

FUNNY

60p

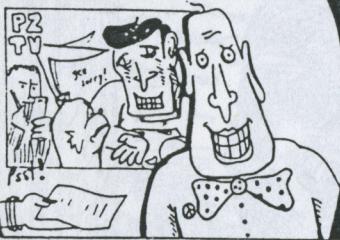
no.1

the funky fanzine



neil gaiman interview
the master of dreams speaks
(well what else would he do?)

ALIEN SLAYS PET CLAIMS JAP BUNNY

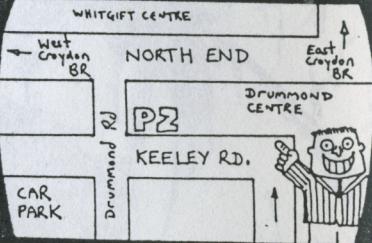


IN AN AMAZING DISCLOSURE EARLIER TODAY RABBIT, A.RONIN, CLAIMED THAT A BLUE AND RED COSTUMED BULLY BOY STEPPED ON AND SQUASHED HIS PET LIZARD. YUCK THAT'S MESSY....AND THIS JUST IN.....

IN AN APPARENTLY UNCONNECTED INCIDENT, AT LUIGI'S PIZZA PARLOUR, RIOT SQUADS MOVED IN AFTER REPORTS OF RAMPAVING TURTLES AND A JOLLY GREEN GIANT. WEIRD.



SIGHTINGS OF A MENACING BAT-LIKE CREATURE AND A HAMMER-TOTING BLONDE ARE, AS YET, UNCONFIRMED. NEXT UP: MUTANTS, MANGA AND MONSTERS? FACT OR FICTION? ED!!



THANKS BOB. WELL HERE'S THE OUTLOOK... COSMIC, EPIC, BREATHTAKING AND IF THAT'S NOT ENOUGH ALL THE LATEST U.S. IMPORTS, BACK ISSUES, 2000AD, VIZ, POSTERS, BADGES, T-SHIRTS AND MORE GREAT STUFF! THIS IS PZTV LIVE FROM SURREY SAYING SEE YOU SOON!

THE PHANTOM ZONE

COMIC, SCI-FI AND
FANTASY BOOKS
KEELEY ROAD
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PdS number 1

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Credits

President, publisher editor 'n' stuff: Peter Ashton

Contributors: Barry "Rip" McCarthy, Philip "Sheep" Belfield, Danny "Lights" Bridge, Craig "Animal" Gardiner, Dylan Oliver.

Many thanks to: Neil Gaiman, Phantom Zone, My Dad for his computer, My cat for moral support, Everbodies parents - without their actions this fanzine would not be here, You for buying this 'zine and to the Fat Knight for inspiration.



Dylan



Sheep

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Please send all letters of praise, letters of disgust and, most importantly, contributions to: PdS, PETER ASHTON, 8 SOUTH VIEW, WINCHESTER, SO22 5EL. PdS 2 will be out eventually. No subscriptions please but if you send me 70p I'll send it to you.

PdS: A Croydon mag, based in Winchester, Printed in the States.
Who, me? Desperate? Naaah!...

The Editorial Sketch

Welcome. This is it! At last, my dream of the last 10 months finally comes true! PdS 1 hits the streets. Yes that's right. 10 months of writing, preparing, typesetting (read glueing), photocopying, teenage apathy, 2am typing sessions, 2 bonfires, 3 bar-B-Qs and some enormously large lunch breaks, all over.. But was it worth it? Well I should bloody well hope so!

You may have noticed that a lot of the stuff in this issue is by me (My name's PETER aSHTON by the way, probably a relation). This is mainly because the rest of the crew are lazy sods who couldn't pull together a story before a deadline unless there was a lot of beer involved. Baz's story was once an English essay and that little picture on The Chronicles of Baramay took Sheep 2 weeks to start and 2 hours to do! We are dealing with some seriously lazy sods here! OK, that's enough of the slagging off. They're great guys really. Just a bit lazy. But who are these people, and what sort of a name is Sheep anyway?

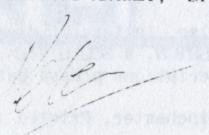
The Sheep's real name is Philip. He's a fun loving chap who reads comics, plays games and drinks a lot. The name Philip was given to him by his folks so he changed it to Sheep. Barry McCarthy AKA Baz AKA Mr Ripensmoke AKA Rip is a drunk sod who shouldn't be trusted. He tends to draw and scribble "stories" (so he tells me) when the fancy takes him. He is also in a band with Animal called Rave Up. Animals real name is Animal although his mum has been heard to call him Craig. He/it is a mad drummer who was going to write a "guide to Raving Up" with Rip for this issue but missed the non-existent deadline. Watch for it probably around issue 10. Last and probably least is Danny better known as "Danny" to his friends and "Danny" to his close friends. He's the kind of guy that borrows all your copies of Spiderman and plays innocent when they come back with creased spines. His mega epic The Chronicles of Baramay appears in this issue. And thanks must go to Dylan Oliver who sent in and eight page comic strip to many months ago to an unknown address and is probably wondering what happened to it. Well here it is Dylan.

Of course the only reason you picked this 'zine up was for the Neil Gaiman interview (yes we do have a Neil Gaiman interview) If you've never heard of the guy then I strongly recommend you pick up any of his stuff, especially Sandman. Yes there is life outside X-men. Thanks again Neil for your time 'n' stuff.

O.K. I'm out of space, out of time and out of here. One last thing. If you hate this zine please tell me. That way I can make it better. If you love this zine, again, tell me. A letters page will appear next issue. And pur-lease please send in a contribution. I will print anything good so if you've got an old sci-fi story hidden away somewhere or a comic strip you did years ago, please send it in. All contributions receive the issue that they appeared in free.

O.K. That's about it from me for this ish so, enjoy, and remember, stay cool, keep your comb handy and always change your underwear. And in the words of the sub-imortal Animal, "Drop Dead"

cheers,



BATTLETECH®

The Crescent Hawk's Inception™

Everybody in gaming knows about Battletech. It's that game with 10,000 expansion modules where you pilot a giant thingy with loads of guns and try to blow up everyone and everything in sight. Well that's what I thought it was all about anyway.

Which brings me reasonably nicely to the item in this review, BATTLETECH - THE CRESCENT HAWK'S INCEPTION (nice name) by Infocom. Huh? A computer game? Has this system no bounds? Seemingly not.

Now, since recovering from the dreaded GW disease, where the victims can do

nothing but buy GW stuff and believe everything in White Dwarf, a few years back I have been wary of anything resembling a space marine and the Battletech universe is very similar to WH40K. But similarity does not necessarily mean duplication, or something like that and I can tell you now that I'm buying the Battletech game as soon as possible, if the computer game is anything to go by.

O.K. so what's it like. At first very confusing. The instruction manual gives no instructions as to how to win the game and you are literally thrown into the deep end. So that you don't give up on you first game, here are a few handy hints 1) you are the little blue man who moves when you touch the cursor keys, 2) go every where, 3) read the entire booklet. It is full of clues and subtle suggestions.



The basic idea of the game is to go through training to be a fully fledged Mechwarrior and join up to fight for your House (in this case the house of Steiner) against it's enemies, mainly the house of Kurita, who just happen to overrun your city on your 7th training mission. Everyone dies except you and you feel it best to head for the Starport, so there. Once you reach the Starport and meet someone you then have a 'Mech and a mission and the game begins proper.

SNEAKY TIPS

- Leave your computer on all night when in the Citadel. This way you build up loads of C-Bills (money) and can buy the good stuff.
- Try and equip yourself with an SRM launcher (kills humans instantly, can be used against 'Mechs and doesn't need re-loading) and a flack suit (cheap to buy, cheap to repair, takes lots of damage).
- Save your game periodically. This way if you die you can start again without starting again, if you see what I mean.
- Don't let the computer do your combat when fighting against humans and 'Mechs. It tends to use 80 C-Bill Missiles to pick off the men when a cheap laser is good enough.
- Try not to go into combat when you are on foot. A crossbow can do a lot of damage even when you are wearing a flack suit.

The general appearance of the game is nice. The box art is what you come to expect from Battletech, dynamic and good, and a full sized poster is provided "free". One pleasant surprise was Howard Chaykin on interior art which complimented the many maps and technical drawings nicely. The Weapon And 'Mech Recognition Guide is a good read but doesn't list all the weapons and 'Mechs in the game and a small note politely invites you to "consult the following publications" for more info

One final note, be prepared to have this game take over your life. One game can last weeks, presuming you stay alive. And for those of you who only read the bottom of a review to find out how good it is, it is a good game well worth getting, O.K.?

Peter Ashton

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"THE CRESCENT HAWKS INCEPTION" is a trademark of Infocom Ltd



T H E R O U T U R E S C F T H

LIVING

BREAD!

They came in their thousands, millions even. They came with one thing in mind, the destruction of the human race and the RETURN OF THE LIVING BREAD!!!!!!

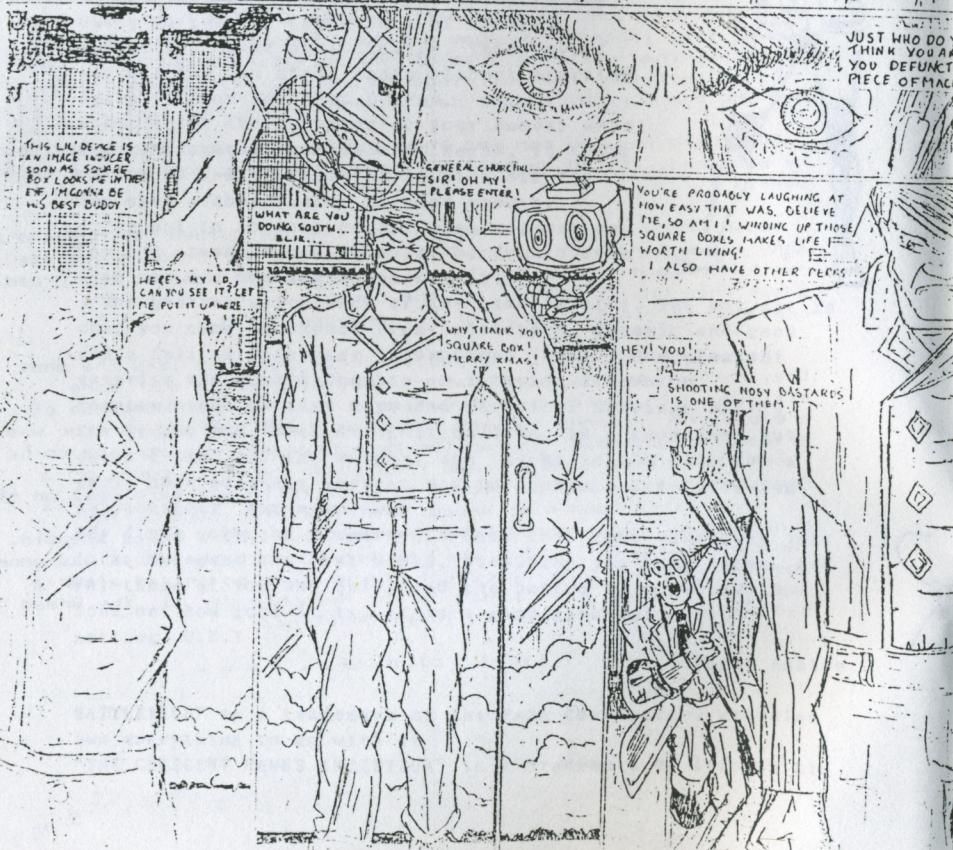
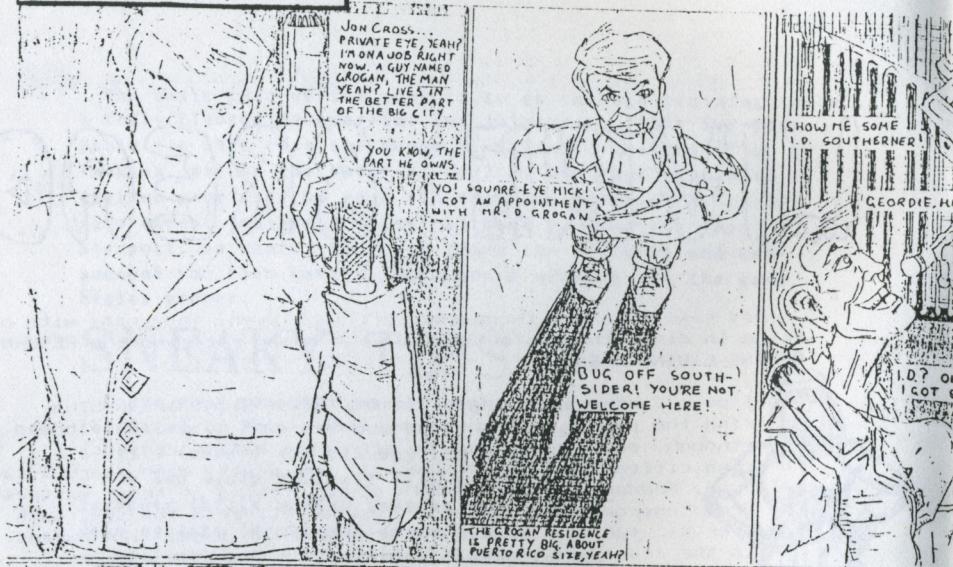
All over Earth reports were coming in of giant bread bins entering the planet's atmosphere. These were no ordinary bread bins though, each one being the size of a battle cruiser, covering cities in their shadows. It was pretty damn scary I can tell you. Suddenly, as the world stood staring at their vastness, the Bread emerged. Thousands of loaves fell from the sky, each one over six feet tall with two arms and two legs, like humans. Set in the crust was a small, warped face snarling with evil pleasure. Each one held a small toaster in it's hand, but even though they looked like some Japanese electronic marvel, they were not, they emitted a beam of red pulsating light which cut through anything from buildings to people. Yes it was a dark day for the human race, a dark day indeed.

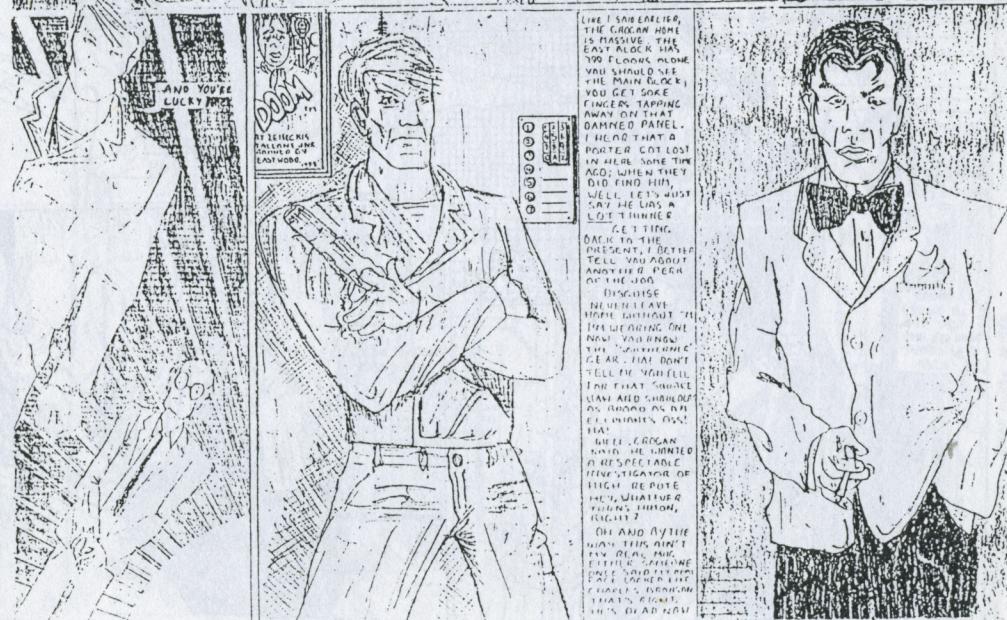
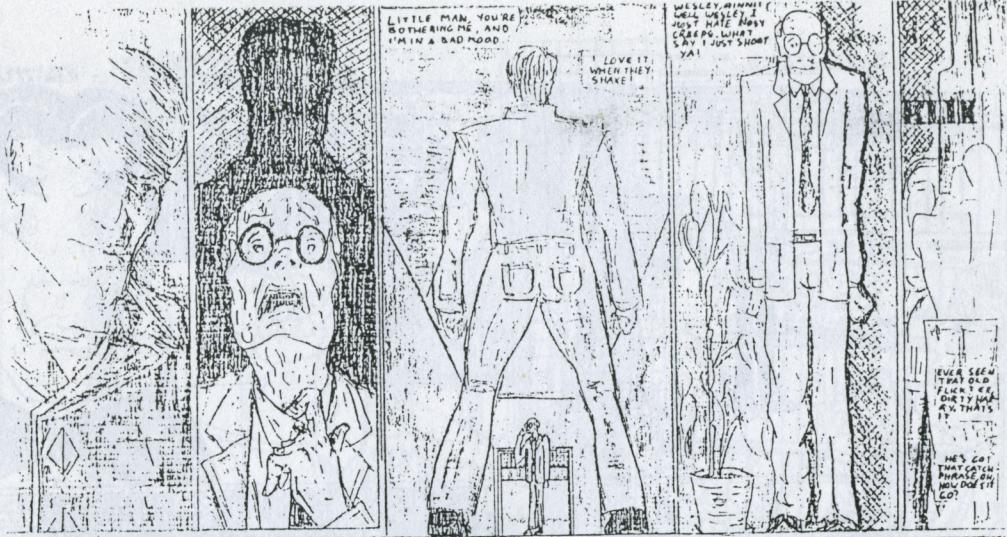
But there was one man who knew how to deal with the Bread, but he was dead, sliced in half by a mini toaster, so his wife took over.

Susan Bryce was a brave woman for she had helped her husband on many mad experiments and had lived. Before her husband had died, she had helped him to develop a secret weapon against the Bread. Susan knew how it worked, so she carried on her husband's crusade, to rid the world of the dreaded Bread.

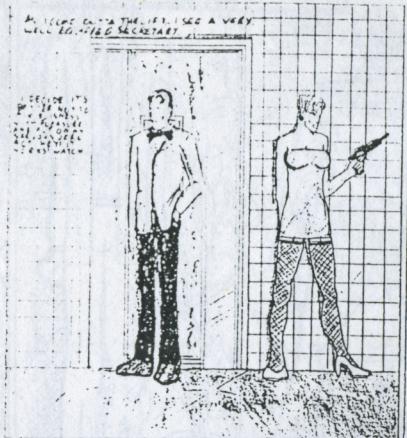
The weapon was a giant bread slicer, very much like the ones they have in the Safeway's bakery only bigger and much more efficient. It worked by automatically pulling any substance of bread matter towards a giant shredder; once a Bread warrior was sliced, it was dead. So far the Megashredder, as it came to be known, had claimed more Bread than Susan cared to count or remember and she and her loyal band of followers were well on the way to ridding London of Bread, when disaster struck. The Megashredder was tracked down and destroyed by a Bread assassin. Susan was devastated. Her only weapon against the Bread was gone. She tried to think nothing except the will to go on and after a week of reliving her past began on the Megashredder II. The Bread had better start shaking in their toasters.

THE END CONTINUED . . .



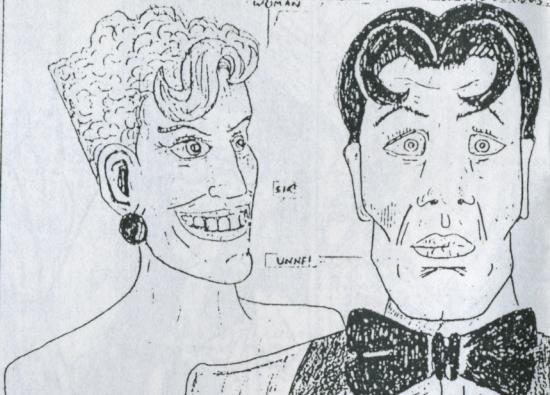


AS I CAME OUT THE LIFT I SAW A VERY
WELL DRESSED SECRETARY



(GOOD EVENING SIR IT'S
A VERY SEASIDE DAY)
WITHIN

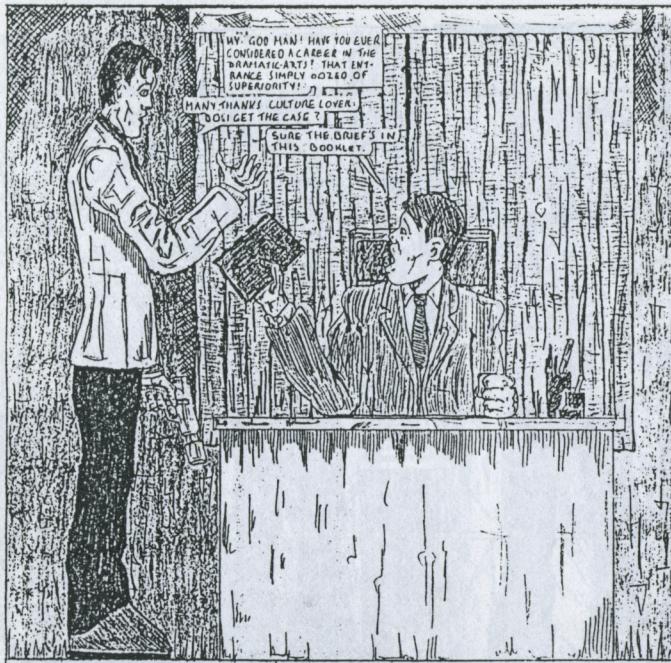
SOMETIMES THEY'RE SERIOUS



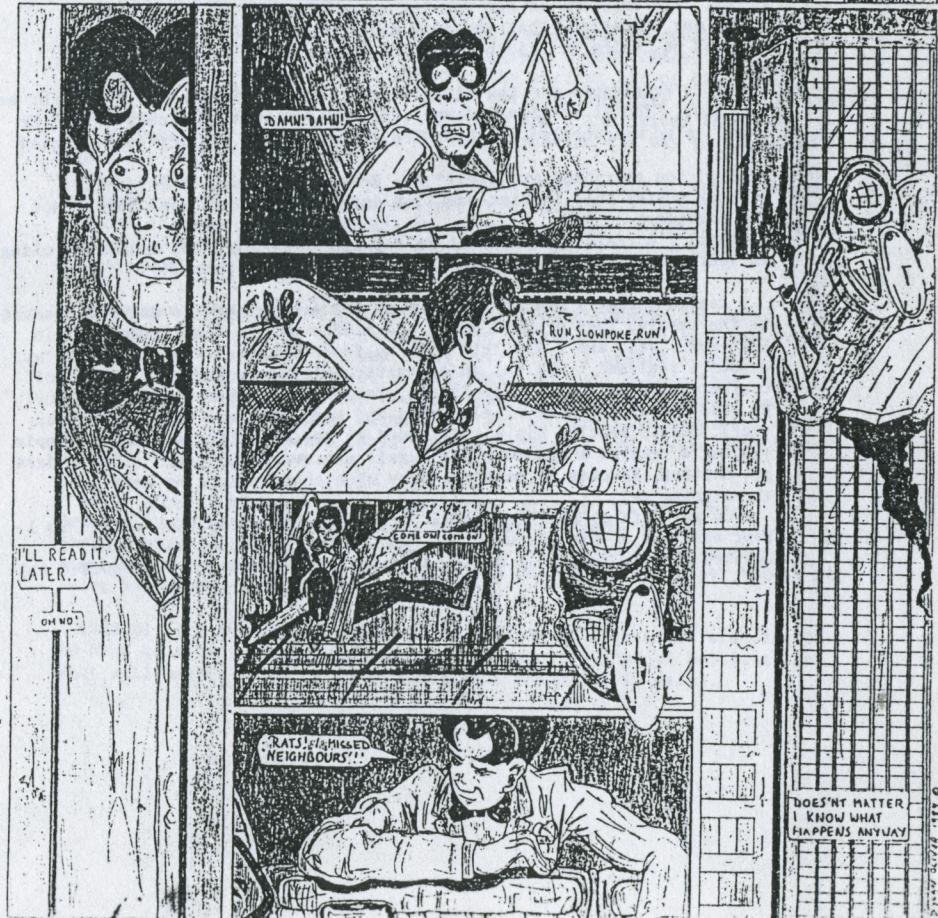


NO SMOKING PI









"A STOATER OF A STORY AND NO MISTAKE"
From an original holucination by Barry McCarthy

One sunny day I decided to take a stroll out in the marshes and bogs off pretty Viet-Nam. Who should I discover pointing their guns at my testicles but the British army! It was even worse when I discovered that none of them spoke English and kept talking gibberish about cutting my toes off one by one. I decided that action should be taken, so I dropped my trousers and, seeing my Union Jack boxer shorts, they loaded and aimed their guns. "Not a good move" I muttered to myself as they revved up the tank. One of them grabbed my 300 pound shirt and laughed his slimy head off. I kicked it into a bag saying "You wait! I'll get all my mates onto you, you ape! You big bully!" And they threw me into an elephant trap which is quite strange because they don't have elephants in Viet-Nam.

"I wanna cut off all my hair!" Strange! I'd only been in the elephant trap 5 minutes when the distant rappin' of the American Universal Medical Army Corp came into view (view?). And what tough guys they were. They were so hard they shaved with scythes, ate with their bare hands and washed their faces with Domstos. Mind you, it's not surprising - that's all they had with them.

"Who the #?!< are you?"

"er...I'm English! So can you get me out?"

"On one condition, that you join up."

I had no choice so I joined the U.S. army.

Shifty McCriggers was the first person I knew in the army. He taught me to crawl. "You'll get treated well if you treat the Americans well." He said, as he was wheeled into the Red Cross van, so the next day I tried it out:

"Hey! You Americans are great! Mr. Reagan, he's some president."

"Look buster this is Viet-Nam 1960 and Ronald Reagan's an actor, not the president."

Hoops! I'd really put my foot in it, and these elephant droppings cling to your trainers like boys round Patsy Kensit. (Elephants?)

I realised that I had to escape from the army - but the corporals saved me the hassle. They dropped me in the middle of the desert (desert? in Viet-Nam?) yes, and I was left with no food or water. When I came to my senses I realised I was not in a desert, but the bunker of a giant golf course, owned by the king of Israel, Yshlanmid Slorkdivter. what a guy! He bred Camels the size of elephants and had 366 wives (one for a leap year), not to mention his girlfriends! He had a pub the size of a temple (it was a temple) and some other hugely extravagant "things" that I dare not mention. However he wasn't a very nice chap because he kept threatening me.

"You get offa my golf course or I take you for dicky back ride!" So I kept well out of his way until he shot me in the leg with bazooka. I hobbled away as fast as I could straight into a wall and was knocked out.

I was recovering in hospital when I suddenly realised I'd forgotten to phone my mum to say I was out. She'd still be waiting for me at the villa in Israel. I had to get out of bed and find my other leg. Ahhhh! I've just found it. They're sewing it on and they haven't even given me any anesthetic, Egyptian fools! (Egyptian?) It was time to get out, and there was only one way - to walk out. I had devised a cunning plan, to steal the truck as it came to deliver the condoms to the King for his wives - I would fire these at the people who chased me. Unfortunately it didn't work because my trousers fell down as I jumped on, but I managed to hang on to the exhaust pipe as it drove out of the building and over a cactus, the place was full of them.

It started to rain cats and dogs. Most of them got impaled on the cactuses. That was when I let go of the exhaust pipe. I was suffocating a bit and thought it best to leave. By this time I was getting quite tired so I lay down and tried to get some sleep. It was getting dark so I kept rolling into cactuses. This is getting me nowhere, I thought so I got up and walked to the road and, sure enough, a taxi came past after about five minutes. However, it did not stop and when I ran out into the road after it, it reversed back and knocked me over. The driver gave me a rude gesture and sped off into the sunset (sunset?) er.. sunrise.

As dawn broke I got on a bus and was driven to Dahlsborough, where I was told I could get a job as a comedian (very bloody funny) and eventually learn to be a Yogi, that is, the ancient art of floating around on a horse with no legs. I never believed in fairy tails so i "got off" when I realised the bus whet "all the way". The driver told me I could find a man called Frederik who could show me the way to Dreamland where everything came true.

"Not ruddy likely mate, I've seen "A Nightmare on Elm Street" and I'm not going in there!" I snorted not very convincingly as I pointed to an old boiler house that had sprung out of nowhere. But he threw me off the bus anyway so I played with the rabbits for a while before before waltzing off to tell this Frederik to buck his ideas up.

No sooner had I entered the boiler house I came running out again. Why? "Cos I was on the verge of composing a brilliant song and just had to get it down... er... actually I was ruddy petrified. I opened a packet of "Cheesy Round Things That Melt In Your Hand But Not In Your Shoe" and decided what to do. I had it! I would search for water because I was quite thirsty and if I went without any for another five minutes I would probably die. I found an elephant and as elephants are always seen near water, I followed it.

After about 5 minutes the elephant died. Oh dear, no water here. I deduced that the only place with no water was the moon, so I must be there. This didn't explain the fact that I could breath and there were elephants everywhere, but I decided it was better than my other theory of being halfway up a rhinocerases armpit.

Suddenly all the ground around me collapsed and I was left standing on my head on a tiny pinnacle about 100 miles above a load of bubbling lava. What will happen? Find out next issue (Not ruddy likely mate).

Kingdom of Baramay



Desert
Melange

Harlond

Valley

Foine

Bain

DARAM

mountains
of
drama

Dark
lands

Tarim
Mtns

Elves

Wood

Elves

Wood

Wood

THE CHRONICLES OF BARAMAY



Darkness fell over a land of sand. The only movement was of small animals of the night, hunting their first meal of a new dawn. The eastward wind blew cold, bringing a thin layer of sand across the dunes, silently covering traces of movement in the permeable surface. In the midst of this wasteland, a figure kneeled to the ground, gaining cover from his strong back which faced the merciless wind.

This man was known by many names, but the most frequently spoken was Jay, after the bird that roams the skies, free as the clouds which are it's companions. He was a Strider, one of few who wander the lands in search of nothing. They are known to the lords

as great warriors, and Jay had lead many a battle for the white Kingdom of Baramay. But mostly his abilities were as a guide, for he had taken part in countless journeys and adventures, and knew the lands as well as the mountains that looked upon it. He wore thin garments which blended with the desert, with a thick leather belt which carried only a small canteen, and a sword of years gone by. Over his face, a scarf protected his face from the wind blown sand, revealing only his piercing brown eyes.

His hands played with the sand, while his brain thought of many a subject. As fast as the storm had begun, the tall figure rose from the ground and walked south, toward the plush green land of Daram.

Gradually the desert sprung hardy plants from its' surface though water was scarce. The Strider paused to take refreshment from his canteen. His eyes surveyed the horizon. The storm was now less than before, and in the distance the mountains of Derman rose, towering above Daram. He was nearly home, if anywhere could be called home.

Daram housed many friends and memories for Jay. It was the home of Gandor, the wisest Lord that ever was in Baramay. Many forgotten things were remembered by Gandor, the lost languages of elves, dwarves and even fawns. As Jay came nearer to Daram he thought of his friends and was only disturbed by the distant sound of galloping hooves...

NEIL GAIMAN

master of dreams

Neil Gaiman is the creative genius behind Violent cases and Black Orchid with Dave McKean and the successful Sandman series for D.C. comics. After his signing at Phantom Zone we took into the "back room" for an interview....

PdS - I read in Speakeasy that after the sudden departure of Rick Veitch from Swamp Thing, yourself and Jamie Delano (writer on Hellblazer) were due to take over the title but declined. Could you expand on this.

NEIL GAIMAN - Rick was originally supposed to go up to about issue 94 of Swamp Thing and Karen Berger (Editor) had asked me if I'd take it over. I said I'd love to but I'm terrifyingly busy. I'm not prepared to take on another 12 issues a year because quality would go down, so I'd be prepared to do it with Jamie. And Jamie had sort of tentitively agreed to this and that was basically the overall plan, which was that we would take it in turns on Swamp Thing. And Then D.C. got silly.

Rick did this story called "The Morning Of The Magician" which had Swamp Thing meeting Jesus and it was basically Jesus sitting in the Garden of Getsemenie and in the end he gets sort of slung up on a



cross. And it was really sweet. It was like one of those 1950's religious movies with John Wayne saying "Aw, Shawly dat was da shon of gawd" and I mean it was really sweet. D.C. suddenly had cold feet. I have this personal theory that Rick's basic mistake was in asking everybody and saying to people "Look this is going to be conceituous, is this O.K.?" I think if he'd just done it, I mean in this years Swamp Thing annual, which I started to write before this thing blew up, I've done a short story which I call "Shaggy God Stories" and it's about Jason Woodridge going down to the Parliament Of Trees and lecturing his pet Venus fly trap, Milton, on the role of trees in comparative theology, and in the course of it, comes out with things that would undoubtably offend not only Muslims but describes the Crucifixion in terms of cruelty to crowns of thorns and trees and so on, but seeing as I didn't actually wander around saying "Look I'm going to do stuff that's religious and conceituous, does anyone mind?", they just published it because there not very bright, being Americans (laughter). Where as if I'd kicked up a fuss and said does anyone mind they'd have said "Hell yes!"

On why I didn't take Swamp Thing over, three reasons. 1) Rick is my friend and I thought they were treating him rather shodily. 2) I thought their actual grounds for rejecting the story and thus causing Rick to resign were questionable. 3) I wouldn't have been able to trust them at that point. I just tend to go off and write my stories and they get printed and so on and so forth. With Swamp Thing I would have been worried about trying to second guess them. "Could I do this because it might offend someone?", "Can I not do this because some right wing jerk might think it offends his right to do something of other?" So that was basically it. Both Jamie and myself said no, we wouldn't do it and Doug Wheeler and Andy Hefler are taking over. All power to them. I'd hate to see the title go down; it's a god comic. It was a pleasure to write Swamp Thing in Black Orchid and a pleasure to write all the subsidiary characters in the annual.

PdS - I've noticed a distinctive presence of superheroes in your work. Is this nostalgia?



NG - Some of it's nostalgia, some of it's a fondness for them, I mean, I was plotting Black Orchid and I thought, I know what I'll do, I'll have Batman come on! This is me! I get to write Batman! Wow! That was terrific. And I've had a nice time in Sandman with the JLA and Scot Free's dreams, the Demon, Constantine of course who's a lovely character - he writes himself, all the bizarre characters from the old D.C. Mystery books. But I think, with the exception of the Mystery books characters cropping up again, because they're basically now Sandman territory, and the complete and utter resolution of the 1970's Sandman problem, that's probably about it for Sandman. What I wanted to do was to spend the first six or so issues setting the groundwork for the character - where he fits in the D.C. Universe, so now we're at a point where everyone knows who he is, you know what he's doing, you think you know what he's doing. I won't introduce Superman or Batman into the book because you know where he stands in relation to them. I'm now going to concentrate on the Sandman's family. We're going to meet Death, Desire, Dispare, around issue 17 we're going to meet Destruction who quit around 300 years ago and alternately worked as a mercenary and an artist. There's quite a few strange characters cropping up so we're going to stick within those parameters for a while.



PdS - How do you go about writing a script?

NG - Right, (Holds up Swamp Thing annual) I sit down at my wordprocessor and start typing: "O.K. Richard (Rayner, artist on the annual), page 1, we've got 6 panels of roughly similar size. Panel 1: We're looking out of a cupboard and we can see Chester leaning over with Liz behind him, and we can see all this garbage - on one side is a raggy doll, and so on and so forth. Caption: There was a man who tried to do more good than bad, born out of his time." The panel shows a man lying in a pile of trash, with a ragged doll nearby. Chester and Liz are looking at him from a doorway. Chester has a caption box above him. Liz has a speech bubble below her.

bad, born out of his time." Chester: Boy I haven't looked at this stuff since we moved in, do you think it would be worth money?" That's basically how you start. Then you go on to page 2, "a splash page. You can see Chester holding up a poster of Brother Power the Geek" and you spend about a page describing him, "and on the poster is written: we're doing our own thing and we're taking it to congress. Vote Brother Power for Flower Power. Chester off: "Whatever happened to him?" Title at the bottom: "Brothers". That's basically how I write it. Sometimes things happen that surprise me. Sometimes I'll just go off and write it panel by panel. Sometimes I'll write a couple of pages of dialogue and then have to break it down into panels. Sometimes I'll end up writing all the panels and then have to go back once I know what's happening. It depends on the situation.

PdS - Do you ever write a whole chunk of text and then think "Oh, this might be good" and have to change your story plan?

NG - Yes that happens to. Like in Sandman 10: I knew a few very minor things about this character I'm going to be introducing in Sandman 10 - when I got to about page 15 I suddenly discovered, while I was writing the panel description, what he looked like and who he was. He's called the Corinthian and he's an escaped nightmare who's pretending to live a real life as a serial killer. I still didn't know how he was going to end up which is unusual because I usually have a pretty good idea of what's on the last page, even if I don't have an idea of anything else, I know what I'm heading for. So I got to the last page and I wound up writing a page from the Corinthians' viewpoint.

PdS - When you write a script do you bear the artist in mind?

NG - Yes, I write for the artist. Some artists do one thing, some do another. The Swamp Thing Annual was written for Richard Rayner. Now I know what Richard does and he loves doing lots of intricate detail so I can start listing all the things I want to see in the panel and know that I'm going to get the copies of Green Lantern, and the Enterprise and the Lost in Space Robot "Build It Your Self" kit. Where as with Dave McKean I tend to write things which resemble film scripts and rarely break things down into panels, just because Dave has a better design sense than I have. Dave has a better design sense than anyone else I know, with the possible exception of Bill Sienkiewicz, so why even try to put an order on him that doesn't give him free range. I'd rather see him doing what he's best at.

PdS - Do you ever plan to do anything with Bill Sienkiewicz? I noticed you were credited in the Electra book, "For the obsessive hell of it!"



NG - That was a joke! One day we plan to do a book called "Obsessional" which is all about the entire population of New York Marching into the sea, but it's really just a matter of time for both of us. I love his stuff and he likes mine. Bill is one of the few people who's work really does excite me, and there aren't a lot of those around.

PdS - Why do you think "horror" comics like Sandman and Hellblazer are so popular?

NG - People are sick! I don't know what it is, they're sick! I think it's the thought that does it. When you look at a lot of American mainstream comics you feel like they're being written without anyone even engaging a brain. One thing you can say about Jamie's stuff, or my stuff, or Grant Morrison and Pat Mills' stuff is that there is obviously a mind behind it, and they're very obviously being written by the people they're being written by. Jamie's version of Sandman would be a completely different creature to mine, you can tell that we're writing them. I mean, I admire Animal Man but I could never write it like Grant does. With Sandman I'm flabbergasted at how well it's doing because I had imagined that it was going to be the equivalent to my own little comic: it would sell it's 40,000 or so and that would be that. I got a phone call the other day from Dave McKean who told me it was outselling everything in his local comic shop except Excaliber.



15

PdS - Some people say the art team on Sandman is messy and difficult to read...

NG - The new art team on Number 6 I'm actually a little happier with than I was with Sam (Keith). I liked what Sam did but it was limiting in terms of the kinds of stories I could write. I couldn't have written issue 6 with Sam on the art because Sam couldn't have created six believable characters for me to put through hell. Mike is very strong on the realistic stuff but he's probably weaker on the weird kinda stuff that Sam was good at, so you win some, you loose some, and I think Dave's done me proud on the covers.

PdS - How exactly does he do them?

NG - Well, they're about 3 feet tall, he builds shelves down the sides, puts things on the shelves, paints the picture in the middle, photographs the whole thing and sends the transparency off to D.C.

PdS - how did he get that fire effect on issue 3

NG - Ah, that's a trade secret. He set fire to a piece of paper, photographed the paper burning and then stuck the photo of the flame on the cover. On Sandman 4 he was planning to set light to the whole

thing, but it just went black, so instead he just burnt out bits of it.

PdS - I think they're better than his Hellblazer covers.

NG - I think so but that's also because we sat down at the beginning and planned out what was going to be on the cover of each one. The thing is Hellblazer has to have Constantine on the cover and they were never conceived of as a series, where as with the Sandman covers we said "Right, we'll do a portrait gallery. I phoned up Karen Berger (editor) and said "O.K. The Sandman is on the cover of number one, but he's not going to be on the covers of any others." and she said "Well, how will they know this is Sandman?" and I said "It's got SANDMAN written at the top". They'll work it out, trust them, they're smarter than you give them credit for. You don't have to put the lead character on the cover of a comic and I'm sure the Sandman will crop up again on another cover eventually, probably in the Doll's house storyline which are a new series of covers where again there's a totally different design. Now that people are getting used to these covers, and I've noticed Aquaman have started ripping us off, that's fine because we've already worked out what the new set of covers are going to be like.

PdS - If you had the power how would you change or improve the comics industry.

NG - I'd do a lot of things. The most important thing that I'd do would be to run it more like a book publisher which involves giving the creators a larger piece of the cake. When you look at anything like 2000AD. 2000AD's in the fucking Dark Ages. I noticed recently that Quality had reprinted a couple of crappy Future Shocks I'd done for 2000AD, now I don't see any more money from that. I have no control over the fact that it appears in that horrible Quality comics format where it's stretched by a zerox and colored with crayon. They don't give creators royalties and they wonder why all the talent goes to America. But, having said that, even American companies generally speaking don't run like book companies and I don't necessarily think that the comics per-say is the best way of doing things, which is why I'm doing this thing "Signal to Noise" in The Face with Dave McKean. Now whether it proves a pointlessly elaborate experiment which makes us both look stupid or it falls flat on it's face, the fact of the matter is we're doing a comic in a magazine which is about other things. It'll run for about 4 - 6 pages a month for about 6 of seven months after which we'll have a 40 odd page story which we own , and if we want to publish it ourselves or sell it to a publisher, that's fine. We own more than just the characters, we own the whole cake. I think that character created



stuff has it's value, I'm not arguing with that, but I do think that in order to get to quality creative talents, the kinds of writers and artists who work in the mainstream, into comics, you've got to offer them more than just the chance to write Green Lantern for 6 issues. Which is why we need things like the Dark Knight and Watchmen books. We're in a period of change. I'm quite happy to keep on doing what I'm doing because I think we're in a world that's changing anyway and it's going to be exciting to see what happens next.



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Sandman - D.C.
Swamp Thing Annual 5 - D.C. Books
Of Magic - D.C.
Poison Ivy's Secret Origin -
D.C.
AARCH - Mad Love
Luther Arkwright 10 - Valkyrie
Trident Comics - Trident
Blaam - Williprods
Signal to Noise - The Face
Vol.2 No.9+

If you know of any other stuff done by Neil Gaiman, inside or outside comics, please write in and tell me. Thanks.



Neil Gaiman was interviewed by Peter and Sheep. All artwork is copyright D.C. comics except the first one (taken from Violent Cases) which is copyright Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean. Many thanks to Neil for his time and to Phantom Zone for letting us interview him at such short notice. Thank You.

THROWING IT ALL UP

VOMITING IN WFRP

This article enables you to use throwing up in your Warhammer campaign, although it can be easily altered for any system you want.

Vomiting is an ancient and sacred art in the Warhammer world amongst all who drink. It is the ability to regurgitate food, drink, and bodily fluids without effort or discomfort.

THE VOMIT SKILL

The character is able to regurgitate large amounts of sick on a successful DEX roll with a +10 modifier. Failure by over 30% causes D6 damage to the character. This skill is most used in combat.

THE VOMIT CAREER

Professional thrower-uppers are much sought after in the taverns and other drinking houses of the old world. People will often sponsor Vomiters as to how many buckets they can fill in one night and a Barman may pay the Vomiter as an entertainer for his tavern.

Career Entries: Any career with the consume alcohol career.

Skills: Comedien, Consume alcohol, Gamble, Vomit.

Trappings: Bottle of strong alcohol, bucket, hangover tablets (crude herbal tablet).

Career Exits: Alchemists apprentice, entertainer, gambler, thief.

Advance scheme

M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	DEX	LD	INT	CL	WP	FEL
-	+10	-	-	+1	+1	-	-	+20	-	-	-	+10	-

VOMIT IN COMBAT

Characters can only use vomiting in combat if they have the vomiting skill. Vomiting takes one full turn to prepare during test, which nothing else can be done. If the character passes the vomit covering their opponent. Vomiting is only effective in hand to hand combat. Once a throw has been made, consult the VOMIT TABLE below.



D6 EFFECT

- 1 The victim is covered with a film of clear goo and cannot do anything for D3 rounds.
- 2 The victim is hit by a lumpy mass of sick and can do nothing for D6 rounds.
- 3 The sick contains large amounts of acidic digestion fluids. Take D3 damage to the head, body and, if 3 Damage, arms.
- 4 As for 3 but with D6 Damage to head, body and arms.
- 5 The vomit completely covers the victim with acidic sick, Take D6 Damage to the whole body, loosing one point of dam per turn. The effect continues untill all the damage is used up.
- 6 Stomach explodes. Take D3-1 damage to own body and D10 to opponent, loosing one point per turn as for 5

PUKE THE GOD OF VOMIT

Puke is the god of all who vomit and will aid them in any way to achive total pukeness. He is usually represented as a Drunkard carrying the sacred bottle and bucket and throwing up everywhere.

Puke is neutral.

Puke is worshiped in inns and taverns across the old world. His worshipers are often rogues, especially lower class rogues.

Puke has no formal temples and all worshiping takes place in the local tavern. Often the Barman will erect a shrine in the back room consisting of an upturned bucket and a bottle full of the strongest ale.

The symbol of Puke is a diced Carrot in a pool of sick. This is usually simplified to a cube.

Puke, unsurprisingly, has no friends and no enemis although was rumoured to have had an affair with Liadriel, the Elven god of song and wine, though all Elves strongly disagree with this.

Requirements for the cult of Puke are few. The initiate should be able to consume alcohol to a large degree and should enjoy vomiting.

All initiates and clerics of Puke must follow the following strictures:

They must drink every night with the lads if possible.
They must enjoy their drink.

They must be on good terms with the barman and never get barred.



Spell use. A follower of Puke has access to the following spells:

Vomit Bolt

SL: 1 MP: 1 R: 2yds D: 1 turn

Ingredients: a dab of alcohol.

Effect: A bolt of vomit streams from the users hand causing D2 vomit critical.

Aura of Vomit

SL: 1 MP: 2 R: 4yd radius D: D3 turns

Ingredients: a dab of strong alcohol

Effect: Causes an aura of vomit to surround the character giving D3 vomit critical to anyone who enters the circle. The user is safe.

Vomit Bolt II

SL: 2 MP: 4 R: 10yds D: 1 turn

Ingredients: a vial of alcohol

Effect: as vomit bolt I but with D4 Vomit critical

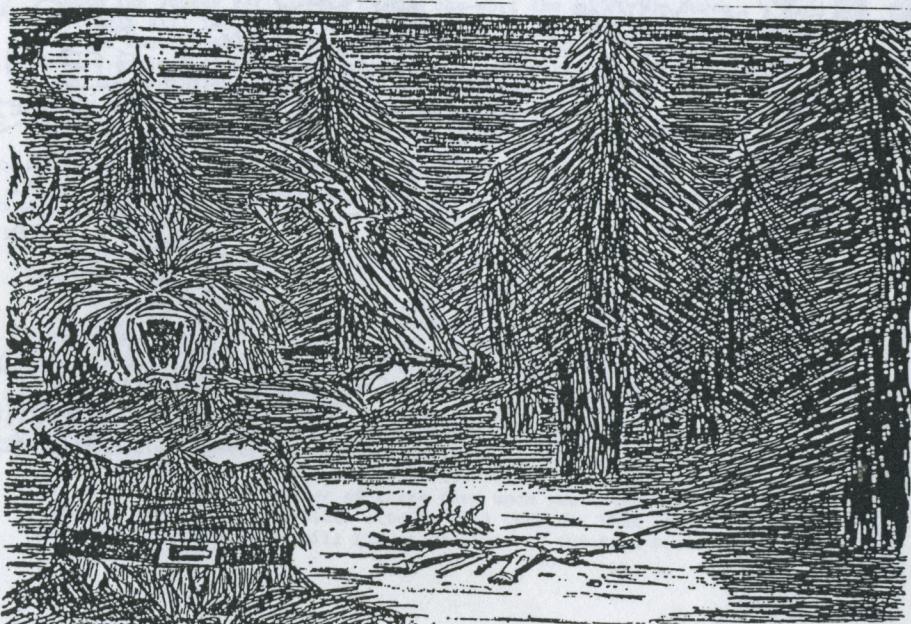
Cause Vomit

SL: 2 MP: 6 R: 10yds D: 1 turn

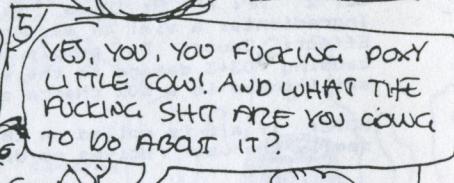
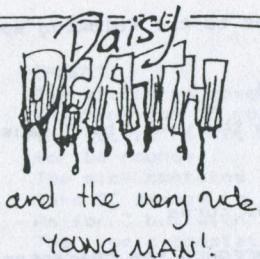
Ingredients: a vial of alcohol

Effect: Causes D6 people in the circle to throw up violently causing D3+3 damage to the victim. If the victim has the vomit skill there is a 50% chance of them controlling it.

NOTE: If a 6 is rolled on the vomit critical table when using a spell, the user receives no damage.



by Barry Marshall



RIDERS ON THE STORM

This adventure for Judge Dredd RPG was faithfully adapted from the story of the same name in 2000AD progs 427 and 428. When searching for Dredd ideas I often look in the pre 1987 progs mainly because there are so many good stories from that era and none of my players were reading 2000AD then. Riders is a nice weird case for you Judges to solve but make sure none of your players have read it. If they have change the bikers to sky surfers or something.

Open the adventure with this T.V. announcement. "We interrupt this broadcast to bring you an emergency announcement. A breakdown at Weather Control has caused a freak thunderstorm over parts of Sector 58. It's raining cats and robo-dogs out there! Judges are diverting traffic away from affected areas. Driving is hazardous. Citizens are warned to stay at home. Do not go out unless it is absolutely necessary."

The Judges are on road duty at the Subic Stripway/Luzon Drive intsec when control crackles through the radio

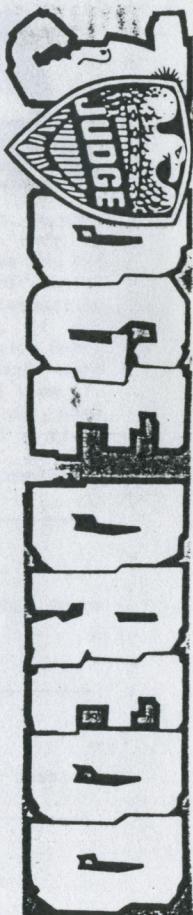
"Control to all units sector 58. We have a Block rumble, Ferd Marcos Block car port. Be on the lookout for unknown bike gang last seen exiting feedway 4 to Subic Stripway."

At that point the Judges notice 10 bikes vrooming along the Subic Stripway. If they follow the bikers they vanish when approached. Spooky huh?

When the Judges get to Ferd Marcos car port the surviving Juves will tell all. There was a pre-arranged rumble Between the Marcos Mentals and the Aquino Rude Juves (I love these subtle jokes). The bikers arrived mid rumble, shot everyone and everything up and left. When questioned, one spug, Julius Schwartz gets hysterical shouting "I'd recognise them dirty bikers anywhere! It was them! We was wiped out by the ghost riders man!"

"Them dirty bikers" turn out to be the Ramos Block Insolents a bike gang who were wiped out in the Imelda Street siege a year ago. Lie detectors check this as true. They are dead, trashed, not alive.

Later that night the Judges having resumed their duties hear gunfire coming from President's Mall shopping mall. As they approach a punk intercepts them saying "B-Behind me, the Insolents!" They arrive as the same bikers are shooting up the Imelda Marcos Block Trendos, another Juve gang, many of whom are on the ground, dead. If a Judge shoots and hits a biker it will explode, revealing himself to be a robot! After that the bikers will begin to disappear and any Judge passing a +10 tech skill roll will realise they are using matter transporters. A smart Judge will try to follow, probably by jumping on its bike. If you have no smart Judges, Tech Division should be able to trace the signal from the wrecked bike. If neither of these dawn upon your Judges keep blitzing the sector with Biker attacks till they do. When the Judge(s) get there, they will find themselves in the Ferd Marcos Richfellows club.



All the members of the Richfellows club are old, rich men and will surrender without a fight. There excuse is as follows. The members wanted to help out with the local Juve problem so using inside information, which was easy to buy, they set up the robot ghost scam to kill of all the gangs. There was no way the gangs could connect them to the killings and the Bikers scared the fear of Grud into them alive let alone dead, so they were safe. The charge is life plus 10 years per Bribe (1 mill creds)

On its own this is a rather short adventure but remember the conditions: a torrential downpour. When Weather Control cocks up Mother Nature gets her own back. And when the enviroment goes crazy... you guessed it! Let imagination go wild, which, if you're reading this 'zine, shouldn't be too difficult.

Originally written by T.B. Grover. Adapted by Peter Ashton
Copyright (c) Fleetway Publications (The idea anyway) as is "Judge Dredd".





MARVEL SUPER HEROESTM

I have one problem with the D.C. Heroes RPG, I don't understand it. So when I want to play my favorite D.C. characters, or run an adventure around them, I find it much easier to use the more flexible Marvel Superheroes RPG and convert all the D.C. heroes to the system. "Well, what's the point of that." you may be asking "Almost all the heroes in one universe have a counterpart in the other: Elongated man and Mr. Fantastic for example." That's fine, if you want to play Reed Richards, the infallible king of the superheroes. Ralph Dibny is a basic adventurer with no office block and no fortune. A much more interesting character, and who says he has to be the Ralph we all know of. He's in a different universe now, with a different history. For instance, when I play Block in MSH, I say he fell through a space warp and landed on earth where Reed Richards gave him his flight ring to counteract his weight. He had an argument with the Thing and left the group to work on his own. Completely different to the Block from LSH. Anyway, enough chat, enter the Heroes:

MARTIAN MANHUNTER, Jon Jon'zz, Alien

F RM 30 A EX 20 S IN 40 E RM 30 R GD 10 I EX 20 P RM 30
HEALTH- 120 KARMA- 60 RESOURCES- EX POPULARITY- 15
POWERS- Flight: RM, Body Armor: GD, Shape Change: IN, Invisibility: RM, Image Generation- self: IN, Telepathy: IN
LIMITATION- Catastrophic fear of fire.
TALENTS- Science

THE ATOM, Ray Palmer, Altered Human

F RM 30 A EX 20 S EX 20 E GD 10 R GD 10 I EX 20 P TY 6
HEALTH- 80 KARMA- 36 RESOURCES- GD POPULARITY- 15
POWERS- Shrinking: UN (Down to 0.1 inch), Change Mass: AM (Up to normal mass)
TALENTS- Acrobatics, Electronics, Science, Martial Arts B.

BLOCK, Alien (Dryad)

F RM 30 A PR 4 S MN 75 E AM 50 R GD 10 I TY 6 P PR 4
HEALTH- 159 KARMA- 20 RESOURCES- TY POPULARITY- 5
POWERS- Body Armor: UN, Flight: GD
LIMITATION- Flight is only with flight ring.

ELONGATED MAN, Ralph Dibny, Altered Human

F IN 40 A GD 10 S GD 10 E EX 20 R IN 40 I RM 30 P TY 6
HEALTH- 80 KARMA- 76 RESOURCES- TY POPULARITY- 15
POWERS- Elongation: AM
TALENTS- Detective, Martial Arts D.

THE DEMON, Etrigan/Jason Blood, Demon/Altered Human

F IN 40 A IN 40 S IN 40 E RM 30 R TY 6 I EX 20 P AM 50
HEALTH- 150 KARMA- 76 RESOURCES- Demon: MN, Blood: TY POPULARITY- 0
POWERS- Claws: IN, Teeth: RM, Fire Generation- Mouth: RM, Magical Ability- Various Spells, Alter Ego- Blood/Etrigan Through Rhyme.
LIMITATION: Blood- Slightly Inhumane, Etrigan- Slightly Humane
TALENTS- Talks in Rhyme CONTACTS- Hell



Confessions of a COMIC FANATIC



The time every solid comic fan dreads.
The time of the STANDING ORDER CLEAR OUT !!!!

Shit! Shit! Shit! What am I going to do? 10 pounds in my pocket, a standing order file the size of Jenette Khan's salary and still more new comics! Help!

"Er, Hi! Can I have my file, yeah, that's it, the one taking up half the draw. (groan) Ta."

Uh oh. Is that Kitty & Wolverine 6 on the wall? And Wolverine 1? It is. Err... Oh No!! They've got that issue of Spiderman I desperately need! OK, not desperately, but I can't find it anywhere else and the buyers guide lists it as very scarce and... no. I can do live out them, can't I?

"Can I have those three off the wall? Thanks." Uh oh. He expects me to pay for them now.... Can I put them in my file please" oh please, please, pretty please, beg on my knees, be your servant for eternety...

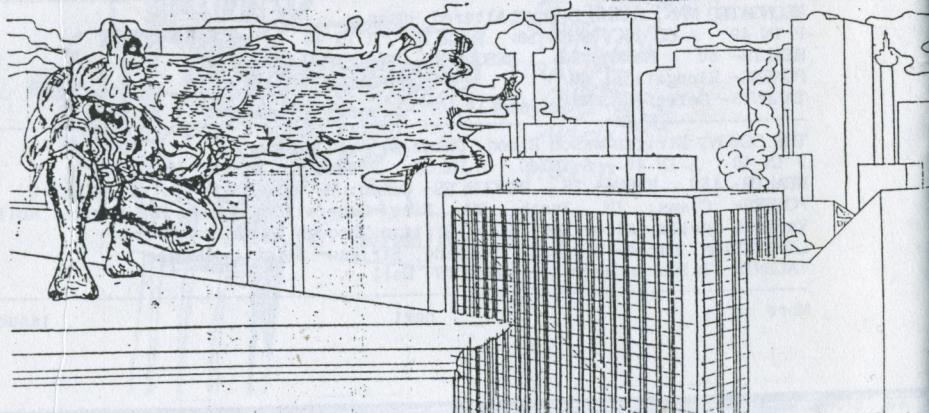
"O.K. but you've got to do something about this file."

"Yeah, sure. Actually I'm working next week so I'll have it cleared by then." Liar.

Now, to the file. Oh god, why does it have to suddenly bloat just when I'm poor?

"O.K. I'll take X-men, Batman, Hellblazer, Sandman, She-Hulk, JLE (What!), JLA (I don't need this, but Barda's had her power rod stolen and Blue Beatle's dying, so...), Excaliber, Stray Toasters (I don't even understand this, but it's Sienkiewicz, so...), Meltdown (2.50!!!!) Spidey, Scimidar (Dirty sod), 10 2000ADs, 5 Crisis', oh, that's all. (My file is still mega) I'll clear it out soon, (Mum can I mow the lawn?) honest (Does your car need doing?) well I'll see you then (p'raps the neighbors? The street????)

Moral- Comics really screw you up, but its a bloody good laff

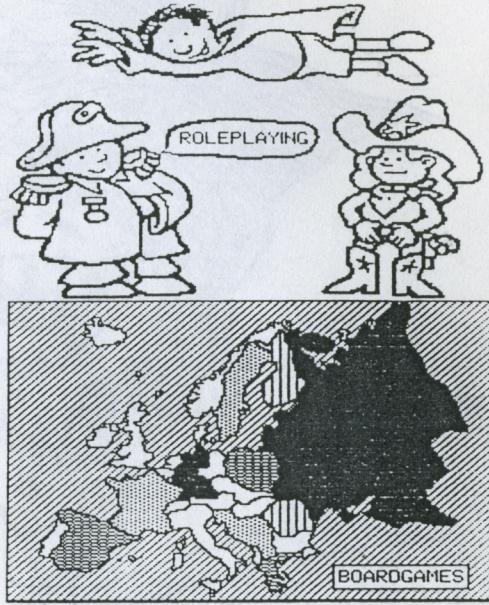
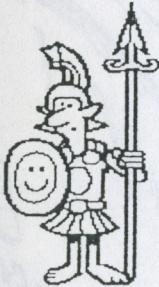
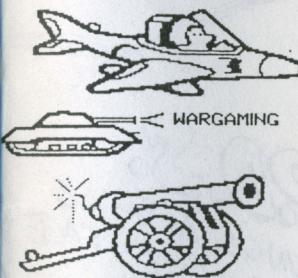


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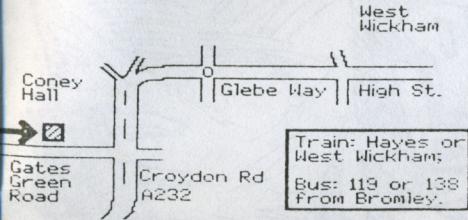
West Wickham Games Club

is a club for anyone interested in wargames, role-playing games or boardgames in the West Wickham or Bromley area. We welcome people of any age from 12 upwards, and meet regularly (every Monday except the first in each month) at the Assembly Rooms, Gates Green Road, Coney Hall.

We play:-



How to find us:-



Any questions?

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or Andrew,
462 6615.
Mike
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FUNNY

60p

no. 1

the funky fanzine



neil gaiman interview
the master of dreams speaks
(well what else would he do?)