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DINGOES ATE MY BANJO

**AND OTHER ECCENTRIC ADVENTURES
ON THE FRINGEPATHS**

**A special supplement for
Richard Tucholka's Fringeworthy RPG**



7 ALL NEW FRINGEWORTHY PLOT HOOKS

BY S. L. VILKMAN & MEL NATCHER

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SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT FOR RICHARD TUCHOLKA'S FRINGEWORTHY RPG

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DINGOES ATE MY BANJO

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Layout and Composition by
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For more information contact
rpg@tritacgames.com

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Dedication

We dedicate this book to Richard Tucholka, a man that shared his vision of other worlds with our world, and we will miss him forever. Without his devotion to his ideas, this book would never have been possible.

DINGOES ATE MY BANJO

Includes artwork and photography by

Maximov Krasen
Melody Natcher
Samantha Snyder
Sally Vilkmán
Tyrus Flynn

Author

S.L. Vilkmán

Layout and Composition

Sally Vilkmán
Melody Natcher

Editor

Lynne DeNike Wardrop

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INTRODUCTION TO FRINGEWORTHY GAME HOOKS

This book was written to provide inspiration to new and old GM's alike, as well as provide never before revealed information about places to be found on the Fringepaths. Often Game Masters find themselves in need of a short filler encounter or small story arc to get their players to the place in their campaign where they want them to be. This book should provide a few enjoyable sessions with minimal work for the GM in charge.

Hooks are basic story ideas that can be played in one or more sessions and fit into pretty much anyone's campaign, either as random events or part of the grand scheme of things. Each one has its own NPC cast of characters – human and nonhuman alike populate this book. The human NPCs found here are not ordinary Earth Prime based humans, and the nonhuman NPCs come from diverse cultures that will bring a fresh point of view to a routine encounter.

General information about the NPCs accompanies each hook, references to where they were first mentioned may also be part of the information provided. More information is available about each individual race mentioned in this book, and we will be happy to help you with any questions you may have along the way.

The email address to send any questions to is: rpg@tritacgames.com

KEEGAK AND THE EGG

Adventurers pass through a portal and discover they have entered a pocket stop. In this pocket stop they are greeted with billboards and signs pointing to a large building in the distance. The signs all say **Welcome to G'lerg Brothers Emporium of Everything**. As they near the building, they hear a loud argument coming from within. If the group stays outside and listens they will hear the following.

"WHY did you take that in trade? I wouldn't have even taken it if it was free!"

"It was free. They tossed it in with a sweet deal I really couldn't turn down."

"There is NO deal sweet enough to make me want THAT anywhere near me. I need some air and time to think about keeping you as my brother, err, my partner."

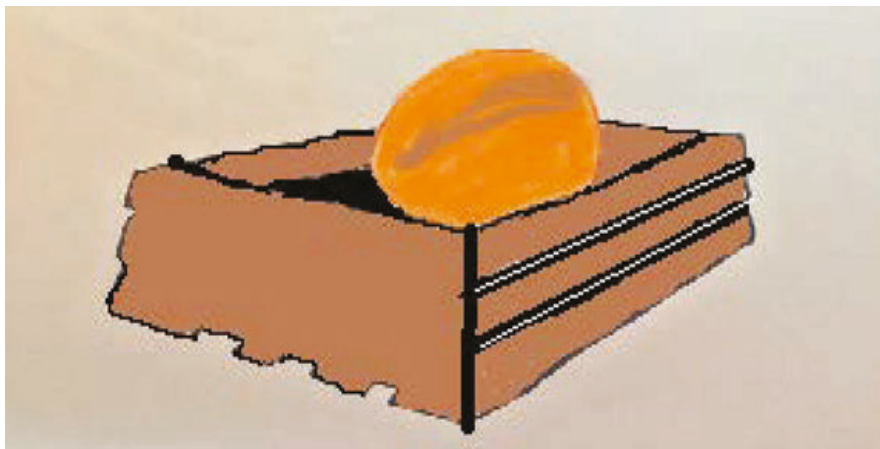
With that, a scruffy looking Keegak stalks out of the building and into the group of Fringe walkers. He recovers quickly from the surprise of the collision, and smiles a salesman's smile.

"Welcome to the G'Lerg's we have whatever you need! Come in and look around. Are you looking for something in particular?" He opens the door wide and waves everyone into the building.

The team can explore the massive store filled with items from all over the Fringepaths, and in doing so, find things they have never seen before. But they will soon discover that nothing has a price tag and, more importantly, that the brothers do not simply sell their merchandise.

GM NOTE: You get to decide the platform and portal where you will want your group to end up, and what happens to them there. The brothers will offer the items the team members want if they bring back something specific from that portal's world. As well as the following demand:

"We also want you to get rid of this egg, we do not care where, as long as it is NO where near the Emporium. It isn't something you can eat either, it would poison you, you would die, and then we couldn't do business anymore." He then hands the group leader a large egg – about the size of an ostrich egg – that slowly pulsates with colors.



The egg will hatch the next day and the players will be faced with a baby Chick – just like the adult version, only much more emotional and always hungry. It will also bond with one of the party as its surrogate parent and will follow that person through any portal they pass through.

If the team brings the chick back to the Emporium, the Keegak will order them to get that *Death with Fuzzy Coat* off of their world. If the group refuses, they will attack the party and try to sleep dart the Chick. If the players keep the chick on the Fringepath while they make their trade with the brothers, the transfer will go off without a hitch and the team will have an NPC Chick they need to deal with.

GM NOTE: the brothers should be twice the skill level of the highest player in the group.

BASIC FACTS ABOUT CHICKS FOR THE GM

The Chicks' home world is platform +356 prime. Both infants and adults look like fuzzy chicks with tentacles emerging from the center of their faces. They smell like apricots and chili when happy, rotten fish when unhappy. They are not something anyone would want to eat, since eating them in any form is lethal. Adult Chicks use their tentacles to communicate with each other and have limited telepathic communication skills with the person they bond with. There is a high chance that a Chick can be taught any language the person it bonds with can speak, but there will always be an odd accent with additional chirps and clicks mixed in. Their nasty smells when upset cause nausea and vomiting. If a Chick dies an unnatural death it gives off a toxic cloud with a 10-foot radius that poisons anyone that breaths it in.

Fully grown Chicks are 4-5' tall. Newly hatched Chicks are 18-24" tall

Racial Traits

Strength	Low
Constitution	Average
Dexterity	High
Intelligence	Average
Wisdom	Low
Charisma	Average



Keegak call them *Flock of Death with Fuzzy Coats*.

Slarg are allergic to them and sneeze uncontrollably when near even a single Chick.

Chicks will mourn and smell very, very bad if they see anyone eating eggs or chicken prepared in any manner.

Flocks move and manipulate large objects with group telekinesis, but individual Chicks are too weak to affect anything weighing more than about a pound.

SOME DINGOES ATE MY BANJO!

IDET decided that with the influx of alien races being discovered or just plain showing up at the Earth Prime portal, it was time to add a new feature to the training given to all new recruits. A series of training seminars were designed to introduce the recruits to the various races they may meet on the Fringe paths.

These programs teach recruits how to meet, greet, and get along with the newest friends of Earth Prime, as well as get the recruits used to the idea that we are not alone on the Fringe paths. Each race sends their representatives to Alice Springs for a month-long rotation, where they teach the seminars and do daily question and answer sessions.

This particular seminar month is being given by a pair of Bugs named Buford and Otis. They happen to be twin brothers with very different personalities. Otis is all business and handles most of the lecture sessions, while Buford is much more laid back and thrives on the question and answer portion of the day, as well as the relaxation time that follows. During the first few days of the session, nothing much happens. The lectures and Q&A go off with precision and the recruits learn quite a bit about the Bugs and their likes and dislikes. On the 4th day, however, things change. Buford shows up at the lecture hall instead of Otis, and in one of his hands he is holding a glowing banjo. With his other hand, he pulls a small cart full of cans of beer.

“Class will be held out at de bonfire today, Otis had ta report to de higher ups and he left teaching ya’ll to me. I ain’t gonna ta stand in that room and yammer all morning and it’s time fer ya’ll to see how we Bugs party.” Buford announces this as he pulls his cart out the door and heads toward the oasis bonfire area.

Once everyone has assembled at the bonfire, it is lit and beers are passed around. Buford starts playing his banjo, and as he plays, it begins to glow and pulsate to the beat of the music. Buford asks if anyone else plays as he hates being the only one making music, and a couple recruits go to their dorm and grab their instruments. One plays a guitar and the other comes out with a banjo. Buford sees the banjo and issues a banjo challenge to the young player, who accepts. The banjo duel is full of well executed riffs, and after a while Buford and his glowing banjo are declared the winner. Buford offers to teach the other player how to strum his glowing banjo after they share a nice cold beer.



Unfortunately, the recruits and Buford were not the only ones out by the oasis this day. A small pack of dingoes were busy scouting the oasis in search of scraps tossed out by people on base. The pack moves carefully, avoiding the humans while locating various things to eat. One brave dingo sniffs around the area where the banjo duel took place and grabs Buford’s banjo in its teeth. Before anyone can react, it begins to drag the instrument away from the populated area. Another dingo decides it looks tasty and starts dragging in a different direction, and soon a full-out tug of war takes place.

About this time Buford is heading back to where he left his banjo and discovers that it is missing. Looking around, he spots the dingoes fighting over his instrument and exclaims “Dem ugly dogs done took my Banjo!”

Collective cries of “grab that banjo” and “chase off those dingoes” can be heard from the recruits. By the time they manage to get the banjo from the dingoes it is in sorry shape. Large bites and gouges mar the once special instrument; the banjo glows a sickly black for a few minutes then the glow fades entirely. Buford looks at the gathering crowd of recruits and instructors and says “Dem dingoes done ate my Banjo! De kilt it. Dis is not good, not good at all.” Buford continues “I have to have my banjo or I go a bit crazy. Ya’ll need to get me all the stuff I need to make me another one. I gotta get Otis to give you a list.” Then he scurries away to the visiting alien quarters.

The next morning Otis appears in the lecture hall and announces that Buford is being locked in the alien quarters for the safety of all those in the compound until he can make a new banjo. He provides the recruits with a list of materials needed and generally where he would go to get them. The list of ingredients:

1. Wood from the talking trees found on **Alt 7 of the Ocean World platform**. Otis suggests asking politely for any large branches they might be willing to part with, since talking trees become grouchy if you just start chopping on them.
2. Glow worm juice from the glow worms found on **Alt 4 of the Mud World platform**. He suggests bringing back a dozen or so whole worms to get enough juice for one banjo. He warns that the Alt 4 portal opens into a large muddy marsh filled with glow worms and leaches. The worms are roughly a foot long, but the leaches can be up to 3 ft long and are always hungry. The glow worms themselves, however, are quite harmless.
3. The final item on the list is spider silk from iron spiders that live in **Spider Marsh, Alt 3 also on Mud World platform**. This marsh is not as muddy but more web filled. There are also marsh snakes and large aggressive birds that normally feed on the spiders, but will also happily accept humans as a food source. Buford will need strands of at least 3 ft in length, and will also take a couple of undamaged silk sacs from the spiders.

Once all the materials are collected, Buford will create his new banjo, and if they brought enough materials for two, he will help the human banjo player build one of his own.

BASIC FACTS ABOUT BUGS FOR THE GM

Bugs are very social and appear to have a Cajun accent as they speak. The love Cajun food and BBQ in general, all sorts of music, and beer. When traveling on the Fringe paths, they move their homes with them on the back of giant stag beetles. They treat the beetles like family pets and will go out of their way to prevent harm to them. Bugs resemble large mantises with moth wings most of the time, but there is a second, less common race of Bugs they call “the cousins” that resemble a large beetle with moth wings. They range from 5 ft to 6 ft 7 inches tall.

Any Dimixi on the base tend to avoid them, and when they are mentioned, the Dimixi call them something that translates to Stupid Hill Folk.



KAGOODY COOKING CONTEST: MAY THE BEST SPAM WIN!

A group of Kagoody have decided to enter a cooking contest that is being held on Earth Prime and sponsored by their favorite cooking network. They have asked for, and been granted, permission to have the rules waived regarding contestants needing to be citizens of the USA. The group has been given a small house to live in during the contest where they can practice their recipes until the week of the event. Everything has gone well with them during their stay at the house, but once they appear at the hotel where the contest is being held, things take a turn toward a lethal direction.

During the first day of the contest, two of the competitors take exception to the odd-looking Kagoody taking part and set out to cause issues with their test kitchen. A large fight takes place, with several other contestants joining in against the Kagoody. Several other issues also arise between contestants, but are barely noticed due to the attention given to the brawl between the Kagoody and the other cooks. Everyone is sent back to their hotel rooms to calm down and all practice cooking is canceled for the night.

The following morning, one of the contestants is found dead in his test kitchen. A large set of teeth marks are found at the stump where his arm and hand are missing. He has a wound on the back of his head that would have easily rendered him unconscious, and the large pool of blood tends to suggest he bled to death. The first thing that comes to mind on the part of the human contestants is that the shark mouthed Kagoody bit off his hand and ate it, leaving him to bleed to death as revenge for the items stolen from the Kagoody kitchen.

It is up to the Fringeworthy team assigned as the Kagoody liaison to prove that none of their contingent murdered the human chef.

Evidence found at the scene includes the bite mark on the dead man's arm, stolen cookware from the Kagoody kitchen, and a torn page from the chef's recipe book that is still clutched in his remaining hand.

Evidence found elsewhere includes a video of the dead chef arguing with the Kagoody over them being allowed into the contest, video of the dead chef arguing with two other human chefs about him stealing recipes or rare ingredients, and complaints filed against the dead chef for cheating by yet another chef. Since the test kitchens were supposed to be off limits that evening, the cameras were not on and did not record the murder. Eventually the chef's hand will be found in another test kitchen freezer, but the chef that uses that kitchen has an air tight alibi for the time of death; he was on live television giving an interview about interspecies competitions.

Facts proving the Kagoody did not kill the chef:

- #1 The bite mark on the end of the chef's arm does not match any of the Kagoody contestants and there are no other Kagoody on the planet at this time.
- #2 All the Kagoody have alibis for the time of death, each needs to be confirmed but all can be proven to be nowhere near the test kitchens that evening.
- #3 The item used to hit the chef on the back of the head will be found hidden in the chef's hotel room and a video of a hooded figure going into his room will be found. The size and shape of the figure rules out the Kagoody and does get the team questioned on their whereabouts during the time of the break into the chef's room. Everyone on the team can come up with provable alibis.
- #4 The missing recipe book will be found in one of the competing chef's room, along with his fingerprints on the pages.

- #5 The medical examiner determines a cleaver was used to cut off the hand and the bite marks were added later. A cleaver was found in the dead chef's test kitchen that had traces of his blood where the handle meets the blade.

As a last ditch effort, IDET can bring in a telepath to read minds – but this would be a last resort and open a new can of worms, since psionic testimony is not admissible in court. It would help eliminate suspects, but legitimate proof would still be required for court.

The team can interview the other chefs, the contest judges and the crew filming the whole thing. They can be part of the teams that search for the evidence, but cannot be part of the team that tests the evidence.

GM NOTE: Kagoody basic information can be found in Portals 4. They have four eyes and a shark head complete with a mouth full of sharp teeth, but from the neck down they are as human as anyone else.

They are very fond of spam and have found many inventive recipes for it, so that can be part of the discussions as well.



Cheesy Macaroni Spam Bake

Ingredients

- 1 12-ounce can SPAM® Classic, diced
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
- 8 ounces elbow macaroni
- 1/2 cup fresh breadcrumbs (1 slice)
- 1 pinch ground red pepper (cayenne)
- 2 cups milk
- 1/8 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 pound processed sharp American cheese, diced
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Heat oven to 400°F. Lightly grease 2-quart casserole.
2. Cook macaroni according to package directions; drain.
3. In casserole, stir together SPAM® Classic and macaroni.
4. In medium saucepan, melt 1 tablespoon butter. Blend in flour, salt, mustard, black pepper and cayenne until smooth. Stir in milk; cook over medium heat, stirring, until mixture thickens and boils. Add cheese; cook, stirring, until cheese is melted. Pour over SPAM® mixture; mix well.
5. In microwave-safe bowl, melt remaining 1 tablespoon butter; stir in breadcrumbs and paprika. Sprinkle over macaroni. Bake 20 to 25 minutes.

This could be run as a murder mystery party where members of your campaign take on the task of playing one of the NPCs as well as their own character, the only provision being that they cannot interview the NPC they are controlling. Let the person who is in charge of the murderer know, but remind him/her that his own character does not have this information.

STEAMPUNK TOLL COLLECTORS

A band of Steampunk Fringe Pirates are making life miserable for every Fringeworthy they meet on the Fringe Paths. This can be a simple, not so random encounter on the way to whatever mission players are heading towards, or the start of a longer campaign to rid the Fringe Paths of the pirates.

As a not so random encounter, the GM can place the Pirates as an obstacle between the party and the platform they need to get to, and provide for lessons in fighting on the Fringe Paths. The pirates outnumber the team 3 to 1 and will attempt to take everyone alive. Most of their attacks are items to immobilize or render the group unconscious. They prefer to ransom people as well as collect information from them about their home worlds.

The Pirates will take advantage of the generally overlooked possibility of walking on either the “up” or the “other-up” side of the Paths, and hide their true numbers as they set up their ambush by moving most of their members to the opposite side from the one that is usually trafficked.

First step for the Pirates will be disabling whatever transportation the group is using (but not in a way that would ruin its value to the Pirates), such as damaging the tires with a mechanical spike strip that lays flat until the vehicle is about to drive over it, then pops up and deflates the tires. If that doesn't stop the vehicle they also have the option of sending little missiles through side windows, mounting a tear gas type attack. If the team is captured, they will be loaded onto the Fringe Pirate's landship, along with whatever the pirates can salvage from the team's transportation. The landship looks like an old-fashioned pirate ship on wheels complete with billowing sails. A large cargo door opens on the lower section of the front, allowing easy access to the storage hold.

The pirates have taken over a ring station on an abandoned Tehrmeiern factory planet and surrounded it with a huge fortified city. The Pirate base is like stepping into Steampunk heaven – everything is run by clockwork mechanisms or steam. High tech items have been retrofitted to work with clockwork and steam whenever possible. Items that cannot be converted are used until their power source fails, then torn apart (to see how they work) or sold on a thriving black market.

Players can attempt to escape, or wait to be ransomed to Earth Prime – all the while knowing full well that if no ransom is paid they will be sold at a black market slave auction. Tech savvy people may be recruited to join the Pirates, if they can pass initiation tests meant to prove loyalty to the Pirate Leader. They will be questioned as to where they are from, and advanced interrogation techniques will be used in determining what other information they can provide, using an invention that causes considerable pain but does no true physical damage. This is the Pirates method that allows them to torture and still get ransom for the team.

MARCUS MATTHEWS

Marcus Matthews leads the Pirates and has a biomechanical arm. It can do anything a normal arm can do, only better. He also wears an odd helmet that has gadgets on it that include lenses for night vision and long-distance viewing. Matthews has a level 7 crystal in his arm that he uses to lock his ring when the Pirates are not expecting any raiding parties to return.

Matthews has a well-trained team of Pirates that are loyal to the death, servants that are loyal to a point, and slaves that are not loyal at all but are also not very good at fighting. Members of either of the latter two groups can



be persuaded to provide information for the team, but they will never give the party a key to the cells or provide access to the team's stolen weapons.

There are families living in the areas surrounding the main base, made up of former pirates and their families, many of which were captives that were never ransomed back to their home worlds. A few are loyal to their new family, and all the retired Pirates are extremely loyal to Matthews.

GM NOTES ABOUT THE STEAMPUNK PIRATES

Marcus Matthews was content to be an inventor, making wondrous clockwork items until the discovery of the Fringe portal on his home world. This started a rush to find anyone that could travel through the portal and explore the Fringe Paths for the glory of the government. Marcus didn't want to leave his inventing life, but was forced to train to be a Fringe explorer. Once he realized he had no choice in the matter, he decided he would use it to his advantage and started watching his fellow recruits, befriend the ones he felt would be useful and training them to follow his lead. After he and his team were deemed fully trained, they were given a simple assignment where they were accompanied by one of the training officers. They handled the mission in record time and were pronounced graduated from the training program and ready for a real assignment.

This is exactly what Matthews had planned on, and he and his crew set out to find a place to call their own, stocking it as they completed missions for their government while building up a population of people loyal to Matthews. Eventually, he and his team were given a mission that was scheduled to take six months, but they were given only enough supplies to last roughly a month. This was exactly what he was waiting for, now that his base was set and his crew would not be missed for at least 6-8 months, they could finally desert from their world's Fringe program.

While they were doing normal missions for his world, Matthews and his crew had also been traveling well past their assigned missions. In doing so, they had discovered an abandoned Tehrmelern factory complex. In the complex, they found a life support pod that had been damaged. The creature in it had died and all that remained were random odd objects and a level 7 crystal. Matthews was able to use the crystal to lock the ring station to level 7, and purposely neglected to report the find to his superiors.



He converted the factory into a Steampunk haven for the pirates and anyone that wanted to join them. There are marvels of clockwork and steam inventions as well as items stolen from various worlds and unlucky Fringe Travelers.

On a high-tech world, the pirates discovered a biomechanical genius named Alael, who was not appreciated by his peers. He quickly fell under the charismatic spell of Matthews, and was given a well-stocked laboratory in the Pirates' highly fortified base. This was fortunate for Matthews, as he was later severely injured during one of the raids he led and his arm was crushed beyond the medical skills of his medics. He ended up with a biomechanical arm and a greater appreciation for his fellow inventor. Alael also invented the biomechanical torture device Matthews uses to extract information from his captives.

Matthews has 3 raiding parties that go out without him, as well as his own major group that captured the team. There is a 25% chance of one of the three raiding parties being in the base on any given day.

ZANE GREY IS MISSING AND PRESUMED WRITING?

Word has filtered through the grapevine, and finally reached IDET main headquarters, that there has been a major incident on one of the Alt-history primes not too far from Earth Prime. Zane Grey, long dead on Earth Prime, has been abducted and taken onto the Fringe paths by a group of unknown Fringeworthy. No one saw who took Zane, but one of his neighbors was awakened by a disturbance and heard Zane cry out that he was being kidnapped. His neighbor called the sheriff, but by the time the lawman arrived the author was gone.

Normally, this is not enough of a crime to warrant the attention of Earth Prime, but coupled with a sudden influx of new Zane Grey novels flooding the market on Earth Prime, and a request from the ambassador from the Alt-history Earth, headquarters decided to send out a team to try and find out where Zane Grey was taken.

Mrs. Johnson, the primary witness, was elderly and her eyesight was poor – all she could make out was that there was four figures carrying Zane off into the night. Another witness saw the same group pass through a rainbow portal, but he was known by the police to be a drunkard and liar, so they dismissed his story until Zane turned up missing. When the IDET representative on the world later tried to get more information, she discovered that the second witness was nowhere to be found.

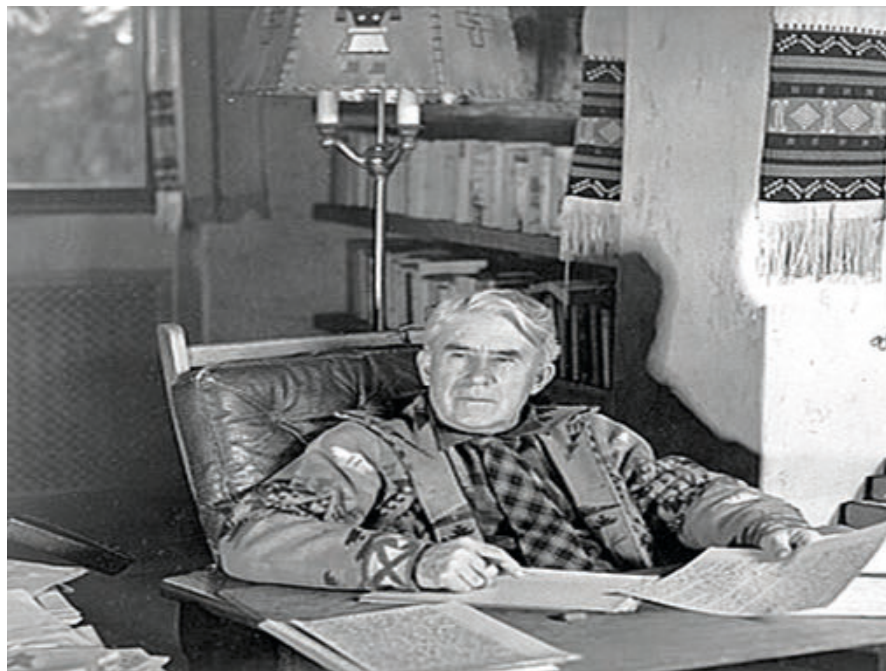
There are some obvious clues hidden in the audio book editions of Zane's new novels, and some not so obvious clues hidden in the printed books. For some reason there are no clues at all in the braille versions.

Audio clues include a short story about talking dogs invading the Old West, as well as a few random messages in his characters' dialog begging for someone to find him and take him home. Written clues are trickier and require code breaking. These clues tell of four nonhuman captors and drop hints about the world where he is being held captive. These suggest he has been taken to a pocket world.

Zane has been writing nonstop, even narrating some of the new Wild West adventure audio books himself.

Reading between the lines, you realize that his captors treat him with reverence, and if they had not abducted him he would be flattered.

He is safe – but wants to go home.



* Zane Grey circa 1920's

GM FACTS ABOUT SLARG

The Slarg idolize Zane Grey. They were appalled that he died at age 67 on Earth Prime, long before the Fringepaths opened and they got to meet him. So they went on a search for an alternative history Earth where Zane hadn't died yet and was Fringeworthy. Eventually, they found the right version of Zane Grey and abducted him. They took him to a fully furnished pocket world where he has all the comforts of home plus modern items he has never seen before.

They have a fully functional braille printing press, as well as a normal printing press and a recording studio for audio books. For the first week he is at the pocket world, they insist that he sleep in a Tehrmelern Doc Box that will fully heal of all his health issues. He will celebrate his 68th birthday in captivity.

The pocket world has both Slarg and human residents to deal with. The Slarg tend to be tricksters that avoid open confrontation. They will set up traps and tricks to cause the adventurers delays in finding and retrieving Zane. The human guards are well paid mercenaries that are loyal to the Slarg, and will do their best to keep strangers from entering the mansion where Zane Grey is being kept. The printing facilities are filled with human workers doing all the normal jobs that need doing, but none of them are very knowledgeable about Zane's location. They simply do their jobs and live their lives.

The Slarg appearance is very similar to that of an oversized chunky Afghan Hound that has no eyes, though some are more furry than others. Slarg use an unknown sense that is similar to but not identical to sonar. This slarg-sense allows them to "see" objects within 200 feet, in a sphere 360-degrees vertically and horizontally. They cannot see through solid objects, but light or darkness has no effect on their ability. They also have a heightened sense of touch and smell, average human intelligence, and small but serviceable hands. They often talk before thinking and can be quite impetuous. But they are very cowardly and avoid combat at all costs. Most of these aliens speak English, unless they are being stubborn or evasive. Then all they can speak or understand is Slarg or some obscure language they have chosen at random.



Slarg are universally Fringeworthy, no matter where they are born. Their home world does not exist. They were designed to be an experimental weapon against the Mellor, but due to a glitch in the experiment that made them, they are pathologically cowardly. The location of the laboratory that created them is a mystery none of them are willing to reveal to IDET.

Other than being cowardly when it comes to combat, Slarg are interesting to have around. That is, unless someone makes dog references or tries to pet them or tickle their tummies – in those cases that person will likely discover the 64 very sharp teeth that fill a Slarg mouth, and you will lose your traveling companion when the Slarg leaves in a huff.

A Slarg bite blocks Mellor regeneration and poisons them, doing considerable damage to the Mellor. It is therefore a shame that Slarg will never get near a Mellor unless trapped in a corner with nowhere to run. They fight only when the situation forces them to, otherwise they run and hide very effectively. If a group forces a Slarg to fight a Mellor through extreme duress, they will lose their friend and gain a cunning enemy that will make their travel a nightmare full of tricks, traps and pitfalls.

MIND TOUCHED

"Help me and my herd," a weak voice whispers into the mind of one of your team. If the player has Psionic skills the message is stronger, but even someone completely lacking in psionic skills will hear a weak voice in his/her head. "Help us please," will be repeated over and over until the person actively focuses on the voice. At that point, the message will continue with: "We are surrounded by men with weapons, we cannot escape this canyon." If the player continues to focus on the voice, a visual of the narrow canyon will take shape and it will be clear that the sides are sheer rock. Once the person receiving the messages can convince his/her team that the messages are real and someone needs their help, more information can be discovered. With the entire team focused on the messages the following information is gathered.

1. The "herd" consists of two Blizniz, three Broupians, two Slarg and a Pangolisk.
2. Brutus, one of the Slarg has a badly broken leg and is too injured to run.
3. Jonrra, the other Slarg was stabbed and is in serious condition.
4. Blenn one of the Blizniz, has a major head injury and is in and out of consciousness.
5. Ecca, the Blizniz contacting the Adventurers, has some abilities to treat injuries but the wounds of her "herd" are severe and taxing her skills to their limits.
6. Eeni, Meeni, and Moe, the Broupians, are trying to shelter the injured but appear to be very confused.
7. Ritzi, the pangolisk, has been trying to find ways to escape but so far, he has been unsuccessful.
8. The group is in a box canyon about a mile from a rainbow warp, and there is a tribe of very unfriendly natives between them and the warp that sees them as either enemies or food. Neither one bodes well for the herd.

Ecca can give enough information to narrow down the platform and portal where they are trapped. It is up to the Adventurers to come up with a plan to rescue them.

Once they are rescued and people are healing, Ecca will explain the odd herd to which she belongs. All of the members of the herd were trapped on different worlds and brought to the prime as zoo specimens, none of them were happy in their enclosures but due to their lack of fine manipulation skills, most of them were trapped without hope. That is, until one day Ritzi was captured and placed in one of the enclosures near Ecca. The zookeeper had no idea just how talented at escape Ritzi was, and the Pango soon had his cage door open and was wandering around checking out the zoo. When Ritzi found out no one could come out to explore with him, he decided to let them all out of their enclosures. They escaped through a portal when Ecca discovered that Ritzi had a crystal in one of his pouches that unlocked the nearby ring station. The group decided to stick together – after all they were all lost and far from home, none of them had been captured anywhere near this platform, and most of them will say it took days for the trapper to get them to the zoo from their homes.

Ecca tells the adventurers about a group of humans that is also trapped in the zoo, in a special area that is always patrolled, so while it was sad to leave them behind the herd had no choice. The adventurers can simply take Ecca and her herd home, or they can head to the prime and rescue the humans in the cages and put an end to the zoo and its keeper.

The humans are a Fringeworthy team from a different prime captured when they came in to explore. The zookeeper is human and very unfriendly.



BLIZNIZ, SLARG, BROUPIANS AND PANGOLISKS - GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE GM.

Blizniz need to belong to a herd-type arrangement and will adopt others into their herd to increase its size and survivability. They have a calming effect on other creatures and can send out “vibes” to make enemies feel less likely to attack them. The strength of this effect is based entirely on the size of the herd and how many Blizniz there are to concentrate.

They are similar in appearance to a small elephant and use their trunk to manipulate objects. They are a non-violent species and prone to becoming supporting figures in IDET teams they have joined, as they are extremely loyal to the herd. Blizniz have an innate sense of herd direction, and never get lost in relationship to the location of their herd, so food scouts, etc. always know how to find their way back to the herd’s location.

Slarg were explained in the Zane Grey incident, page 16 of this book.

Broupians always come in a cluster of three. Broupians do not communicate with any language, they make a single multi-tone ‘broup’ noise which they use to create an emotional impression. Using this as their baseline communication, they employ a form of emotional telepathy that requires explorers to narrow categories as if playing twenty questions with them. Telepaths of any standing have a much easier time communicating and understanding what the Broupians are trying to tell them, but they still are not going to be able to hold standard conversations with them. When forced to defend themselves, they can generate a severe neurological shock that can drop a bull elephant. However, they have to rest for 30 minutes after using this defense, so its use in a PC group is limited.

The Pangolisks are best described as six-legged anteaters covered in both fur and scale. Their middle set of legs end in highly dextrous manipulative hands, while the front sport a formidable set of digging claws. They are marsupials that lay eggs and have a pouch where their young can travel safely. They speak a simple version of the common language and are moderately intelligent. Like magpies, they collect shiny things in their pouches – you never know when something they pick up will come in handy. Pangos are naturally curious and like to take things apart, but often get bored when the time comes to put the item back together. They also randomly pouch small parts and keep them.

Pangolisks become extremely alarmed in the presence of Mellor in any form. Their bodies secrete a natural paralyzing toxin that incapacitates Mellor when they are attacked, and which can be spit 30 feet when they are under duress. But Pangolisks will not willingly go into a fight. They will scream and run away at the first sign of Mellor, making them welcome residents at the IDET primary gateways onto Earth Prime.

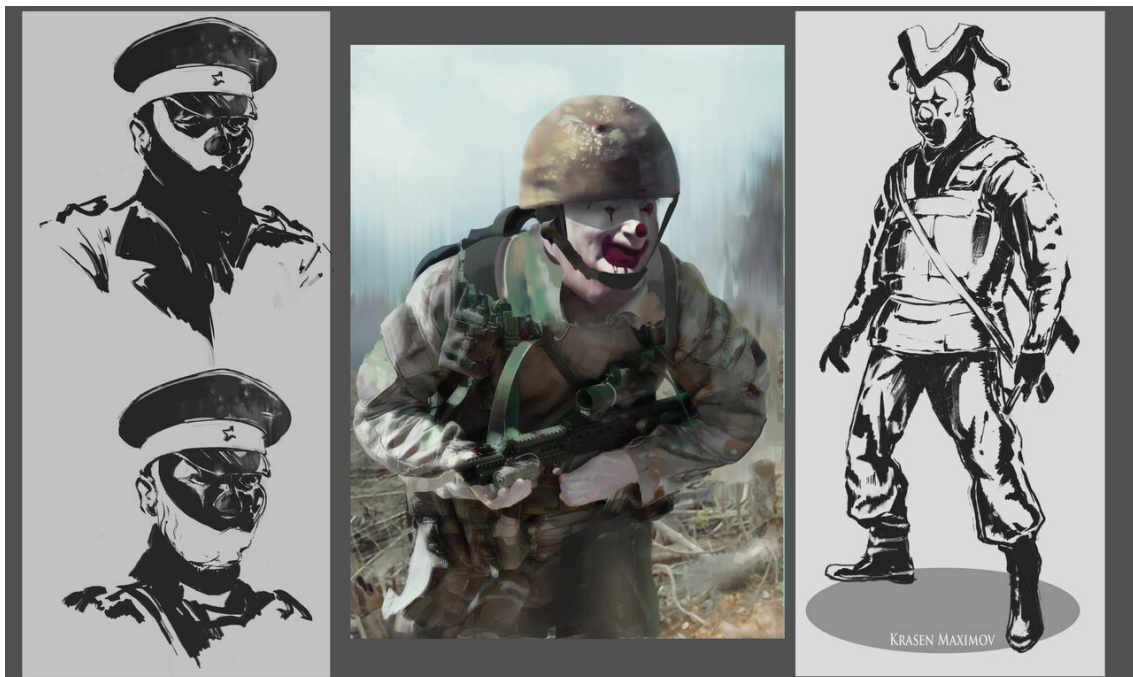
SEND IN THE CLOWNS

Earth Prime has been informed that on one of the star platforms not too far from Earth has become a hive of activity, and they need a team to go out there and discover what is going on. When the team arrives, they find brightly dressed clowns carrying very dangerous weapons guarding the platform, who challenge anyone that attempts to enter the portal. The team discovers that these guards are from another world where dressing as a clown is the way warriors prepare for battle. The more bold and bright the costume and makeup, the fiercer the warrior is perceived to be. The clowns suggest that the team should get out of the way of incoming transports, and will point the party toward the direction of a temporary command center across the platform, where they are to speak to their superiors.

Covered transports enter and exit the star portal on a tight schedule, and the team sees roughly a dozen an hour pass through. The ones coming out look to be battle scarred, and one barely makes it through before it stops running and needs to be hauled away, out of the line of traffic.

Wounded Clowns wearing goofy looking masks stream out of the portal and are loaded into the back of a large truck that takes them up to the Alt platform where they enter one of the portals that leads to a healing station.

The Clowns will accept the help of the group if they are willing to go into the portal and do some spying – or go on rescue missions for Clowns that are too injured to walk out on their own, or have been captured. The leader is insistent that the bulk of the warfare be handled by his Clowns. He says an invasion force has taken over the space station the Clowns had been using as a supply dump. The base's security was caught off guard and is no match for the invaders. He will offer masked spacesuits to the team, if they team does not not have their own spacesuits available.



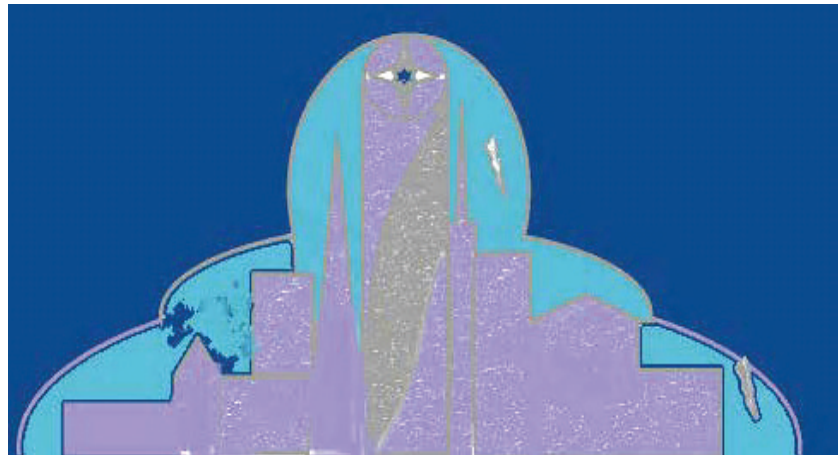
CLOWNS

Clowns are above average in both height and weight . The size of a well built human weight lifter, they average 6'4" tall and frequently top out close to 400 pounds of pure muscle. They move surprisingly fast for their size and are extremely tough. On their world, their costumes and makeup serve the same purpose as any other world's armor and warpaint.

The star portal opens into a domed space station that has had its dome breached, creating large sections where there is no oxygen to breath. The space station is on a small planet that orbits a red star and has a thriving population of traders, food services and entertainers. Many of the base's residents are in the underground bunkers that were built for asteroid doomsday events, but even if they were not, they are not much on fighting. The security crew are mostly dead and the bulk of the resistance has been led by the Clowns.

Racial Traits

Strength	High
Constitution	High
Dexterity	High
Intelligence	Average
Wisdom	Average
Charisma	Varies from Goofy to Threatening depending on makeup



One goal of the team is to spy on the enemy, gaining information on their numbers, their tech level, who is in charge, what kind of space ships are they using and how many ships they have. Rescuing wounded can possibly get the team into combat with a group of space-faring humans with a general weapon level slightly above whatever the team is using at the time.

The Clowns also offer a short-range stealth spaceship to spy on the enemy, but warn that there is a minor chance the enemy has a means to detect the vessel when it is within 100-yard range. The team is also warned that the stealth ship has limited weapons and is unlikely to be able to do much damage to the enemy ships. The stealth ship will fit within the docking bay of the biggest of the enemy fleet, but once it is inside it will be visible to anyone in the bay. It could, however, give the group an excellent means to gather information and figure out a way to destroy the command ship.

Space Ship encounters are found mainly in FTL 2448, which provides a plethora of reference materials.

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