



ZWEIHÄNDER

Semester 1 | 2023

sutekh The Board Game and Tabletop Society

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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Hi, it's Joel, again. I have not yet been ousted despite my previous article (see "Four Ways to Coup" from the 2022 *Zweihaender Semester 2* issue). So I'm still President. Don't get me wrong, I'm glad you all have kept me around for a second year, it's just been a long journey and the start of this journey was important to me.

I'm glad I convinced myself to come along to my first Friday Pizza and Games back in 2019. Walking up the stairs to the old Holme Reading Room to see a pile of games and strange people was quite intimidating, but someone caught me before I could turn tail and run. A friendly face asked me if I wanted to play a game, and deposited me down in front of the game *Root* with three other people. While not an overly complex game to play, it was different to anything I had seen. My pile of bird shaped meeples, a mysterious playerboard in front of me and a hand of cards all at once was incredibly strange compared to my history of playing *Twister*, *Rummy*, and *Monopoly*. I fought off the cat shaped meeples, and got decimated by the mice shaped meeples, as the single racoon bounced around the board uncovering ruins and ultimately winning.

The game was great, I was hooked, I found a community I loved, and I ate pizza.

So, I stuck around, and a month or two after that I joined the executive team as General Executive 2 and bought myself a copy of *Root* for myself to celebrate. It was just the start of a growing collection of games, decks of cards, and dice, though it is still to this day one of my fondest games.

Since that first day, being a part of ~~Sutekh -the-Popculture and Games Society / Popculture and Board Games Society / Board Games and Popculture Society~~ **Board Game and Tabletop society** has been a core part of my university social life and I have met many wonderful people this way.

Your favourite distributor of misinformation,

Joel Donnelly



A NEW MEMBERS GUIDE TO SUTEKH

DON'T PANIC. Sutekh can be an eclectic and imposing society, full of subcommunities, new people, and strange creatures. (What is a paranoid Android doing with a fish head?)

But don't worry its quite simple to get into. I, William Saffery who totally wrote this, have meticulously combed through everything there ever was to know about our society and refined it into the purest essentials.

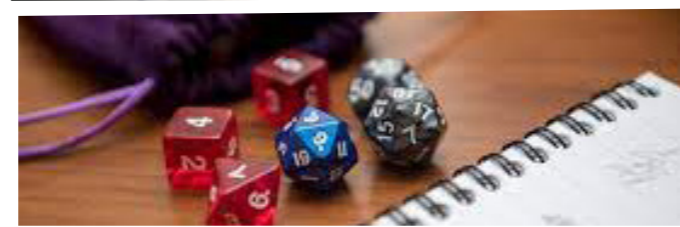


REGULAR EVENTS

- **Wednesday Cards and Cartridges,** Typically held somewhere in the education building near Manning. Watch the Discord for specifics.
- **Friday Pizza and Games Night,** In the Holme building Reading Room. Just go down the road to the right of the front entrance of the Quad and up the stairs once you reach the Holme building.
- As well as a range of special events that are regularly announced on our social media and discord!

SERVICES

- Our **discord server**, discord.io/sutekh
- Our **library** can be found in the "cage", in the basement of the **Holme Building**. It's temporarily closed.
- You can annoy our executives via our emails or Discord DMs, which are listed at the bottom of the front page of our site sutekh.org.au
- **Sign up for D&D and other tabletop events** on the Discord server in channels under the **Role-Playing Games Group**



TTRPGS AT SUTEKH

OUR GAMES FOR 2023

Our newly formed TTRPG subcommittee is more excited than ever to get TTRPGs to flourish at Sutekh. Beyond our usual offer, to help matchmake for players and GM's in all systems, we aim to bring the wide variety of TTRPG's to the forefront, and to offer a rich and layered Dungeons and Dragons 5e experience that all members can benefit from.

LEARN DUNGEONS & DRAGONS!

During Welcome Fest we are offering two sessions, aimed at helping new players become familiar with D&D 5e.

- **Session 1:** Wednesday 15th 3:00pm - 5:00pm. **Introduction to D&D 5e: How to Play**
- **Session 2:** Friday 17th 3:00pm - 5:00pm. **Introduction to D&D 5e: Character Creation**

Look out for information on our discord, instagram and more for our location and other details.

LAMPLIT & LOST

A MULTI-DM 5E CAMPAIGN

Deep in the Lapin ocean lies a set of islands called Masaka. A powerful nation on the brink of collapse. The unheard of magic it uses now dormant. But, in just a moment, the islands change. No one is left. The thriving cities now ruins, the landscape unforgiving and wild. What happened?

Do you seek high stakes adventure? Finding mysterious artefacts, exploring beyond what is known and delving deeper into mysteries? Join now as an Adventurer! This Epic Exploring game of D&D 5e is open to all Sutekh Members.

Where did the people go? What are the Islands like? What powerful relics can you uncover? The control of where and what you do is fully in your hands! This is a sandbox style game where you pick what you persue.

A team of Game Masters offer games at different times and both online and in-person so you should always be able to find a session you can attend. Play with different players each week to grow futher and uncover all the mysteries of Masaka.

SIGN UP!

The first step is to sign up! Joining the Discord will allow you to select sessions to attend, or request a session, along with so much more! To keep our games safe and open to all players take note of our TTRPG Code of Conduct and the Safety Tools we are using.

SIGN UP

or sign up at: forms.gle/CmTZqpwDT2ZwYTXs7

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF TTRPGS

PLAY NEW TABLETOP SYSTEMS

Do you want to dip your toe into tabletop roleplaying games, but don't know where to start? Are you a D&D player who wants to learn about other systems after certain recent events? Have you always wanted to play this one RPG that was just too niche?

Whoever you are, Sutekh has something for you with our **Wonderful World of TTRPGs** events which will be held throughout 2023. These will focus on introducing people to systems spanning genres like classic fantasy to Lovecraftian horror and post-apocalypse through a series of one session games.

No experience is necessary! Just come along, and maybe you'll wind up with a new favourite game.

RPGs that may be run, subject to GM discretion, include Call of Cthulhu, Blades in the Dark, Honey Heist, City of Mist, Thirsty Sword Lesbians, Pendragon, Delta Green, Mörk Borg, Sign: A Game About Being Understood, Dungeon World and Polaris.

Keep an eye on the Sutekh Discord and our other pages to find out how to get involved.

Editor's Note

I have never written, edited, designed or produced a magazine before. With no qualifications, I was elected Sutekhs editor after submitting my nomination a mere 15 minutes before they closed. Despite this, **Zweiander Semester 1 2023** exists, and without offence to any former Zweiander editors or contributors, **I think this is the best one yet.**

TO THE ZWEIHANDER SUBCOMMITTEE

This is in many ways not because of me. Ironically, I did very little editing considering my title. Instead a team of incredible editors – namely **Jarod, Zoe, TK and Ze'ev** meticulously restructured, respelt and argued about the word choice of all the articles presented to ensure they were the best they could be.

Our contributors each provided their own personal and unique articles about areas they are passionate about, together forming the base of the Zweiander; without them, it would be nothing more than executive schlock no better than the Discord's announcement channel. I, however, pulled my article because I failed to consider that a full original wargame rulebook may not be appropriate for Zweiander.

Finally, the incredible visual design was primarily done by **Jessie** whose relentless work ethic and professional grade skills ensure that the articles I designed stick out like a sore thumb and I couldn't be happier she has shown me up. I ended up being more of a director on this project than anything else and my vision of Zweiander could not have been realised without the team that came together for it. So thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

Sutekh is my favourite society and I'm so glad that I could contribute to what might be one of my favourite parts of it. That being said, not all people who helped are saints...

My response to the **two egregiously incorrect statements** published in Zweiander Semester 1 2023:

DO NOT PICK "the pile of bird-shaped meeples". Root is the best board game; everyone should play it, but for the love of God, do not let the new player play the hardest, most unstable and swingy faction. The birds are like if you want to pretend to be a criminal mastermind but to do so you need to understand the game. Please play any other faction first. (Presidential Address - Joel Donnelly)

GURPS is a cringe system. If D&D 5e is oatmeal, GURPS is like eating a bowl of granite pebbles. If you see anyone comment **"Average GURPS enjoyers"** on a Sutekh post, simply reply **"eat rocks"**. If Will wants to burn books, GURPS must be the first to go. (Librarian's Report - Will Ma)

Other than that, thank you for taking the time to read this magazine.

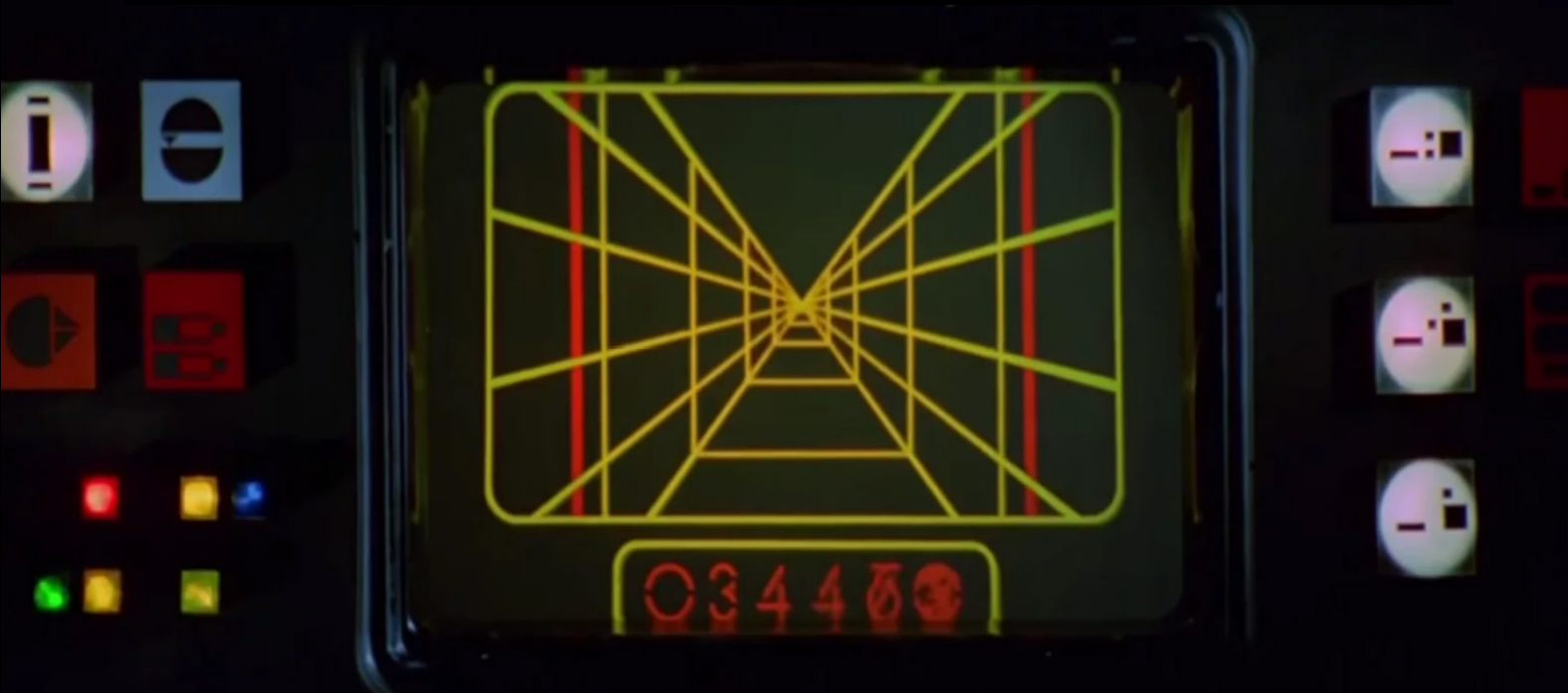
Here's to many more to come.

Sam Livingston

Chief Editor



JOIN SUTEKH AND RULE THE GALAXY



Reasons not to not play **PEN-AND-PAPER RPGS**

By TK

At the start of each semester, Sutekh matches up Players with GMs willing to run games either in-person or online.



While others might wrap up their day after school or work with some football, a few pints in the pub, helping the kids with homework, and so on, those of us who gather around a table with books and dice improvising some collaborative spontaneous storytelling garner a measure of suspicion and derision from general society. After decades in obscurity, this hobby entered the spotlight with the series *Stranger Things* but in case you're still unsure about how to justify participating in such activities to parents and peers, here are some apologetics:

Investment. People often ask how one can justify investing several hours a week into such a social activity. They gasp at the cost of a sourcebook, a miniature, or a set of dice. Does buying specialist sports equipment deserve such scrutiny? Or custom plates for a car? How much does a night in pubs and clubs set one back? By comparison, roleplaying expenses aren't so outlandish. The same applies for time invested and attachment developed. There are urban legends of roleplayers in steam tunnels taking drastic action when their favourite character bit the dust, but that's got nothing on pub fights after a team is disqualified from the World Cup. Moderation is important in all things—roleplaying isn't special.

Endorsement. *Dungeons and Dragons* has been notorious for purportedly grooming youths for the occult by imposing sorcerers and spells and

summoning demons. Chick Publications has produced such propaganda, *Dead Alewives* have parodied it, the public are uncertain. In *D&D*, advancement is contingent on hunting down, killing and looting "monsters"—but that doesn't mean the authors, publishers or players condone racist colonialism.

In *Shadowrun*, advancement is contingent on infiltrating offices and laboratories, abducting researchers, and planting demolitions—but nobody condones criminal activities. *World of Darkness* covers werewolves and vampires but they don't condone biting your friends! The setting provides a bounded, internally-consistent fiction based on or inspired by a known experience for the purposes of suspension of disbelief; it doesn't tell anyone how to live their life.

Escapism. There is a perception that running away from your problems is maladaptive. But it's also a medium to process the possibilities raised by "but what if the world were different?" in a relatively controlled environment. This provides a supportive arena for participants to appreciate life from someone else's point of view and come to recognise that reality is often more nuanced than black-and-white first impressions might suggest. For example, *D&D* has long offered playable fantasy races which are not differentiated into male and female; such content nurtures open-mindedness.

Age-appropriateness. Some hold that comics, cartoons and games are for children, and a sign of a successful transition to adulthood is outgrowing such futility and dedicating oneself to a productive career. Psychologists have been working hard to dispel this myth, emphasising that play relieves stress, improves memory, develops creativity, problem-solving and resilience. Play shouldn't be the sole privilege of young children and their parents.

Medium. Opponents often presuppose that RPGs are all Internet-based. While chess has been successfully computerised, it was a tabletop game for centuries before that and remains so. While many RPGs have been profitably computerised, they have been primarily pen-and-paper games for decades before that and remain so. Socialising with fellow enthusiasts and problem-solving together for a few hours is surely no worse than swapping tall tales in a pub.

WHAT TO EXPECT

So if pen-and-paper roleplaying really isn't as pagan and sociopathic as its foreboding reputation suggests, what can one expect if one signs up to try it out?

1. Scheduling logistics! Finding a common time when five or six people are available isn't that easy.
2. One person has thought up a scenario and offers to host it as the Game Master. Potential players check if the scenario's précis appeals to them and they sign up as participants and collaborators—an active part of the story, not a passive audience.
3. Control passes from one person to the next within the telling of the narrative as each player asks for information or describes their responses, ideas and actions. This is usually ad-hoc, but when order of events matters (such as within a combat), everybody takes their turn in order.
4. Sessions take place at whatever interval suits the group and the narrative delivery is apportioned incrementally, much like episodes of a TV series.

Some feel that this unfamiliarity presents a barrier to entry, but really, the "rules" just ensure everybody has fun and nobody can stomp all over anyone else's ideas. If you are daunted by the idea of committing to a group for the entire semester, there are "one-shot" games where the entire game is played in just one sitting from introduction to conclusion. Some settings follow occult investigators in the 1920s; some follow survivalists in a retro-futuristic post-apocalypse; some take place entirely within a bunker run by an insane computer; some are closer to *The Lord Of The Rings*.

The strength of roleplaying is that characters can behave authentically; they are not a slave to the overarching plot. They might sabotage carefully laid plans through ignorance or prejudice, but they can also refuse to "split up to cover more ground"—famous last words! So, what story might such a collaboration result in? *The Expanse* is now a popular television series, but originally it was a roleplay game campaign which inspired so much world-building it became a series of novels and attracted the attention of producers.

To get an idea of the range of games we run, **READ ON** to find summaries of two short campaigns played by Sutekh members in 2022.

Want to Join a Tabletop Gaming Group?

Playing a part in heroics just like these can be yours for the low-low price of a **Sutekh membership** and a healthy workout of the imagination centres in your brain. If you ever enjoyed an ancestor telling bed-time stories in your childhood, this is your opportunity to build up a collection of your own.

Choose your own adventure!

The Lemburgian Chronicle

LEMBURGIAN GENTRIFICATION

D&D 5e high-fantasy Campaign by Tevildo

CONTENT WARNING: death, magic spells, class elitism, dismemberment, enchantment by fairies

THE PARTY

Cervus: anthropomorphic goat **Yoru'vold:** an elven convict
Kim: economist from the capital **Miratoris:** a tea-loving giant



Our party are sworn in as guards to protect the village of Lemburg. They must investigate the disappearance of the previous city guard, the sudden reappearance of fairies (not seen for almost a century), and restore the manor house prior to the arrival of a new Lord.

The manor is dominated by a huge tree growing in it, reverberating with strange magic. The local wizard, Thomas, identifies it as a parasitic Mathair tree, which releases figures made of vines and leaves who attack when provoked. The guards see them dancing in the hall, accompanied by tree-musicians. The Mathair tree is carefully felled and found to have 99 growth rings.

Meanwhile, fae visitors have wreaked havoc on the village. The guards kill a water fairy who had cursed workers who were polluting its river. Yoru'vold and Miratoris are cursed, which causes draining of life if the person doesn't submerge themselves in river water. They hear of a witch living in the forest who had been exiled from Lemburg for doing Wild Magic, who might help them.

On the way, the PCs meet a clearing of dancing fauns. The fauns say they've just returned from a war led by the fairy king, True William, who battled to win a castle from another fairy, The Queen Of Swords. They say that he wants to extend his power into this world, too. After days of travel, the guards find the witch, Moriel. She cures them, and reveals

that a century ago a strange man named William boasted to her that he would one day occupy Lemburg manor.

Moriel retorted that wouldn't happen in 100 years! She thus unknowingly made a contract with him, who will be returning to seize the town when the century is up—in a month's time. Moriel tried to void the contract by demolishing the manor with a Mathair tree... a plan the guards recently foiled. She sries for the missing guards, discerning that one, Bulldwon, lies under a tower and the other, Elkie, dances in a fairy castle.

Back in town, the guards find that the wizard, Thomas, has fled town. They break into his tower and discover a secret dungeon. It turns out Thomas had built his tower over the laboratory of an ancient archmage, Sorcha, and continued her research. A ritual he found from her library let him kill his political opponents from afar... only costing one live human limb each casting! Thomas had retrieved Bulldwon where he had fallen asleep dancing with the fauns, placed him on a necromantic dais, and taken his arm. By scrying on the PCs, he knew he had been discovered and so fled.

The necromantic dais is Sorcha's magnum opus: whatever is placed on it is kept alive forever... albeit defencelessly; nearby are the remains of Sorcha, dragged from her dais many years ago by Thomas. The guards use another of Sorcha's spells to grow a new limb for Bulldwon.

The party go to find Elkie in William's castle. They learn of a portal under a stone circle where the veil between worlds is weak. Stepping through, they find themselves on a hillside under a gibbous moon, with a dulcimer playing in the direction of a black castle. Fairies in glorious attire sit outside its gates, denied entry for not being extravagant enough. The PCs, being (more or less) human, are beneath anyone's notice.

Meanwhile, Elkie dances on a stage, compelled magically beyond exhaustion for the entertainment of the partygoers. The PCs execute a plan involving a fog-cigarette and a Tenser's Floating Disk to extract her. Too late, they notice that many people here have black and silver eyes, the eyes that True William is supposed to have. As they run, they realise that True William is way out of their league; and exactly how are they going to survive dreamland until the portal opens again?



LAST VOYAGE OF THE FAITHFUL

A space horror Mothership two-shot by Tevildo



CONTENT WARNING: body horror, space survival

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS

- **Cpt. Shirley Nelson:** pilot, recovering alcoholic.
- **Buster3000:** android janitor / benevolent AI
- **Eddy Sullivan:** ship's cook, former space marine
- **Oliver Perry:** space marine and direct descendant of famed 21th century singer Katy Perry.

It's the year 4206.

Our intrepid crew on a rundown freighter find their spaceship the Aurora in a collision due to the sudden appearance of a strange vessel.

Aeons ago, a people known later as the Soma Ware Culture venerated a being called **Mother**. She was made of formless flesh and birthed tadpole-like seeds of muscle and bone. If these were implanted in inorganic tech, metal and plastic came alive and perfectly interfaced with the operator's mind. The Soma Ware outstripped their neighbours in every industry.

They were happier too. How could you feel alone if your longhaul ship had a beating heart? But demand grew, and Her priests cut

Her open to take more seeds. Only a few heard Her cries. They built a powerful (nonliving) ship to rescue Her and make a hyperjump far across time and space.

The PCs enter the strange ship and meet its crew, who explain their mission and offer supplies to patch the Aurora. In the hubbub, their biologist, Tavi, disappears. Their pilot is found dead and the armoury is empty. Sabotage!

The crew find Tavi distorted by Soma Ware biotech: an exoskeleton of exposed muscle, a living sniper rifle. The sight gives Eddy a heart attack from a failed Panic check. His player takes up Ostra, one of the Soma Ware crew. The crew decide to fight past Tavi to get a precious seed from the ship's reliquary and use it to fix the Aurora. After a perilous chase, they escape at last.

The seed enables the Aurora to knit herself together. As the crew pilot her away, the controls have never felt more natural. Ostra and the other crew decide to stay behind to defend their Mother.

We don't see what happens to them...



In Defence of D&D 4TH EDITION

By Aidan Ray

4th Edition is often considered to be the low point of D&D editions. Still, as a player who began my TTRPG journey with 4e, it does have several redeeming qualities. While there are notable issues (such as the lack of non-combat utility and the GSL licence), the game is not the complete failure it is often portrayed as by D&D fans.

The Redeeming Features

My favourite part of 4th edition has always been the class identity and fantasy. 4th edition benefits from unique classes while also keeping a degree of customisability. Each class has its own spell or “manoeuvres” list, including martial classes, from which you can select at-will (cantrips), encounter (per fight), and daily powers. Class-separated spell lists help maintain class identity, something that I would argue is missing in 5th edition, where the line between wizard and sorcerer is sometimes blurred. Although 4e doesn't really have subclasses, it still allows great customisation with hybrid classes and paragon paths as you level up.

As mentioned earlier, this edition also solves the martial versus caster debate. Critics of 5th edition will always point out that as casters grow in levels, they gain access to increasingly powerful and unique spells, while fighters and other martial classes just hit things harder or more often. In 4e, martial classes also unlock awe-inspiring powers from their manoeuvre list as they level, and even at the highest levels can keep their martial identity alive while seeking immortality with martial class-specific Epic Destinies such as Godslayer or the Undying Warrior. Another feature from 4e I love is psionic classes. 4e builds upon the basis of the Psion class present

in 3rd edition, adding additional psionic class options beyond the simple ranged attacker with the new and improved psionic Monk, Battlemind, and Ardent classes. I love the concept of the Battlemind manipulating the battlefield from his front lines, so I was very disappointed when none of the psionic classes made it into 5th edition - Monk did technically, but it was a different design.

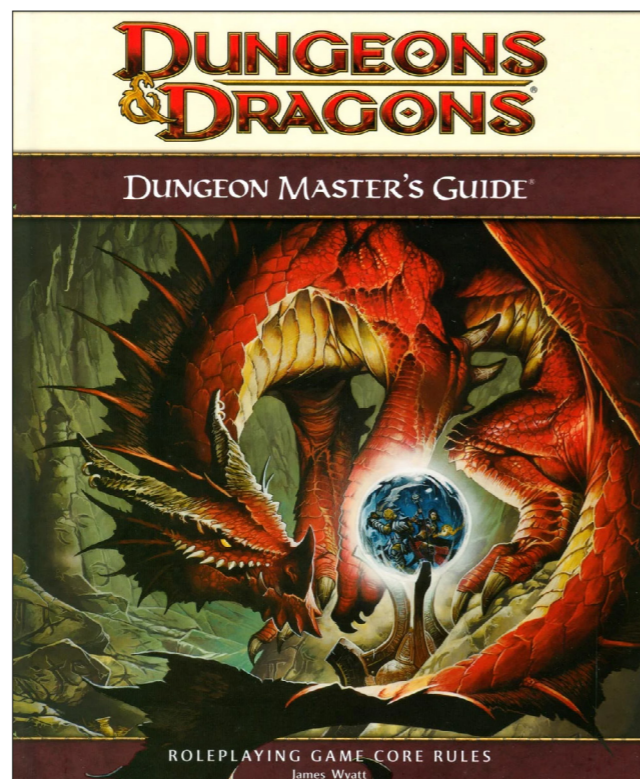


Illustration by Ralph Horsley
from D&D Essentials (4e): Roleplaying Game Starter Set.

Addressing the Issues

As I see it, there are two major issues with 4th edition: the GSL and the lack of outside-of-combat utility. 4e being licensed under the GSL made it harder for third-party companies to make content for the game, which led to very little third-party support for 4th edition. This lack of support resulted in one of their previous contributors, Paizo, entering the ring themselves with the original Pathfinder. For the average player, this meant less game-related content to consume and fewer 4th edition adventures.

The other major issue with 4e is the lack of out-of-combat support. While there is the typical “give advantage to ability checks”, there are no other utility spells really designed for out-of-combat

play. There are no Mending or Message spells, for example. While some classes have features that involve out-of-combat play, there is much less support for this than in past or future editions until later levels.

Both of these issues combined make running 4e campaigns much harder. DMs need to be able to adapt the spirit of a class or spell to non-combat encounters rather than taking the text as written. However, I believe with an experienced 4e DM, adventures can be just as rewarding as 5th edition, possibly even better with the combat system, which I personally find superior.

Yeah I'm just an Indie Dirtbag, Baby

By Ze'ev Krischer - Vellichor#7097

With the OGL drama over the New Year, more people than ever before have begun searching beyond Dungeons and Dragons for a new way to play and experience tabletop RPGs. While some have made the shift to Pathfinder and other D20 systems, I'm here to encourage you to leap into a system very different from what you're used to.

To help, I dived into my RPG folder, full of indie goodies that I will never get the chance to play. They all use vastly different rulesets that capture the essence of their genre while allowing you to explore new worlds and settings. Without further ado, here are my top 3 recommendations.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

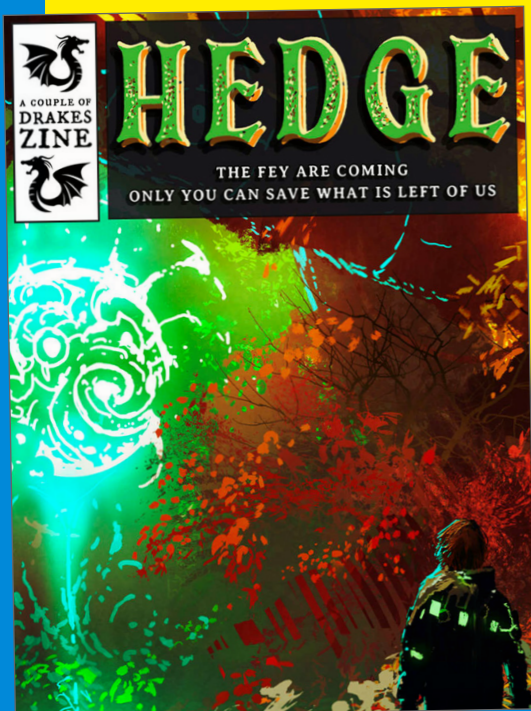
Here are some extra suggestions that I didn't have time to go into more detail on:

- **Heart: the City Beneath (Rowan, Rook and Decard)** - A grim dungeon crawler, but the dungeon just wants to give you what you want. In the worst possible way.
- **The Wildsea (Quillhound Studios)** - A ship building, exploration and delving RPG, except the ocean is made of trees and everything wants to kill you. Even the flowers.
- **Gubat Banwa (Makapatag)** - A South-East Asian fantasy martial arts tactics game inspired by the **Lancer TRPG** and **Final Fantasy Tactics**; a war drama of an RPG. Rejoice! In the Glory of Combat!

Closing Remarks

These are just **3 of the 3,735** different books (and related items) that I have in my RPG folder. When you come across one on itch.io, the chances that I have it are very high (I'm not sure if this is something to be proud of). I encourage all of you to try something new, whether it's just for a one-shot or an extended campaign.

If you want to try any of these, or have any questions about finding the right game for you, **feel free to shoot me a message on Discord, and I'll be happy to lend you a hand or run a game.**



Hedge (A Couple of Drakes)

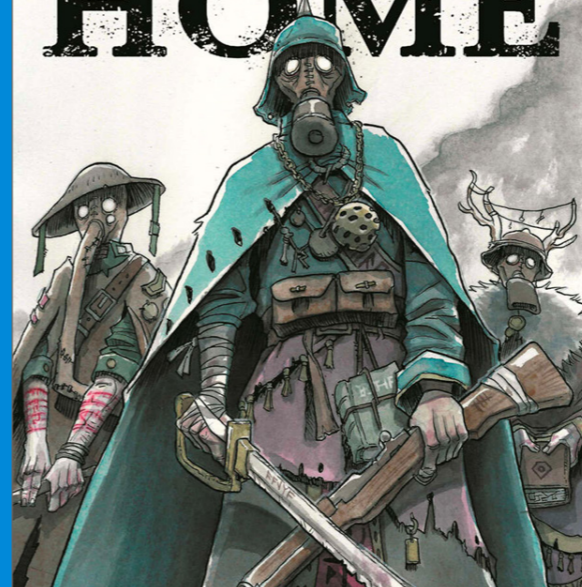
What do you think will cause the apocalypse? Zombies? Nukes? War? How about the Fey?

That's exactly what Shawn and Navi Drake propose in this post-apocalyptic folklore mashup. **Hedge** imagines your characters as a group of Nature's Wardens fighting against the Fey courts in an attempt to defend the world from their mercurial whims. The game is full of amazing flavour; each of the classes comes with great little story paragraphs that thoroughly explain the role they play in a team.

The game runs on the **Lumen system**, which is inspired by **Looter Shooter games such as Destiny and Borderlands**. Your approach matters more than a stat list, with 3 stats that are equally useful in combat. Range is abstracted into bands with every character being a relative distance from any other, this leads to dynamic combat where enemies dart in and out of your reach.

You can check Hedge on Itch.io, as well as two **FREE** expansions that include new mechanics like base building and new classes and enemies: <https://acoupleofdrakes.itch.io/hedge>

NEVER GOING HOME



Never Going Home (Wet Ink Games)

Never Going Home is an RPG set in the haunted trenches of the First World War, and it's full of amazing artwork from Charles Ferguson-Avery. Not only is the art fabulous, but throughout the book are small documents like telegrams, letters and journal entries which all further immerse you in the game's time period. The game excels at setting an atmosphere: bloodshed from the biggest armed struggle of its time has torn the Veil between worlds apart. Your characters form a unit of soldiers with a mission to complete, but with the world falling apart at the seams, will you even be the same at the end?

Probably not. **Never Going Home** is a party based game, where your individual characters are less important than the unit itself. Characters will come and go, either dying or succumbing to the corruption that fills the land, but new characters are easy to make, only requiring you to assign points to 3 stats and choose 3 skills. The game's proprietary +One system uses both cards and d6s - while you roll dice to accomplish tasks, your cards represent characters' memories and you can bid them to gain health, level up and add bonuses to your rolls.

This game has an excellent and fascinating setting that uses interesting rules to accomplish the feeling of what one must lose to survive Hell on Earth.

Never Going Home and its many expansions can be found on DriveThruRPG: <https://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/283637/Never-Going-Home>.

The Wizards & the Wastes (John Batts)

Everyone's heard of Movie Magic, a term relating to the feeling of awe that comes from seeing special effects create something impossible. This feeling can be captured with all creative endeavours, the act of turning nothing into something, of creating a work of art from the most basic of components. What if you could capture that feeling, that moment of wonder and turn it into something truly magical?

Wizards and the Wastes is a **GM-less game** of Arcane Bargaining, meaning each player takes ownership of the world and how it reacts to your characters. Each of your characters is a Spellcaster, with the catch that each of your spells comes from a real-world art piece. You use these as inspiration to come up with intricate spells that are a balancing act of the game's currencies. Time, spell corruption, and even mental insight are some of the things you will have to give up in order to truly make magic. Players work together to decide a cost for each of your incantations, bargaining with each other to create spells and cast them to further their goals.

In case you get stuck without a GM, the rest of the book is filled with tables, charts and picklists that you can use to populate your world, and they're even usable in other games. Each is full of interesting and sometimes hilarious topics and tasks to entertain your group of aspiring casters.

My favourite is from the Nobility request table:

"The Reading Club needs your deep critique on their latest erotic reading choice. Presented as if it were a university lecture."

For these situations and more, the Wizards and the Wastes can be found on itch.io: <https://johnbatts.itch.io/the-wizards-and-the-wastes>



Why Distant Spell is the Best Metamagic

in Dungeons & Dragons 5e

By Zack Alloggia



I have always found spells in D&D fascinating. As a fantasy reader and student of quantum mechanics, harnessing discrete patterns and wavefunctions of an omnipresent magic field can't help but ignite creativity! Short of a homebrew though, a 5e player is presented with a daunting dictionary of over 500 magical things that you could do.

The challenge of playing a spellcaster is to ask of all the things in these lists available to you, and of all the descriptions you read: *which do I choose and how can I use them.* For some PCs, it might seem simple: "Fire Bolt has the best damage die!" / "You can't *not* take Counterspell!" / "I cast Fireball!" — there are "obvious" choices for your standard healer, stealer, aesthetic-appeal-er or damage dealer.

But not me.

I embrace the obscure and mysterious. The **arcane!** I want to push the limits of my spells and for that reason I gravitate towards the **Sorcerer**. They are one among the crowded class of Charisma casters in 5e, and—barring 2 subclasses—boasts the *smallest* number of individual **Spells Known**. BUT, these characters house an incredible potential inside of them; an ability to push their spells **further** than any other class in the game. **Metamagic!**

For those unfamiliar, at the cost of tracking one more resource, **Sorcerers** can choose options to augment their spells in various ways. For example: **Subtle Spell** can let one cast a spell silently and without their hands; **Quickened Spell** lets one do more on their turn; **Twinned Spell** can (conditionally) even duplicate effects across two creatures! The usual "can't-go-without" options may make a spell more fast, reliable, or safe — but I can't bring myself to call them entirely *transformative*. It's always essentially the same spell.

There is one exception though. A *Metamagic* that truly awakens the potential *inside a spell's description*. One that changes it into something **MORE** and not just something **BETTER**. Unnoticed, underappreciated **Distant Spell**.

"When you cast a spell that has a range of 5 feet or greater, you can spend 1 sorcery point to double the range of the spell. When you cast a spell that has a range of touch, you can spend 1 sorcery point to make the range of the spell 30 feet."

Many think that just because it only affects "range" it can't do anything dramatic. Those people are **WRONG!** I have many examples to prove my claim that **Distant Spell** is the best metamagic. I have presented these roughly in **Spell Level** order, and clarified when an example requires a specific subclass (though multiclassing would work too).

All this is to say nothing about being able to cast spells like **Cure Wounds**, **Lesser Restoration** and other situational *Touch* spells from up to 30 ft away.

D&D inspires creativity in many ways, even through seemingly bad mechanical choices. Personally, I love making 'bad' choices when I make characters. I build adventurers based around making certain abilities or tools shine, taking *mechanically interesting* over *mechanically optimal*. But that's not universal! I'm not encouraging you to play like me. Play like you!

Everyone plays by the rules differently, and that's part of what I love about role-playing games. From the pro-bono rules lawyer, to the optimiser, to the Oscar-worthy roleplayer: everyone brings their own joys to the table and can learn from each other. So broaden your scope, be receptive to new ideas and be like *Distant Spell*: take it further.

Distant Spell Combos

Distant Spell + Light (Cantrip, PHB)

Did you remember this spell can be used on objects held and worn by other creatures? Sorcerers don't have Faerie Fire, but this is the next best thing! Is the baddie jumping between shadows causing grief for your darkvision-less friends? Scared that bandit will get away in the crowd? Cast *Light*!

Distant Spell + Shocking Grasp (Cantrip, PHB)

An *attack roll* cantrip, that *always has advantage on targets in metal armour*, that *ALSO prevents reactions*, and you don't even have to be near them? This also combos perfectly into using *Quickened Spell* to cast something without the risk of *Counterspell*... Hello?! Are you listening?!

Distant Spell + Witch Bolt (1st, PHB)

This spell is usually pretty useless RAW, as the average enemy can simply use their movement to move 30 ft away and end it. Increasing the range to 60' makes this way more viable at low levels (though it's still not the best move).

Distant Spell + Earth Tremor (1st, XGE)

Turns an otherwise underwhelming *Thunderwave*-wannabe into a whopping 20-foot-radius *save-or-fall-prone*. **At 1st level!** It even makes difficult terrain, so your enemies are even further slowed! It's not even concentration!

Distant Spell + Maximilian's Earthen Grasp (2nd, XGE)

Flavour-wise a perfect combo with Earth Tremor. Now you can restrain foes up to 60 ft away. You'll catch up with them in no time!

Distant Spell + Invisibility (2nd, PHB) / Fly (3rd, PHB) / Longstrider or Heroism (1st, PHB, non-sorcerer but easy to get)

Really helpful spells that you can upcast to target more than one creature! Shame every target has to be within touching distance for it to work! Enter *Distant Spell*. You've been cornered? Wouldn't it be handy if your entire party turned invisible, or even started flying into the skies in 1 turn? I thought so.

Distant Spell + Thunder Step (3rd, PHB) / Dimension Door (4th, PHB)

It really is that simple: double your teleport distance to 180 and 1000 ft respectively. Unfortunately, *Misty Step* doesn't work as "30 ft." is baked into the description. You can't have 'em all...

Distant Spell + Enthral (2nd, PHB, non-sorcerer/Aberrant Mind) / Incite Greed (3rd, AI, non-sorcerer/Aberrant Mind)

Both these spells let you magically distract (*non-charm-immune*) targets within range.

Enthral means as many creatures as you want within **120 feet** have disadvantage on *Perception* checks to perceive any other than you. If you chose Aberrant Mind and spent 2 more sorcery points, you can cast this with **NO** components at all! It's not even concentration! The actual *perfect* distraction.

Incite Greed is crazy. **Any number** of creatures **within 60 feet** need to save or be **charmed and unable to do anything but safely move closer** and ogle a gem you're holding. They still save come end of turn, but still, *what?!*

Distant Spell + Tiny Servant (3rd, XGE, non-sorcerer/Clockwork Soul)

First of all, the spell is incredible on its own; but *Distant Spell* shenanigans abound. So long as you have a minute to cast, almost any object smaller than a 2.5 ft. cube within 30ft. can be your best friend. The keys visible on the table through the window? The king's expensive vase? Whatever it is, they grow arms and legs and you can psychically command them. Just imagine...

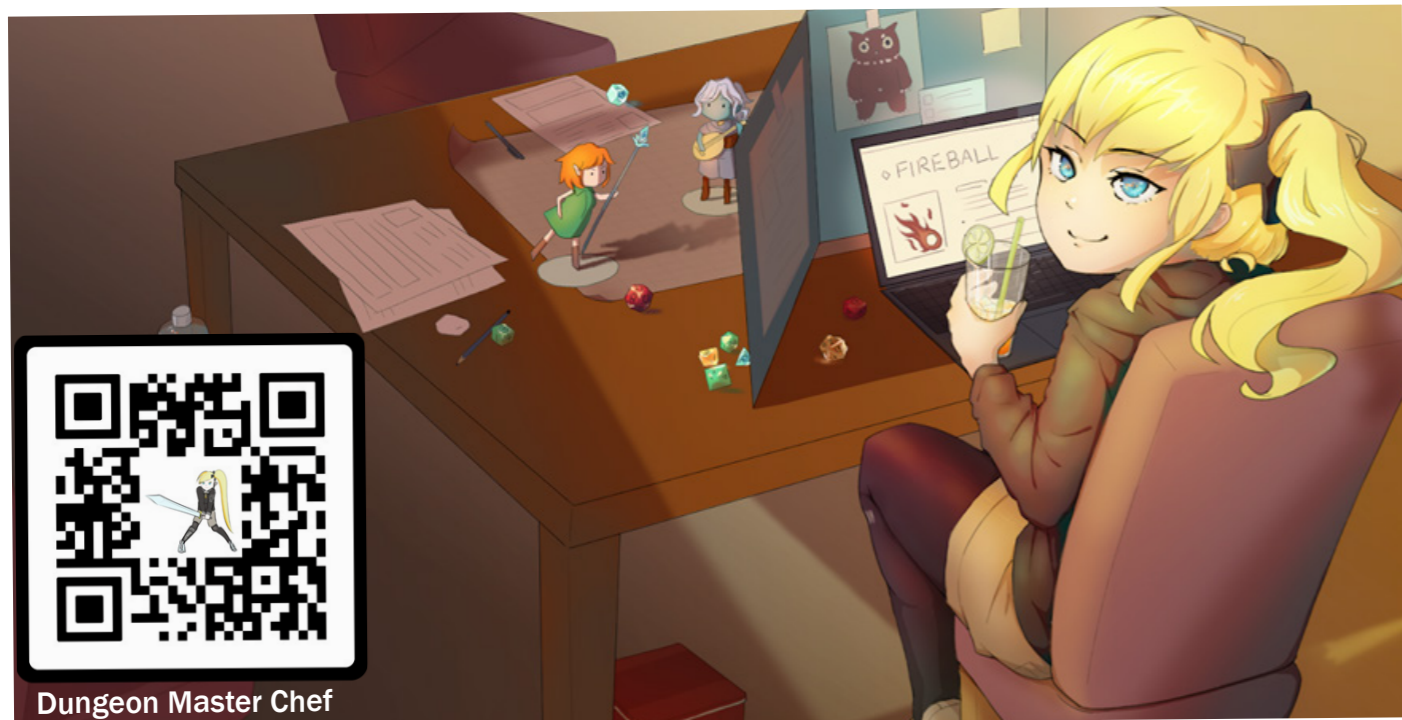
Distant Spell + Telekinesis (5th, PHB)

Telekinesis is so cool! You can grab, hold and move nearly anything! But it has to stay within 60ft... unless you double it! *You. Can. Lift. Someone. 120 ft. Into. The. Air.* Nothing and no one can escape you if you can grab them from **120 ft away!**

Distant Spell + Seeming (5th, PHB)

"This spell allows you to change the appearance of any number of creatures that you can see within range. You give each target you choose a new, illusory appearance. An unwilling target can make a Charisma saving throw, and if it succeeds, it is unaffected by this spell."

You can make everyone within 60 ft. look like a grandma. **This spell lasts 8 hours.** Of course, this is perfect if you need to escape into a crowd, but who cares at this point. You can do anything.



Dungeon Master Chef

Youtube TRPG Animations

THE NOW AND THE FUTURE

By Timmy Leung

Tabletop Roleplaying Games are about immersion and imagination. In my opinion, the best medium to showcase your D&D and other TRPG shenanigans is definitely animation.

Apart from big productions, like the Dungeon and Dragons cartoon show and The Legend of Vox Machina, there are numerous smaller animations and animators on Youtube, which we will take a peek at in this article.

SKITS

These videos use the kind of humour that contains a lot of in-jokes which outsiders may not understand. As such, how well the jokes are delivered determines how well the video performs and how much TRPG interest it generates.

Examples: JoCat's [A Crap Guide to D&D](#)

JoCat is a no-brainer for skits due to his "Crap guide to D&D" videos. He also makes replays.

Types of TRPG Animations

Generally, there are three types of TRPG animations.

STORYTIME

Interested in seeing tall tales, legendary exploits, or the misadventures of misfits brought to life by an animator? This is for you! Like other Youtube storytime videos, they tell stories of the animator's usually bizarre adventures. Examples include dooming the world with karaoke, sending an evil overlord to a pub full of angels and ascended paladins on Mount Celestia, and a group of small people hating tall people for fighting a galactic civil war in a faraway galaxy a long time ago.

Examples: [Dingo Doodles D&D Stories](#)

The best storytime video series goes to DingoDoodle's "Fool's Gold". It can be a bit long for newcomers, but it is definitely worth watching.

REPLAYS

Replays are a very popular form of RPG Animation in Asia (especially Japan) due to their preference for anonymity. Dice rolls are depicted and explained and you can see the players' character sheets' changes throughout the game. Players may use their real voices or speaking software for the character's voices.

Seeing how a campaign is being run helps new players to learn game mechanics and game flow (at the expense of the campaign being spoiled).

Examples: [Yukkuri DnD5e](#)

Click on the links to learn more!



OTHER GREAT CHANNELS

Puffin Forest: I personally started with [Puffin Forest's](#) "My favourite classes to play in D&D". Puffin Forest's art may not be top-notch, but he has the pacing and humour.

Other good channels include [Blaine Simple](#), [Zee Bashew](#), and [Adan](#).

What now? After the OGL Drama?

To those who do not follow the TRPG scene closely, Hasbro's reiteration of the Open Gaming License did not include videos, cosplays, music, and video games for commercial use, meaning there is a disincentive for these animators to stick to DnD as they can no longer monetize their videos. The backlash has been immense that the vast majority of creators voiced their concerns, and many even downright refused to make DnD videos again. Yes, DnD isn't the only TRPG in the market, but it is the most well-known. How will creators fight against Youtube and other social media's brutal algorithms without it?

What if the audience and creators all find greener pastures in different TRPGs? I believe diversifying and establishing a strong personality might be the only answer, and creators are already doing so. JoCat diversified into Final Fantasy XIV (having originally started with Monster Hunter) and Dingo drew real-life storytime videos. While we are facing the fall of a giant in flames, we can build a society of RPG players that start to play more diverse RPGs and discover new systems that better match their favourite themes. There are creators who have and will shift to Pathfinder 2e (Adan) or other content. I hope their futures in their respective RPG systems are bright.

By the way... I draw TRPG animations too. My Youtube channel is: <https://www.youtube.com/@dungeonmasterchef>

While I speak Cantonese in my videos (yes, I am trying to promote TRPG to Cantonese speakers), I include English subtitles for those who don't speak Cantonese.

Until next time, I am Timmy, peace.

The Crusade Primer & Wargames Report

BY INQUISITOR
WILLIAM MA



It has been a quarter of a solar cycle since the Ephyras System was desolated by the first Sutekhian Crusade. Its fields drank deeply the blood of noble warriors and its planets marked and scarred forever by terrible weapons industrial, arcane and profane. Another once-strong pillar of the crumbling Imperium shattered forever.

Deep in the depths of the Adeptus Administratum, a lone adept was filling out the mountains of paperwork associated with the fall of the Ephyras system; reallocation of labour, rebalancing of tithes, necessary purges and culling of oversized population etc. Then, she came upon a missive, authorisation for a crusade of a size not seen in millennia, more than eight thousand years in fact, for the missive was made in M32 (likely as part of wars of reconquest in the wake of the Beast's fall).

Regardless, it has been lost for several ages and now it has been found and with the resources it affords, a thousand Ephyras could be avenged.

And so, the second Sutekhian crusade began, a crusade declared and forgotten for millennia reignited. The Astropath network blazed bright that night, as trillions of men and women were impressed into the Imperial Guard and Navy, hundreds of chapters of space marines were called to war and even God Machines were stirred awake.

The age of missive served as a double edged sword however, as it called upon regiments from shattered and conquered worlds, chapters long gone renegade or traitor. Even worse, the frenzy of astropath activity has created an impression on the warp, a beacon for the malignant powers which resides there.

Hot off of the trails of a highly successful 2022, Sutekh's wargaming subcommittee is dedicated to delivering an even better 2023, with more collaborations, more events and more wargaming.

At the end of 2022, we saw Sutekh's first ever* collab event with another university, the highly successful inter-university Warhammer 40k apocalypse with the Macquarie University Tabletop Society and the University of Technology Sydney Gamer Guild (which team USYD won BTW ;) :0). We are actively looking for further collabs (exclusive tip, something may be coming up in early March so keep an eye on the announcements :0).

We recognise that wargaming may be somewhat daunting with its high barrier of entry and have been looking to rectify that with more one-box wargames and working to provide resources for general members. My personal current favourites are BRUTL, Kill Team and a little something called Gropblins

In Semester One 2023, we will be launching the next chapter of Sutekh's in-house narrative Warhammer 40k crusade. We aim to provide a casual, non-committal and flexible experience, where people can play whatever list they find fun. Players are free to coordinate games between themselves whenever, However we plan to host some sort of recurring wargaming event so keep an eye on our social media.



JOYCE, ADEPTUS ADMINISTRATUM ADEPT
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SECOND EPHYRAS
CRUSADE (EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH)

*cannot confirm nor deny the truthfulness of this statement

+++ BEGIN TRANSMISSION +++
+++ DATE: UNKNOWN +++
+++ REF: UNKNOWN +++
+++ FROM: HIGH COMMAND +++
+++ TO: PROSPECTIVE WARLORDS +++
+++ RE: CRUSADE SUMMONS +++

OUR IMPERIUM IS BESIEGED UPON ALL SIDES BY XENOS AND HERETICS ALIKE
A CRUEL UNIVERSE AWAKENS DARK TECHNOLOGY DEEP IN THE IMPERIUM NIHILUS, A
WEAPON TO BE USED AGAINST THE IMPERIUM OF MAN
ACROSS A THOUSAND WORLDS, WE FIGHT AND STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE AMIDST THE TIDES
OF EVIL

IN THE DARKNESS BETWEEN THE STARS, THE WEAK AND FAITHLESS GATHER THEIR FORCES
YET AGAIN

THE GALAXY BURNS, AND THOSE WHO WOULD TEAR HUMANITY DOWN ARE LEGION
IN OUR DARKEST HOUR, OUR FORCES ARE FEW, AND OUR ENEMIES MANY
AS LONG AS THE GOD-EMPEROR WATCHES OVER US, WE SHALL NOT FALL

AND SO IT IS THAT I CHARGE ALL WARLORDS RECEIVING THIS EMERGENCY TRANSMISSION
WITH THIS MISSION: CLEANSE THE MUTANT, THE HERETIC AND THE ALIEN
FALTER NOT IN YOUR RELENTLESS ASSAULT, FOR SHOULD A CRACK IN OUR DEFENCE
PRESENT ITSELF, THE ENEMIES OF MANKIND WILL NOT HESITATE TO EXPLOIT IT

+++ END TRANSMISSION +++

Blood Angels vs Aeldari Battle Report

+++ BEGIN TRANSMISSION +++
TO: ALL WARLORDS IN THE EPHYRA SYSTEM

THE REMAINS OF STRIKEFORCE WRATH, SENT OUT FROM BAAL UPON THE BATTLESHIP "BLADE OF FURY" AFTER RECOVERY FROM HIVE FLEET LEVIATHANS INCURSION AT THE DEVASTATION OF BAAL. THEIR INITIAL FORCES HAVE SUFFERED MUCH ATTRITION FROM A CENTURY OF INDISCRIMINATE RUINATION. THEIR GOAL: CLEAR EPHYRAS OF XENO AND CHAOS PRESENCE REGARDLESS OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES.

ALTHOUGH OPERATING INDEPENDENTLY FROM HIGH COMMAND, THEY FOLLOW ONE TENET: BURN THE HERETIC.

KILL THE MUTANT. PURGE THE UNCLEAN.

+++ END TRANSMISSION +++

+++ BEGIN TRANSMISSION+++

A DREADFLEET BELONGING TO THE XENO COUNTESS DANJOU, FIRST SPOTTED IN ORBIT ABOUT PHYRAS PRIMUS, AN AGRI-WORLD LATER FOUND TO CONTAIN AELDARI CONSTRUCTS AND A POWERFUL ARTEFACT, CONFIRMED TO BE THE REASON BEHIND THE APPEARANCE OF THE DREAD-FLEET.

WHILE THE AGRI-WORLD WAS SOON CONSUMED BY A HIVE FLEET TENDRIL, XENOS PRESENCE THROUGHOUT THE SYSTEM CONTINUES. THE DREADFLEET SEEMS TO BE HOME TO A "TROUPE" OF AELDARI HARLEQUINS. THEIR THREAT TO IMPERIAL FORCES IN THE SYSTEM IS CONSIDERABLE, AS THEY HAVE BEEN OBSERVED BY SCOUT TEAMS TO HAVE MANY POWERFUL PSYKERS, AND SKILLED CLOSE-COMBAT WARRIORS, EQUIPPED WITH ALL MANNER OF HERETICAL TECHNOLOGY.

THEIR PRESENCE IN IMPERIAL TERRITORY CAN NO LONGER BE TOLERATED. FIND THEM, AND PURGE THEM FROM THE SYSTEM.

THEIR GOAL: UNKNOWN

+++ END TRANSMISSION +++

ORBITAL SCANNERS OVER THE SHRINE-WORLD MORECH-IV PICKED UP TRACES OF WARP MANIPULATION UPON THE HALLOWED GROUNDS OF THE RESTING PLACE OF SAINT ARCHEON. UPON FURTHER INVESTIGATION FROM SCOUT SQUADS, IT APPEARS AS THOUGH A SMALL XENOS FORCE EXITED A WEBWAY PORTAL TO MAKE PLANETFALL, AND HAVE RAISED AN ANCIENT CHAOS CONSTRUCT FROM THE GROUND. THEIR PURPOSE REMAINS UNKNOWN, BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT THEIR TRESPASS UPON THESE HALLOWED GROUNDS CANNOT CONTINUE. IT IS THE DUTY AND PRIVILEGE OF THE FAITHFUL TO CLEANSE THIS SHRINE-WORLD OF THE XENOS THAT DEFILE ITS SURFACE WITH THEIR PRESENCE.

A FORWARD TEAM FROM STRIKEFORCE WRATH OF THE BLOOD ANGELS ENTERED MORECH-IV'S ORBIT WITHIN A LUNAR CYCLE OF LEARNING OF THE PRESENCE OF WITCHES AND XENO MUTANTS ON SUCH SACRED GROUNDS.

UPON ENTERING ORBIT, PRELIMINARY SCANS OF THE PLANET'S SURFACE PINPOINTED THE LOCATION OF THE XENOS TO A NEWLY RAISED CHAOS STRUCTURE FAR IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE IS TO RAZE THE HERETICAL CONSTRUCT TO THE GROUND, WITH A SECONDARY OBJECTIVE OF WIPING CLEAN THE HERETICS WHO FIRST STEPPED FOOT ON THE SHRINE-WORLD.



THE SCRIBES OF THE IMPERIAL BATTLESHIP "BLADE OF FURY" FOUND RECORD OF THE SITE OF THE CHAOS CONSTRUCT RAISED BY THE AELDARI BEING AN OLD BATTLEGROUND FROM THE AGE OF THE HORUS HERESY, WHERE THE HERETICS OF THE BLACK LEGION HELD THEIR GROUND WHILE UNDER SIEGE FROM THE FORCES OF THE IXTH LEGION OF BLOOD ANGELS.

KNOWING THE XENOS STOOD ON GROUND WHERE THEIR OWN BATTLE-BROTHERS HAD FALLEN 10 MILLENNIA AGO ONLY STRENGTHENED THE RESOLVE OF THE MARINES OF STRIKEFORCE WRATH.

CAPTAIN RAE DETERMINED THAT AFTER THE CONFLICT, SHOULD THE BATTLEGROUND FALL INTO MARINE CONTROL, A SANGUINARY PRIEST SHOULD BE SENT WITH THE UTMOST URGENCY TO SEARCH FOR OLD STOCKS OF GENE-SEED THAT MAY HAVE BEEN DISCARDED.



A RECONNAISSANCE TEAM OF THE FIFTH VANGUARD SQUAD, TENTH COMPANY, LEAD BY CPL VALAR MADE INITIAL PLANETFALL.

SOON DISCERNING THE ENEMYS PLACEMENT, THEY WERE JOINED BY THE FOURTH SQUAD, EIGHTH COMPANY, LEAD BY SGT ARAMEUS AND CPL CANOS, AIMING TO PURGE THE XENOS WHO HAD MADE PLANETFALL BUT A FEW CYCLES AGO. CPL VALAR LEAD HIS SQUAD TO FORTIFICATION IN THE REMAINS OF AN OLD RHINO, MONITORING XENOS MOVEMENT UNTIL THE TIME TO STRIKE WAS RIGHT.

GIVING THE SIGNAL, HIS OWN SQUAD BEGAN TO FIRE UPON THE FORTIFIED XENOS, ALERTING THEM TO THEIR PRESENCE AND DISTRACTING THEM FROM THE TRUE THREAT INCOMING.

THE MARK GIVEN BY CPL VALAR WAS ALSO BROADCAST OVER VOX-CHANNEL TO CAPTAIN RAE, LORD OF SKYFALL, COMPANY COMMANDER OF THE BLOODBLADES AND COMMANDER OF STRIKE FORCE WRATH, WHO TOOK THE SIGNAL TO MAKE HIS OWN PLANETFALL. RAE DROPPED FROM A STORMRAVEN IN THE HIGHER TROPOSPHERE, ALONGSIDE HIS SECOND IN COMMAND, FIRST LIEUTENANT FURON, FIRST BLADE OF WRATH, AND RAE'S PERSONAL GUARD, FOUR SANGUINARY GUARD. ALL FOUR SANGUINARY GUARD ARE WARRANTED BY CHAPTER MASTER DANTE, LORD COMMANDER OF THE IMPERIUM NIHILUS, LORD OF ANGELS AND BRINGER OF SANGUINIUS LIGHT.

EQUIPPED WITH POWER WEAPONS, JUMP PACKS AND THE RAGE OF THE EMPEROR HIMSELF, THEIR OBJECTIVE WAS TO TEAR THE CHAOS CONSTRUCT APART BRICK BY BRICK, ENTOMBING THE XENOS IN THE OBJECT OF THEIR OWN HERESY.

UPON THE GIVEN SIGNAL FROM CPL VALAR, SGT ARAMEUS SPLIT HIS SQUAD INTO TWO COMBAT SQUADS OF FIVE MARINES, ONE LEAD BY HIMSELF AND THE OTHER BY HIS SECOND IN COMMAND, CPL CANOS, AND ENGAGED A LONE SQUAD OF DANCERS IN MELEE COMBAT, FLANKING THEM FROM BOTH SIDES, MARKING THE BEGINNING OF THE BATTLE.

ONCE THE BATTLE ITSELF BEGAN, THE MELEE WAS SHORT AND BRUTAL- TAKING NO CASUALTIES, SGT ARAMEUS AND CPL CANOS FELLED THE DANCERS IN THE SURPRISE ASSAULT. SPOTTED BY A HARLEQUIN, FOURTH SQUAD RETREATED TO COVER, FOLLOWED BY THE XENO MUTANT IN HASTE. A BRUTAL ENGAGEMENT ENSUED, LEADING TO SIX CASUALTIES AS THE HIGHLY SKILLED WARRIOR TORE THROUGH FRIENDLY RANKS UNTIL THEY WERE PUT DOWN BY A SWIFT CHAINWORD BLOW FROM CPL CANOS, TEARING THE XENO IN TWO.



SUPPORTED BY THE COVERING FIRE OF CPL VALAR'S ELIMINATORS, CPT RAEI AND HIS ENTOURAGE MADE PLANETFALL, ARRIVING UPON WINGS OF FIRE AND ROUTING THE XENO FORCES TAKING COVER IN THE CHAOS TOWER.

BESIEGED ON ALL SIDES, A FORCE OF HARLEQUIN DANCERS WAS SENT TO FIGHT OFF THE INVADERS, TO LITTLE AVAIL.

PICKED APART BIT BY BIT BY THE SNIPER FIRE OF FIFTH SQUAD, THE REMAINING FORCE WAS QUICKLY DISPATCHED AT THE BLADE OF FIRST LIEUTENANT FURON.

A FEW SWIFT STRIKES FROM POWER WEAPONS WIELDED BY THE SANGUINARY GUARD, DIRECTED AT THE SUPPORTING PILLARS OF THE STRUCTURE, RAZED IT TO THE GROUND, ENTOMING THE BULK OF THE REMAINING XENO FORCE IN THE RUBBLE.

ALL THAT REMAINED WAS TO CUT OFF THE HEAD OF THE SNAKE, AS CAPTAIN RAEI HIMSELF TOOK FLIGHT TO THE TOP OF THE TOWER, COLLAPSED DOWN SEVERAL LEVELS AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CHAOS FORTIFICATION.

JOINED BY HIS RIGHT HAND MAN, RAEI CORNERED THE LEADER OF THE HERETICAL TROUPE, AND AFTER A BRIEF MELEE, SUMMARILY EXECUTED THEM IN THE NAME OF THE EMPEROR.

WITH THE MAJORITY OF THEIR FORCES EITHER BURIED IN RUBBLE OR TORN ASUNDER BY CHAINWORDS AND POWER WEAPONS ALIKE, AND THEIR LEADERSHIP DEAD, ANY REMAINING XENO WARRIORS WERE PINNED, AND WITH NO MEANS OF ESCAPE, PUT TO THE SWORD.



SUTEKH RANTS

By Esther

OPINION: Boardgames do not have enough pieces

We all know the true joy of board gaming is opening a new box (or boxes if you are using the USU's money) and popping all the little cardboard pieces out from the frame. And then organising those little metal cubes that click clack so nicely in your hands when you shake them into colourful divided piles.

Good board games come with little wooden meeples in various bright colours, or cool unique pieces like the mechs for Scythe.

One game that is truly god tier in terms of pieces is Terraforming Mars. It has just so many good pieces, little meeples for the parliament, the cool hexagonal tiles, the absolutely gorgeous metal cubes.

Clearly, an amazing game should feel good in the player's hand.

Due to this, I argue that the quality of a game is determined purely by the number of pieces.

Good components can revolutionise the gaming experience. Do I know anything about Everdell's gameplay? No.

Have I seen the large cardboard pieces that are arranged to build a tree? Yes. Do I want to play the game? Hell yeah.

See, this is objectively why Monopoly is shit. There are no pieces other than the player tokens; it's all just cards, the lamest excuse for a game piece since checkers was invented.

And don't get me started on indented game boards...



A LONG DESCENT

By WILLIAM SAFFERY

The subway stops with a hiss.

I watch, dazed, as an old lady waddles onto the platform.
Guess it's not quite peak hour.

The train's interior is pristine. Thin benches run alongside its windows; the dozen square tables strung down its centre occupy the bulk of the space.

The tables glow an incandescent blue. On each table a thin cyan outline of a rounded rectangle protrudes from each side towards the centre of its screen, and the recognisable red back of a pack of playing cards is projected in its centre. The display is very convincing, but the casino on wheels is empty.

Pained groans pierce the air.

“WHAT DO YOU WA—”

Light penetrates the tank as its characteristic orange fluid drains away. Sergeant Jones slowly opens his eyes and removes his headgear. After a human has experienced extended digital synthesis, memory tends to come rushing at them like a bullet before it rapidly leaves their consciousness behind, like a dream corked up from digital displacement.

The training session lasted five hours. The focus had been mentally integrating strategies and ideas— ideas in the professional chess player's sense; vision in a rigid land large enough to be functionally deeply flexible, although the entire world had spent the last 4 decades trying to change that.

A short man in uniform makes his way quickly over to the tank, his face wrought with confusion and fear. “You're not going to believe this new mission, sir.”

Out of my cage, I quickly sit at my assigned table. Plain and grey, together with the tank it forms my section of the training grid this warehouse holds.

Whisky on the rocks, ice cold. The tables might be cheap, but they have more pockets than our cargos.

“Go. Shoot.”

<< >>

“Ensure that your equipment has been appropriately set up and you've completed your mandatory mental evaluation of the jump. When the oversized LED behind me goes green, operation BIGSEA will begin its second phase.”

The blades of the helicopter cut through the air, drowning out the chief's voice.

This is a particularly strange struggle, a far cry from the usual luxurious ULDE casino-style battleground.

Technically, all pseudo-military disputes must be settled wherever the origin of the conflict is deemed by ULDE, but with appropriately outfitted headquarters across the globe, the chosen locations are more often luxurious than dangerous.

In strange circumstances, though, the mediation branches can come to unusual decisions. When a satellite the size of a small continent descends slowly over international waters, apparently that means it's time to go skydiving.

Though, the more cynical might come to the conclusion that the dispute being over control of ULDE property might have lent the dangerous field some precedence in the mind of the pseudo-judge. Regardless, a dispute with ULDE itself is always a strange and paradoxical event, conceptually and physically.

It doesn't really make much sense that the entity in charge of simulating conflict for the resolution of otherwise violent disputes could be trusted to simulate conflict for the resolution of otherwise violent disputes against itself. But everyone knows the ULDE is so transparent it's essentially invisible, a bastion of trust, trust everyone seems to have that no one seems to remember giving.

I mistime my parachute, air punches my gut and I land in the arena a little winded. A square grid of approximately two hundred square tables stands before me.

The outer west and south edges are marked with statues of numbers, each approximately 3 metres tall. I make my way to my table and relax into my large chair for a moment. The game's half an hour away; no rush unbuckling all this gear.

Ài Gu shows up to the table T-minus 15 minutes. Analysis of significant deviation from suspected national Chinese strategy shows she tends to prefer steady play, being almost melodic in her risk taking.

Bob Svelte shows up next, a wizened veteran known for spending an unusual amount of time playing professionally as a civilian in casinos and competitions before joining the British Military. T-minus 10.

There's dead silence. The air tenses ever so slightly.

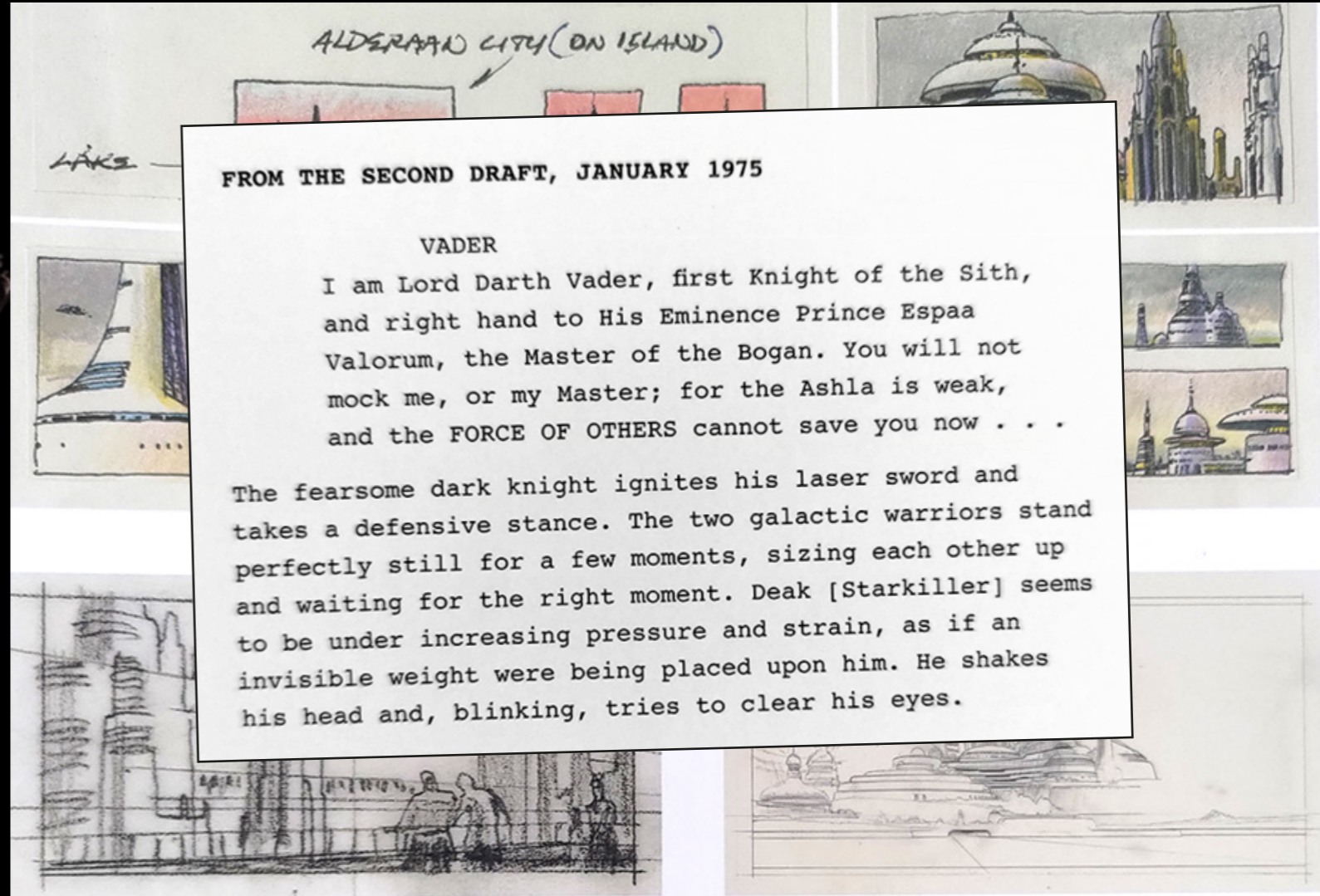
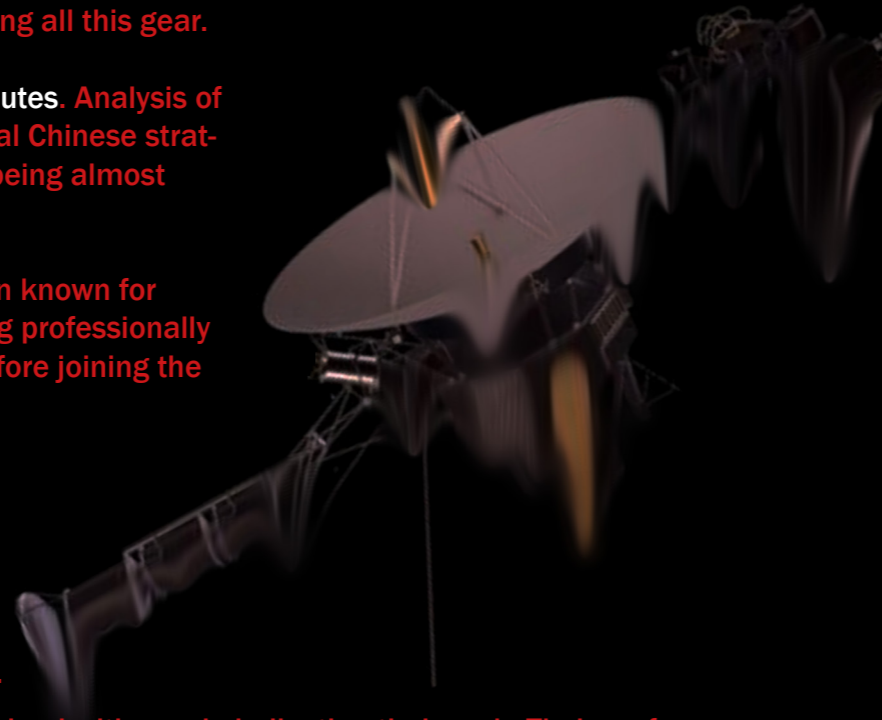
Professional 1A3F56 appears moments before time, and immediately takes their seat.

They're dressed in a black leather coat edged with purple indicating their rank. Their preferential code tag is still not known to Australian intelligence, so 1A3F56 to ULDE Externals they remain. Hands are dealt.

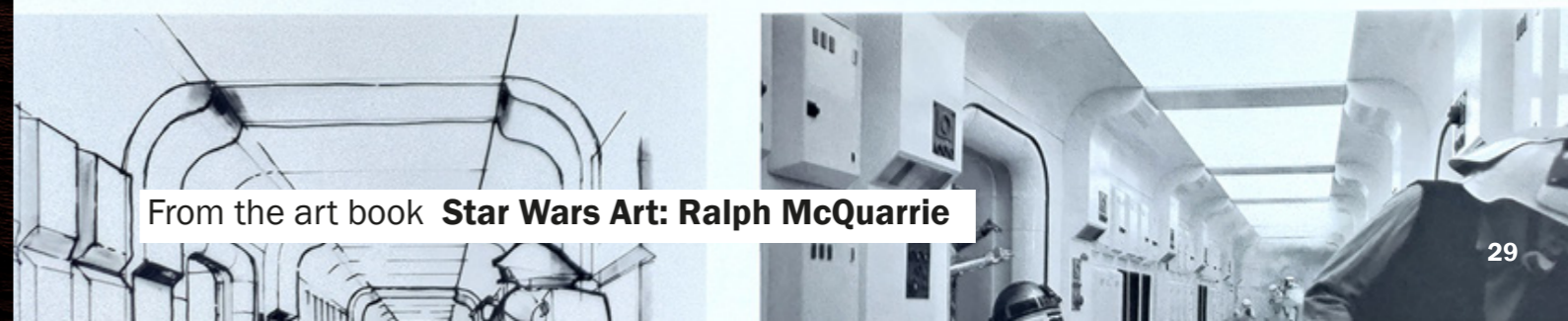
I have a straight to 10 of Diamonds and a pair of 3s, or a triple if I break the straight. Card by card, I inspect the rest of the hand and let digital memories accumulate in my mind, a layer of lights and numbers seeping into my eyes, blurry, and then clear all at once.

I'm lucky, I fancy my odds.
I'm lucky, I fancy my odds.
I'm lucky, I fancy my odds.
<<>>

Click [here](#) to descend further...



Scene 1: Starkiller fights Vader



From the art book **Star Wars Art: Ralph McQuarrie**

From the art book **Star Wars Art: Ralph McQuarrie**



Boba & Friends



Take your Child to Work Day

Moving Day



PODCASTS

Of Modest Length

By Jessie Mai

Looking for an amazing podcast you'll actually be able to finish?
Try some of these gems, all under 100 episodes!



Wolf 359

Genre: Sci-Fi, Comedy, Workplace Comedy

Length: 60 eps (20-40 mins each), **COMPLETE.**

Listen if you enjoy: Star Trek (especially Next Gen, DS9 or Lower Decks), The Office, The Orville.

Wolf 359 is a wacky sci-fi comedy podcast about the dysfunctional crew of the tinpot U.S.S. Hephaestus space station as they deal with daily life-or-death emergencies and search for signs of alien life. Told via ship's logs, this gripping sci-fi comedy podcast gradually becomes more of a comedic thriller as the crew begin to uncover the truth about their mission.

Wooden Overcoats

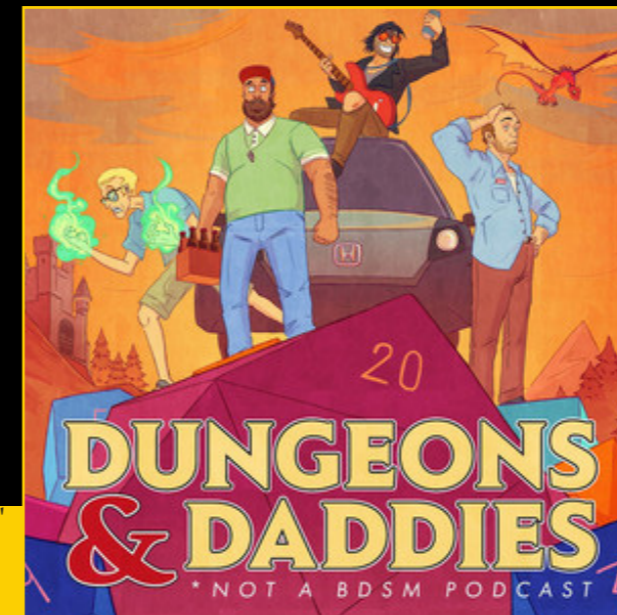
Genre: Comedy, Slice of Life

Length: 34 eps (1 hr each), 4 seasons. **COMPLETE.**

Listen if you enjoy: classic British Comedy (e.g. Monty Python or Fawlty Towers), morbid humour, funerals.

Wooden Overcoats is a hilarious award winning podcast set on the tiny British island of Piffing, where obnoxious Rudyard Funn and his miserable shut-in sister Antigone run their family's failing funeral parlour. But when a new undertaker arrives in town — the impossibly perfect (and attractive) Eric Chapman — the Funn siblings must take drastic steps to stay in business...

Full of murder, mayhem and loveably quirky characters, this is a perfect podcast to enjoy with a warm cup of tea and a dose of cyanide.



Dungeons & Daddies

Genre: D&D Let's Play, Fantasy, Comedy.

Length: 69 eps (1 hr each), **COMPLETE.**

Listen if you enjoy: making pop culture references in your D&D games, dad jokes, Americanisms.

A hilarious D&D podcast where four dads from Earth and their Honda Odyssey minivan are isekaied to the Forgotten Realms on a quest to rescue their kidnapped sons.

DMed by Anthony Burch (lead writer of Borderlands 2), be prepared for constant hijinks, pop culture references and lots of dad jokes (they deal 1d4 psychic damage!).

This is a high quality podcast complete with a fabulous intro song, comedic character skits at the beginning of each episode and an absolute banger of an ending to boot.

If you are looking for a podcast that will make you cry tears of joy and laughter, give this one a try.

The sequel Campaign 2 is in progress as of 2023 and stars the grandkids. This recommendation is for Campaign 1.

WARNING. This is a comedy podcast heavy on RP, and light on actual D&D combat.



Malevolent

Genre: Lovecraftian Horror, Mystery

Length: 38 eps (45 mins each), 4 seasons. **Ongoing.**

Listen if you enjoy: Venom, Lovecraftian fiction, Call of Cthulhu, Magnus Archives, The Host (Stephenie Meyer)

In 1930s Arkham Massachusetts, private detective Arthur Lester with a mysterious Entity inside his head. With the Entity guiding him, Arthur must investigate the sinister occult events going on around them to discover the hidden truth of who exactly his passenger is. Now if only they could stop arguing long enough to actually solve the mystery...

Malevolent is a one-man show by Harlan Guthrie who does a wonderful job creating distinct voices and using creepy sound effects to accompany the evocative narration. At the heart of the show however is the relationship between Arthur and the Entity, which develops from a begrudging alliance to something more.

You'll be on the edge of your seat as the bickering duo encounter disturbing cultists and eldritch horrors beyond mortal comprehension.

I Played *Everdell* and All I Got Was This Useless Big-Ass Fucking Tree

By Jarod Grining

In the lush valley of Everdell, four animal tribes are growing. Demands are soaring and industries are developing. Nests and burrows no longer suffice for these intelligent critters. They want **infrastructure**. They want **cities**. They want **parties**.

And they have just four seasons to get there.

Everdell is a cheerful eurogame with a focus on worker placement, resource management and card playing, with the goal of gaining the most victory points and winning. Revolutionary, I know. There is a wealth of expansions, collections, editions and spinoffs, including something called “My Lil’ Everdell”, but the mechanics of the base game will be extremely familiar to seasoned gamers. This recipe is a classic for a reason, though, and designer James A. Wilson cooks it to perfection. It certainly satisfies the critical palates of Board Game Geek’s community - it’s currently the 31st highest-rated title on the site.

The pace is unusually fast for the genre. On your turn, you play a card, place a worker, or “prepare for season”, then you’re done and play moves along. Even at the maximum four players, this goes a long way in maintaining engagement and dampening the nuisance of analysis paralysis. Everdell’s speed is one of many reasons I consider it a strong introduction to the multi-hour eurogame experience.

Everyone has a private hand, but cards can also be played from the communal Meadow, which is always stocked with options. Cards are either critters or constructions, with different resource costs for each, and not only gain you sweet victory points, but can provide effects when they’re played, throughout the game, during scoring, or even provide extra worker spots. Everdell encourages thematic synergy by allowing you to play citizens for free if you have the matching structure. The art is excellent and the flavour is on-point - players might dig for a Castle to curb their King’s price, or strive to unite the Wife and Husband, even if they lack a long-term victory plan. The game rewards you for following your instincts.



The adorable meeples that represent workers can be placed on marked spots around the board to gain a number of resources - twigs, resin, pebbles, or berries - as well as bonuses like card drawing. There are also four special worker places randomly dealt from a deck at the beginning, which is where much of the replayability and variance comes from.

The worker’s spots surround the Meadow and are imposed by the enormous Evertree, which is an actual cardboard assembly that towers over the playing area. It’s completely non-functional, but it regularly draws attention from passersby at Sutekh events, often drawing in new players who are curious about what purpose the tree serves (spoiler alert: it’s none).

Upon its leafy branches are more randomly-dealt Events - complementing the basic Events at its root - which can be claimed by workers for more juicy victory points once you reach the given conditions. The eight events are rarely worth consciously building toward, so they never quite seem to play the central role that the physical and narrative premise of Everdell suggests. Still, players tend to meet their conditions naturally, so they are a worthy inclusion.



Game Duration

There is certainly benefit to giving players an estimate of how far through the game they are, because Everdell will usually reach the two-hour mark. If you're all newbies, though, it could take up to twice as long, because every card is filled with text and there are many worker places to commit to memory. Once you're familiar with the deck and the options provided by the board, you can come up with a strategy on the fly. However, a beginner might not realise that focusing on unique constructions will reap rewards when a Palace appears, or may regret discarding their Wanderers when their city gets crowded.

You'll almost certainly cycle through the full deck once, so knowing what the future holds is a massive boon. Combined with the trickiness of winter, when resources are scarce and green cards are subtly powerful, this introduces an overt skill gap in Everdell. Fresh-from-Monopoly first-timers simply will not be able to compete with people who think Terraforming Mars is too short. For that reason, you'll get the best experience among friends with similar experience and gaming skills.

Conclusion

Even so, Everdell remains a great introduction to denser games, due in no small part to the endearing art, straightforward premise, and showcasing of classic eurogame concepts. And then there is, of course, the massive fucking tree in the middle. It gets in the way. It draws attention. It does nothing. It is the ideal board game component. It's not the reason I'd recommend Everdell, but it definitely adds to the game's charm, which is something that oozes from every aspect of the gameplay and aesthetic. I'm certain it will charm you and your friends.

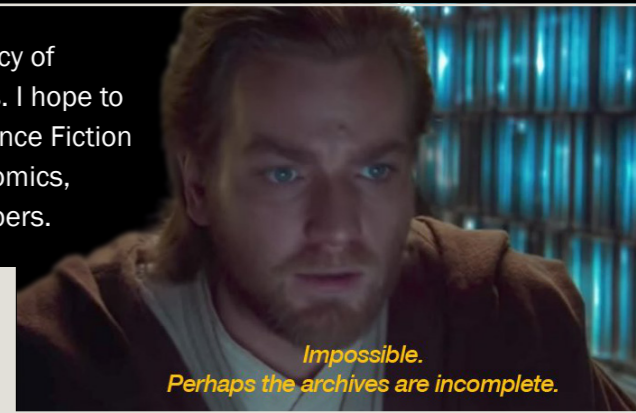
Seasonal Change

The last defining mechanic of the game is **seasonal change**. Players start at the beginning of winter and finish at the end of autumn. This divides the game into four phases. When you prepare for a season, you reclaim the workers you've sent to gather resources, gain new meeples, and get bonuses like hand-filling and re-triggering certain card effects. Crucially, each player follows their own timeline - while the mice are running out of things to do in summer, the turtles might be stubbornly lingering in spring.

This helps mitigate runaway leaders, since stronger players will have more resources to take more actions, but players who move onto seasons earlier get a little boost as the best spaces are suddenly freed for their newly replenished workers to reclaim again. I'm not entirely sure how much the idea adds to the game, and the lack of seasonal synchronisation is thematically awkward, but there's something to be said for giving a structure to the overall game timeline that can be flexed for different play styles.

THE LIBRARY

The Sutekh library, numbering over three thousand items, is a legacy of decades of careful curation by a succession of passionate librarians. I hope to continue the process of actively curating this valuable trove of Science Fiction & Fantasy literature, Tabletop Roleplaying rulebooks, non-fiction, comics, manga, DVDs and magazines as a continuing service for our members.



To sign up for the library, simply head down to sutekh.org.au/resources/ and fill in our patron application form.

Here is an easy **step by step guide** on how to get a library account up and running and how to make the most out of your library membership.

1

Complete the patron application form - The application should be processed in a few days; if it takes longer than expected either shoot me a discord DM @That Moment When#2525 and or email vp_librarian@sutekh.org.au and I will get it done ASAP.

2

Once the application has been processed, you will receive your library login details on the point of contact you nominated on the form.

3

With the power of these logins, you unlock the ability to log into Sutekh's library website and pick out the resources you would like to borrow from the library (virtual cage access :0). I will then approve (or maybe even disapprove [of] >:) your request and you will be notified when it becomes available for pick-up at one of our events.

4

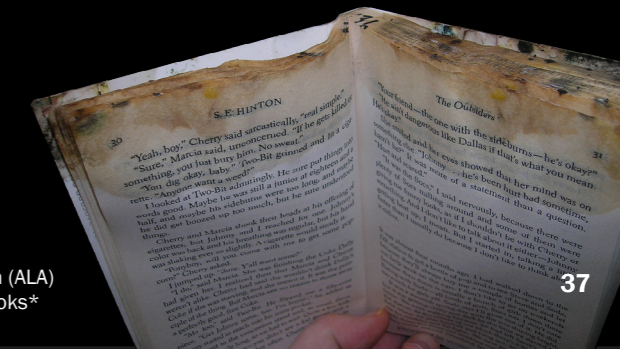
Hop down to one of our events to pick up the books (and stay for the board games and pizza :3)

Additionally, I would just like to mention that we do have a collection of like **30-40 GURPS sourcebooks**, which I think is pretty based. If you also think this is based, go to **Sutekh's instagram** and comment "**Average GURPs enjoyer**" under the image you think best fits the caption.

Regrettably the library is currently closed due to mould so the article is currently non-applicable, but be sure to save it for future use!

Regards,

William Ma - Vice President - Librarian



MEET THE EXECUTIVES

AND FRIENDS OF THE SOCIETY

This year we have a total of 15 diabolical executives scheming and plotting together in order to bring about more fantastic board gaming events. Additionally, we have 4 Subcommittees clandestinely discussing among themselves to formulate even larger scale projects for our members. And 1 friend... What can we say we love SignSoc.

(The smaller the exec's font size the more they love the society - apart from Joel - his was so long it was cut down)



JOEL DONNELLY
President

@Underphoenix#6008

Hi. Im the president two years running now and being a part of this society has been great since I joined and was general executive 2 way back in 2019.



JAROD GRINING
IT Officer

@JGrin#8940

Hey, For the third time running, I'll be Sutekhs IT Officer, ensuring all of the computers are computering and the internets are interneting. You can find me wandering around aimlessly on a Friday, trying out terrible Magic decks on a Wednesday, or passed out in Victoria Park in a pile of Lego on a Saturday.



JAMES WALDEN
Vice-President (Events)

@Hammy_Pig#4500

Hello! I am James. I use board games as an excuse to meet new people and make new friends. Looking forward to meeting you all! :)



ESTHER WHITEHEAD
Publicity Officer

@Potato_o#3528

Howardy I'm Esther, big fan of D&D and keen to pick up some new TTRPGs this year. For board games I love social deduction games as well anything with pretty art.



WILLIAM MA
Vice-President (Library)

@That Moment When#2525

Howdy, Im Will, war(gamer), board(gamer), swiftie and card(gamer). Famously bad at Warhammer* (of all varieties) and making financial decisions. Feel free to catch me at one of our Friday or Wednesday events, (Im usually there.)



NATHAN CORR
RPG Officer

@Lionhearted#3562

Hi, Im Nathan. Im heading up all things TTRPG at Sutekh this year with a lot of games to come your way! Im also extremely passionate about board games, so you can almost always catch me at our Friday events.



KAWANA CROWE
Treasurer

@KawanaBear#8941

Heya, Im Kawana aka Sutekhs resident dragon (treasurer). This is my second year being the societys treasurer and I am really excited to meet and see everyone this year. I'm super friendly and approachable so always feel free to come say hi or flick me a message.



SYLVIE NOLF
Women's & LGBTQ+ Officer

@FunFunFunForEveryOneOne#8903

Hello I am Sylvie, keeper of women and LGBTQs. I am a regular attendee of Maine Fiddle Camp and have probably (definitely) seen more Cinderella movies than you.

Editors note: Sylvies discord was the only one that needed to be shrunk down to fit on one line



ZACK ALLOGGIA

Secretary

@effanineffable#7257

Did you know thats an anagram for "Graze A Sickly Cataloger"? Youll see me at lots of our board game events, so feel free to join my table! Im always keen to share an old favourite (or learn something new!)



HARVIN HARAЕ

Ethnocultural Officer

@harvin#1295

Im a big fan of board games from the classics to something new. Ill be around most Friday events so feel free to come say hi!



OM VISHWANATHAN
Sponsorship Officer

@Lovecraftian Horror here for tea#5635

Howdy folks! Im Om, the current sponsorship officer of Sutekh. If you need help figuring out boardgames, rpgs , pretty much damn near anything or just want to chat you can easily find me being extremely tired or eating something or having sugar or threatening to take the kneecaps of our president.



CHARLIE HADDAD
General Executive

@Corm_Fiend#1961

Hey there, Im your friendly neighborhood general exec member, Charlie. Even though Im only a general exec, I have been a part of Sutekh for many years. So, if you're a new member or long time Sutekhian, I can say with utmost certainty that you will enjoy your time here at Sutekh.



SAMUEL LIVINGSTON
Editor

@Marlin the Paranoid Android#7128

I'm the editor of Zweihander and other Sutekh publications which is relevant because you're reading Zweihander.



ETHAN YIN
General Executive

@comando1026#8957

Hi!! imma Ethan, Im a dnd fanatic preferring the dark strangeness of the void... I also plays board games.



WILLIAM SAFFERY
New Members' Officer

@Neptunion#6137

Hi, I'm Will. I love board games and card games, paper game design, programming and teaching. You can catch me most Friday nights at our board game night event.



FRIENDS OF THE SOCIETY



SIGNSOC

Hey! Were SignSoc (the Sign Language Society). We run Australian Sign Language (Auslan) events on campus during the semester. If you dont yet know any Auslan, thats okay! We have classes on campus, and events for people of any skill level, including conversation groups, trivia and workshops.

Also! I hope you love playing board games as much as I do because were running a voice-off games night with Sutekh! Its going to be good!

Hope to see you around!

www.sites.google.com/view/usydsignsoc/home



KADE
@kade

Kade

Our Sponsors

By Om, Sponsorship Officer

Howdy folks!

Ever wonder where you can get some nifty discounts for board games? Let me be the first to tell you about our great sponsors! Hopefully this list will expand over the year, so keep your eyes peeled for more discounts and sponsors supporting Sutekh!

BEHOLD GAMES

Our first amazing sponsor is **Behold Games**, located at **C17/99 Jones Street, Ultimo, on the corner of Macarthur and Jones**, who have an amazing vibe with extremely friendly and helpful staff. They have an **excellent** selection of board games, miniatures, paints supplies and a tidy selection of Magic the Gathering cards. Be not afraid, as the owner is really nice and will help you get the things you want and will even order games for you if needed.

For such online orders we (Sutekh) have a **discount code**, a nice 10% off if you use the code SUTEKH on checkout, and you can always choose to pick up your order at the store if you're buying something in-stock. Furthermore, every time you use the code SUTEKH to save on gaming supplies, you help us purchase even more board games for the society! Last year, this enabled us to get Root and the Marauders expansion, Wingspan: Oceania and Quacks of Quedlinburg.

Website: beholdgames.com.au



GOOD GAMES

Our other great sponsor is **Good Games**, who have locations all over NSW. Good Games has an enormous selection of board games, dice, miniatures, wargaming supplies and card games. If you can't find something in one store, then the staff will be more than happy to direct you to another store that stocks it.

All Good Games locations run events throughout the week, however these events are not covered by Sutekh's discount. Speaking of the discount, excluding the Miranda and Wollongong stores all you need to do is just show your **Sutekh QPay card** to receive a sweet 5% off your purchase (unfortunately the discount doesn't work online)!

Website: www.goodgames.com.au



EVER DREAM THIS PERSON?



Every night, all over the world, hundreds of people see this face in their dreams. If this man appears in your dreams too, or if you have any information that can help us identify him, please contact us.

www.sutekh.org.au

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 **USU**

EVER DREAM THIS MAN?



Every night, all over the world, hundreds of people see this face in their dreams. If this man appears in your dreams too, or if you have any information that can help us identify him, please contact us.

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