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Make you Fly

Roll for  
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## Technical Sheet

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Because we recognize gender equality as a Human  
Right and wish to promote its achievement even  
in writing, where it reads “he”, should read “she” as  
applicable, and vice-versa.

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I dedicate 35 hours a week to  
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always!

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console games, you'll always find  
me doing something geeky!



INÊS FRAGATA

I am an Evolutionary Biologist  
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CATARINA SANTOS

I studied Conservation Biology  
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and all kinds of games!  
I am addicted to podcasts,  
webseries and book clubs.

## EDITORIAL – WRITING IS LIKE MAGIC

«Writing is magic, as much the water of life  
as any other creative art. The water is free. So  
drink. Drink and be filled up.»

[“On Writing”, Stephen King]

We believe that writing is the basis for the  
speculative fiction that we all love. After  
all, without writing where would all those  
books, we cannot put down, be? How could  
we play our favourite boardgames well into  
the night? Where would we all be, geeks of  
this world, without writing?!

Therefore, in this month dedicated to  
NaNoWriMo, we will discuss the written  
word. We want to be a space that provides  
support for all those writers who will  
begin their adventures, or have already  
started them. Hold on to your notebooks,  
typewriters and computers and enjoy our  
tips, suggestions and techniques.

Have you ever thought “On day I will write  
a book”?

This is the month!

# NANOWRIMO: WRITING IN GOOD COMPANY TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD

It has finally arrived! THE month when every amateur writer can share his/her adventures in writing – the National Novel Writing Month or [NaNoWriMo](#).

From the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> of November set your imagination free, sit down and write 50.000 words.

NaNoWriMo is a creative writing initiative but also a non-profit organisation that believes in the transformative power of creativity, offering a community, encouragement and support so that all people are able to find their voice, achieve their creative objectives and build new worlds, in a page or outside it.

This initiative began in 1999, in S. Francisco, USA. In the first year there were only 21 young people, with a will to make some noise, maybe because they had nothing better to do and

expected to get better girlfriends. In the words of the team: it's sad but true.

However, despite their motivations, their stories were created. Maybe they weren't perfect, but they weren't terrible either.

And the most surprising aspect? The writing process had been fun!

And if these 21 young people had made it, then they were sure that everyone else could succeed as well. And so it was that NaNoWriMo was born.

Since its creation, in '99, there were a lot of developments: a website, a few rules, a deadline...

Well, it's safe to say it grew and grew into what we know today. And the numbers kept rising through the years: from 21 young writers we moved on to 140, and then 3 thousand,

more and more people joined the challenge, surpassing 300 thousand (can you imagine it?!).

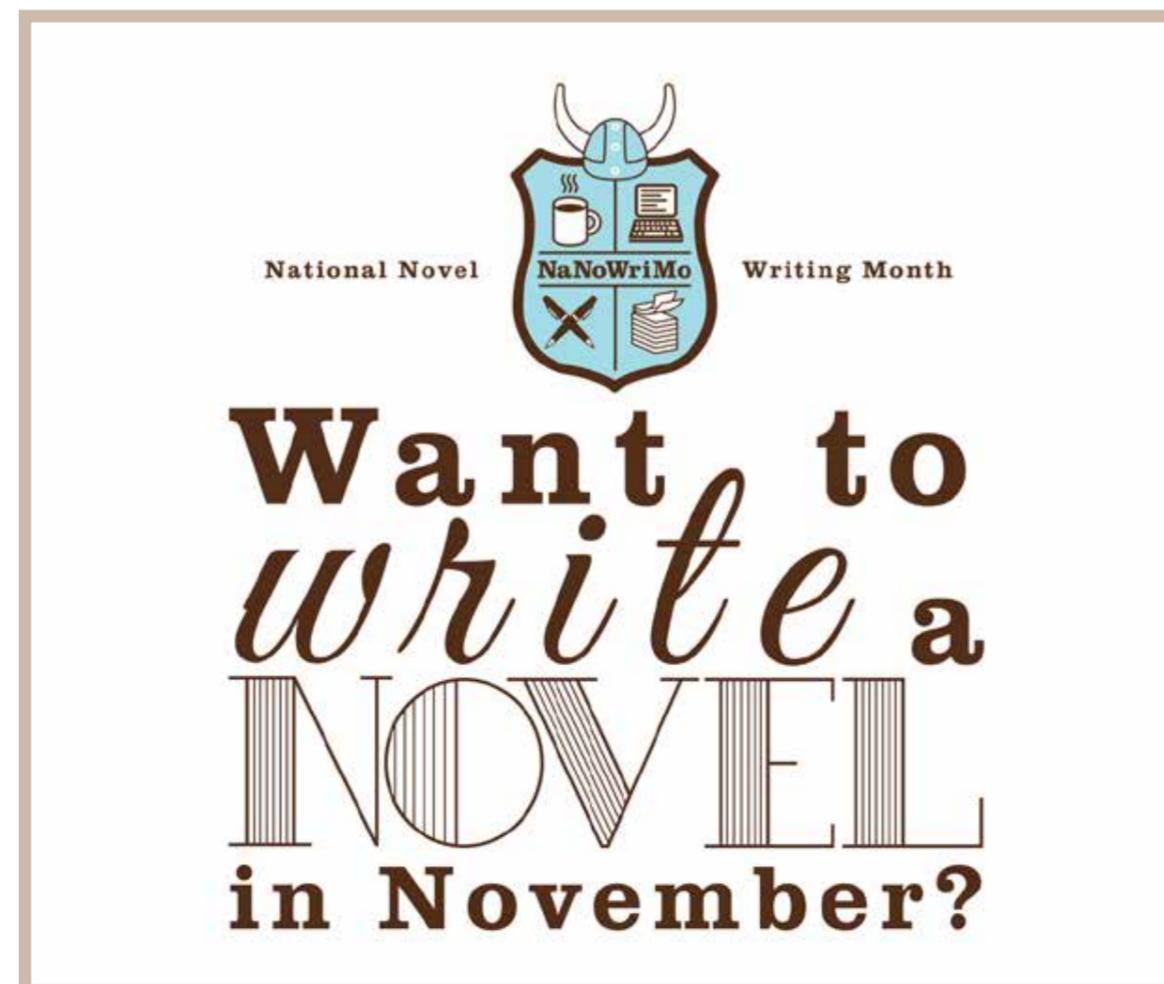
Of course there were (a lot of) difficulties along the way but the team never

wavered and was able to always overcome them as they appeared. Good for us!

And other programs were developed, like "The Young Writers Program", or "Camp NaNoWriMo" or "The Come Write In Program".

With more than 15 years of experience, I will not bother you with all the details of its history (for those who are curious you can get to know every detail [here](#)).

Now let's move to the most important: how does it work?



Easy! First, you have to think hard: are you committed to write the 50.000 words in 30 days? Then the first step is done!

After this, you just have to follow a few simple steps: create your profile as a writer, register your story by leaving a title (it's temporary, you can always change it later) and a short presentation, select a geographical region and then simply start writing.

Although it is not possible to write directly in the website, you can keep updating your word count and, after the 20th, you can paste all your text in the correct space in order to validate and overcome this mega challenge!

And all through this process you can always win "badges" as you achieve different goals.

The genre is for you to decide, write what you like, the way you like it.

The important thing is to recognize that this month everything is possible.

With constant company and encouragement (essential for those moments of total writer's block) this month you can transform your world.

## NANOWRIMO IN PORTUGAL

In Portugal we are very lucky to have a very active team of Municipal Liaisons (ML's), in Lisbon, Porto and Algarve. The ML's are composed by volunteers that dedicate what little free time they have (when they are not writing themselves) to organise events and gatherings where every NaNoWriMo participant can take part in.

In order to keep well informed of all the meetings organised this November take a look at the Regional Forum of Portugal at the [NaNoWriMo website](#) and join the [NaNoWriMo Portugal Facebook group Portugal](#). After the parties that were organised on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November in Lisbon and Porto, there will be weekly meetings for sure!

On the other hand, don't forget to also explore the special [nanozine](#) about NaNoWriMo created by the NaNoWriMo community in Portugal in 2012.

Are you up for this creative writing challenge?

*Maria Inês*

## JOURNALS OF AN INTERNAUT LOST IN SPECULATIVE SPACE

Even here, in the vastness of speculative space, news have reached me that we are dead in the middle of NaNoWriMo month.

Unfortunately, this internaut will not be participating this year (the next chapter of the *Especulatório Magazine* won't write itself, after all).

But, for all the brave souls who've thrown themselves into that adventure we leave you with a podcast we found, adrift around here.

[NaNoWriPod!](#) is a podcast created by Ben Alexander and Jim Markus in 2012.

This podcast is mainly active during the months before, and during, NaNoWriMo, although they try to check in with a few episodes along the year.

Between the two hosts, and the guest they invite, there are discussions of writing methods, personal writing habits, story ideas and everything else that might be related to writing during NaNoWriMo.

They also talk about how each one's project is going, which can be quite comforting to all of those who take part in this challenge, since it shows it is perfectly normal to get behind on the daily word goals, spend a few days without writing a word or even start a completely new story halfway through the second week!

When they started this project Ben Alexander was a NaNo newbie while Jim Markus had already participated a handful of times, and it's quite interesting to see the differences between the two hosts in each one's methods and projects.

You can start by the very beginning, or just by the first episode of this year, but don't worry! The episodes are short so it won't take up much of your writing time.

Next time you need a break during a writing session, take a peek at [NaNoWriPod!](#) And you'll feel you've done something useful during your times of procrastination.

*Catarina*

# THE REAL MAGIC, BY STEPHEN KING

“*«We are talking about tools and carpentry, about words and style... but as we move along, you'd do well to remember that we are also talking about magic.»*

**A**nd that is what Stephen King tells us: that writing is magic. But more than that, he takes us all on a journey through his discoveries and the life choices that led him to be a celebrated and recognized author of his genre.

However, let's start at the very beginning, this month I read Stephen King, but not one of his horror stories (I am still definitely not convinced about horror). On the contrary, I was reading “On Writing”, where we get a chance to

get a little of the wisdom and lessons learned throughout his career and life as an author.

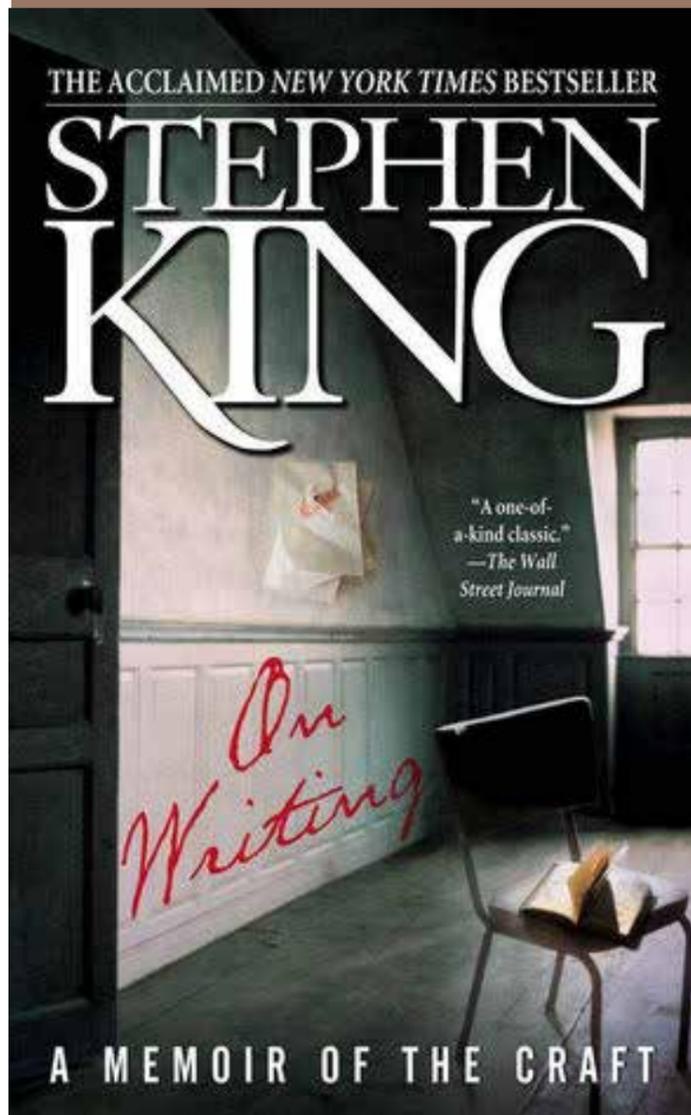
“On Writing” is obviously written by someone that loves to read and values it very much, and this is visible in the entire book, filled with several references to great books.

After all, as Stephen King clearly states: *«If you want to be a writer, you do two things above all others: read a lot and write a lot.»*

Looking at the structure, this book begins with a look at the author's biography, moving on to what he sees as writing, what should be every writer's toolbox, what lessons he considers the most important, finishing with a look into the future and what it may bring.



Every chapter of the Especulatório Magazine will have a space like this, dedicated to appreciating and reviewing books of all genres and subgenres of speculative fiction.



absolutely never!

As I said before, read and write go hand in hand so there can never be too much of either. King also states that writing and rewriting are all part of the process, leaving us with a magic formula: the second draft always equals the first draft, minus 10%.

And my favourite: «*Write with the door closed, rewrite with the door open*».

When we start to write it is very important to do it in our own space, without worrying about what future readers will think or if the story is going in the right direction.

However, it is also imperative to be able to open that door after the initial creative writing process in complete, showing our draft to people we trust, taking in suggestions, being critical about our own work and, finally, be courageous enough to cut and reorganize and review.

Following in this idea, it is fundamental that every one of us, as current or future writers, keeps this in mind: write what you love, in the genre that fascinates you, and forget what others may think of you.

And above all else, you should never focus on what other people will want to read and

It was a great read and an opportunity to discover a lit bit more about Stephen King. Furthermore, it is written almost as a conversation and you can imagine the author giving you tips in a very relaxed context.

And the tips are very interesting, to say the least.

No adverbs, unless it can't be avoided, and the same goes for the passive, but in its case

listen to but on what you imagine and in the way you imagine it.

All in all, it was really a fascinating read, a peak at the writing process, at the road travelled and at the visions for the future of a hugely successful author of speculative fiction. Not a bad example to follow at all, in my opinion!

Of course Stephen King looks at writing in his own specific way and not all of us will agree with every suggestion or ways of creating that is presented to us.

But it seems to me – a very amateur writer just starting out – that the advice he gives us should at least be considered and tried on.

«*Some of this book – perhaps too much – has been about how I learned to do it. Much of it has been about how you can do it better. The rest of it – and perhaps the best of it – is a permission slip: you can, you should, and if you're brave enough to start, you will.*»

Are you brave enough to pick up your pen, typewriter or computer and simply start writing? Will you accept this challenge to create real magic, made by Stephen King himself?

I hope you will!

Maria Inês

## TOP 5 - "Cliches to Avoid"

1	2	3	4	5
<b>Ethnic minorities and stereotypes</b>	<b>Orphans and dysfunctional families</b>	<b>Characters and their mirrors</b>	<b>The "Chosen One"</b>	<b>Personal references/jokes</b>
Avoid stereotyping characters from different ethnic backgrounds. All characters should be individual and diverse!	The main characters can also have an ordinary family (or at least numerous!)	We know it's difficult to describe a main character when writing in first person, but the "looking in the mirror thing" is getting old!	Your main character can be very special without having been touched by the hand of faith.	We understand: you know a lot of details of the geek culture and have great jokes to tell, but enough is enough alright?

# ROLE-PLAYING GAMES AS WRITING TOOLS

**F**or many newbie writers, including some members of our own team, RPGs are a great introduction to the world of Creative Writing. Hiding behind their complex rules systems, five minute battles that take hours and several hours walks that take five minutes, there lies an inspiration and practice tool for creative writing.

In this article, we'll look at the two distinct sides of RPGs, the player's side and the Game Masters' side.

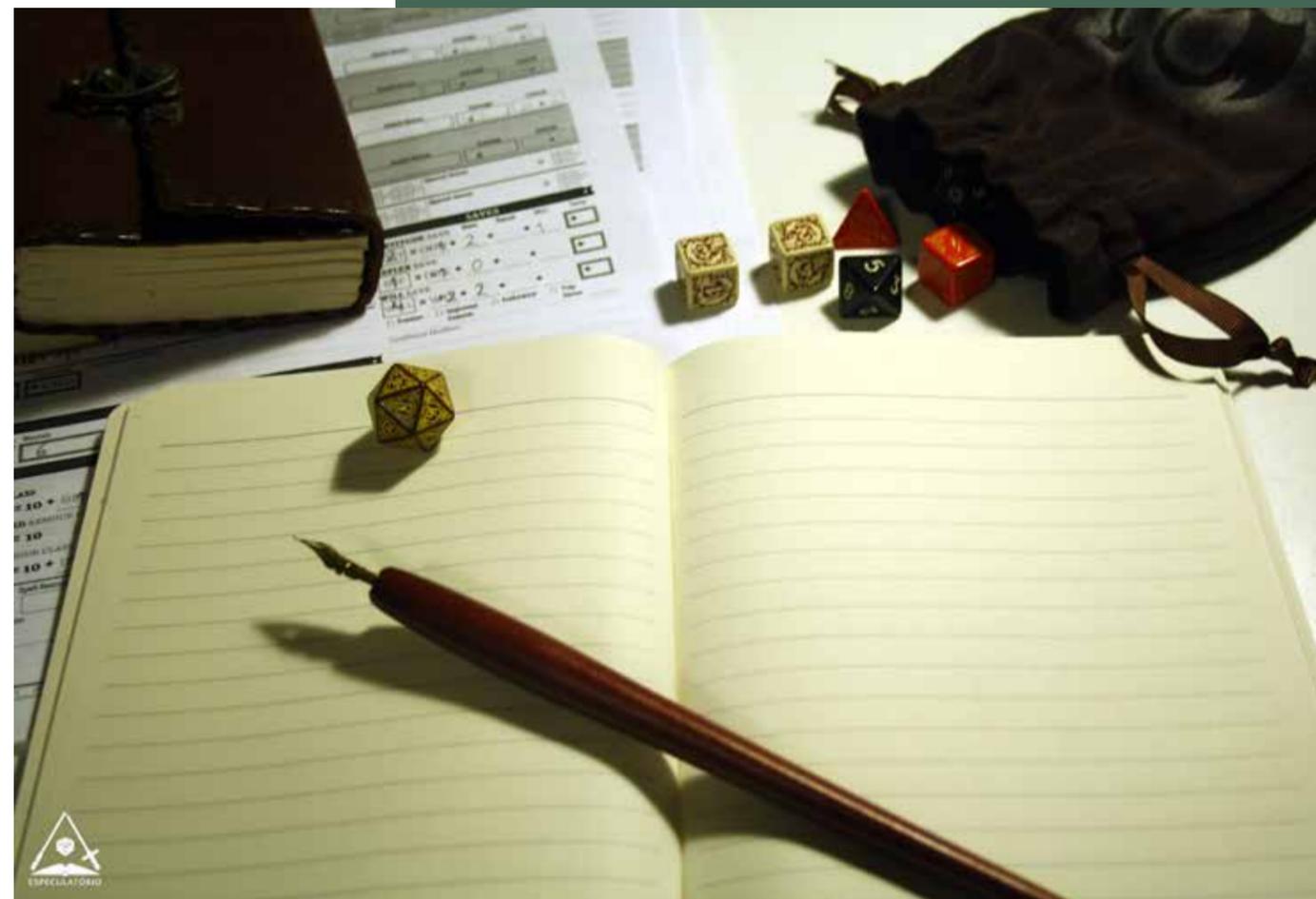
As players, RPGs are a great way to learn to develop our characters. When we create an RPG character, after spending hours picking our abilities and reading rule books picking our

spells, we come to the other half of creating a character. It's important, so we know how to play it, to know the backstory of our character up to this new adventure, what hardships it had to face that shaped its personality, which are its motivations and fears.

After the character is created, the adventures it lives can be a source of inspiration for our own story. What happens at the table, good or bad, can have a special place in our story.

Did you have a great die roll that allowed you to defeat the villain in a spectacular way? Then why not spend some time carefully describing the situation, down to the smallest detail? That scene can have a place in your next book!

Are you trying out a new setting or a new



world in an RPG? Who knows if it doesn't bring your ideas for a story.

As GMs, we have even more opportunities to improve our creative writing. The GM's main role is, in fact, to tell stories. It is through the stories concocted by the GM that an RPG comes to life and, as others before have done, these stories can become fantastic books.

As GMs, we also improve our ability to improvise, because it doesn't matter how much we prepare and write our story, the first decision that a player makes will totally contradict everything we've been preparing.

On the flip side, unpredictable players can help us unlock the next part of our story, as well as teaching us what are the obvious solutions to the problem that we want to present.

If our story's hero is always doing what the reader is expecting, it quickly becomes boring and predictable, and the reader loses interest.

Being a GM also opens the possibility for us to test our story.

By exposing different characters to the dangers and decisions our hero will face, we can obtain multiple points of view over those events and, through them, better understand how our hero would react to them.

Furthermore, being a GM gives us the experience of working on a story stuck to a predefined set of rules and genre conventions, just like in the editorial market.

On the other hand, it helps us to constrain ourselves when we're writing a story without these limitations.

Since nothing is perfect, RPGs have their own problems too. Taking part in an RPG campaign, as a player or a GM, is a huge commitment that takes up a lot of time – time that could be used to write our story.

Adapting an RPG campaign into a story can go right but, unfortunately, that's not always the case.

Little details like inner jokes, player's personalities and interactions, among others, will probably be lost in the translation of a campaign into a book.

And even if the story is adaptable, the characters might be too strange or peculiar for the conversion to paper.

Nevertheless, we can always use the world we created for our campaign as a starting point for our story.

So, the next time you're having fun in an RPG night, remember to use it as a source of inspiration for your story!

*Carlos and Catarina*



## MONTHLY KICKSTARTER - DIALECT

This month I will talk to you about Dialect, an RPG about how to create a language.

The premise of the game is simple, players live in an isolated community and have to create a way to communicate with each other.

This community where the players live has to have three basic characteristics that all players identify with (although everyone can do it their own way).

At each turn, the active player chooses a card from his hand that symbolizes a concept that his community has been in contact with and which is related to one of the base features of the community.

Then, given the context in which this concept is inserted, all players determine an event or something that exists that can build the word.

Finally, two of the players explain the meaning and feelings that they think that are associated with this word (since the same word may have different emotional loads, depending on the character).

In this way we can create different concepts, that can evolve throughout the game and that

will have different meanings and associations between players.

The game is played over three ages, giving the community the opportunity to evolve into something different, for words to change in meaning and for contact with other communities, which may lead to the collapse of your initial community, or not...

The game seems to be a lot of fun and has a lot of potential, especially if you want to, for example, develop a new dialect for your next book! But also to explore concepts and try to understand how a language can be built from scratch, evolve and transform over time.

If you are curious, go to the Kickstarter and have a look, you have until the beginning of next month to decide if you are interested or not!

*Inês*



# FACTS AND FICTIONS: A (VERY) BRIEF HISTORY OF SPECULATIVE FICTION

Despite the fact that the explosion of Geek activity in the world began rather recently, the truth is that Speculative Fiction has actually much older roots.

And it is about the origins and evolution of Speculative Fiction that I will talk to you a bit in this article.

But before that, I think we should start with a definition. What is Speculative Fiction?

Speculative fiction is any work of fiction (invented) in which the “laws” that govern the world (whether explicit or implicit) are different from our present world.

Although there is a fairly powerful triathlon of the major genres that are included in this type of fiction - Fantasy, Horror and Science Fiction - there are several sub-genres that also represent this genre.

It should be noted that not all science fiction or horror correspond to Speculative Fiction, but by definition, all Fantasy works are part of Speculative Fiction

Interestingly the origin of the term Speculative Fiction is attributed to Robert Heinlein who in 1947 proposed this term as an alternative to Science Fiction (and curiously was not supposed to involve Fantasy). The term

fell into disuse until about the year 2000, when it began to be appear linked to the various genres that speculate about things that are not real, and wonder what would happen if we changed the laws of the real world.

Some of the sub-genres in the Speculative Fiction are: *Hard Science Fiction, Sociological Science Fiction, Space Opera, Near Future Science Fiction, Dystopias, First Contact, Time Travel, Military Science Fiction, Romantic Science Fiction, Light Science Fiction, Cyberpunk, Steampunk, Alternate History, Biopunk, Climate Fiction, Slipstream, Science Fantasy ou Future Fantasy, Epic Fantasy, High Fantasy, Magic Realism, Urban Fantasy, Historical Fantasy, Dark Fantasy, Romantic Fantasy, Romantic Horror, Splatterpunk, Psychological Horror, Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic.*

Now let's get down to business: when did speculative fiction begin?

The first thing I want to draw your attention to, is that Speculative Fiction did not start as a whole. In fact, the various genres associated with it, each had its beginning, sometimes with centuries of difference. In our search for the origin of speculative fiction we will actually

discover three very different roots, which only much later come together as an increasingly popular genre, both for kids and adults.

Not wanting to be exhaustive, nor trying to analyze which authors have a stronger “footprint” in our genre of election, I will give you a short review of the works that are considered to be the provenance of the 3 main genres of speculative fiction.

If we go back in time, we will find that the first works of speculative fiction regard the genre of Fantasy. Works as the “[Epic of Gilgamesh](#)” (around 2100 b.C.), “[Homer’s Odyssey](#)” (somewhere around 2000 and 800 b.C.) or “[Beowulf](#)” (700-1000 a.C.), are the earliest works describing imaginary worlds.

Other books that are also in the roots of fantasy are “[The Book of a Thousand Nights and a Night](#)”, a collection of stories from the Middle East and South Asia made between the 8th and the 13th century and whose translation in English was done in 1855; or “[Kinder-und Hausmärchen](#)” (Brother Grimm’s Fairy Tales) that correspond to a collection of German short stories published by the Grimm Brothers in 1812.

Fantasy usually focus on magic users and supernatural elements as central themes in the plot and are always envisioned on imaginary worlds or worlds with a strong imaginary component. It is interesting to think that Fantasy was the first genre of speculative fiction to be created.

Although it makes sense, if we consider that the imaginary of humans, influenced by beliefs in supernatural powers, would create complex worlds and stories to explain what they did not know.

For Science Fiction there is some debate about which were the first works that initiated the genre. Basically the origins are somewhere between 1516 with “[Utopia](#)” from Thomas More, 1818 with Mary Shelley’s “[Frankenstein](#)”, 1835 with Edgar Allan Poe’s “[The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Phaall](#)”, 1851 with “[A Voyage in a Balloon](#)” by Jules Verne e 1895 or “[The Time Machine](#)” by H.G. Wells.

Any of these “Parents” of Science Fiction has spawned a tradition of works that focuses on describing what would be the effect, in today’s world, of technologies or innovations such as travel in space or time, but not using elements of the fantastic, and based on “scientific theories”.

As I told you, in 1947 Robert Heinlein used the term speculative fiction as an alternative to Science Fiction, but it was only from the 2000’s that it began to be more commonly used.

In fact, the first steps of Speculative Fiction in the mainstream world and its new surge of air was somewhere between 1960-1980 with the appearance of “[The Hobbit](#)” by J. R. R. Tolkien and the compositions of Stephen King, Larry Niven and Ursula Le Guin. From then on, Speculative Fiction gained momentum in books and other types of media, such as radio, television and games.

It was there that the boom of Speculative Fiction took place with a great diversification of sub-genres and several authors occupying different niches, creating a whole diversity of small worlds to explore, by the different types of media available.

Series like Star Trek and movies like Star Wars helped to spark the interest on the Sci-fi genre. On the other hand, RPGs like Dungeons & Dragons or Pathfinder, books (and movies) from “[The Lord of the Rings](#)” and “[Harry Potter](#)” and the much-celebrated “[Game of Thrones](#)”, have established fantasy as a strong genre in the world of Speculative Fiction.

What distinguished Horror (the genre to which we have dedicated our last number), from the others genres of speculative fiction, is the fact that its main goal is to frighten, create discomfort or even repulsion in the audience. Horror compositions that are usually included in the genre of speculative fiction, overlap with the genres of fantasy and science fiction, by creating mythical and ancient monsters like the Cthulhu or by imagining how aliens would look like and how they would interact with humans.

Curiously, some of the authors responsible for the beginning of Science Fiction are also responsible for the beginning of horror books, such as Mary Shelley and Edgar Allan Poe. Also important were “[The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde](#)” by Robert Louis Stevenson (1886), “[The Picture of Dorian Gray](#)” by Oscar Wilde (1890) or “[Dracula](#)” by Bram Stoker (1897).

As you can see, the origins of what is now called speculative fiction are quite broad, and quoting the Riddick’s Chronicles movie, «*We all begin as something else*».

So how did these genres end up together under the same hat?

The Horror genre took shape with films such as “Alien” or “Resident Evil” or RPGs such as “Vampire, the Masquerade” and board games such as “Mansions of Madness” and “Eldritch Horror”, which brought our most primitive fears back from the depths.

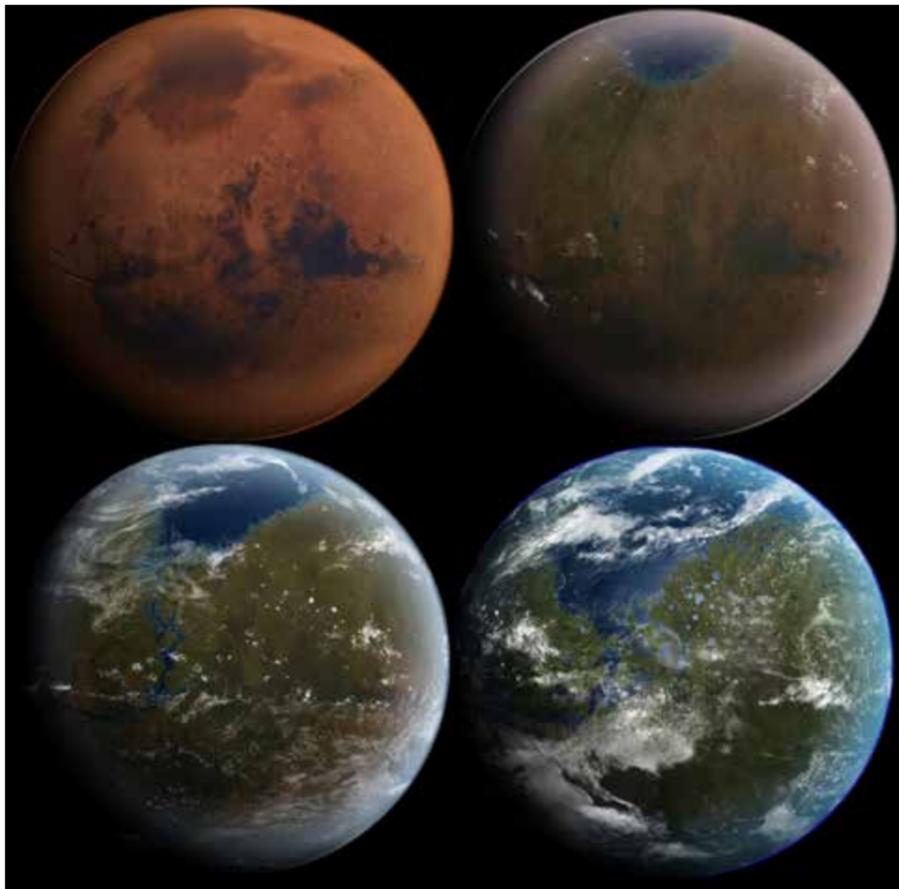
Not to mention the role of series such as “The Big Bang Theory” that helped popularize geek hobbies and get several generations of players and readers out of the closet, or the game “Magic, the Gathering” that addicted (and still addicts) an entire generation of players.

Nowadays we can consider that we are in a golden era for geeks, with a popularization of what was once considered children’s hobbies, and a culture open to less common tastes in the books, game and RPGs.

It is interesting to think on what the future holds for us. As we create more and more books, series and worlds, will the novelty disappear?

Already a lot of people already say that, for example, all fantasy books are based on Tolkien’s books...

Or will the exploration of new worlds in space and new technologies lead us to worlds beyond?



Either way, I hope to be here to see it... It’s important to take advantage of the moment generated by the (unexpected) popularity of Speculative Fiction.

After all, it’s good to be a geek!

Inês

# NARRATIVE GAMES VS. LINEAR NARRATIVES: PART I

This section is written by our guest, Sérgio Mascarenhas, coordinating member of the Lisbon’s Roleplayers’ Group, and he will be discussing dramaturgy and role-playing games. *(translated by the Especulatório Team)*

**N**arrative games, character games, RPGs, what you call it doesn’t matter. Games where the emotion is experienced through the drama lived by characters animated by the players. Games and drama. How do they combine?

*«The purpose of a game like “Stormbringer” is to transcribe the essence of someone’s imagination in a descriptive and quantitative way so that it can be easily manipulated with rules. The players’ task is to take these numbers and give them shape using their imagination in order to mentally recreate the dramatic experience during the game» (transcribed by Especulatório team), said Ken St. Andre in 1991 (the creator of “Tunnels &*

Trolls”, the second commercial narrative game – after Dungeons & Dragons, of course).

This quote expresses very clearly the interaction between the game, with its different forms and rules, and the drama of a life experience or a story. That is to say, what separates narrative games from other games.

But what do narrative games have in common, or different, from other narrative forms, with linear dramatic productions? With cinema, theatre, literature, comic books, etc.? A way to bring narrative games and linear productions together is looking at who contributes to the fulfilment of the respective objects. In fact, the production of a narrative

implies the fulfilment of a series of roles – but beware! We are discussing roles and not people, each role can be fulfilled by a variable number of people and the same person can accumulate several roles.

When looking at highly professional works, the result of mature industries such as cinema or television, these roles often divide into sub-roles, carried out by dozens or hundreds of people.

Usually, as the construction of a narrative starts to get more complex and professionalized, the more people it starts to involve and the more specialized their performance is. On the contrary, when dealing with more amateur and simple productions, with little resources at their disposal, the rule is that a small group of people gathers several roles. In the early years of the modern theatre the great playwrights (people like Shakespeare or Molière) were

also actors, directors, producers and it was not rare for them to be also the inventors of new technical tactics. Only in success cases, where there are proper financial means, does each person involved in a production fulfil only one role.

In linear dramatic productions we find, usually, the following roles:

**DRAMATIC WRITING:** the script for a movie or television series, the screenplay for the theatre production, the story or novella, they all establish a narrative. In some cases, such as in literature, their role is just to be read. In other cases, for example, the theatre, they are simultaneously a literary work and the frame of a performance.

**DIRECTION:** in a complex dramatic production, someone has to make the whole function harmoniously. That is the role of

the movie director, the choreographer, the maestro, the stage director. Of course there are narrative productions that exempt direction as an autonomous role, as is the case in literature for example.

**INTERPRETATION:** here we have to consider the actor, who gives body and voice to the dramatic writing character's, but also, in other contexts, the musician, the singer or the dancer. As in direction, interpretation is specific to performance productions, not being present in exclusively literary productions.

**TECHNOLOGY:** each dramatic production requires specific technological resources. If, in cinema or television, audiovisuals are absolutely indispensable, there is no literature without electronic editing or theatre without light technicians, for example.

**PRODUCTION:** someone has to take care of logistics, ensure the when, how, where and

who are prepared so that everything proceeds without fault. He or she also has to take care of the funding for the entire project, a reduced capacity in amateur productions, almost always funded by the participants.

What is important to take from this is that not every person has equal talent for all these roles, some of us are stronger in some activities than in others.

But how do we compare narrative games with linear dramatic productions?

Take a look at the table below.

It's true, narrative games really have similarities with cinema, literature and the more established dramatic arts. But they also have significant differences. In the next chapter we will explore precisely these similarities and differences.

Sérgio Mascarenhas

Table 1: Comparison between Linear Dramatic Productions and Narrative Games

Role	Cinema	TV	Theatre	Comics	Literature	Narrative Games
<b>Dramatic Writing</b>	Screenwriter	Screenwriter	Playwriter	Writer + Illustrator	Writer	Setting Writer
<b>Direction</b>	Director	Director	Stage Director	n.a.	n.a.	Game Master
<b>Interpretation</b>	Actors, Extras	Actors, Extras	Actores	n.a.	n.a.	Players (protagonists) Game Master (antagonists, secondary characters, extras)
<b>Technology</b>	Filming, sonoplasty, lighting, editing, musical direction and composition, special effects, wardrobe, hairdresser, etc	Filming, sonoplasty, lighting, editing, musical direction and composition, special effects, wardrobe, hairdresser, etc	Sonoplasty, lighting, scenic materials, wadrobe, hairdresser, etc	Colorist, letterer, proof-reader, printing, etc.	Proofreading, electronic editing, printing, etc.	Game system, game materials, scenic materials
<b>Production</b>	Means, logistics, funding, marketing	Means, logistics, funding, marketing	Means, logistics, funding, marketing	Funding, marketing	Funding, marketing	Logistics

# WRITING PROMPT CALENDAR FOR NANOWRIMO

We know that not everyone can start NaNoWriMo right at the beginning of the month. Therefore, we leave you with a guide for those who only manage to start a few days later! The objective: to write 50.000 words in around 23 days (which averages 2.174 words a day). Since we all have other obligations throughout the month (and can't just hide in an isolated cabin in the woods until the end of November) we have reserved 4 days (Sundays) for you to relax and plan your next steps in this journey that is writing a book in one month.

## November 4 - Friday

**Goal:** 2174 words (4%)

**Idea:** Start your story with a celebration or your protagonist going on an errand.

## November 5 - Saturday

**Goal:** 4348 words (9%)

**Idea:** Someone appears looking for your main character due to their occupation/job/magical qualities.

## November 6 - Sunday

Relax and Plan!

Your only job today is to watch a movie or a T.V. show.

But! You must use your brain and analyze what you are watching with a critical eye. Try to understand how many plotlines are being developed, how long it takes for the main conflict to be presented or how screen time is divided between characters.

Then use all you've learnt to continue your story.

## November 7 - Monday

**Goal:** 6522 words (13%)

**Idea:** Your protagonist attends a social event and meets someone wise.

## November 8 - Tuesday

**Goal:** 8696 words (17%)

**Idea:** Your main character makes a friend and has a conflict with their adversary.

## November 9 - Wednesday

**Goal:** 10870 words (22%)

**Idea:** The protagonist breaks a rule.

## November 10 - Thursday

**Goal:** 13044 words (26%)

**Idea:** The protagonist and his/her friends suffer a setback or a surprise attack

## November 11 - Friday

**Goal:** 15218 words (30%)

**Idea:** Someone gets hurt and is healed by a secondary character

## November 12 - Saturday

**Goal:** 17392 words (35%)

**Idea:** The best-friend teaches something important to your main character

## November 13 - Sunday

Relax and Plan!

Use a little of your day to take a look on what you've already written and try to add some detail or colour. What matters is that you're establishing a connection with your story so the ideas will be fermenting in the back of your head until your next writing session.

## November 14 - Monday

**Goal:** 19566 words (39%)

**Idea:** The protagonist tries to save a friend but fails.

## November 15 - Tuesday

**Goal:** 21740 words (43%)

**Idea:** The main character understands the true nature of the sacrifice needed to reach the final goal.

## November 16 - Wednesday

**Goal:** 23914 words (48%)

**Idea:** The protagonist plays hide and seek with the villain's underlings.

## November 17 - Thursday

**Goal:** 26088 words (52% - you're halfway done!)

**Idea:** Show some tension within the group of main characters

## November 18 - Friday

**Goal:** 28262 words (57%)

**Idea:** The main character's plan fails

## November 19 - Saturday

**Goal:** 30436 words (61%)

**Idea:** Show the protagonist's special ability (so that you can use it on your main conflict)

## November 20 - Sunday

Relax and Plan!

Take a blank page and some colouring pencils (I'm sure you have some laying around in your home) and map the world of your story. Include the house, school or work of your main characters, places you have visited throughout your book and places you have yet to visit. Then take the opportunity to fill out missing places, you never know when you'll need them!

## November 21 - Monday

**Goal:** 32610 words (65%)

**Idea:** The protagonist is saved by one of your other characters

## November 22 - Tuesday

**Goal:** 34784 words (70%)

**Idea:** Your character is distracted by something, or someone, of its past (an old acquaintance or a problem).

## November 23 - Wednesday

**Goal:** 36958 words (74%)

**Idea:** The villain gains an advantage, either by capturing a friend of the main character or by obtaining a special "weapon".

## November 24 - Thursday

**Goal:** 39172 words (78%)

**Idea:** The protagonist must make a difficult decision

## November 25 - Friday

**Goal:** 41306 words (83%)

**Idea:** Something is missing to defeat the villain. The main character must obtain some knowledge, clue, weapon or help from someone.

## November 26 - Saturday

**Goal:** 43480 words (87%)

**Idea:** The protagonist uses his/her special ability in an unexpected, and relevant, way in the final conflict.

## November 27 - Sunday

Relax and Plan!

Now is the time to review all your notes, post-its or notebooks where you might have written ideas for your story. Surely you have something there you can still use!

## November 28 - Monday

**Goal:** 45654 words (91%)

**Idea:** A final battle where the twist is revealed and some things are finally explained

## November 29 - Tuesday

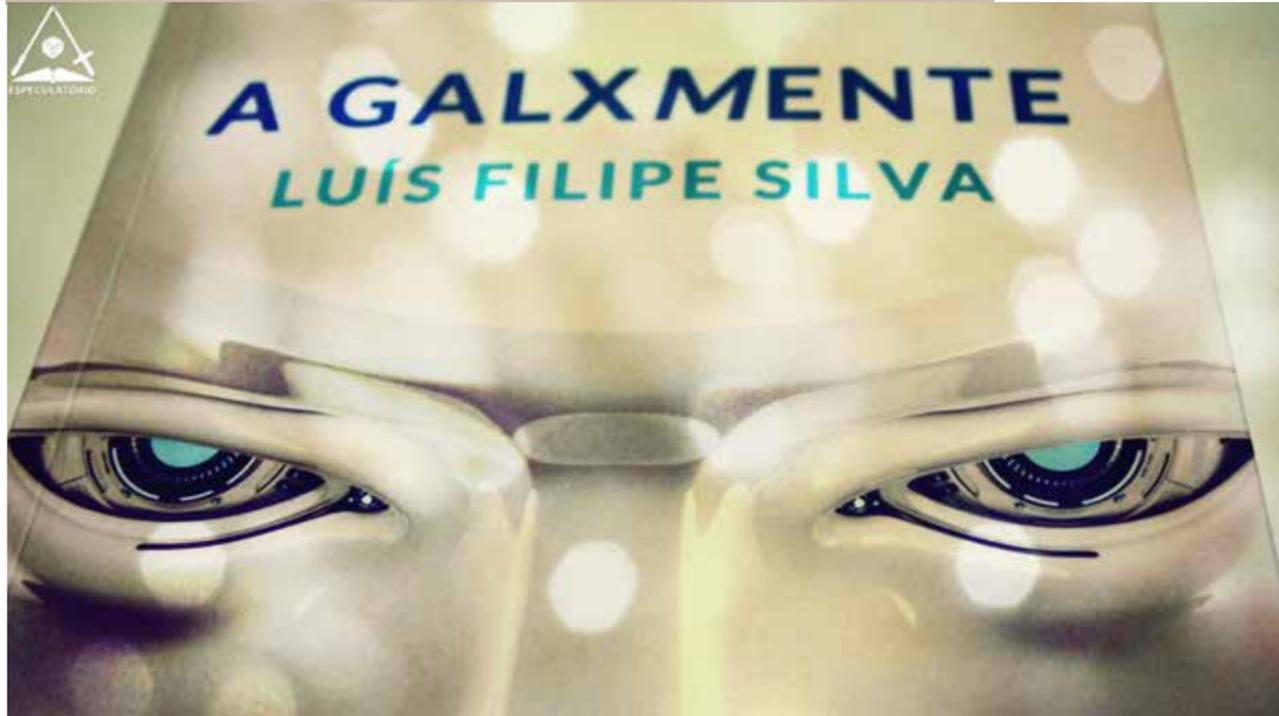
**Goal:** 47828 words (96%)

**Idea:** The protagonist returns to the place where it all begun, but finds clues that maybe the threat still lurks in the dark.

## November 30 - Wednesday

**Goal:** 50000 words (100% - You've made your goal!)

**Idea:** It's your last day! Throw a kitten (or some other equally fluffy animal) into the middle of your story and see what happens!



# INTERVIEW: LUÍS FILIPE SILVA

This month we interviewed writer Luís Filipe Silva, author of books such as “A Galxmente”, among other stories, who comes to us with some tips and inspiration.

notebooks with doodles of Disney characters, or others inspired by them, which engaged in space adventures full of spaceships and battles, capturing the rhythms and styles of the comic-books I devoured.

Was this a need that arose from a lack of material? It might be difficult, today, to understand the hunger for content that existed back then. There were only a certain number of books and magazines published

1) WHAT MADE YOU START WRITING?  
WHAT OR WHO INSPIRES YOU?

The need to tell stories had always been present, but what first motivated me, in the prehistory of my life, was drawing. I filled

each month. Everything else required trips to the library and book clubs, which weren't always easy to access. I know that I wanted to continue stories, to live longer inside certain worlds, to fulfill the dissatisfaction of certain narratives. This need moved onto prose - I started doing what today we call Fan Fiction, revisiting my favourite characters and stories in my own words, because I wanted more.

One day there was that “click” - I was going to write a novel. One of my own, not inspired by others, not using faces and names that I hadn't thought of myself. This click came with a Science Fiction novel - “Time Storm” by Gordon R. Dickson - in which there was not only a story but a philosophy of being, as well.

In its own way (perhaps nowadays I would judge it lacking and poor - after all it is not exactly one of the classics of Sci-Fi), it showed me that fiction could go further, could teach one how to see and interpret the world. It could guide life. And that understanding couldn't be silenced. It had to be reproduced, told, praised.

Hence the writing. So that I could, somehow, show, highlight, call attention to the wonderful and eternal aspects hidden in our daily routines.

2) WHY SPECULATIVE FICTION,  
AND MORE SPECIFICALLY SCIENCE-  
FICTION?

Because it is a device of distortion and abstraction, and without it certain assertions about the Human Being become troublesome to present.

Because it takes away the importance of the petty problems of our present days, of the economical crisis, of the political turmoil, of the conviction held by each generation that it is better or superior to the one that came before it, and that, therefore, only good things will come from it.

But also because it is an instrument of the wonder embedded in the very fabric of the universe.

This universe which we can measure at a distance, remotely, with instruments of our own making, and the language of math. It's sublime, what we've already achieved, as a global species, in the fields of knowledge - the invention of writing, the establishment of the scientific method, the creation of the internet.

Three cornerstones of our civilization whose feet of clay are so easy to knock down. Indeed, Science Fiction also warns us of the dangers of our own nature.

3) IN YOUR OPINION, WHY DOES SPECULATIVE FICTION HAVE SO MANY FOLLOWERS?

Because in it you get to hold the very fate of the universe in your own hands. You're the king of your life. You get to witness the most important event in all of History. You get to discover, at last, the ultimate machinery of the reality you inhabit. Its ability to dream and enchant, its stories of danger and adventure, can't be duplicated by genres concerned with paying rents, shopping, dealing with family member's nervous breakdowns or putting up with co-workers...

However, we should keep in mind that these are First World concerns, where the daily life is essentially trivial and predictable, unless when broken by moments of terror, like acts of nature or urban accidents. Bear in mind that, in other places of our world, in this very moment, their dream of utopia is our Western monotony...

4) WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL BE THE FUTURE OF THESE FICTION GENRES?

To begin with, an easy prediction that doesn't require a genius to foresee: they will continue to exist (to be produced) as long as there is a market for them. And there will be

a market well beyond the natural lifespan of these genres, because the power of marketing will zombify audiences, repeating known formulas and producing infinite remakes of the old classics (and also of the new classics).

What fascinates me is thinking about the revolution that is coming, the nature of the narrative itself, the way we tell stories, powered by emerging technologies. Not only the immersion in alternative tridimensional worlds which comes from the participation of innumerable members connected through social networks, which already exists nowadays in a primitive format (primitive considering what they will turn out to be going forward), but the ability to enter the truly alien dreams of Artificial Intelligences. To be able to inhabit abstract concepts, pure thought. To reason with a logic unknown to us.

And not only that. Imagine an assisted dream technology, which would allow us to experience, in the course of a single night, the unabridged life of historical characters (or made-up ones) - because, as we know, when we dream, a single minute can embrace decades. Imagine waking up with the memory - and the experience and the knowledge - of these lives, as if they were our own. Imagine becoming different people every night,

assured it would be nothing more than a dream. What will become of us then? What will it be like, to write stories in a world with such possibilities?

5) ARE YOU AWARE OF INITIATIVES LIKE NANOWRIMO? WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF THEM?

Writing is like entering a sports competition that has no audience and with only one athlete: us.

We have trained without assistance, we have stumbled without someone helping us up again, we have leaped over barriers and worked around obstacles and broken records without the clamour from the stands.

Because the only thing that matters is reaching the goal, on time and well. And in this case the goal represents the end, the final chapter. It represents writing the whole. Because, without it, all the effort was in vain.

And since this process is terribly lonely, sometimes we need to scream out to someone that we are here, that we suffer together, that we can do it. We need to feel that there is a goal, an end in sight, and be ashamed to give up halfway. Sometimes, all it takes is to keep on walking.

NaNoWriMo, as a mechanism of

socialization, is effective in reaching this disciplinarian purpose. One cannot, however, imagine that it is enough. A good book is not conceived in a hurry, the same way an athlete doesn't train only in the last few days - unless when one has a lot of past experience, and even so it would depend on the kind of sport...

I guess that those who best benefit from NaNoWriMo are the ones who learn from discipline and let it shape their writing habit, entering the process with an already thought out structure and a familiar story.

Going back to the sports metaphor: they have memorized the path, they know where the obstacles lay and they have chosen the proper equipment before the starting shot...

6) WHAT ADVICE, OR TIPS, DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG WRITERS ABOUT TO ENTER THE WORLD OF SPECULATIVE FICTION?

In essence, the same advice I would give to authors of any genre or tendency: start by reading a lot, read the kind of books you'd like to write, and then the kind of books you don't really enjoy, but in a deconstructive way, trying to isolate the good and bad moments and imagine alternatives to solve those problems. Read slowly, without rushing, sometimes out

loud, looking for the changes in rhythm. Don't flee from the action moments nor from the long descriptive passages, but analyze them in detail for future use in your own texts.

And lastly, diversify, from poetry (the art of concision and unusual metaphors) to theatre/script (the art of showing through dialog, one of the most difficult to perfect) to essay (to learn from historical facts, from the biographies of people who made a mark, from the political, social and economical mechanisms, to draw from it teachings that will enrich your made-up worlds).

And when you know all the rules by heart, start breaking them, one by one, until there isn't one left standing.

7) IF YOU COULD MEET ANY CHARACTER FROM ANY BOOK IN SPECULATIVE FICTION, WHO WOULD IT BE? AND WHY?

When I was 14 years old, I would've have wanted to meet Jaxom, to be able to ride Ruth, the white dragon, and soar across the skies of Pern.

By the time I turned 21, perhaps Shevek of Anarres, for his idealism in wanting to change the world and learn how to build

an ansible.

My 30-plus self would, undoubtedly, want to be Zaphod Beeblebox, and have an infinite probability drive at bay, which, they say, makes possible even the most insane projects.

Today, however, I am fully convinced that the world has been, almost of it, assimilated by the pod people. Indeed, it might be them knocking on my door right now...

8) IF YOU LIVED IN THE WORLD OF THE LAST SPECULATIVE FICTION BOOK YOU'VE READ, WHERE WOULD YOU BE RIGHT NOW?

In the dissociated Europe, covered in borders and suspicion and new flows of spies, of Dave Hutchinson...

Now that I think about it, maybe there is where I'm really living. It would explain quite a lot...



# WRITING: HOW TO SURVIVE NANOWRIMO?

Every month we will talk about writing. No being masters on the subject, we wish only to offer inspiration and motivation for every writer who, like us, wants to put their ideas on paper.

This month we will review our tips on how to survive NaNoWrimo.

We know it isn't easy (having several failed attempts amongst our team) but with our help and some determination you'll make it!

## HABITS

Be consistent, establish a schedule and personal goals, before you begin and then try to keep them. The more you write the easier it will be to keep writing, so never stop!

Try not to interrupt your writing routines because it will be that much harder to get back into the rhythm of things afterwards.

It's better to be realistic about your day-to-day schedule and set beforehand some days in which you will not be able to write (we all have family obligations we can't miss).

The beginning is always the easiest and the middle is always the hardest.

No matter your intentions when you start the month, there will be a time when all you want to do is give up.

But don't worry, you're not the only one who, halfway through November, has no idea where your story is going, or how you're gonna get to that amazing ending you've got thought out.

If you find yourselves facing this sort of obstacle the first thing to try is to write that ending first, or maybe those couple of scenes ahead that are stuck in the front of your mind.

Take a couple of hours to retrace your plot, make use of one of the thousand writing prompts available online (take a look at our suggestions!) or ask for help for another NaNoWriMo participant for a brainstorming session.

If you reach the conclusion you can't overcome this bump on the road at the moment, and you see time passing by and the deadline approaching, don't panic!

The solution is: description, description, description.

Describe your characters, their perception of the world around them, the places they will visit in your story. What matter is that you're writing and practicing. It might not be good, but it's writing!

It is possible to start without knowing where you're going, you don't need to have everything planned.

Even for the kind of writer who likes to plot, NaNoWriMo is an excellent opportunity

to discover new things.

No one said you've got to have a finished book by the end of the month, nor that it must make a lot of sense.

### WRITING EXERCISES AND PROMPTS

[WritingExercises.co.uk](http://WritingExercises.co.uk)

[BuzzFeed.com/99 writing prompts to get your novel started](http://BuzzFeed.com/99-writing-prompts-to-get-your-novel-started)

[SciFideas.com](http://SciFideas.com)

[PlotGenerator.org.uk](http://PlotGenerator.org.uk)

[TheWritersDen.co.uk](http://TheWritersDen.co.uk)

[WritingPrompts App. by Writing.com](http://WritingPrompts.App.by.Writing.com)

[StoryPlotGenerator App. by ARC Apps](http://StoryPlotGenerator.App.by.ARC.Apps)

Take the chance to try new things, take risks and practice methods that you'd normally be outside your writer's comfort zone.

### IDEAS

If you find yourselves without ideas (we all know the day-to-day routine makes it really hard to have the creative mind set to generate new ideas) the first thing to do is to find a space and time to get creative.

It could be taking a bath, going on a long walk, to the gym or listening to some music. What matters is that your unconscious mind is

Take note in little pieces of paper, throw them all into a hat and then pick a handful of ideas and go on an adventure!

If that doesn't work for you, take a couple of hours off to read. Not necessarily in the genre you want to write in, but also in other literary genres.

You never know where inspiration will come from.

free to bring forward some questions, events or personalities that got stuck in there.

Wherever you are, take a look around. Sometimes it's the places you go by everyday that might be catalyst for your story.

A good technique, when you don't know where to start, is to make a list of ideas that you like, for example from your favourite books or movies.



The same way, you can use movies or music and your muse. Maybe you'll find a spectacular idea that you also want to play with, or perhaps something that you feel wasn't done properly.

Don't be afraid to "steal" for the different kinds of media you consume. We are surrounded by them everyday, so why not use them as inspiration?

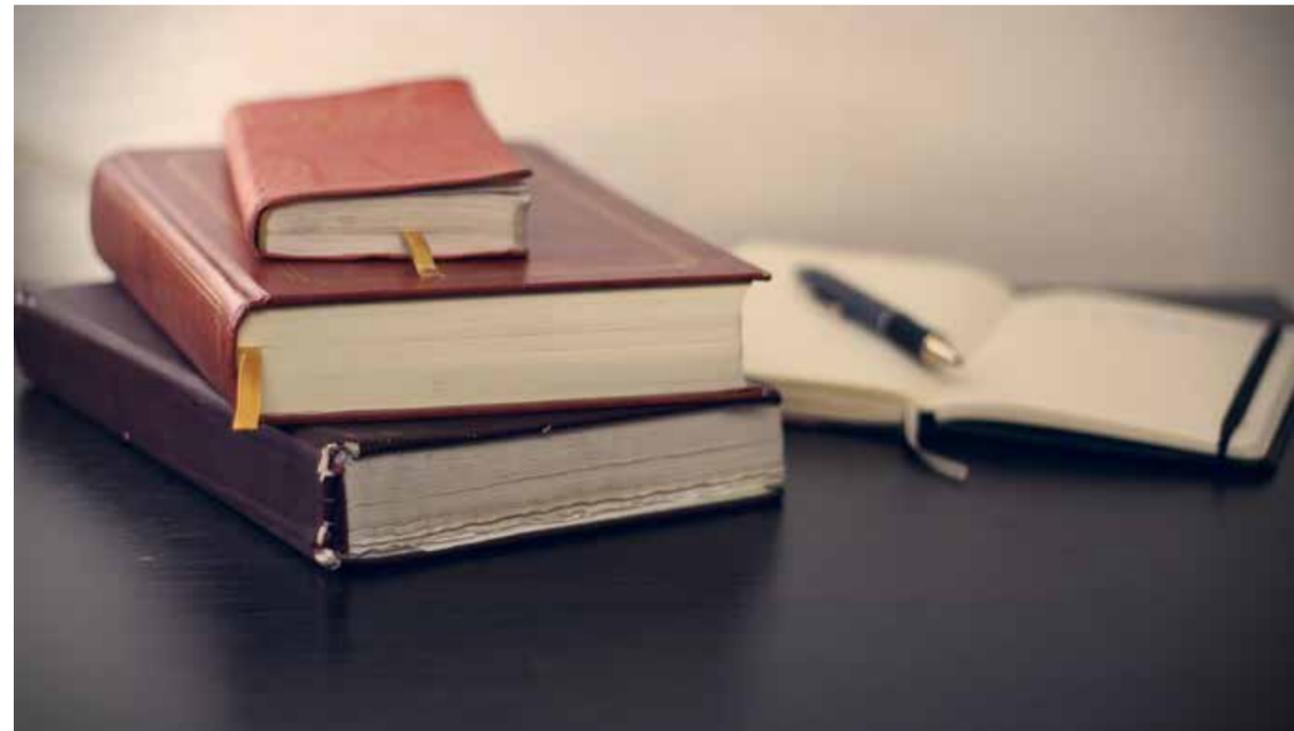
If you write in public let the conversations that surround you in coffee shops or public transports be your inspiration. Who knows if you won't find the perfect line for that scene you're writing?

By this time everyone should have an ideas' notebook (or a smartphone app), but if you don't it's time to get one! Every time some new idea comes to you, take note of it, no matter how silly it seems!

And throughout this month try to establish where you get most of your ideas - as you're falling asleep, when you're driving, in the shower, as you clean your home, on your daily commute to work - and then make sure you have your notebook with you at these times. A lot of times, when we put ideas into paper, things start making more sense in our heads!

To generate some more ideas all you need is a conflict, a problem, and then try to reach its various solutions. If your first solution doesn't motivate you to write, try to take it to the next level, keep asking questions until you find something that inspires you to write.

And the same way you can use modern entertainment to inspire you, you can also do



some research on new scientific or technologic innovations and ask yourself: what could go wrong?

News are also a good basis for idea generations, since there are interesting events throughout our world that might be a good starting place for your narrative.

Our world History is also a good place to start with. Take any historical event that catches your fancy and imagine a different outcome.

The thing to remember is that the more you write the more ideas you'll have, and the more ideas you have the better the odds some of them will actually be good!

#### PLOT

But to write a story you need more than some loose ideas. No matter how good your ideas are, they alone do not make a complete story, with a beginning, a middle and an ending.

The first step will be to find the conflict generated by your idea.

It might be a conflict between characters,

or maybe a clash between your protagonist and the world he/she inhabits. What matter is that someone needs to be in pain (literally or figuratively), someone has to have their day ruined by your excellent idea.

You should figure out how your idea will affect the different classes in your world, who has more to gain, or to lose, from this problem? How does your idea impact your world or your plot?

All of these points are good ways to develop conflict in your writing.

Now that you've created several points of tension, you should decide how they'll be solved. Find as many solutions as you can for the problems you created for your characters and decide which one makes the most sense for your story, which one is the most original and particularly, which path generates even more conflict, so that you end up with an interesting story to tell.

Often, finding the problem that you can't solve yet might be the best story, the one it will be more interesting to tell. Because if you can't solve the problem on your first try, your readers will probably fail to solve it too. And

if that story is interesting to you, it will be for others as well.

Go back to your idea's notebook and organize them in the best way for you - by characters, world, plot - so you can get a better sense of the connection between them. Or maybe simply write a summary of your story to try and discover how your various ideas intertwine.

By this time you'll probably be ready to decide on the kind of story you want to tell, and how you want it to end, so you can better "plan" the path of your characters.

But keep in mind you don't need to know every step of the way!

If you have good ideas for characters, and you know where they start their adventure, just start writing dialogue and let your character lead the way.

For some writers it helps to tell the story to someone else, to solidify the story in their heads or even to find out where it's going.

You might even discover that you can't, yet, explain your idea completely, perhaps you need to work on it a bit more.

Other people's reactions, and the questions they might ask, can be really useful in the

development of your story.

A brainstorming session with other writers might help evolve your idea and discover which are the most interesting questions to ask

#### THE END

The only way you're going to write 50.000 words (or whatever your personal goal is) in a single month is to turn off your inner editor and ignore all the rules you've ever learn on how to write (including the ones we just suggested!).

When you finally write "The End", then you can start thinking about revising your work. I'm sure there will be a lot to edit, since no one finishes NaNoWriMo with a perfectly finished book.

And if you didn't reach 50.000 words, I guarantee you'll not be the only one!

Change your deadline and keep writing.

No proper writer only writes one month a year!

December is coming, with a couple of holidays in the middle and, for a lot of people, some vacation days too. Make use of them!

You can write on Christmas Eve or even at Christmas lunch. After all, who needs both hands to eat turkey? Go cavemen style, while you type furiously with your other hand.

And while everyone is sitting down to digest that massive Christmas meal, watching the same old movies on T.V., you can find a corner and write a couple more thousand words. Who knows if the sugar rush from all those Christmas desserts won't help you write faster?

Or maybe you have reached your word goal, but you're story isn't over yet. Establish new goals and a deadline and keep writing.

Never feel you've failed! You might've not reached 50.000 words in a month, and maybe what you did write isn't a great work of art, but it is practice!

The best you can do to be a better writer is to write.

*Catarina*

## SOUNDSCAPES FOR EVERY GENRE

[Epic Fantasy 1](#)

[Epic Fantasy 2](#)

[Epic Fantasy 3](#)

[Young Adult Fantasy 1](#)

[Young Adult Fantasy 2](#)

[Urban Fantasy](#)

[Alternative History](#)

[Hard Science Fiction](#)

[Military Science Fiction](#)

[Space Opera 1](#)

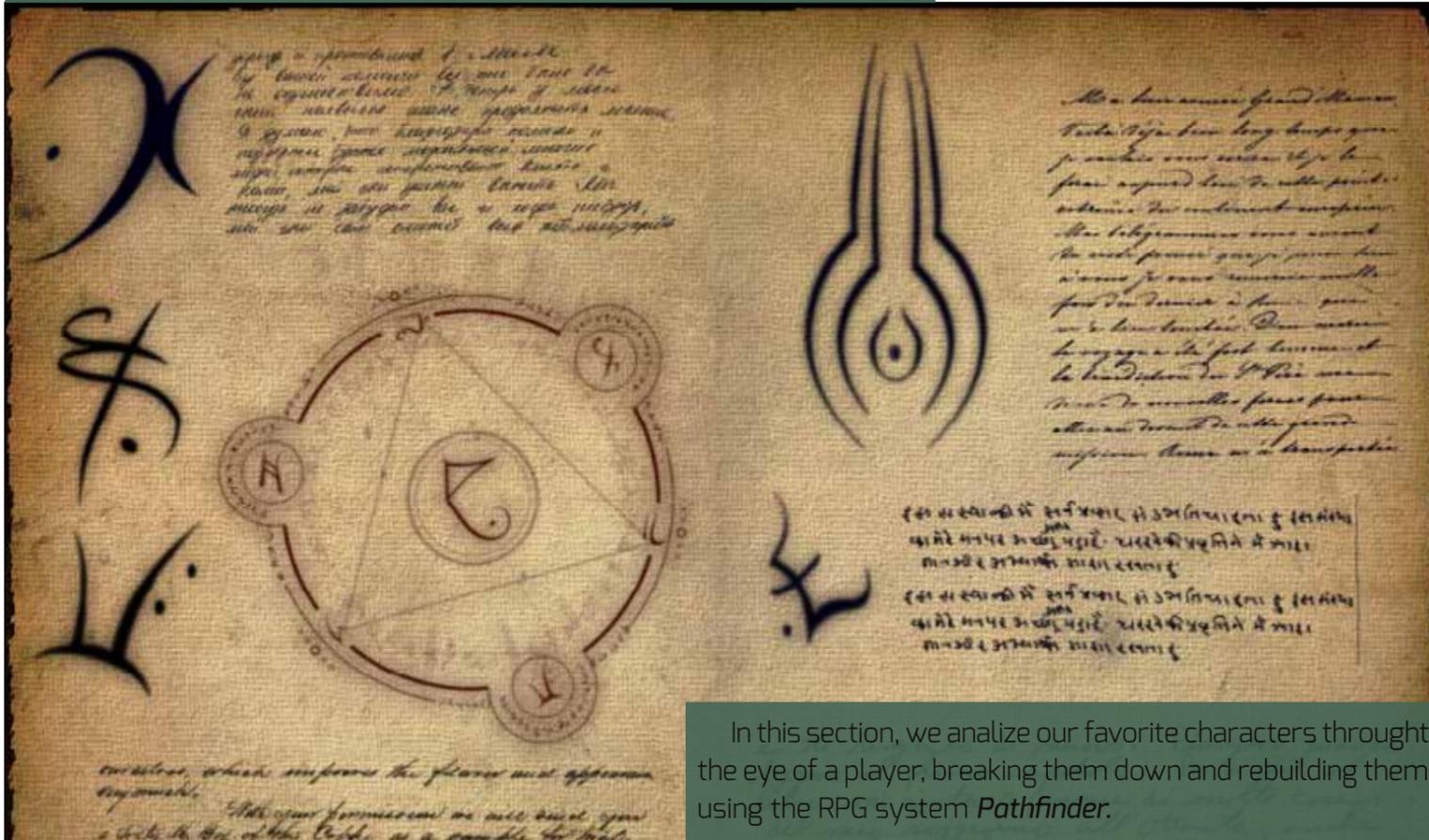
[Space Opera 2](#)

[Fantastic Horror](#)

[Gothic Horror](#)

[Steampunk](#)

[Cyberpunk](#)



In this section, we analyze our favorite characters through the eye of a player, breaking them down and rebuilding them using the RPG system *Pathfinder*.

Welcome to the Character Workshop, this time a little different than usual.

In honor of NaNoWriMo, we will talk about the power behind words, using a Pathfinder variant called Words of Power.

While most practitioners of magic dedicate their careers to learn and master every spell in their field, there is another way. Some turn their backs to this path and, instead, unleash the true power behind those spells, the building blocks of magic itself. Those blocks are the Words of Power and, through them, one who masters this

art can control the very forces behind magic, manipulating them like no one.

Don't forget, as with all variants, you should check with your Game Master before using it.

Words of Power represent the primitive forces of magic. In the default setting of Pathfinder, Golarion, the use of Words of Power is extremely rare, and its practitioners are masters of all kinds of occult lore.

Words of Power are the source from where all magic descends and, although power, it is a very primitive system, flexible but unrefined.

Its practitioners have total freedom to

create their own spells. Despite its power and flexibility, most magic academies look at the Words of Power as an archaic and outdated system, to be studied only as a part of the world's history. Those that study them are normally alone and abandoned by other scholars.

For a Wordcaster, learning new words is like unlocking the secret laws of reality, each word a new source of power under their control. There are three types of words: Target, Effect and Meta. Arranging these words as they see fit, Wordcasters can create a multitude of spells.

To make a spell, first the Wordcaster chooses a Target word, which includes, for instance: Cone, Line, Area, among others. These defines what targets the spell will affect. Then, they choose one, two or three Effect words. This selection will affect the level of the spell being cast, as you can see on the following table.

Lastly, the Wordcaster can also add Meta words to the spell. These have a special restriction: a wordcaster can only use meta words a number of times per day equal to half his caster level in his wordcasting class. For instance, if we're a level six Wordcaster, we can add three Meta words per day to spells in the

# CHARACTER WORKSHOP: WORDS OF POWER

Table 2: Number of Effect Words by Spell level

Spell Level	With one Effect Word	With two Effect Words	With three Effect Words
0	0	---	---
1	1	---	---
2	2	0/0	---
3	3	1/1 or 2/0	0/0/0
4	4	2/2 or 3/1	2/0/0
5	5	3/3 or 4/2	2/2/2 or 3/1/1
6	6	4/4 or 5/3	3/3/3 or 4/2/2
7	7	5/5 or 6/4	4/4/4 or 5/3/3
8	8	6/6 or 7/5	5/5/5 or 6/4/4
9	9	7/7 or 8/5	6/6/6 or 7/5/5

following combinations: three spells with one Meta each; one spell with three Metas; a spell with a Meta and another with two Metas.

Another restriction is that one Target or Effect word can only be affected by a single Meta word at a time. Ergo, a spell with a Target word and two Effect can have up to three Meta words, one affecting each other word. These words are akin to metamagic feats: they can extend the duration of an effect, remove verbal, material or somatic components from the spell, or even change the type of saving throw that the target needs to roll.

This all seems way too complicated, but the rewards are really good. Let's look at some sample Wordspells.

- *Burst Mind Wrap Winter's Wrath*: These 8th level spell cause 1d6 cold damage per caster level and 1d4 dexterity damage.

The problem is that it's saving throw is Fortitude. When we're fighting against brutes with high Fortitude and low Will, we just need to add the Meta word Mind Wrap and presto! Now, our Winter's Wrath requires a Will save instead of a Fortitude save.

- *Boost Selected Alignment Shield Perfect Form Boost Accelerate*: Are you your party's buffer and you're tired of losing round after round just casting buffs on your allies?

Look no further! With this 6th level spell you can, in a single standard action, protect your allies against a single alignment, give

them a +4 bonus to each physical ability score (Strength, Dexterity and Constitution) and an equivalent to the spell haste!

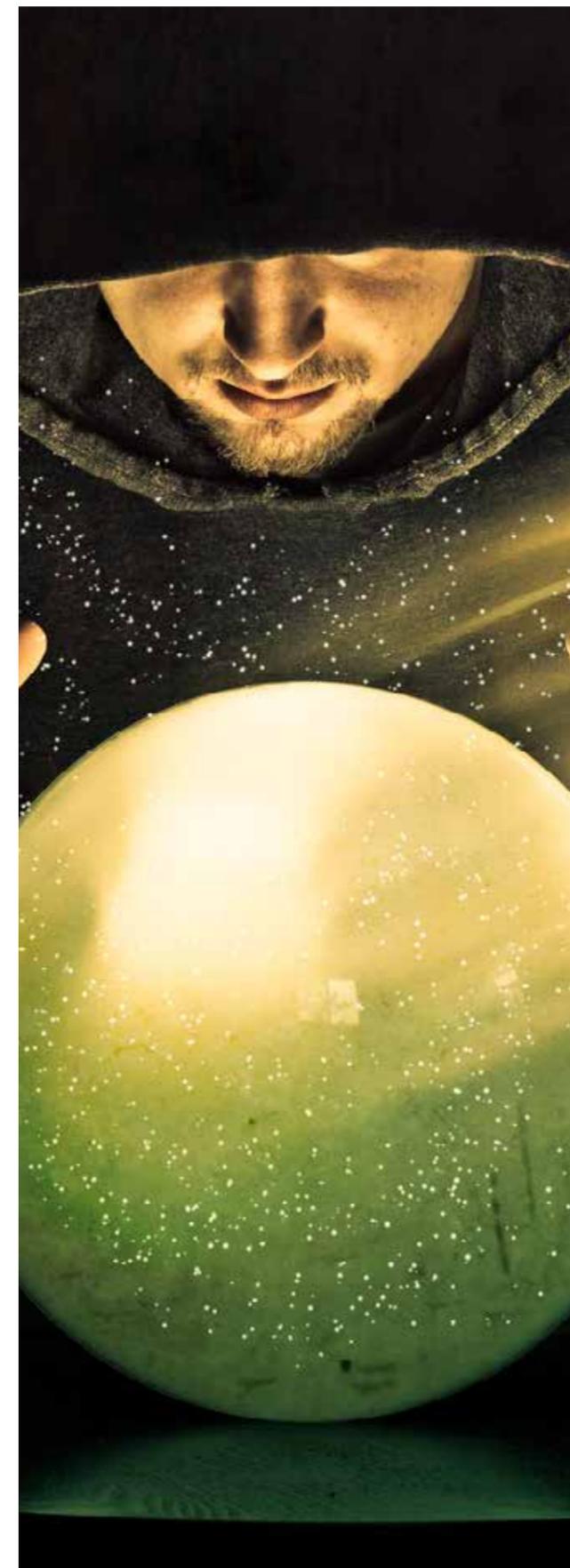
- *Barrier Terror*: Certainly, you've seen walls made of fire, ice, even blades, but when was the last time you saw a wall made of fear itself?

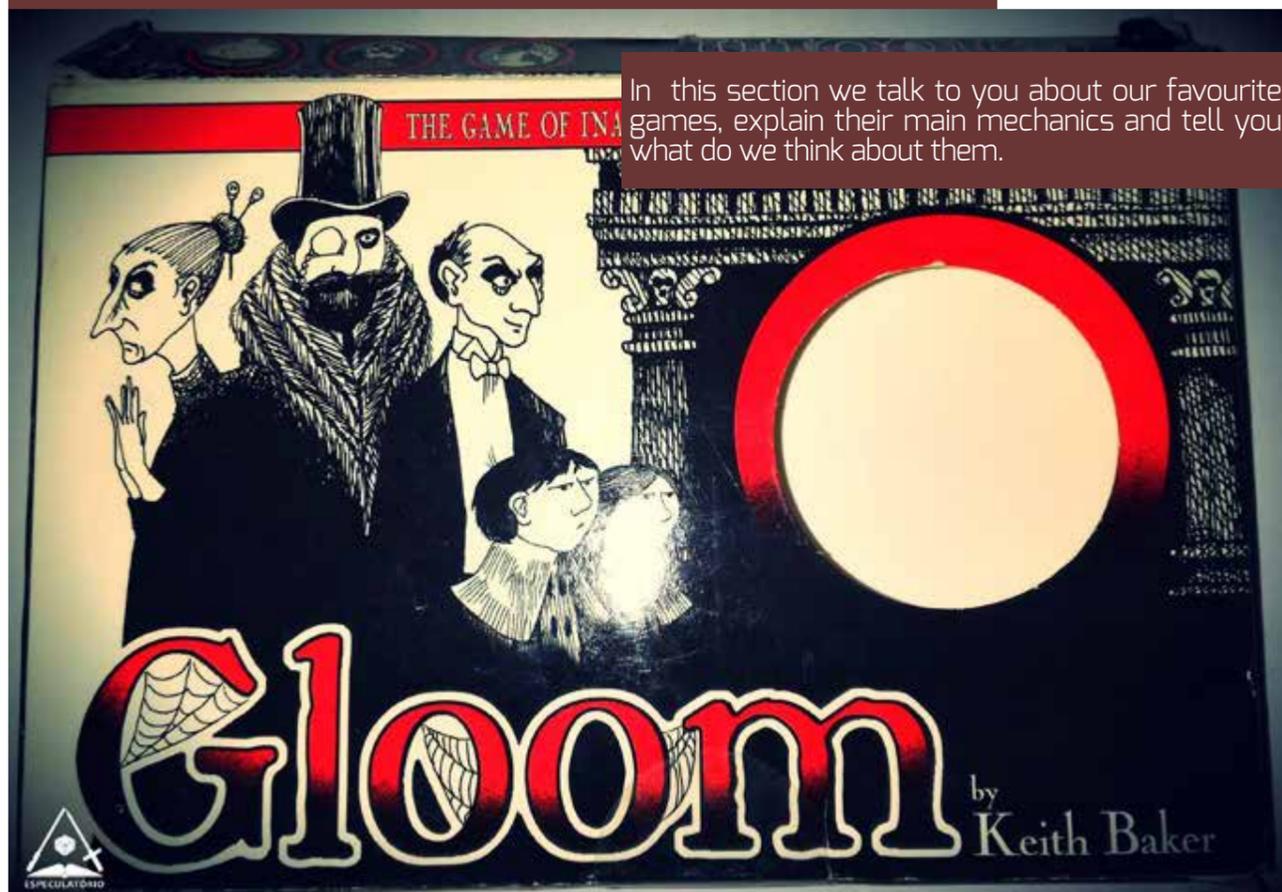
With this 4th level Wordspell, you can make a wall with 10 feet per caster level that is technically invisible and assails whoever crosses it with an overwhelming fear that makes them run away!

And if you are afraid your targets have way too high a Will save? Just add the Meta word Manifestation and now the fear attacks their Fortitude!

And this is why the pen is mightier than the sword!

Carlos





In this section we talk to you about our favourite games, explain their main mechanics and tell you what do we think about them.

# UNFORTUNATE STORIES

*The day started gray, as any other normal day for the Slogar family. Lord Slogar awoke to a cold, faint sun, with a promise of rain, which ended up not pouring. The milk he drank at breakfast was sour, leading him to a painful obstacle run to the bathroom. In the bathroom, there was no toilet paper and the only thing at his disposal was the newspaper of the day before, whose miseries he had not yet finished reading, but which he probably would not want to see after the not so easy process of cleaning up his...*

*Leaving the bathroom, he slipped in one of the toys Melissa had left on the floor and smashed his elbow on the doorjamb. The elbow emitted a sharp pain and immediately began to swell. With no strength to curse, he crawled into the kitchen to get some ice for his elbow. When he opened the door of the freezer, a chicken carcass fell on his foot he jumped in pain. As he did so his head met the cupboard corner, opening a shallow gash on his head. Bleeding from his head, he went to his wife's, Helena, laboratory, to ask her to stitch up his head. However, the*

*accumulation of pains and loss of blood made him a little dizzy, and he toppled on top of a marquise ...*

*When Lord Slogar awoke, he felt light, light as a feather, as he had never felt in his life. It seemed that all his pains had disappeared... as if nothing in his body was wrong... almost as if he had no body at all...*

*Professor Helena looked at her husband's brain in the box full of spinal fluid. If it were not her, Lord Slogar would not be there ... She really should not have gone to the laboratory with so high a fever and delirious ...*

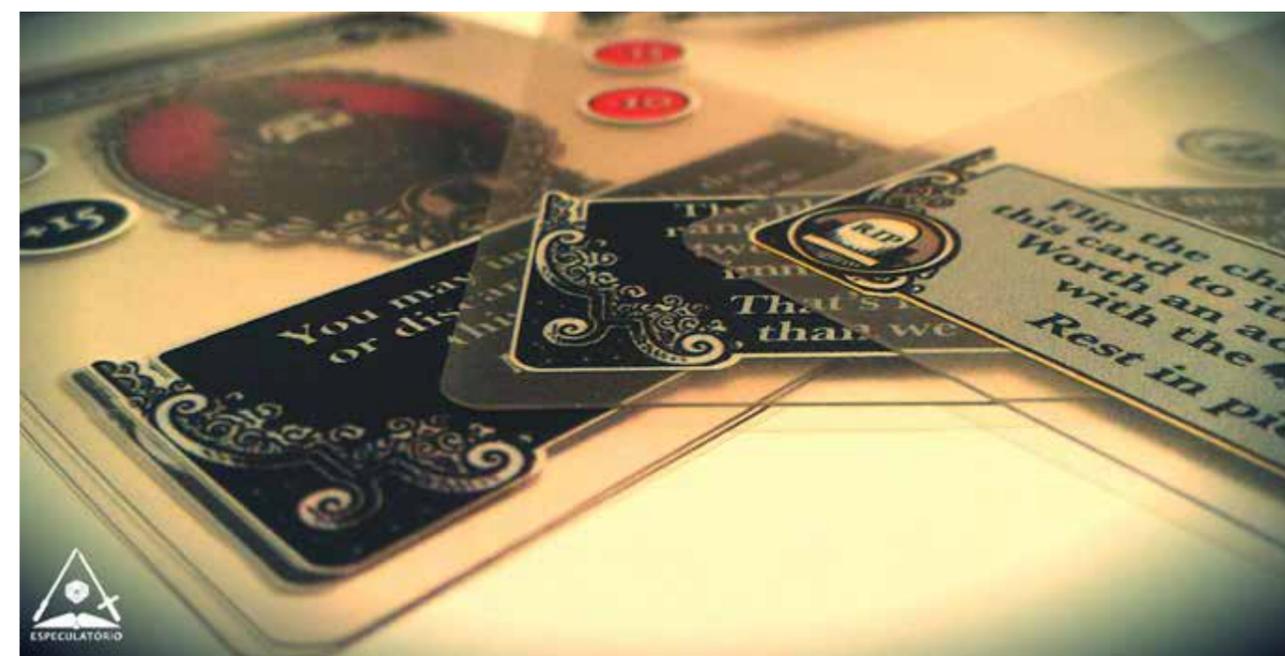
This is the world of Gloom, gray, unlucky and full of unhappy events.

The only chance for the characters of this world to ever be happy is when they die. And this is only if they have accumulated enough misfortunes that will make their afterlife better.

Gloom is a very peculiar card game, mostly because the main goal of this game is to make the characters as unfortunate as possible. Since the unhappier they are in life, the happier they will be in their afterlife.

Each player is responsible for a family of 5 characters and will have to subject their characters to Pathos cards that cause them problems such as "Was attacked by beggars", or "Was widowed at marriage" or "Was hunted by horrors". At the same time, each player has should invite the characters from other families (players) to experience happy moments, such as "Delighted to see the ducklings", or "Slept without problems".

Unfortunate events cards award negative points, and happy events cards award positive



points. At any given time, the sum of all points that are visible on each character correspond to its score.

When a player thinks that the character has suffered enough, he may play a card of Untimely Death, which will take the character to a better place (literally). The game ends only when an entire family “moves to the other side”. When this happens, each player adds up all the points of the dead characters he has. The player with the lowest score, wins!

Although this game is not so obviously a storytelling game, such as “Once Upon a Time”, the truth is that the experience is much funnier and interesting if people tell the unhappy story of their characters when they die. Usually, when we play that is exactly what we do, as we try

to build scenarios that incorporate all the bad things (and good ones) that have happened to each character.

In visual terms the Gloom cards are very unique, since they mostly are transparent. This is so, because at any given point everyone should be able to see the points that each character has collected. In addition, every card always has a small flavor text, describing and adding more depth and context to different types of events.

It is a simple, quick and good game to train how to do storytelling, although it is more suitable for people with a darker mood and not very advisable to younger children (the game recommends from 13 upwards).

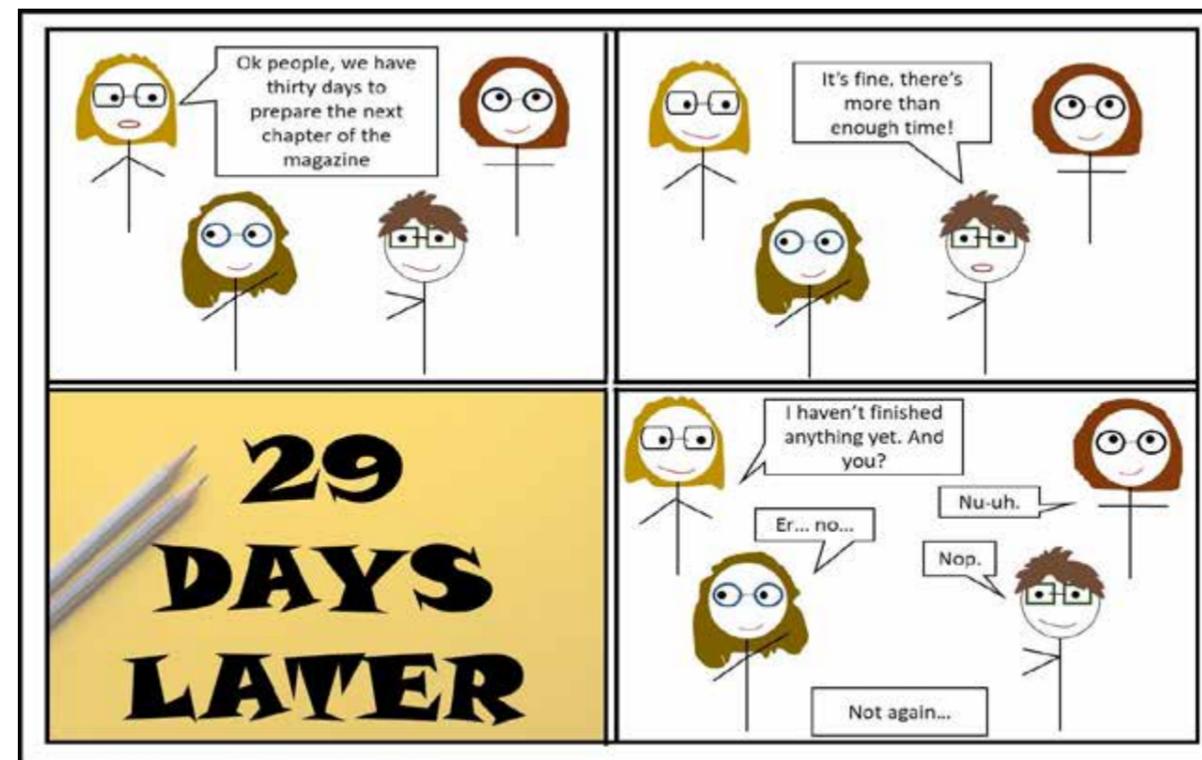
Good games!

Inês

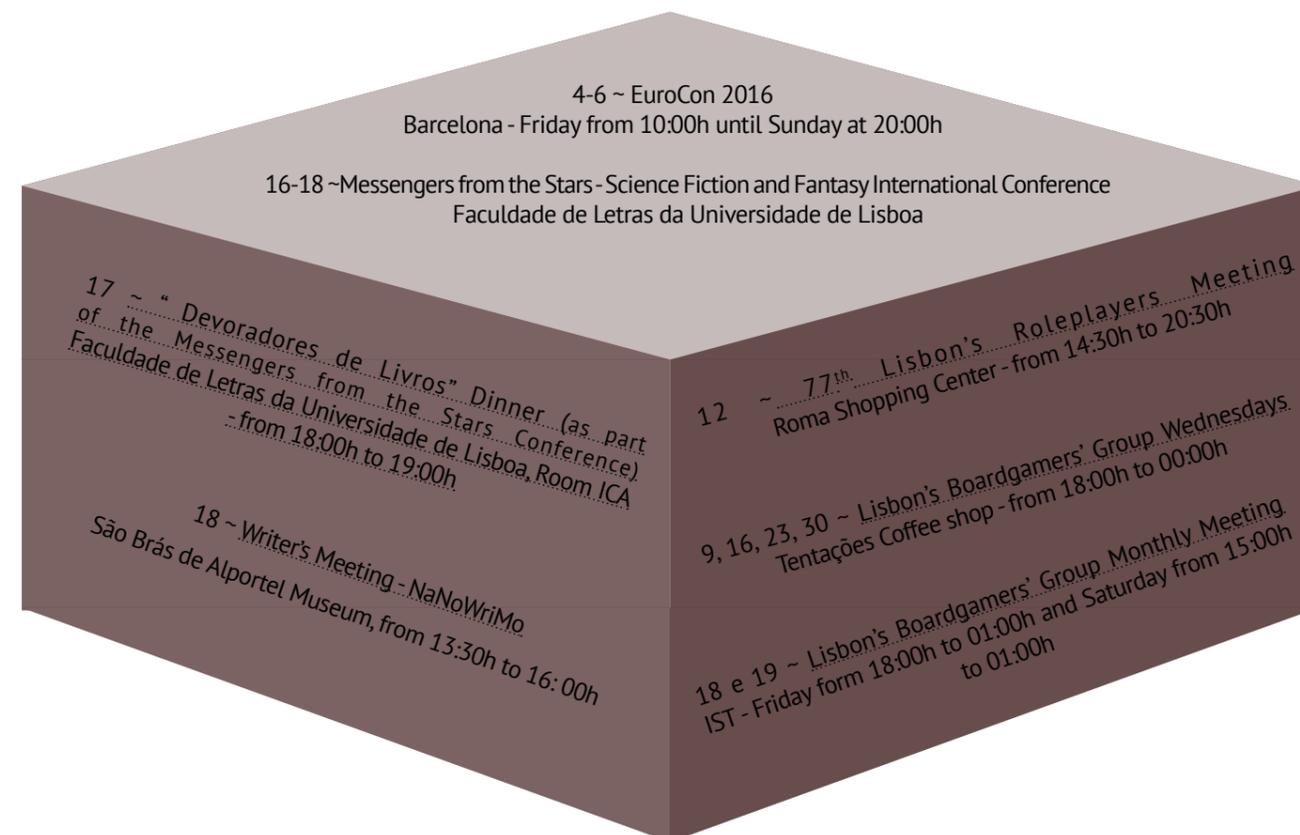
### Fictional Conversation Guide - Book

High Valyrian	Tembyr [tɛmbir]
Dothraki	Timvir [tɪmvir]
Sindarin	Perf [p'ɛrv]
Quenya	Parma [par'ma]
Klingon	Paq [pak]

### THE PROBLEM WITH DEADLINES



### EVENT CALENDAR



In Fantastic Adventures, we follow Irwer's adventures, but it is you that decide our next steps! To do that, just vote on the option that you like more and, in the next month, you'll see the results of your choices.



## FANTASTIC ADVENTURES CHAPTER 3 - STRANGERS ADRIFT

Cautiously, Irwer approaches the station, sword ready to cut down any threat that might appear.

He slowly opens the front door of the station and, staring deeply into its dark depths, letting his eyes adapt to the darkness.

Inching slowly, looking around before taking each step, Irwer makes his way through the station as silently as he can manage.

Something behind!

His sword cuts through the air, stopping mere millimeters from the neck of a small and dirty child.

“Please, help us.” the little girl asks, approaching Irwer and, grabbing him by the hand, leads him through the maze of shelves, passing falling guards, killed by the orcs.

Reaching a room, the girl lets go of Irwer's hand and enters, announcing the arrival of the elf. Inside the room are more people, all of them humans.

By their clothes, two of the humans are wizards or some other kind of conjurers. The third human is a female warrior, tall, brawny and carrying a sword taller than Irwer.

One of the mages seems hurt, a flesh wound on his arm.

“Don't worry, I can help.” Irwer says.

Turning his back, he runs back to his bike and returns moments later with a first aid kit. “My name is Irwer.” he says, while tending to the mages wound.

“Caleb.” says the injured mage “My companions are Willem, Valgoria and her daughter Zora. We hail from Orilon, on the other side of the Morne desert. We were refueling and resupplying before continuing our path to Trenkell. Unfortunately, we were on the wrong place at the wrong time, and, when these Orcs attacked the station, not only did they decimate the guards, they also killed the rest of our escort and two others of our order.”

“If you hadn't come to our aid, we would have fallen as well. Thank you.” Valgoria says, extending her hand to Irwer in thanks.

Irwer takes the warrior's hand and uses the momentum to get up. “The trip to Trenkell is going to be hard, with fewer guards and Vutha's zenith approaching. But I do wish you good luck.”

“Wait!” Willem calls, grabbing Irwer's arm “With your help we would surely reach Trenkell alive and in time.”

“Would you please accompany us?” Caleb asks “We can pay for your services, if needed.”

It's true that there is safety in numbers, but are these strangers trustworthy?

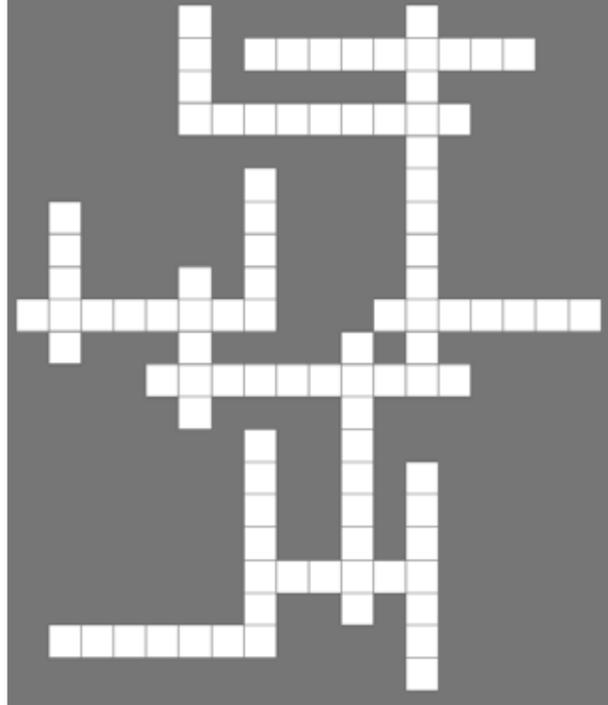
WHAT WILL IRWER DO? THAT DEPENDS ONLY ON YOU!

JUST FILL IN THIS SMALL [GOOGLE FORM](#) AND CHOOSE WHAT WILL HAPPEN. THE OPTION WITH A HIGHER NUMBER OF VOTES WILL WIN!

BUT HURRY UP, YOU HAVE ONLY UNTIL THE 25<sup>TH</sup> OF NOVEMBER TO ANSWER!

## QUEST OF THE MONTH

To relax in between writing sessions, find the appropriated space for each of our chapter words!



GLOOM  
KING  
GALXMENTE  
PROTAGONISTS

NARRATIVES  
LANGUAGES  
NANOWRIMO  
CONFLICT

AUTHORS  
DIALECT  
WRITE  
PODCAST

STORY  
PENCIL  
MAPPING

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OR THROUGH OUR FACEBOOK

# NEXT CHAPTER...

Another month has passed...

And that brings us closer to December, which will be dedicated to... Christmas, of course!

So be prepared for a great number of tips for great gifts, be they books, games or even very geek and spectacular Portuguese craftwork.

We will also share with you some ideas of how you can have a very different, and geeky Christmas Eve!

Are you in?

Until then, go on exploring new worlds through old media





ESPECULATÓRIO