

ESPECULATÓRIO

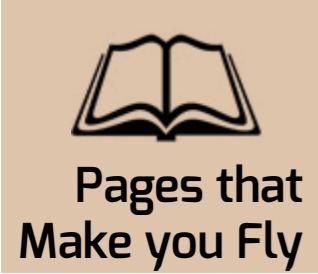
CHAPTER I

"New Beginnings"



SEPTEMBER 2016

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Technical Sheet

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The editorial content of this magazine is from the full authorship of Especulatório. We are not affiliated with any entities here publicized, nor can we be accountable for any events outside of the organization of Especulatório..

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..

Contact: especulatorio@gmail.com

ESPECULATÓRIO TEAM



I dedicate 35 hours a week to Global Citizenship Education but being a geek is a full-time occupation. Always a bookworm, occasionally a boardgamer and a soon to be D&D player.

MARIA INÊS SANTOS



Developer during the day, inveterate geek during... well, always! Be it with boardgames, RPGs, books, series, computer and console games, you'll always find me doing something geeky!

CARLOS ALMEIDA



I am an Evolutionary Biologist passionate about books, boardgames and RPG's. One of my projects is to create a boardgame that allows me to join my hobbies with biology!

INÊS FRAGATA



I studied Conservation Biology for love, I work a desk job by necessity, but my passions include writing, reading and all kinds of games! I am addicted to podcasts, webseries and book clubs.

CATARINA SANTOS

EDITORIAL - NEW BEGINNINGS

New beginnings.

Becoming something new.

To transform.

Be different.

Be unique.

This is the road that the Especulatório team wants to follow.

We are planning to use the lessons that we learned throughout our first year and shape something more distinct, coherent, innovative and more capable of showing the importance and breadth of Speculative Fiction.

It seems that we are quite the philosophers, right? Well, don't worry, you haven't seen the rest of our Magazine.

We are not experts, nor anything like it, in truth we never tried to be and we are not starting now. What we want to do is to bring new perspectives, ideas and suggestions in speculative fiction, for all the geeks that are out there.

"It's a dangerous business (...) going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept off to" J.R.R.Tolkien.

We don't know what is waiting for us in the future, but we are dying to find out and give our contribute, by showing new worlds, through old ways.



COME TO THE DARK SIDE....

When you start something new, the first steps are always the most complicated ones. No wonder they say that the first step is the hardest. This happens not only because of our “friend” inertia, but also because the world of speculative fiction is full of worlds and universes where you can enter and, at the beginning, that can be quite daunting.

So, we (the Especulatório Team) will share with you some of our favorite worlds, games and adventures to help you in your first

steps into the speculative world or that can provide some assistance on bringing your skeptical friends to these domains.

One of the biggest vectors for passing information of speculative fiction is also the oldest. In my case, it actually corresponds to my first interaction with fantasy, and I bet for many of the people who like this genre was also their doorway to this world. I am of course talking about Books.

So here are some of the books that told us the adventures that made us dream and

become completely immersed in fictional worlds: the Harry Potter saga, the Mistborn Trilogy, the Narnia Chronicles, the Earthsea Quartet, the Discworld series, “Dune”, “1984”, “Brave New World”, “Ender’s Game”, “Stranger in a Stranger Land”, “Ubik” ou o “The Martian”.

If you want to start by reading some stories on the internet or listen to some podcasts, you can always take peek at “Sword and Laser”, a podcast and book club with Veronica Belmont and Tom Merritt.

On the other hand, if you are thinking about initiating some young member of your family or friends, take a peek at “My Little Geek” or “My First Fandom”, which are books for the younger ones. Because it’s never too early to start!

If you are interested in creating your own adventure, and want to convert a group of friends to the wonderful world of role-playing games (RPGs), we also have suggestions for you!

One way to go, if you want to hang out with your friends and go on adventures together, is to take a look at some of the adventures that our Dungeon Masters (DMs) suggested: “We Be Goblins”, “Vault of the Dracolich”, “Crypt of the Everflame”, “Mines of Madness”, “Keep on

the Shadowfell”, “The Harrowing” ou “Pathfinder Society Scenario Intro: First Steps”.

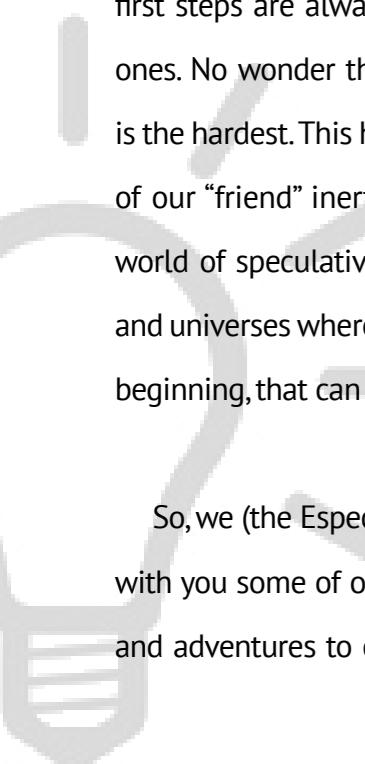
However, if none of you has any experience in RPGs, you can always get together and learn with the “Dungeons Dragons (5th Edition Starter Set” or “Pathfinder’s Beginner Box”.

These provide excellent introductions to the world of RPGs, offering everything you need to start playing, in one box.

Don’t forget that you can always take a peek at the Matthew Colville Youtube Channel, where there is a series of videos called “Running the Game” that provide an introduction to new DMs, and also a video that is very good to introduce new players to the world of Dungeons & Dragons.

And if you want to convince your friends by showing them real examples of people playing RPGs you can always show them the “Critical Role” series and “Adventure Zone”. Fair warning, when you start playing it’s not always as awesome as they make it!

Still talking of fun times in a group that can be used as unexpected introductions to the world of fiction, there are several board games that can bewitch everyone, from kids to grownups.



Some of the games that we have played with non-gamer friends and were an instant success are: “Catan”, “Forbidden Island”, “Ticket to Ride”, “Dixit”, “7 Wonders”, “Tsuro”, “The Game”, “Star Realms”, “Sushi Go”, “Les Loups-Garous de Thiercelieux” (The Werewolves of Millers Hollow) and “Carcassonne”.

These games can be played by anyone and guarantee many hours of fun. They require different levels of strategy, but all can be played without prior knowledge of how to play board games.

If nobody in your group of friends has any of these games, you can always try the Board Game Arena, which allows you to play online games before buying them, so that you can make a more informed purchase. And don't forget that there are always game stores or conventions where you can meet with more experienced players and learn and try games before getting them!

Here are our suggestions to begin your adventures in the world of speculative fiction.

Always count on us, the Especulatório team, to help you navigate, explore and discover all the worlds of fantasy, science fiction and horror that are out there!

Inês

SEPTEMBER

Back to the Past



INTERVIEW WITH: ESPECULATÓRIO

As Especulatório celebrates its first year and embraces a new challenge – the monthly magazine – it seems the perfect time to talk a lit bit about ourselves.

Thus, we give you a brief presentation of our history, our mission and what guides us.

WHAT IS ESPECULATÓRIO?

Especulatório is a project created by speculative fiction fans which aims to raise awareness about the new worlds of these fiction genres but through “old media”: books, games and events.

We are a group of enthusiasts, readers

Other Speculations

and gamers, and we want to bring fantasy, horror and science fiction to the day-to-day conversations.

WHY SPECULATIVE FICTION?

Because we love to be transported to different worlds, be it through a book we cannot put down, taking part in themed events or even gaming gatherings that continue well into the night.

Because we want to travel to the future. Because we want to discover fantastic worlds, with monsters and heroes. Because we want to be scared by the supernatural.

Ultimately, because we are all absolute fans of these fiction genres, be it fantasy, science fiction, horror and any other sub genres we can find.

HOW DID THIS IDEA CAME TO BE? AND WHY THE MOVE NOW TO AN ONLINE MAGAZINE?

Especulatório emerged as an idea we wanted to apply for financing: a space where speculative fiction fans could gather, with themed days and events, with an area to test new games, read books and, also, a space where everyone could reduce their shopping wishlist.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to start this project like this but we did not give up

our idea. On the contrary, we decided to move forward with an online space where we could write about these genres and what captivates us about them.

are already experts but want to discover new views and suggestions. At the same time, we would like Especulatório Magazine to be an open space, with opportunities of participation for all those who wish to share information,



On our first anniversary, we feel the time has come to advance towards a new format, where we can explore themes and genres in a more coherent and deeper way. We aim to value speculative fiction at the national level, be a reference for those still taking their first steps in these worlds but also for those that

ideas and stories.

Especulatório Magazine will explore a different theme each month, starting with Chapter 1 – New Beginnings.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHY DOES SPECULATIVE

Other Speculations

FICTION HAS SO MANY FOLLOWERS?

For us, speculative fiction permits an escape from ordinary daily lives, giving us epic tales, unforgettable adventures, impossible missions, complex journeys and characters, allowing everyone to leave the couch behind.

However, at the same time, it gives us real characters who face challenges similar, in some ways, to our own. Being fiction, it nonetheless allows us to explore current themes, making us reflect about issues that are all encompassing.

WHAT DO YOU SEE IN THE FUTURE OF THESE FICTION GENRES?

Since Especulatório is a project dedicated to speculative fiction, of course we believe these genres will continue to grow.

More and more people want to be with their friends, not with a mobile phone in hand, but to share moments around a table with a boardgame and speak about the books they have read or events they have attended.

There are nowadays more possibilities for all tastes and at all levels. At the national level, we see the growth of opportunities, with different groups and projects gaining importance.

Speculative fiction has come to stay!

IF YOU COULD MEET ANY CHARACTER FROM ANY SPECULATIVE FICTION BOOK OR GAME, WHO WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

Hard question, for which we have as many answers as team members.

CATARINA – It is not easy to make these kind of decisions, but I think for me it would be Polgara, the immortal enchantress from the David Eddings series “The Belgariad” and “The Malloreon”. For sure a strong woman, who has lived through many eras and memorable historical events (and had a hand to play in several of these). Who better to sit with, share a cup of tea and explore this epic world?

CARLOS – For sure it would be Jarlaxle Baenre, from the Legend of Drizzt book series, the Drow Mercenary, leader of the well-known Bregan D'aerthe mercenaries. An opportunist that became the most powerful man in a society dominated by women, he does everything in order to raise his own and his organisation's power.

INÊS – There so many book characters I would like to meet. It has been a difficult internal debate but I ended up choosing a

character from “Wheel of Time”, Egwene Al’Vere. This character grows immensely through the entire saga and in the end is a woman full of strength, with her heart and mind in the right place and an exemplary leader. In my opinion, this character almost went downhill at a certain point of the story but then Robert Jordan was able to organise events in such a way that made this character even more human and admirable.

MARIA INÊS – Hard decision! For me it would be Phèdre Nô Delaunay, from the “Kushiel’s Legacy” first trilogy, by Jacqueline Carey. It is a very interesting character, who overcomes difficult but memorable challenges, never forgetting who she is. A totally kick-ass woman that lives in her world in her own way. Why not?

IF YOU LIVED IN THE WORLD OF THE LAST SPECULATIVE FICTION BOOK OR GAME YOU READ OR PLAYED, WHERE WOULD YOU BE AT THIS PRECISE MOMENT?

Once again, we are a team but we are not alike, so we leave you with a show of our diversity:

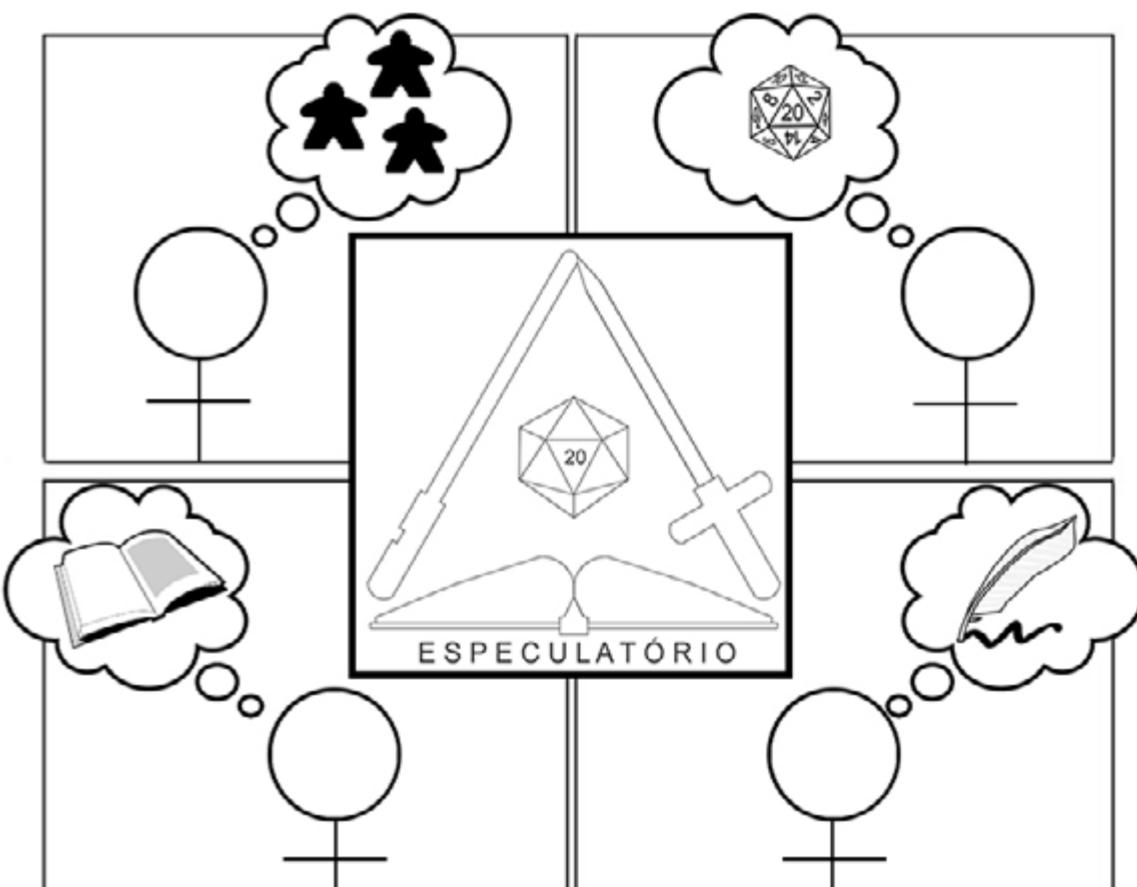
CATARINA – I must confess I wouldn't be

in the nicest place, since at the moment I'm reading “The Three Body Problem”, by Liu Cixin, which begins during the chaotic events of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. But there is a promise for alien contact, so I am sure it will be an interesting journey!

CARLOS – At this moment I would be helping the twins Jacob and Evie Frye conquer Templar London and regain power for the Assassin's Order, from the game “Assassin's Creed: Syndicate”.

INÊS – I would be fighting Trollocs with Perrin and his wolves, trying to set Faile free from another problem. Or I would be helping Naeve and Elaine look for Angreals (yes, in the Wheel of Time universe, since I'm rereading the saga).

MARIA INÊS – I would be at Hogwarts, about to begin a new year at the most awesome school. Because rereading the entire Harry Potter series was a great excuse for these new beginnings.



FOUR GEEKS, ONE IDEA

MAGIC THROUGH THE EYES OF A MUGGLE

“ Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, of number four, Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were perfectly normal, thank you very much. They were the last people you'd expect to be involved in anything strange or mysterious, because they just didn't hold with

Thus begins my addiction and growing need for fantasy books – the Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling.

There were others, probably even before I read “Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone”. But none mattered nor stayed with me through so many years nor captivated me as much as Harry Potter continues to.

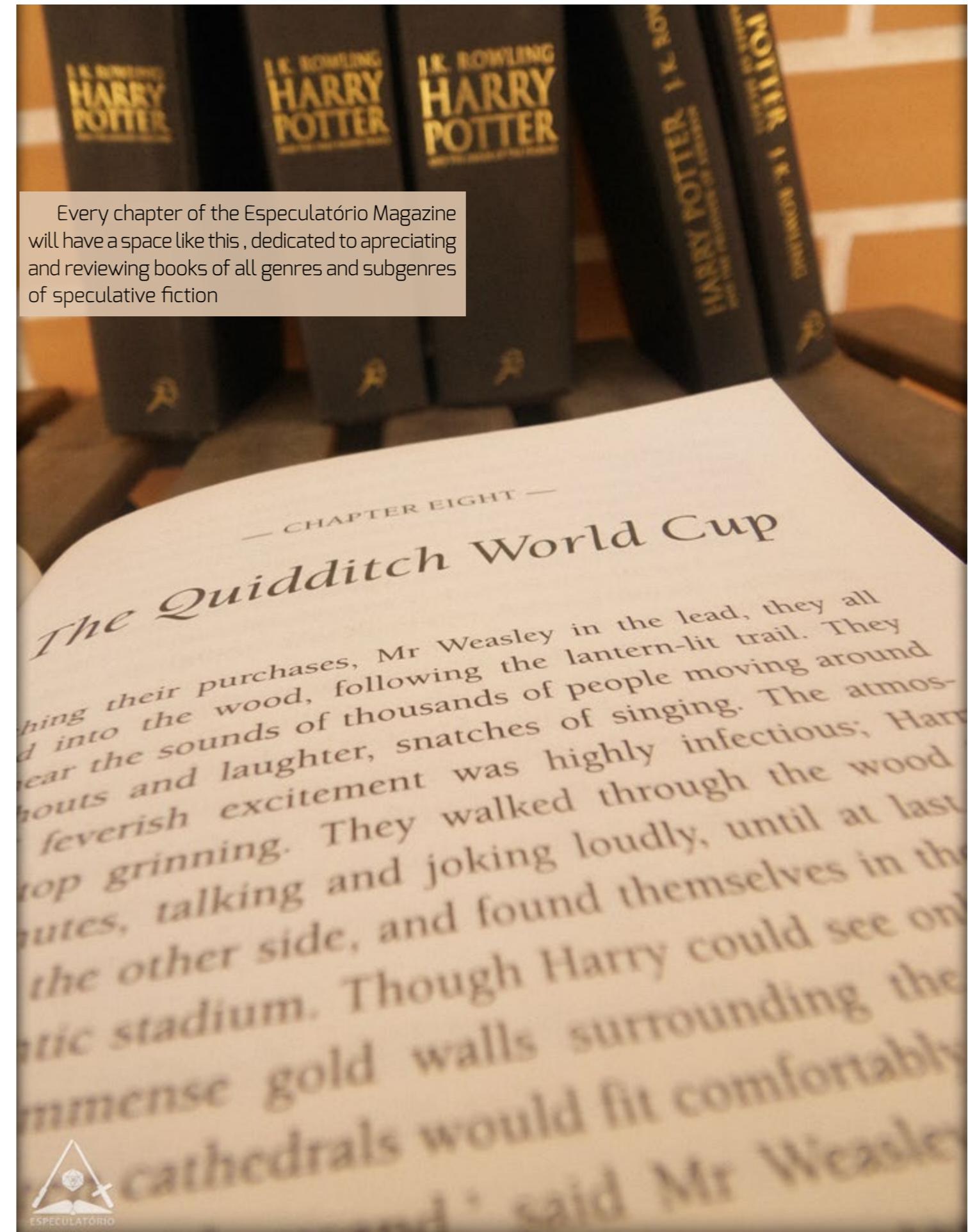
It goes beyond the phenomenon: the saga

that calls to young and old about a boy wizard that will grow up to defeat the darkest wizard that ever lived.

For me, reading these books is simply to hold a bit of magic.

I reread all seven novels a short while ago (truthfully, any excuse is a good excuse!) and I also gave a chance to the so called eighth novel – “Harry Potter and the Cursed Child” – which is in fact something outside the original series but interesting nonetheless, it makes us wonder about the reality 19 years later.

With Back to Hogwarts Day around the corner, I wanted to leave my own vision and



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review of this world that, after all this time, continues to be new and challenging.

Perhaps I can begin with the characters: many of them, is true, but very different, people with flaws but always with the chance to outdo themselves. They are characters with whom we can identify and with whom we sometimes want to be more alike.

Let's look at the main trio: Harry – the curious boy that is invisible until he learns of his past, who we want to befriend and accompany in his adventures; Ron – the youngest son that is eager to prove his worth, to show that he is able to change the World in his own way; Hermione – at first glance only a bookworm but in fact someone that will stop at nothing for those she holds most dear.

Who doesn't know someone like this or even feels like this sometimes?

The story that advances with each chapter shows us the growth of each character, getting more and more complex and mysterious.

With the arrival of the seventh book – "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" – we understand that the darkness that started appearing in the earlier books has really come

to stay.

We leave the happy endings and the magic without care behind. Suddenly we are face to face with a challenge more difficult than Harry, Ron and Hermione have had to deal with but a road they can walk together.

Because another high point of the Harry Potter saga is the fact that it is not all about Harry. Although he is often the centre of plots and challenging missions, he never overcomes them alone.

This shows us that Harry Potter is a set of books that put friendship and family above all else, not always in a happy way but demonstrating that we are nothing alone, we need to share with and trust in those that are closest to us.

I also love the way J.K. Rowling writes. At the same time she is able to be comical and dramatic, with room for funny scenes, problem resolution, death and loss. All in all, an engaging writing style with spectacular descriptions and dialogues.

And I love every magic element that becomes more real as the story advances. It makes perfect sense that there is a room that

can be exactly what you need in that moment, a tree that fights back, stairs that never stay put, ghosts that are teachers and spells for everything.



It is a world built in such a complete way that we can't help but become part of it, we stop being muggles – we discover Hogwarts, we stroll around Diagon-alley and Hogsmeade, we live in Privet Drive and Grimmauld Place.

If I had to describe the Harry Potter series in seven words, for those that have never decided to become involved in this story, I would choose these: magic, mysteries, friendship, adventures, family, growth, compassion... and maybe drama (an eight word for an eight book).

But if I start thinking about the words that really make me smile, then the list changes a bit: Hogwarts, Hedwig, Quidditch, Muggle, Hufflepuff... well, I think that this list may be never ending.

I have heard that this saga may not be for everyone, but I admit I have difficulty believing that. If you haven't given it a change yet why not now, with a new story bringing Hogwarts back to the spotlight?

It is never too late to come aboard the Hogwarts Express.

Until then Nox!

Maria Inês

HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF THE FIRST RPGS

While it's true that Dungeons & Dragons was the first RPG created, very few know the actual origins of these kind of games.

It's in XVI century Europe that we find the roots of RPGs.

It all began with a group of artists that travelled from place to place and acted a very special form of improvisational theater called Commedia dell'arte, with pre-made characters and scenarios, but with totally improvised lines.

Later, in 1780, Johann Hellwig adapted chess rules to create a battle simulation for the Duke of Brunswick, giving birth to the era of the wargames, a kind of simulation game,

using miniatures and emulating historical battles.

Per Max Boot's "War Made New" it was in the early XIX century that the Prussian army started to invest in the development of such games, with soldiers moving metal pieces on a table, using dice to determine the probabilities of failure or success of attacks and maneuvers. These games started to become more and more popular in many European armies and were praised for their ability to simulate battle situations.

Wargames made the transition into the hobby market in 1913, with the release of the children's book "Little Wars" by H. G. Wells. It contained rules to emulate wars using the,

then very popular, little soldier toys. The adult versions of these games started to appear with war simulations from the Napoleonic period and, although usually a single figurine would represent a whole squad of soldiers, there were a few supplements for skirmishes with a reduced number of miniatures, each of them representing a single soldier.

In 1959, with the release of the boardgame Diplomacy, we see the introduction of the social aspect in wargames. Players would spend as much, or more, time in political discussions, forging alliances or declaring wars, than in actual combat situations.

In the late 60's, fantasy elements begin to appear in these games. The linguist M. A. R. Barker developed a fantasy setting, called Tékumel, to use in his wargame sessions, and



the writer Greg Stafford created the boargame "White Bear and Red Moon", taking place in the fictional world of Glorantha, a setting closer to science fiction than to fantasy, later published in 1975.

It's in 1971 that Gary Gygax created a set of rules for medieval wargames: "Chainmail".

This, at the time weird, historical combat game had many additional fantasy supplements, including such elements as wizards and dragons.

And these were the supplements that Gygax would then use to create the first modern RPG, Dungeons & Dragons.

Carlos

WRITING: WHERE TO START?

Every month we will talk to about writing. Not being masters on the subject, we wish to offer inspiration and motivation for every writer who, like us, wish to put their ideas on paper.

This is the question everyone asks when taking their first steps in creative writing.

We have mentioned before that there is nothing more important than being prepared to just sit your behind in the chair and write, even if you don't have any ideas, or inspiration or you just don't feel like it. Create your space and your schedule and keep to it as much as possible.

If you haven't got any ideas take a walk, look around you, read a book, a scientific magazine, watch a movie or even use a writing prompt. We're always surrounded by sources of inspiration, if we are open to and aware of them!

And, of course, don't forget to always have on hand a way to jot down your ideas, because

you never know when you'll find something useful and inspiring.

But, after all this, where do we start our story, book or short tale?

FIRST SENTENCES

There is no doubt that the first sentence of your tale is very important, some would even say critical, because it is the first promise you make to your readers - this is the kind of story you'll read, this is the world you'll immerse yourself in, and this is the mood we'll invoke.

Just remember that the first sentence does not have to be the first sentence you write!

While it's true that some stories come into being from an excellent sentence that inspire in us the will to write, other times the plot comes first and the first sentence is built (often

with lots of sweat and tears) afterwards.

Don't worry if you don't know the words to start off your tale. Write the rest of your story and, when you go back to edit it, think about how you want to start.

Also, don't think you have to start with a sentence worthy of this month's Top 5!

It is always good to start with a first sentence that captivates your readers, but it doesn't have to be an instant hook.

Show your world with a visually evocative phrase or start by introducing your characters with some interesting dialogue. Another good idea is to set off with some conflict, movement, change or action.

Take this opportunity to reveal the mood of your story - will it be funny, romantic, serious

and dark, full of political intrigue or a light adventure?

Start with someone going somewhere, doing something they are good at, a question that sparks the character's, and the reader's, curiosity.

Show off your world, establish if it's the same as our world or technologically more advanced, magical or with different natural laws. You don't have to explain everything in your first line, but introduce the idea of a different setting where strange things can happen.

By showing something different in your world, without really explaining it, you are encouraging your reader's curiosity and

TOP 5 - "First Sentences"

1	2	3	4	5
"In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit" [The Hobbit, J.R.R. Tolkien]	"I'm pretty much fucked. That's my considered opinion." [The Martian, Andy Weir]	"Ash fell from the sky." [Mistborn, Brandon Sanderson]	"It is true that I have sent six bullets through the head of my best friend, and yet I hope to shew by this statement that I am not his murderer." [The Thing on the Doorstep, H.P. Lovecraft]	"There was a boy called Eustace Clarence Scrubb, and he almost deserved it." [The Voyage of the Dawn Treader, C.S. Lewis]
The sentence that will remain the best introduction for one of the greatest books	A start that simultaneously makes us fear and long for the rest of the story	A very visual way to start an adventure, with a glimpse into a grey and unknown world	A mysterious beginning to a frightening tale	Why? We must find out!

20 promising you'll explain it further down the book.

In Late, Out Early
It is important to start each scene as close as possible to the action, and to leave as close as possible to the end of it.

No one wants to read about the start of the cliché “Where is this relationship going?” conversation. We want to arrive just as the voices start to raise and the tears start to flow, and we want to leave just as someone gets up and slams the door.

FIRST PAGES

All of us, when we pick up a new book, are able to assess, in two or three pages, the quality and style of writing, and if it's something we might like.

Keep this in mind when you're developing your first pages, since it's here you'll show your readers what kind of writer you are and why they'll want to keep reading your story.

We have mentioned above that you can, and should, use your first sentences to trigger your reader's curiosity with an unanswered question. Use your first pages to solve that question. This way you are promising your reader that you will answer other, bigger, questions that might arise and that they can trust you to explain (almost) everything, eventually.

Your first pages are a good place to start introducing what kind of conflict your story will have and what is important for your character, even though you don't have to show what her story arc will be as the plot evolves.

It's always a good idea to start the first pages with action, but it doesn't necessarily have to be a 007 kind of action, with explosions, car chases, chaos and destruction. It could be something more like an Indiana Jones scene, which presents us with the character's personality and show us what he's good at.

Start with dialogue, but don't forget to establish who is talking and where, to demonstrate action and conflict (not necessarily between characters).

Remember to show your setting, without describing the whole world.

A scene always has to do more than one thing, so it's very important to remember, from the get-go, to write scenes in which the action shows setting, character and the mystery to solve. Write dialogue that shows conflict, something about your world and the people talking.

Every word has to have a purpose, to show

something about your story, and your first pages have to introduce characters, location, mood and movement.

FIRST CHAPTERS

How many of you have invested your time in the first chapters of a book only to be forced to give up on it?

This first part of your book or tale is very important to show your readers why it's worth staying with you until the end. The promises you make in the beginning of your story have to be the promises you intend to solve by the end of it.

If the first third of your book establishes what your characters want, what kind of story arc they will have, what's missing in their lives and what are their motivations, you are promising your readers that, by the end of your book, all those things will have a resolution - either good or bad.

Establish your main plot, and all the small secondary problems, and your readers will assume that all those questions will be solved by the end.

Decide what are the spectacular moments

COMMON MISTAKES

- To start with too much information and worrying too much about introducing the world you created. Examples of that are the typical prologues, very common during a certain age of epic fantasy, in which one would start the book with an introduction to the mythology, history and politics of the world (how many of you know the history or politics of our whole world?). Write a prologue if that suits the story you want to tell, but try other alternatives to incorporate that information first,

- To start with a comedic, hyper original, and completely different from anything else ever written, first sentence. And then to write a story that isn't a comedy, or hyper original or even that different. Understand the promises you are making your readers so that you can understand how to fulfill them throughout your story.

- To get stuck on your first chapter. Prepare to cut it, or at least to strongly re-edit it, when you get to the revision stage. Many of us need to write ourselves into the story, or into our character's head, but that is not necessarily how our story begins.

Words and Scribbles

22 that you wish to include in your tale. Now try to introduce the idea that those moments might happen from the very beginning (if needed, when you revise your text).

Promise your readers there'll be fantastic resolutions, so that they'll be satisfied when they finally reach them.

CONCLUSIONS

We know that starting is the hardest part, but we hope that all these tips will make you feel a bit more prepared to pick up your pen and paper and get started.

Fictional Conversation Guide - Greetings

High Valyrian	Rytsas ['rytsas] or Valar morghûlis ['valar mor'yu:lis]
Dothraki	M'aθchomaroon [maθtʃomaroon] ou M'aθ [maθ]
Sindarin	Mae l'ovannen ['mae lɔ.'van.nɛn]
Quenya	Alla ['al.la]
Klingon	nuqneH [nook-NEKH]
Ewokese	Sku [skoo]
Goa'uld	Kel Sha [kel shaa]

Remember that all stories break some rules. But if you are aware of them you can break them knowingly, conscious of the risks.

Write the story you want to tell and then use our advice to make it even more awesome!

Catarina

A Box Full of Tokens

MONTHLY KICKSTARTER - CHARACTER MEEPLE 2.0

23 EstIn this section, we tell you about some Kickstarter campaigns that have gotten our attention in the last few days.

This month I will tell you about one that I am supporting and that will end on September 7th: [The Character Meeples 2.0](#).

The purpose of this Kickstarter campaign is to generate Meeples (board games tokens – similar to the image of our Box full of tokens section) for games that don't initially come with them e.g. Codenames or Stone Age - but

where you can use and benefit from having the Meeples as part of the gaming experience. The kickstarter creators also made available a few more meeples that can be used in any game you want.

Although a generic plastic or wooden meeple can be used normally to play a game, when you use thematic Meeples, you and the other players will be more easily immersed in the game or in the role of the character you have to play.

Inês

EVENTS CALENDAR - SEPTEMBER

2 - 23 ~ Writing a Book: where to start? | Level I
escrever|escrever - Friday's, from 19:30h to 22:00h

7 ~ LitLovers Lisbon Bookclub "The Master and Margarita"
Bookshop Bivar - from 19:30h to 21:30h

1 - 3 ~ Warm-Up MotoLx 2016
6 - 11 ~ MotoLx 2016
10 - 11 ~ SpringIt Con Summer Edition
Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade do Porto
14 - 15 ~ SYFY Scientific Review
Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade do Porto
Highlighting the game LisbonWalker - 3rd October, at 17:30h
IST, Lisboa

21 e 22 ~ Lisbon Boardgamers' Group Monthly Meeting
IST - Friday from 18:00h to 01:00h and Saturday from 15:00h to 1:00h
12, 19, 26 ~ Lisbon Boardgamers' Group Wednesdays
Coffee Shop Tentações - from 18:00h to 00:00h
14, 21, 28 ~ Friday's at Versus Gamecenter
from 18:00h to 01:00h

MYSTERY ABOARD THE HLS MANDRAKE: EVENTO NO SCIFI LX 2016

Saturday, July 16th. 16 hours and 30 minutes.

Everything was ready for another Especulatório adventure, this time at Sci-Fi Lx 2016.

Four teams – Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta

– were called upon to explore the mysteries aboard the HLS Mandrake.

Once again the Especulatório team facilitated a session of Dungeons and Dragons (5th edition), with four Dungeon Masters (DMs) and four game tables, where the participants had to work together to investigate this suspicious ship and solve the mystery surrounding it.

But let us step back a bit: where did the HLS Mandrake come from? What kind of world is this?

Homeland was a luxurious world, filled with natural riches and with a society composed by elves, dwarves, humans, orcs and so many other species. But with the beginning of a great war, where difficult choices were made and new spells were tested without a thought to its consequences, Homeland began to die, losing its strength and magic.

When the sun turned purple, a truce had to be found and an unstable peace returned. With the change in the sun, the radiation levels became unbearable, forcing everyone to work together to create an enormous fleet that could take them away from Homeland and its deadly sun – and so Abscond was born.

And it was here that the Especulatório adventurers came into play.

A ship that had been lost in the early flight from Homeland is returning to the central fleet – the HLS Mandrake. A team was sent to explore but soon stopped responding, having only left a single message:

“EVERYTHING IS. OKAY”.

It fell to the four teams of participants to investigate the mysteries that inhabited this silent ship, adrift in the dark universe for a long time, all for the good of Abscond!

This adventure had each team search a different part of the ship once they arrived at the HLS Mandrake, with a specific goal – the Alpha team was in charge of recuperating information from the ship's central computer about the path followed by the Mandrake since it left Homeland; the Bravo team went



Speculating Reality

26 to the engineering section in order to try and recover an ultra secret chip, designed to enable quantum jumps in hyperspace; the Charlie team had the task to acquire all the information about hydroponic plants as well as any living specimen still aboard; and lastly, the Delta team was prepared to operate the ship's self destruct system, in case the dangers were such that the HLS Mandrake could not be saved and had to be destroyed before it reached the fleet.

That maps used, by Kristian Richards (<http://crookedstaff.blogspot.pt/>), were the perfect base for the multiple challenges we threw at the different teams.

Each team identified the team captain, who received a communication device (in reality an access to an online group chat) in order to be able to communicate with the other captains, to share warnings and status reports.

Once again we had a full house, with 20 participants, from new players to more experienced ones, including several artists that had fun drawing their own characters.

All the teams, even those formed by participants who didn't know each other before the event, were able to establish a great team spirit, with fantastic dynamics between them

and constant stat reports circulating.

This team spirit was tested when one of the teams activated the ship's self destruct system, leaving less than 45 minutes for all adventurers to reach the elevator and leave the ship behind, or else see the explosion of the HLS Mandrake from way too close.

With an atmosphere of great pressure, the teams stood by each other, trying to overcome the four challenges of the elevator room, with some defeating new monsters and others trying

“ 3 POSITIVE ASPECTS, ACCORDING TO OUR PARTICIPANTS

THE ADVENTURE ITSELF

«The best game I played in my life, super engaging and fantastic»
«Having a timed battle was interesting»

THE COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

«[I liked] The feeling of teamwork in the adventure by putting the parties working together»
«Communication between leaders was a genius idea»

THE ESPECULÁRIO TEAM

«Awesome DM»
«People were nice and available»

to trigger the elevator itself – the only way out. With 10 minutes until the explosion, the chaos was overwhelming but many participants were able to climb to safety... unfortunately not all were able to survive (we salute you!).

We take this opportunity to thank all players for their willingness to get to know this world, coming with us on this adventure.

And we thank everyone who was kind enough to leave us their comments, either at the end of the event or through our final questionnaire. We recognize we still have a long way to go, we understand that not everything

was perfect, that there were times with nothing to do for some teams and too much complexity for others. But thank you for valuing our efforts, our playfulness, our will to permit you to be inside this reality as much as possible.

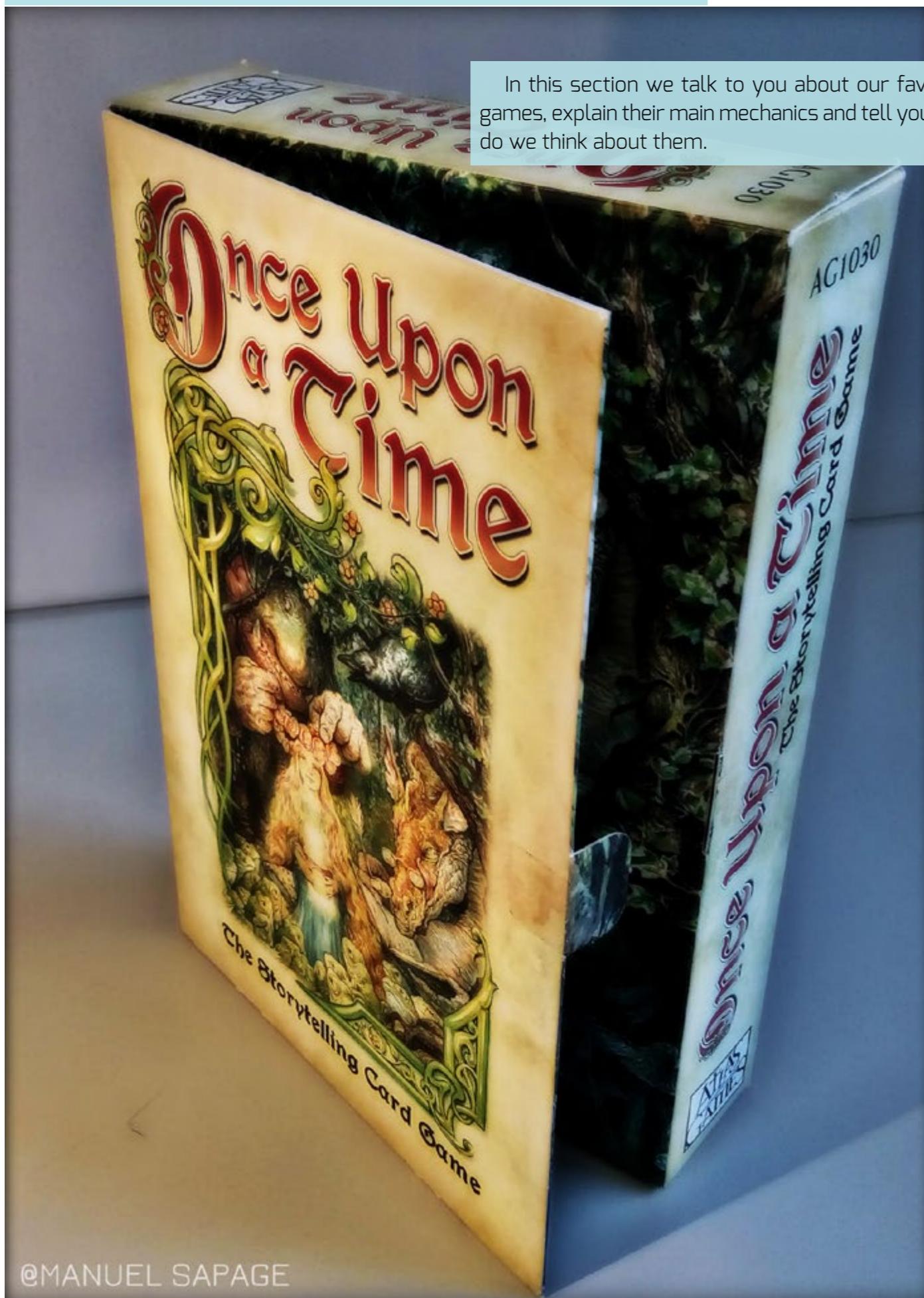
On the other hand, we give thanks to the Sci-Fi Lx organisers for your openness to receive us. We will be present at the next edition, for sure!

We are proud of another challenge fulfilled and of another opportunity to present our project.

Maria Inês



Speculating Reality



@MANUEL SAPAGE

"ONCE UPON A TIME" - A GAME TO START NEW STORIES...

Everyone has heard at least once in his or her life the classic start of fairy tales: "Once upon a time ..."

There is no more striking phrase for a beginning of some well spent moments (at least for me). And that's why, in this (re)start of Especulatório, we will speak to you about "Once upon a time," a game made for storytellers.

The main premise of this game is simple: the goal is to tell a story and in order to do it, each player starts with 5 to 10 Once Upon a Time cards (depending on the number of players). These cards represent characters, items, sites, adjectives or events that players will use to

build their story.

The player who is telling the story is called the Storyteller, and while he's inventing and telling his story he has to show the cards and the elements that the card represents and that are being narrated in the story.

But... If by any chance the Story Teller refers to an element that is in a card that is held by another person, that person can stop the narrative, show the card and continue to tell the story.

There are also interrupt cards that allows a player, in due course, to interrupt the narrative, by playing the card, and to continue the story, thus becoming the Storyteller. Whenever one

30 of these two hypotheses happens, the old Storyteller is bound to draw a card from the pile.

In addition to the Once Upon a Time cards, each player also has a Happily Ever After card, which is the last card that the storyteller needs to play to finish the story. This is the ultimate goal of each player, since when someone plays this card, the game ends and that person wins the game!

This game is a guarantee for a time well spent, allows for the inclusion of a lot of people



in the game and is perfect to start a board gaming afternoon, to familiarize new people with games, but also to break the ice and put everyone at ease. It is also a good choice to play between more hardcore games, if we want to take a break.

If you are looking for a nice game to break the ice and that can result in a lot of laughter, or if you want to practice storytelling, "Once upon a time" is the game to try.

Good games!

Inês

JOURNALS OF AN INTERNAUT LOST IN SPECULATIVE SPACE

Today, as I browsed the immensity of speculative space I was overcome by an existential crisis.

There are thousands of published adventures for Dungeons & Dragons (and other similar role-playing games) and it is certainly much easier, and less time-consuming, to adapt an existing adventure than to create one from scratch.

What if there was a tool that allowed all Dungeon Masters (DM's) to search for specific adventures that met certain criteria - like the level and number of players, the kind of monsters or the location?

That way, the DM could find an adventure or module that best suited his campaign or his players! It would certainly reduce a lot of the time spent preparing each session.

Apparently, someone already debated this most vital question before me!

Matthew Colville (youtuber and creator of the show "Running the Game" for new DM's) has brought up this same idea on his channel and decided to put all the other lost internauts

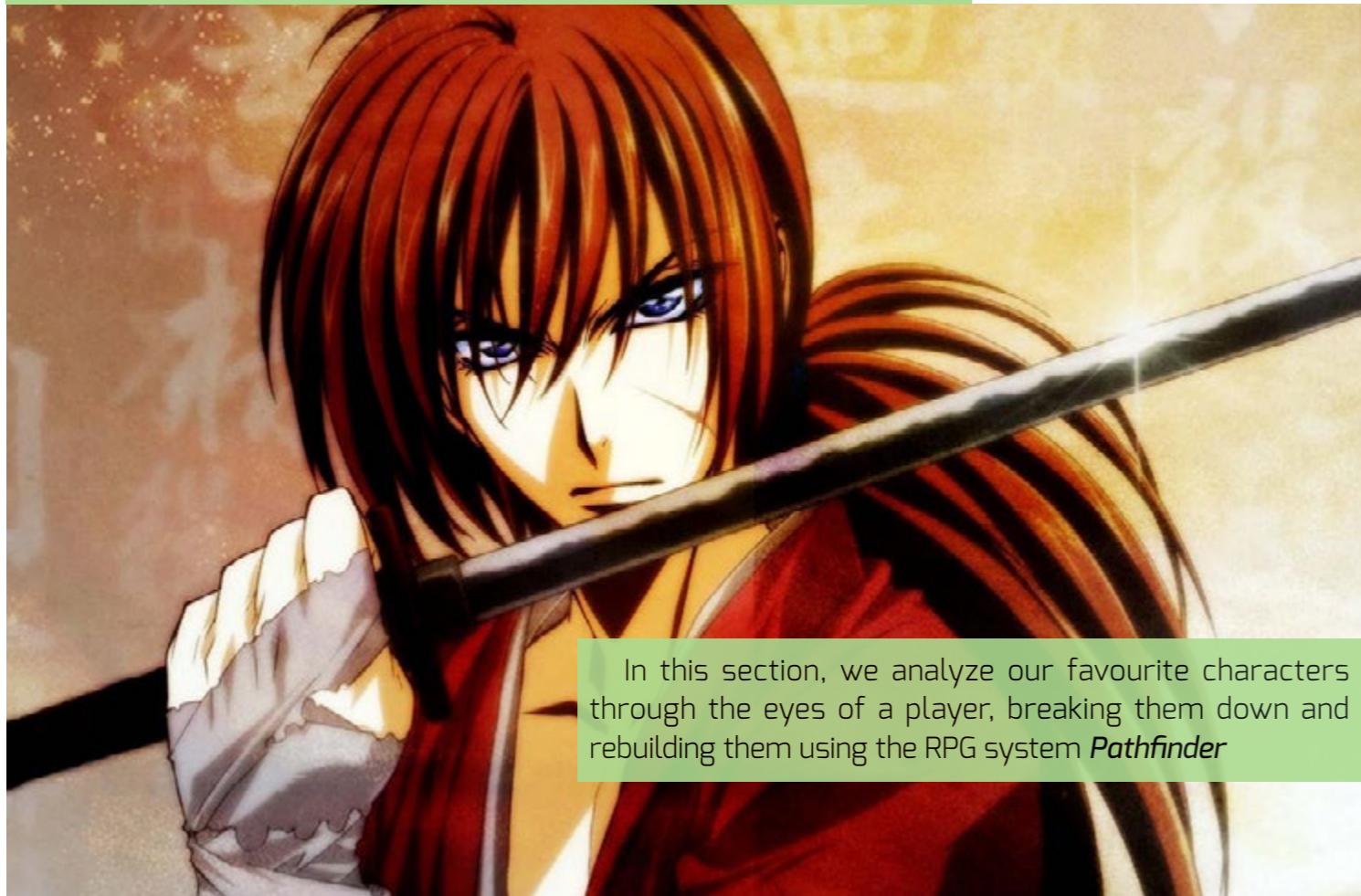
working on this matter.

This tool, called Adventure LookUp, is still in its early development fases and, although progress has been slow, I am confidant that it will, eventually, become a reality.

Therefore, I am leaving this message floating in this speculative space - if you'd like to know more about this project, or even help in its development, take a look at the Adventure LookUp Wiki and the affiliated subReddit.

For those of you who have little technical skills - or are currently lost in an unknown location, like me - we can only wait for the conclusion of this project so we can start helping populate its database with all the adventures and module that fill up our bookshelves!!

Catarina



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

CHARACTER WORKSHOP

Welcome to the Character Workshop.

We're going to talk about a hero who also had a new start: Himura Kenshin.

For those who've never heard of him, Kenshin is an ex-assassin samurai who, after

killing a lot of people, decides to embrace a more pacifist way of life. To do so, he avoids fighting with anyone, no matter what they do to him, and in the rare cases that he does, he uses his special katana that does not cut flesh.

Let's start with the breakdown of the basis for Kenshin.

Race: Human.

Class: Barbarian. Wait! Don't leave! Barbarian makes a lot of sense for Kenshin, simply because of this: Urban Barbarian. Stay tuned to learn how!

Multi-class: To help our Barbarian Samurai, let's add a dash of Swashbuckler.

Now for the main abilities.

Ora, vamos às habilidades em si.

LEVELS 1-7

Classes: Swashbuckler 1 / Urban Barbarian 6

Feats: Weapon Focus (Katana) (1º), Slashing Grace (Katana) (Human bonus), Weapon Finesse (Swashbuckler bonus), Dodge (3º level), Mobility (5º level), Vital Strike (7º level)

Main Abilities: Panache, Deeds (Derring-Do, Dodging Panache, Opportune Parry and Riposte), Swashbuckler Finesse, Crowd Control, Controlled Rage, uncanny dodge, Trap sense +2, Improved uncanny dodge, Rage Powers (Guarded Stance, Savage Intuition, Rolling Dodge)

Controlled Rage is the ability that made me choose Barbarian for this character.

Kenshin had an ability called Battousai Mode, which allowed him, temporarily, to tap into the killer instinct from his previous life to grant him more speed, agility and power.

That's basically what Controlled Rage does. As for the rest, the level in Swashbuckler is there so we can use a katana with Dexterity, since Kenshin isn't exactly strong. Dodge and

Mobility are there to help with his defense, as well as the Rage Powers Guarded Stance and Rolling Dodge.

Savage Intuition let's Kenshin activate Battousai Mode even when surprised and Vital Strike, although not super important right now, will be useful later.

Levels 8-14

Classes: Swashbuckler 1 / Urban Barbarian 13

Feats: Weapon Focus (Katana) (1st), Slashing Grace (Katana) (Human Bonus), Weapon Finesse (Swashbuckler Bonus), Dodge (3rd), Mobility (5th), Vital Strike (7th), Spring Attack (9th), Improved Vital Strike (11th), Improved Initiative (13th).

Main Abilities: Panache, Deeds (Derring-Do, Dodging Panache, Opportune Parry and Riposte), Swashbuckler Finesse, Crowd Control, Controlled Rage, uncanny dodge, Trap sense +4, Improved uncanny dodge, Damage reduction 3/-, Greater Rage, Rage Powers (Guarded Stance, Savage Intuition, Rolling Dodge, Clear Mind, Reflexive Dodge, Intimidating Glare)

Spring Attack and Improved Vital Strike

show up to simulate the quick and deadly attacks against a single enemy.

We gain Damage Reduction to keep Kenshin alive a bit longer and we gain access to Greater

Rage.

Intimidating Glare is a great flavourful power to simulate the scary eyes Kenshin gets when he enters Battousai Mode.

Levels 15-20+

Classes: Swashbuckler 1 / Urban Barbarian 19

Feats: Weapon Focus (Katana) (1st), Slashing Grace (Katana) (Human Bonus), Weapon Finesse (Swashbuckler Bonus), Dodge (3rd), Mobility (5th), Vital Strike (7th), Spring Attack (9th), Improved Vital Strike (11th), Improved Initiative (13th), Combat Expertise (15th), Greater Vital Strike (17th), Whirlwind Attack (19th).

Main Abilities: Panache, Deeds (Derring-Do, Dodging Panache, Opportune Parry and Riposte), Swashbuckler Finesse, Crowd Control, Controlled Rage, uncanny dodge, Trap sense +6, Improved uncanny dodge, Damage reduction 5/-, Greater Rage, Indomitable Will, Tireless Rage, Rage Powers (Guarded Stance, Savage Intuition, Rolling Dodge, Clear Mind, Reflexive Dodge, Intimidating Glare, Swift Foot, Increased Damage Reduction, Swift Foot).

Swift Foot makes Kenshin faster in combat, and Whirlwind Attack helps him eliminate the weaker enemies from combat faster, to then finish the big bad boss with a Greater Vital Strike. Increased Damage Reduction and Indomitable Will help our Barbarian Samurai to stay alive.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

We have a little problem with our character: no Weapon Proficiency (Katana). To overcome

this problem, we can get the Traits Heirloom Weapon (Katana) and Signature Moves (Masterwork Katana) to get proficiency with the Katana as well as getting some very nice bonuses and a Masterwork Katana in level 1.

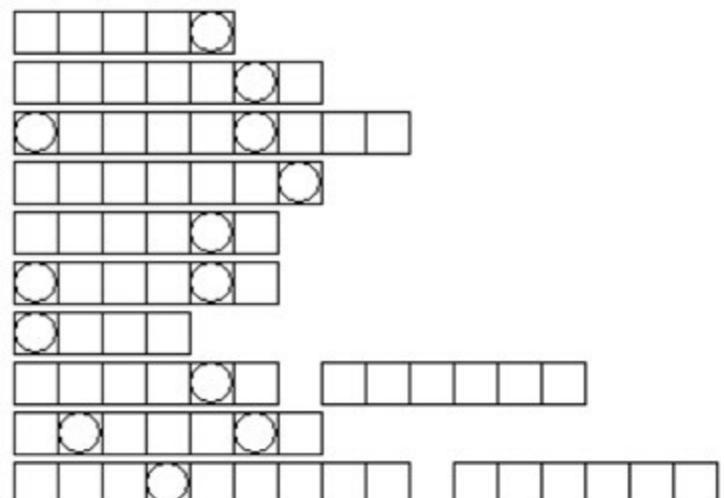
Also, so that our character reflects Kenshin's pacifist nature, we can just get the Merciful enchantment on our Katana so we can deal nonlethal damage with it.

Carlos

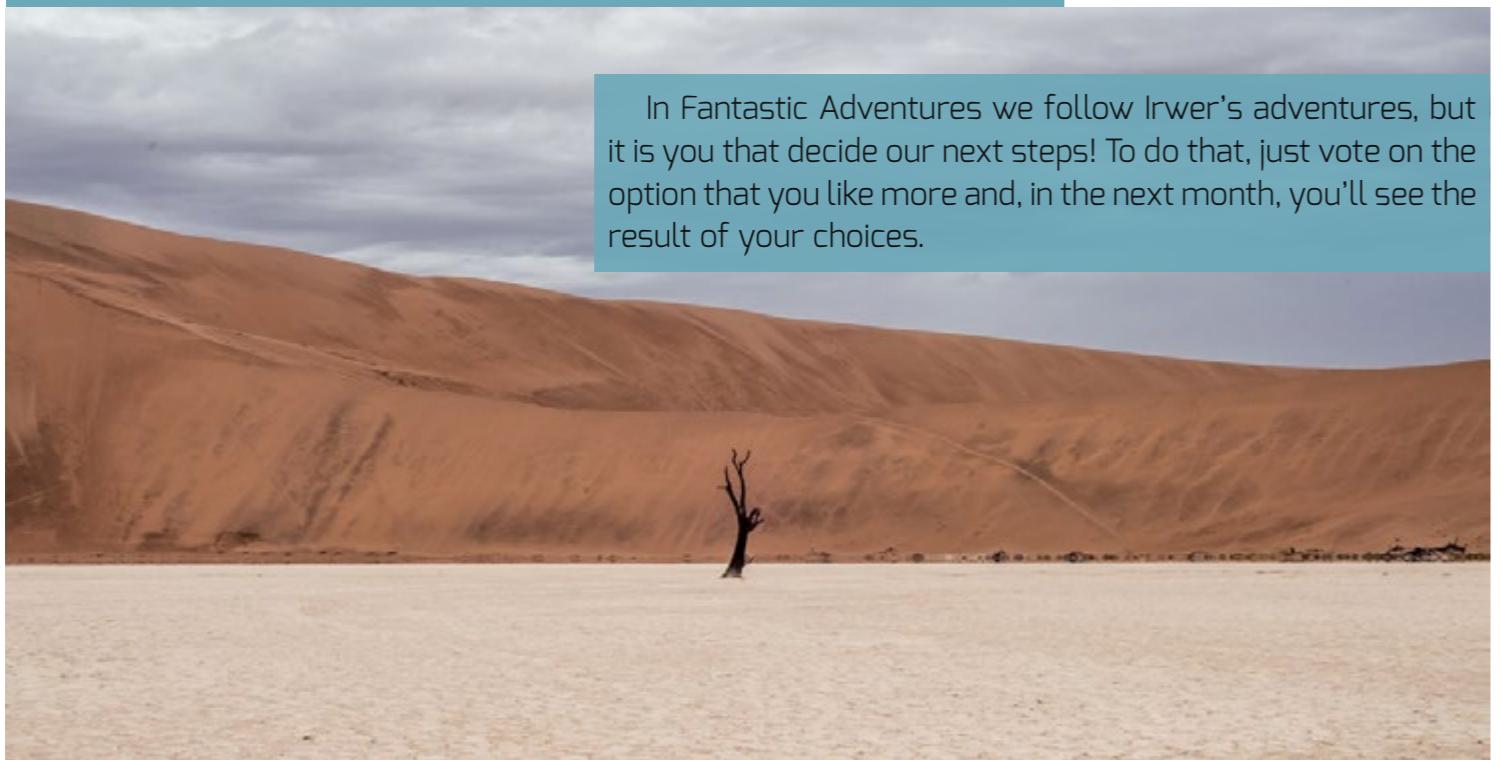
QUEST OF THE MONTH

Put the letters in order, with the help of our clues, to discover the final message!

1. SKBOO
2. KIPNUMP
3. HOATAGLNR
4. XITSEEN
5. RIRHAC
6. HUNEQN
7. EIRW
8. REGOEG TAIRMN
9. NACBOSD
10. VEURTNADE KOLOUP

**FINAL MESSAGE****CLUES**

1. Old media in paper | 2. Pasties *Hogwarts Express* style | 3. Fictional world created by Greg Stafford for his game "White Boar and Red Moon" | 4. Century where we can find the origins of role-playing games | 5. One of the four suns of Sikstai | 6. Greeting in Klingon | 7. Author of our second place "First Sentences" | 8. Born on 20th of September 1948 | 9. World where our SciFi Lx 2016 event game was set | 10. Monthly discovery of our internaut lost in the speculative space



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 result of your choices.

FANTASTIC ADVENTURES

CHAPTER 1 - THE FOUR SUNS

Desert ahead, desert behind, hot sand below, scorching sun above, desert as far as the eye can see. Only the wind begotten by the speed of his bike could appease the intense heat, a constant for more than 500 years on planet Sikstai.

With his long hair flowing behind him, Irwer crosses the desert on his solar bike, one of the most common vehicles in the Morne desert, the hottest, and less shadowy, desert in the planet, perfect for this mode of transportation.

But Sikstai wasn't always like this.

In the past, Sikstai had only one sun. It had thick and lush forests and nearly everyone lived in harmony with nature, despite their technological advancements.

Everything changed when Morkad, the most powerful wizard that Sikstai ever witnessed, appeared. He began to experiment, mixing arcane and solar energies, trying to bring more power to his order, the Sun Mages. They were so called because their power rose as the sun climbed the sky. When the sun reached his zenith, even a Sun Mage apprentice would be more powerful than a typical mage. When the sun would set, even Morkad would seem like a

mere illusionist, doing parlor tricks for children.

Morkad tried to overcome the Sun Mage's weakness by creating the other three suns of Sikstai.

The red sun Charir was the one with the hottest zenith.

The blue sun Ul-har, created with the destruction of the moon, was now the one which controlled the tides of the few seas still left in Sikstai.

And the black sun Vutha, the one that irradiates a black light which overshadows every other light. It is the sun which radiates more energy, and a prolonged exposure to it would often lead to mutations.

After the Dawn of the Fourth Sun, the Sun Mages tried to conquer Sikstai during Vutha's zenith, reaching a power level greater than any other mage on the planet. They would have succeeded, if it weren't for the mutations they suffered while trying.

Of all the inhabitants of Sikstai, only the elves, millenary creatures, remember these events. For the other races, these stories are nothing much than legends created by bards around campfires, or tales to frighten children.

But the truth is that Sikstai wasn't always like this...

"Hello? Anybody there?" a voice echoes from Irwer's solar bike. "This is East Morne's Service Station. We are being attacked by a group of Orcs. We have a dead security guard and several injured civilians and we need help! Anyone out there?"

"Damn. And I was hoping for a peaceful journey..." Irwer wonders. He wanted to reach Trenkell before Vutha's next zenith, but this detour will cost him time....

Carlos

WHAT IRWER IS GOING TO DO NEXT
DEPENDS ONLY ON YOU.

JUST FILL IN THE [THIS FORM](#) AND CHOOSE
WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT. THE OPTION
WITH MORE VOTES WILL BE THE WINNER!

BUT HURRY UP! YOU ONLY HAVE UNTIL
SEPTEMBER 15 TO ANSWER

Pumpkin Pasties Recipe, Hogwarts Express style

2 rolls of pie dough (or mix your own)	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon	<i>Topping</i>
1 cup pumpkin purée	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp nutmeg	1/4 cup milk
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup brown sugar	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp clover	1 Tbs white sugar
2 Tbs white sugar	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ginger	1 tsp cinnamon



ACIO PUMPKIN PASTIES!

1. Peel and cut the pumpkin into cubes, cover with water and boil until tender. Let it cool for a bit and then smash it into purée (ie. in a food processor);
2. In a bowl, mix the pumpkin purée with all the spices, brown and white sugar;
3. Lay and cut the dough into small circles and put them in an oven ready tray. Fill with a bit of the purée and then seal each pastry;
4. Brush the top of the pasties with milk and sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Bake for 10 to 15 minutes, until golden, at 180 degrees.

This blank space could be yours!

Especulatório supports projects in the Fantasy, Science-Fiction and Horror genres.

Tell us your tale and send us your short- stories, illustrations, comics or anything else really, and you could see them on a future chapter of the Especulatório Magazine.

Will you let this opportunity pass you by?

ESPECULATORIO@GMAIL.COM OR THROUGH OUR FACEBOOK

NEXT CHAPTER...

Eager for the next chapter of Especulatório Magazine?

In order to cheer your waiting, we give you a glimpse of what's to come. October could only be dedicated to... Horror!

In Halloween month, we dedicate the edition of our magazine to this main genre of speculative fiction.

It will include reviews of new books and games, more tips about writing for this genre and a presentation of the big names in Horror (did someone said Mary Shelley or H.P. Lovecraft or even Edgar Allan Poe?).

Do you want to know more?

Then you will have to wait for the next chapter in Especulatório Magazine.

Until then, go on adventures and explore new worlds through old media!



