

One Thousand and One Nights and One Night

a role-playing game campaign design 'zine

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Kill Order 66!

Thirty one issues of my 'zine! That's simply amazing! I'm pretty proud of that (and they've been mostly on-time, too)! This issue, I've got some fun stuff, from one of my genre-mixes (Supers in Space!) to another good tactic from China. And if you get "instructions" to game with your friends, don't blame me!

Hearty Congratulations!

To RW and his lovely bride K! I was honored to be a participant for your special day! Congrats and all the best!

Orbital Mind Control Lasers Quote

Q: Our local boy scout troop would like to tour your facility, how can we do so?

A: *You can't. We do not allow visitors due to insurance restrictions. We suggest that you take them to the Smithsonian Air & Space Museum. All children love the genuine replica of the Wright Brother's plane.*

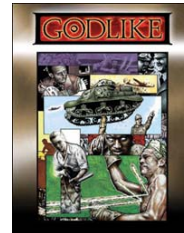
—From the *Orbital Mind Control Lasers FAQ* (www.fortunecity.com/tattooine/vonnegut/42/faq.html)

Another Tactic from Ancient China

Last month, I mentioned the Thirty Six Strategies of War in Ancient China. Another good one for a GM to try is **Trouble The Water To Catch The Fish**: "*Before engaging your enemy's forces create confusion to weaken his perception and judgment. Do something unusual, strange, and unexpected as this will arouse the enemy's suspicion and disrupt his thinking. A distracted enemy is thus more vulnerable.*" I've used this, usually to the confusion of my players (which usually improves my story by what they fill in the blanks with!). "Why did they raid the meat packing plant? Was there something there? I thought their target was Conrado Industries? We need to get to that plant and look around!"

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Supers in Spaaaaacccccceeeeeee!

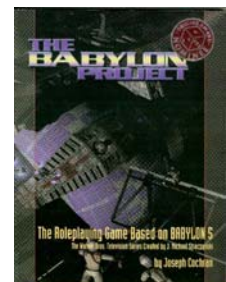


A recent thread on RPG.net about mixing *Godlike* (Arc Dream) with *Twilight 2000* (GDW) got me thinking about other uses for *Godlike* (Arc Dream) in a mix-and-match game. What setting would provide a war that would be an

interesting backdrop? Since I'm a big, big fan of *Babylon 5* (Babylonian Productions), I thought "What would the effect be dropping super-powers into the Earth-Minbari War?"

According to a *Babylon 5* timeline, the Earth-Minbari War started July 12, 2245, when the *EAS Prometheus*, captained by Michael

Jankowski, fired on three Minbari cruisers, killing the head of the Minbari Grey Counsel, Dukat. The war raged for over two years, with Earth rapidly loosing ground and space battle after ground battle, until the Earth's final stand at Battle of the Line in December 2247. That's over two years of conflict to have some fun with. Let's get started!



Shoehorning Godlike

Godlike (Arch Dream) has the first rules on Talents, but another resource (if you were lucky to get it) was *Wild Talents* (Arc Dream), which contains the *Godlike*-universe in modern



times. I've got a copy myself of both, so that's not an issue. Another resource is *Nemesis* (Greg Stolze), which uses the ORE (One Role Engine) System, too. If you look on Arc Dream's website (arcdream.com), they've got a lot of info

available, including downloads that'll be useful for this game. Be sure to check them out, especially their supers write-ups, which could (continued on Page 2, First Column)

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Shoehorning Godlike (cont.)

be useful for quick-and-dirty NPCs.

So, after deciding on a system and those resources, how to change the course of the war? First, I plan on only the Humans developing Talents at first. Since the Earth Forces are so badly out-classed, it makes perfect sense that would be the case. Only later in the game timeline would Minbari get Talents, which will throw in some good surprises when the PCs encounter them. This can easily be explained, metagame-wise, by the "Minbari souls" waking up to fight to save the human race from extermination.

Psi vs. Talent, Cage Match!

Another thing to consider is the differences between Psionics and Talents. Psis already exist



in the B5-verse and they are *mostly* understood. In order to keep the players guessing, I'm choosing to have them be completely separate. I'll use the same game rules for them for

simplicity sake but they'll be cosmetically different and incompatible. If you're a Psi, you can't develop Talent, and visa-versa. Also Talents can have psionic powers that don't apply to the traditional "psi" thoughts. Psis cannot read Talents, however, and can't stop a Talent from using their powers. Talents can stop other Talents from using their powers, however, just like in *Godlike* (Arc Dream). This presents a problem for the Psi Corps in general, too. Another power group is on the map and they can't be manipulated mentally.

Talents will develop suddenly and, even with the least "self-aware" individual, the powers will be useable straight "out of the box." Ground forces, facing Minbari soldiers, are the most common Talents, though there are many other Talents throughout the rest of the war theatre. In fact, Sheridan manifests his during the battle with the *Black Star* (and aren't you (continued on Second Column)

Psi vs. Talent (cont.)

interested in what it is? Since you don't have access to his personnel file, I'm going to keep that one secret).

Before long, Earth Force gathers these talents up, much like the governments in *Godlike* (Arc Dream) and uses them as best they can to stem the tide of battle. At first, there's not much of an effect. However, into the later part of the first year of the war, another couple of "victories" due to Talents are achieved (usually at the cost of the Talents lives), leading to the opening of another front back towards Minbari territory. This is short lived but amazingly shocks the Minbari at a core level—which may be what leads to a few Minbari themselves developing Talents. Over the course of the war, which for simplicity sake I'll set to be about the same time period, the Talents on both sides grow exponentially, but with Humans outpacing Minbari because of their earlier start.

During the course of the war, many technical-minded Talents have manifested Goldberg Science abilities, which lead to a leap in scientific discovery. Since the *Babylon 5* universe is already a (mostly) hard SF setting, I figure that most Goldberg Science inventions eventually become "real" to the majority, providing many new technologies (though, during the war, they usually were weapons-based).



Ground Pounding PCs

I'm not going to stat up aliens because the game will be human-centric. After all, they manifest Talents first. If I had a long while to build the campaign, I would have one or two sessions where each player creates their PC developing their Talent while in a short stressor scenario, with a group of "extras" played by the other players. That would give each PC some context, interesting back story and contacts for play.