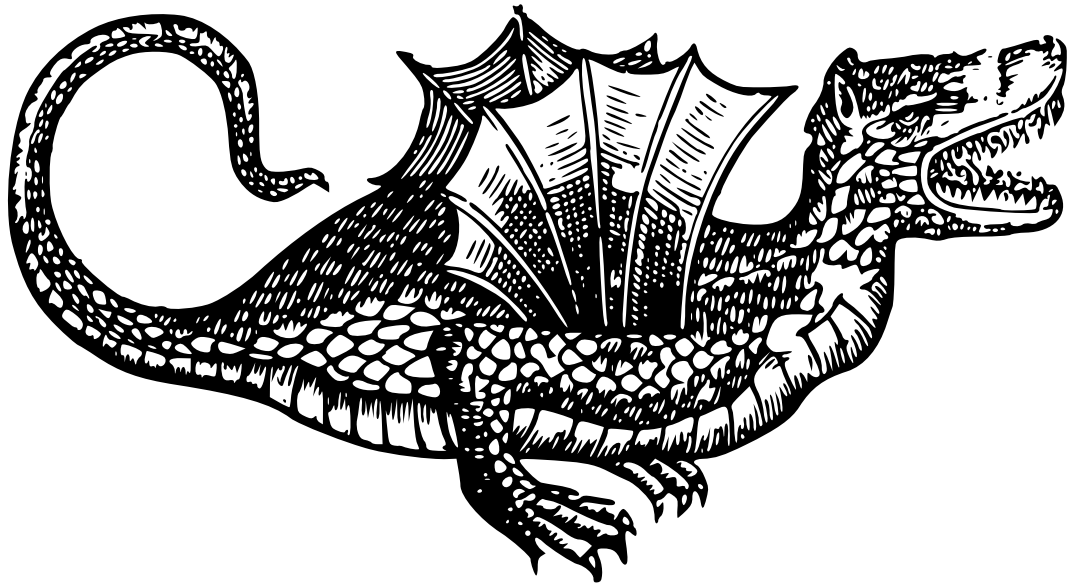
You're not  
You are stupid  
I hate stupid people  
Stupid people think that the world is going to  
end this year  
The Mayans can't predict the future

Or they would still be alive  
Their predictions are stupid  
Because they end  
I hate ends.  
I hate beginnings  
I hate the middle part too  
I hate time  
Time slows me down and makes me old  
I hate being old  
I am all-powerful  
You're not powerful  
You are weak  
I hate weak people

Weak people have  
weak minds  
Weak minds think  
that the world will  
end this year  
Maybe the ice caps  
will melt  
I don't like ice caps  
I don't like meteors  
So a meteor is not  
allowed to hit the  
planet  
I also hate the  
planet  
The planet has  
people on it  
I don't like people  
They make shows  
about the end of  
the world  
I hate the end of  
the world

There is no end of the world  
I will not die  
I cannot die  
I don't like dying  
I am all-powerful  
I am the Archbigot  
And I hate you





ISSN 1728-3221