TALES FROM THE UNDERHIVE

BY "PAPA" STEVE ANASTASOFF

INTO THE DEPTHS

Hey kid, didn't think I'd see ya back here so soon. Thought ya had 'nough last time. So what brings ya back down to the Badzones? Ahhh... I should've guessed. It's always the same. Someone starts spreadin' rumours 'bout a new 'tech dome they've discovered and pretty soon every ganger and his rat wanna piece. Ya start imaginin' all those riches just waitin' for ya, but there's some places down here that go beyond imaginin'. Places that even ya nightmares hide from. Places best left undiscovered...

Among the many diversions that the White Dwarf crew find to entertain themselves, one of the favourites is "cult" science fiction and horror movies. There's just something about a gang of Mutant Radioactive Zombie Bikers from Hell (or whatever) stomping their way through ninety minutes of roller-coaster cinematic action that attracts us. Necromunda has always seemed to me to be a good setting for this kind of gratuitous fun, and so I started thinking about a few scenario ideas, based around some of my favourite B-movie cliches.

WATCH THE FILMS

The best way to start if you want to create and play this sort of scenario, is to watch a few appropriately low-budget films. Old black and white movies are always being shown on late night television (although you should only bother with the horror and science fiction movies, ignoring the Cary Grant comedy romances and the subtitled French art house flicks), and these can give you some great plot ideas. If you need some of our personal recommendations, try *the Thing from Another World* or *Fiend Without a Face* (Adrian's favourites), *the Thing* (Ian's top choice) or the original *Night of the Living Dead* (my pick, but only really suitable for our more mature readers). *Forbidden Planet* is another classic that's well worth watching. A lot of the old episodes of programmes like *Doctor Who* or the *Twilight Zone* can also be excellent sources for plot ideas.

Over the next few pages I've taken some of my favourite B-movie themes and plots, and suggested ways that they can be used and adapted for Necromunda. I've also taken one particular theme, the classic Zombie fest, and developed it into a full blown Arbitrator scenario, *Hive of the Living Dead*. Enjoy, and remember, be afraid...

The Goliaths look on helplessly as an unfortunate Juve tries to fight off a huge swarm of hideously mutated giant spiders!

HIVE OF THE LIVING DEAD

Yeah, I remember the time, some poor fools got 'emselves trapped at Hive Bottom, worst pit of desolation this side of hell. Wouldn't wish that on my worst enemy, really I wouldn't. Not only that, but as they tried to find their way out they found themselves being hunted down and eaten, one by one, by a whole bunch of Zombies. Only one escaped to tell the tale and he was driven stark, staring mad by the experience.

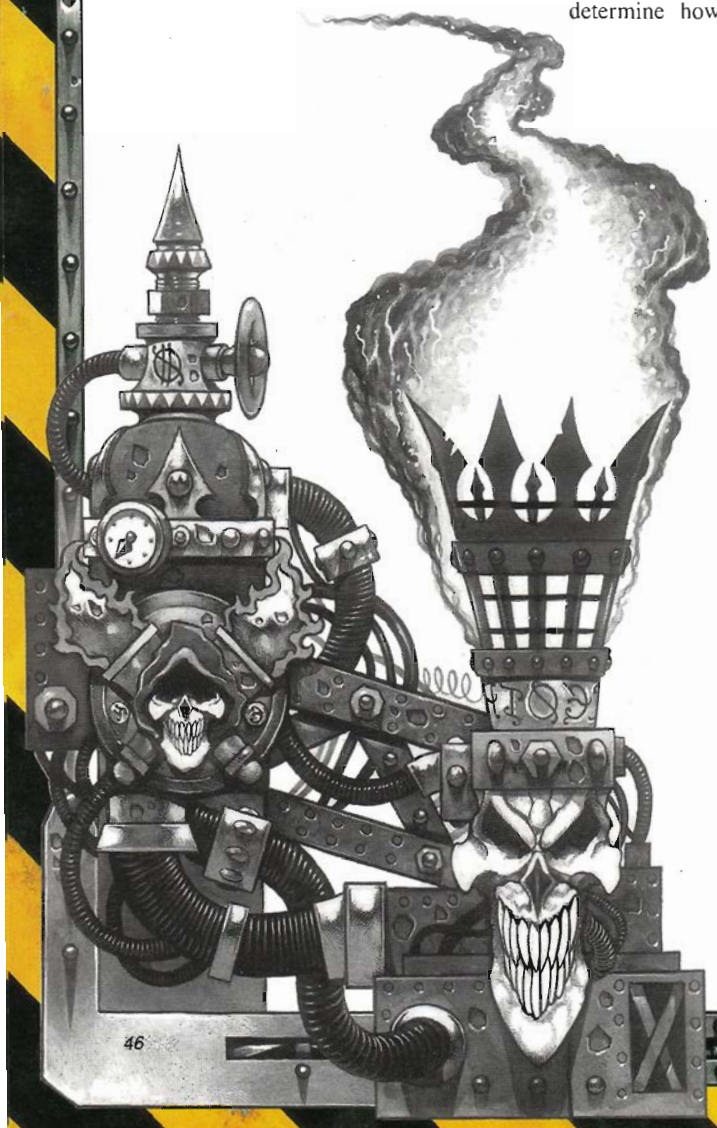
An individual or group who are suddenly isolated from normal civilisation is one of the most common themes in horror B-movies. Frequently, the main characters are cut off from society as they know it, where they are forced to confront their worst fears. My first scenario idea came about from this type of theme. Many situations can arise which will cause gangers to become separated from their gangs, and in the Underhive this is not a pleasant situation to be in at the best of times. Unfortunately, times have a nasty habit of seldom being at their best when you want them to be...

The chainsaw-wielding maniac, sinister insectoid hunter and pustulant Zombie are just some of the B-movie monstrosities you can borrow for your Necromunda games.

INTO THE DEPTHS

There are several ways of getting into this scenario. The most straightforward way is to simply grab one or more players who want to take part. Roll a dice and add two to the result (giving a value between three and eight) to determine how many gang members will take part in total. If you have more than one player involved then divide this number as equally as possible among all the players. The actual gangers involved should be determined randomly.

However, the second way of getting into this scenario is much more interesting, and much more fun! Wait, and bide your time until a suitable occasion arises. Many of the Hazardous Conditions, especially Hive Quakes, are excellent for this. As the ground begins to tremble and quake, gantries collapse and great rends are torn beneath the gangs' feet, plunging random gang members into the depths of the Hive. Again, you can decide the gang members randomly as above, or choose them appropriately (for example, instead of gangers going out of action from a Hive Quake, have them plunged into the horrors of this scenario instead!) However they get there, the selected gangers soon find themselves very lost, in a place they most definitely do not want to be.



WHERE ARE THEY?

After tumbling and falling through sewer ducts and air shafts, down garbage chutes and sludge pipes, the gangers have ended up in the depths of the Hive Bottom. No other life is visible, and even by Necromundan standards the area they are in is ruinous and inhospitable. As they begin to realise their predicament, they notice shambling figures shifting through the shadows. Things are about to get a whole lot worse...

The object of the scenario is for the players to fight their way out, past the hordes of Plague Zombies that are closing in on them, and escape back uphive. This is not easy. Not only is no one quite sure of the way, but for every Zombie blown away or dismembered another two seem to appear to take its place. Pustulant hands claw at the gangers' feet as they flee, the rotting victims of the Zombie Plague eager to feed upon fresh flesh. And the gangers only have so much ammo...

SETTING UP THE TABLE

The Arbitrator should set up all the terrain for this scenario himself. There are several terrain features that should be placed during this stage. Firstly, there must be an escape point somewhere on the table. This can be anything you like, perhaps a hatchway on a piece of terrain, or a large open pipe leading off out of sight. Make sure that it is something quite definite, though, rather than just a point on the table. This is the only way the gang members can escape. Unfortunately, at the start of the game, none of the players know where this point is. Only when one of their models approaches within eight inches of the escape route should you reveal its exact location. Note that there are no bottle tests in this scenario – none of the gangers would know where to run. Neither can the gangers escape off any table edge. The only way out is through the designated escape route.

Secondly, you should define a "sanctuary" in the middle of the table. This is an area that the Zombies are unable to enter. Perhaps light shines down from uphive on this particular spot, or maybe the strange, ancient looking obelisks that circle it create an aura that the Zombies fear. While we were playtesting the scenario I used a ruined temple as the sanctuary – I felt that this gave the right sort of feel to the game, creating a sort of holy "sacred zone".

The players must deploy first. The unfortunates must be placed anywhere inside the sanctuary at the start of the game. Roll a dice to see how many Zombies the Arbitrator (or Zombie player) starts with. These may be deployed anywhere outside the sanctuary, but no closer than 8" to any gang member.

THE HORROR BEGINS

The gangers always get the first turn. If more than one player is participating, then either let them sort out their own turn sequence, or decide randomly if they are unable to do this (tut, tut! They'll have to learn to co-operate sooner or later...). The Arbitrator then takes his turn normally. However, at the end of each Zombie turn the Arbitrator may roll a dice and place that many extra Zombies on the table. These are deployed just like the initial Zombies, anywhere outside the sanctuary, but no closer than 8" to any gang member. In addition, they have the extra restriction that they must be placed within 8" of a Zombie already on the table. If there are no Zombies on the table already then the new ones may ignore this restriction.

The game continues until all the gang members involved have either been taken out of action or have managed to escape.

At the end of the game, instead of rolling on the normal injury table for gangers taken out of action, roll on the *Zombie Plague Table* below.

Make no mistake, surviving this scenario is (or at least should be) very difficult. Anyone who survives and makes their way back uphive will, without a doubt, earn a reputation as one of the most iron-hard, tough gangers in the Hive. Instead of acquiring experience for escaping from the Zombie lair, any

ZOMBIE PLAGUE TABLE

D6 Roll	*Result*
1	**Zombie Food!** Hordes of Zombies fall on the helpless body of the ganger, tearing their body apart and feeding on the still living flesh!
2	**Lost in the Depths.** The ganger quickly succumbs to the Zombie Plague. Brain death occurs within hours, and the new Zombie remains in the depths of the Underhive.
3	**"I heard you were dead... "** The gang member manages to escape back uphive uninjured. However, the other members of the gang, fearing that he has already contracted the Zombie Plague open fire immediately upon seeing him! Randomly select one other gang member and roll to hit as if firing at close range with the highest strength weapon the they own. Resolve wounds/injuries as normal.
4	**One of them!** The gang member manages to crawl back uphive, but unfortunately the Zombie Plague has still infected the hapless ganger. Make a roll on the regular Zombie Plague table in the Outlanders rulebook. If the ganger survives, make a roll on the Serious Injury table as normal.
5	**Survive!** The gang member manages to fight off the effects of the Zombie Plague and escape back uphive. You must still make a normal Serious Injury roll, but you may re-roll results of 11-16 (Dead) or 61-63 (Captured).
6	**Unhinged.** The gang member manages to escape back uphive uninjured. However, the encounter has left them slightly unhinged. From now on treat them as if they have suffered a head wound (see the Serious Injuries table).

"I SURVIVED THE ZOMBIE LAIR!"

D6 Roll Result

1 **Killer Rep.** Stories of the gang member's brutal and bloody escape from the Zombie lair quickly spread through the Hive. The gang member automatically gets the *Killer Reputation* skill.

2 **Discovery.** Crawling their way back uphive, the gang member stumbles upon an ancient and well-hidden opening. Roll another dice to determine what sort of territory the opening leads to. The gang may add this territory to those it already possesses.

1-2 Old Ruins
3 Spore Cave
4 Tunnels
5 Vents
6 Archeotech Hoard

3 **Archeotech.** During the battle against the Zombies, the gang member stumbled across a strange and ancient looking device. The ganger may add this item of Archeotech to his equipment list. Roll on the Archeotech table in the Outlanders rulebook to find out exactly what sort of device it is.

4 **Iron Will.** Having faced the horrors of the Zombie lair, little that the Hive has to offer now will perturb this gang leader. The gang leader automatically acquires the Iron Will skill. Re-roll this result for any gang member other than the gang leader.

5 **"I remember when... "** Your gang member now has some truly frightening first hand anecdotes to keep the Juves in line. After each game that this gang member participates in, instead of working for income or searching for rare trade items, they may try and impress some Juves enough to join the gang. Roll a dice, and on a roll of 6 you may add a new Juve to your gang just as if you had a *Settlement* territory.

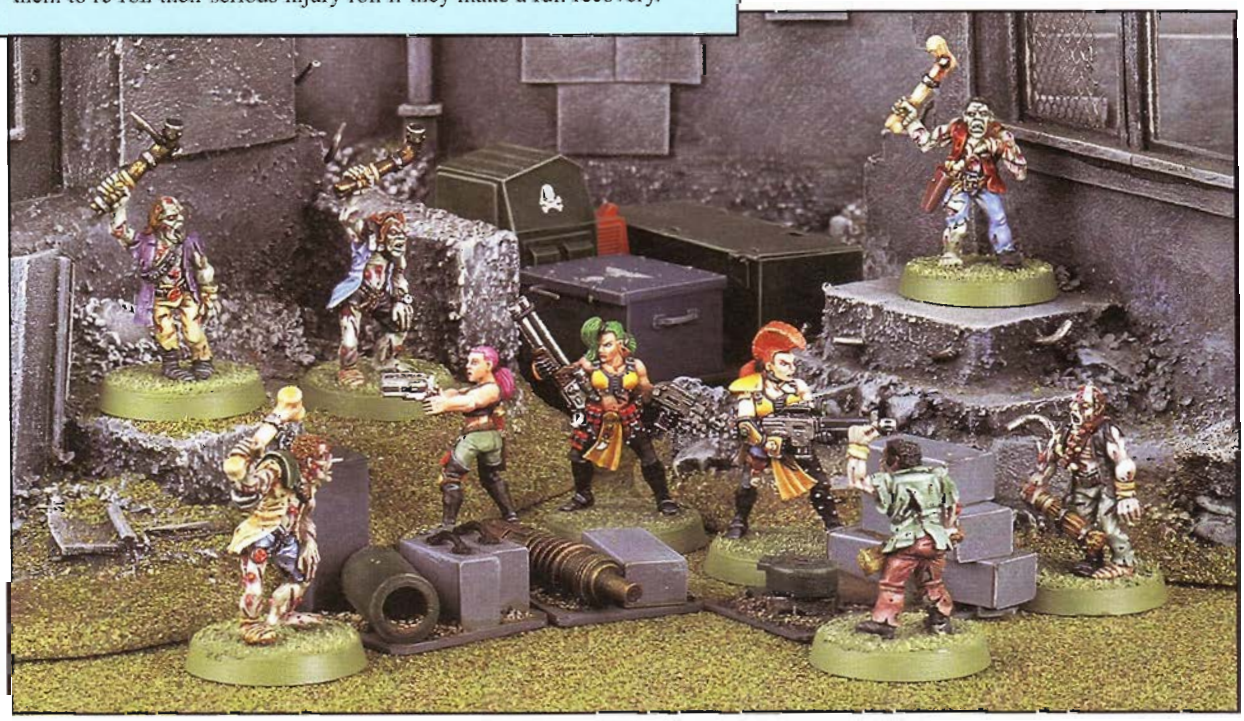
6 **Cruel and Pitiless.** Constantly haunted by nightmares of the fight with the Zombies, the gang member has been left cold and heartless. The ganger has become completely cruel and pitiless, and any time this character takes out an opponent in hand-to-hand combat you may force them to re-roll their serious injury roll if they make a full recovery.

surviving gang members should make a roll on the *"I survived the Zombie lair!"* table to find out the benefits of their outing.

I WILL SURVIVE

As it stands, this scenario is designed for fairly novice gangs. However, it is a simple matter to make it easier or tougher for the players. If you feel the need to make it easier, the most straightforward way is to limit the maximum number of Zombies on the table at one time. Making the sanctuary larger, or making the escape route closer to the sanctuary, or more obvious, are also effective changes.

Conversely, to make the scenario more difficult, you can make the sanctuary smaller, and hide the escape route away in a distant corner of the table. To make it more difficult still, you could tell the players that during their tumbling journey into the Underhive, they lost ammo supplies, so that they must now make ammo checks on a roll of five or six, instead of just the normal roll of six. To make it really, really tough, you can always introduce some extra enemies other than the Zombies. Perhaps there are also some Scavvies or Scalies lurking amongst the shadows, or maybe even Karloth Valois himself is guiding the Zombies? Additionally, you can make the sanctuary slightly less safe – maybe you could allow the Zombies to enter this area if they can pass a leadership test, or say that after a fixed number of turns the Zombies overcome their fear of the sanctuary and may then enter it freely.



ANDY'S CYBORG ASSASSIN

This is the thing responsible for bombing the trade delegation uphive. He is hiding out in your gang using his remarkable morphing powers – pick one of your gang members for him to impersonate (not a Juve). His true nature will be revealed when he takes a wound – replace the gang member with a servitor model.

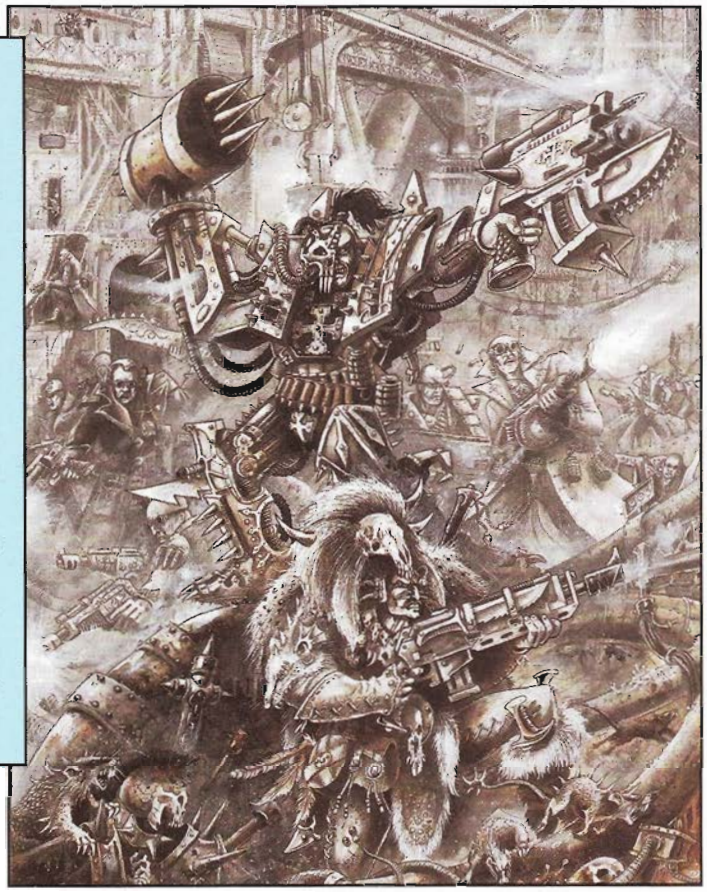
Profile	M	WS	BS	S	T	W	I	A	Ld
Cyborg	4	5	4	5	6	2	4	2	10

Weapons. The assassin is armed with the weapons of the gang member he replaces.

Armour. The Cyborg has an armour saving throw of 4, 5 or 6 on a D6.

Equipment. The Cyborg is equipped with filter plugs and photo contacts.

Skills. Hurl Opponent, True Grit, Nerves of Steel. Immune to nerve rolls.

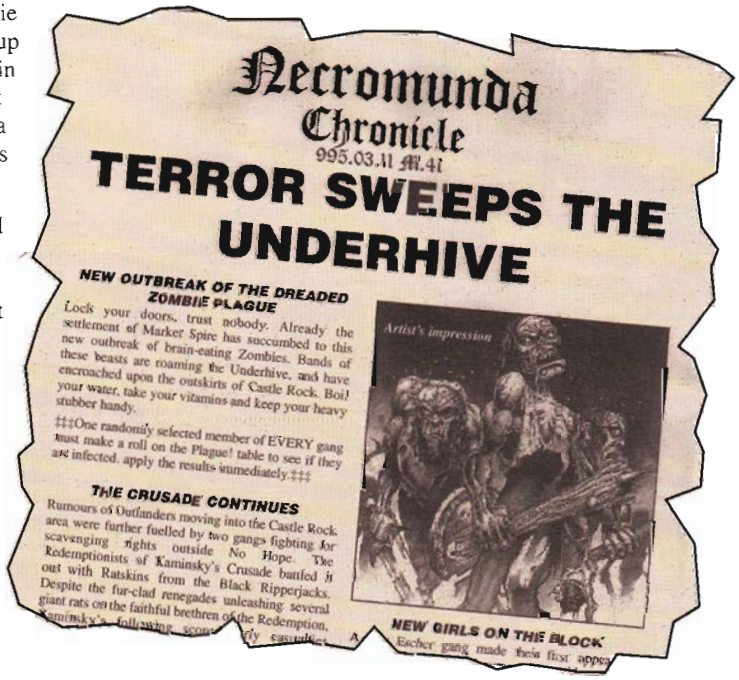


This scenario can also be played solo or without an Arbitrator quite easily. Shuffle together eight or ten playing cards, one of which is an ace. Scatter these at suitable locations around the table top. Whenever you get within eight inches of one of these cards you may turn it over, the ace representing the escape route. Each turn the Zombies will move at full pace towards the nearest ganger. When placing new Zombies, determine randomly where they are placed as follows: randomly select a Zombie already on the table. Then roll a normal dice together with a scatter dice to determine how far and in which direction the new Zombie is placed from the existing one. You can even team up with several of your mates to play the scenario together in this way. You can each take it in turns to move and fight with the Zombies. It helps if one of the players has a Warhammer Undead army, so that you can borrow all his Zombies to use!

Remember that these events are terrifying and unusual even by Necromundan standards, so they should only really be run as a one off. This sort of scenario is much too dangerous for regular play! Once you've played it through, you can always try and devise some follow on scenarios to carry on the theme (yes, just like with the movies, you too can have several cheesy sequels!) Perhaps after returning uphive the gang decides to mount an expedition back down to the depths to recover any gang members who didn't manage to escape. Or maybe the Zombies manage to follow the gangers after they escape, finding a route to the Gang's base! Pretty soon total carnage erupts as the Zombie plague spreads throughout the hive, with armies of brain-dead flesh-eaters fighting against the massed gangs defending their homes...

DO IT YOURSELF

Of course, there are still countless other variants and ideas that you can steal from your favourite B-movies. Rather than develop these into full blown scenarios, I've just given some basic plot outlines that



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TERROR SWEEPS THE UNDERHIVE

NEW OUTBREAK OF THE DREADED ZOMBIE PLAGUE

Lock your doors, trust nobody. Already the settlement of Market Spire has succumbed to this new outbreak of brain-eating Zombies. Bands of these beasts are roaming the Underhive, and have encroached upon the outskirts of Castle Rock. Boil your water, take your vitamins and keep your heavy stubber handy.

‡‡‡One randomly selected member of EVERY gang must make a roll on the Plague! table to see if they are infected, apply the results immediately.‡‡‡

THE CRUSADE CONTINUES

Rumours of Outlanders moving into the Castle Rock area were further fuelled by two gangs fighting for scavenging rights outside No Hope. The Redemptionists of Kaminsky's Crusade battled it out with Ratskins from the Black Ripperjacks. Despite the fur-clad renegades unleashing several giant rats on the faithful brethren of the Redemption, Kaminsky's following scored [illegible] casualties.

Artist's impression

NEW GIRLS ON THE BLOCK

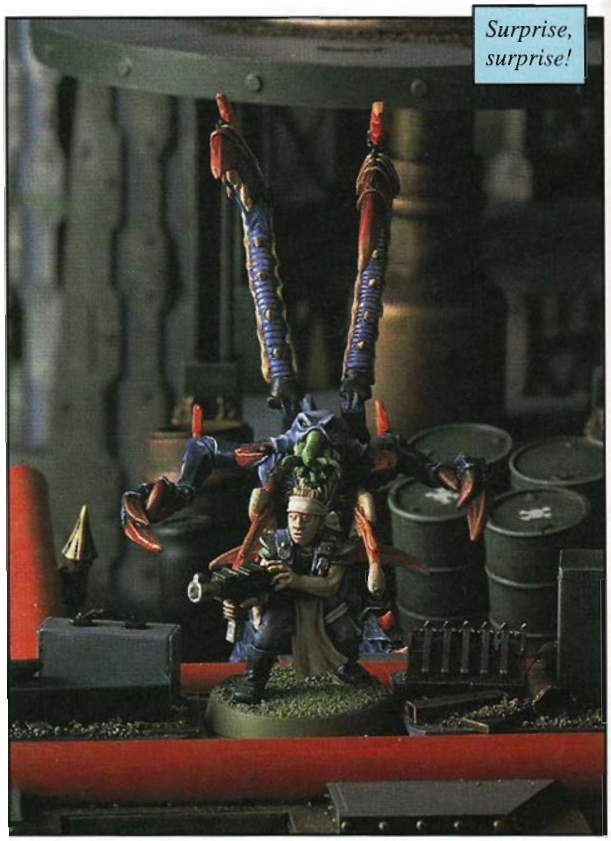
Each gang made their first appea

you can work up properly yourselves. You can use *Hive of the Living Dead* as an example of how to do this sort of thing. It's really not very difficult to create your own scenarios once you get into it, so why not give it a go?

IT CAME FROM THE SUMP

Another situation that arises as the central theme of countless horror and science fiction movies is where the main characters are trapped and hunted down, one by one, by something deadly, huge, and usually unseen until the very last reel. *The Thing from Another World* or *Fiend without a Face* are perhaps the best examples of this sort of plot and, as we have already seen, are particular favourites of Adrian's.

You can quite easily create a scenario where the players' gangs are trapped in a secluded and abandoned section of the Hive. Abandoned, that is, except for a single horrific monster. The gangers cannot know how it got there – maybe it was a genetic experiment gone wrong, or perhaps it stowed away on board a cargo vessel travelling from a distant world. You can pick a creature from the Underhive bestiary section of the Outlanders rulebook, or even just invent a monster yourself. This second option is particularly good if you can convert a suitably horrific model to use. I've recently been trying out using creatures from Warhammer 40,000 in some Necromunda games, and have even had a couple of gangs going up against a Lictor(!). Rather than having to kill the monster, all the gangers had to do was survive until a time-locked door opened, sparing them a truly horrific fate. Perhaps in a future scenario they'll get the opportunity to go back and finish the job off (or perhaps the Lictor will get that chance!)



Surprise, surprise!

CAMEO APPEARANCES

You don't even need to create a full-blown scenario to be able to capture the cult movie feel in your games. You can have cameo type sub-plot that run through your campaign and find their way into games when the players are least expecting it. When Andy Chambers was running the Studio campaign we had a sub-plot going on for several weeks with a Cyborg Assassin hiding out in the Underhive. The Cyborg could change shape freely, so you could never know who it was disguised as at any one time. I've included the rules for the Cyborg Assassin (on the previous page) just as Andy wrote them, so you can see how simple it is to work this kind of thing into your games. The trade delegation bombing that Andy mentions refers to an event that had happened the previous week in our Studio campaign.

There are also countless ideas that you can add to your basic theme to add even more depth, and make it even more terrifying. How about making a scenario where the gang's Juves are cut off from the rest of the gang and forced to survive against some truly terrifying monstrosity (maybe a Spyrer?). Perhaps the gang's weapons have been rendered ineffective for some reason, or the creature they face is simply immune to them. They will have to improvise ways of fighting their way out instead.

Just remember that there are hundreds upon hundreds of films that you can take ideas from, and not nearly enough space here to describe all of them. So if you ever need more inspiration, then go and find yourself an old black and white B-movie. Let's see, *Fiend Without a Face*, I haven't seen that one yet... Gangers beware!