

IN THE NAME OF PROGRESS

A NEMEZIS ONE SHEET™ BY UMBERTO PIGNATELLI

A old friend is missing. Only our brave heroes can save him from a terrible death!

1. A PHILANTROPIST DREAM

Faktery-27 is an old industrial graviter, an enormous unique production facility, tailored on a rigid castal society, at the top of which sits the Cybercount Manager, owner of the factory and a member of the Krabala family. The current Cybercount, Olon, is a young very educated and progressive man. He decided to improve the life quality of the Workers, the lower caste members, through a simple solution: mechanization and robotization. But Faktery-27 isn't prepared for such a change. A devious sect of luddites, destroyers of complex technology, spawned in response to the Cybercount massive innovations. They say to fight for the rights of the Workers, but in truth they worship a god more evil than technology...

2. A DESPERATE CALL

One of the heroes was a close friend of Olon, before his ascension to the high position. He is contacted by Deckard, personal steward of the Cybercount. His Highness, despised by the mild success of his innovations, decided to test himself the new Workers' life: disguised as a lower caste member, he joined a work crew in the Great Foundry, one of the hardest places of Faktery-27. Three days ago he doesn't returned to his cubicle after his turn. Deckard is very worried. He doesn't want to let the Count Guard investigate, fearing to put in danger Olon's life. Instead he asks the heroes to infiltrate themselves in the factory disguised as Workers assigned to the same crew of Olon and to discover what happened to the Cybercount.

3. BEFORE THE WORK TURN

The heroes reach the Great Foundry an hour before the new work turn starts. They wear plain Worker dresses. They are shown their cubicles, the refectory and the Workers' library.

Olon's Cubicle. It is a small room, protected by a security lock. It can be easily lockpicked (+2). Inside there is a bed, a toilet, and a small table, nothing interesting. Instead, with a Notice (-2) roll the heroes can see that someone has scratched a symbol on the door: a broken gear. A hero can understand what the symbol means with a Knowledge: History(-4) roll or at the library (see below). If the heroes breaks in Olon's room they are automatically noticed by the Luddites (see below).

Worker's Library. The library is one of Olons' innovation. Inside there are some, very simple, data terminal with educational programs. Apart Su, the bibliotecary, the room is empty because no Worker is interested in the thing. Su tells the heroes that isn't that way until some weeks ago. With a Persuasion roll the heroes can pry them some additional informations: there is someone who tells the Cybercount's innovations are blasphemy and will ruin the Workers' way of lfe. The identity of the agitators is unknown, but there are many of them. Using the library, with an Investigation roll, the heroes can find out what the mysterious scratch found in Olon's Cubicle is: it is a Luddite symbol, an ancient sect of the past devoted to destroying technology.

The refectory. This area is full of Workers eating their blurb before going to work. Socializing, with a Persuasion roll, the heroes discover what is the main news among the workers: the many accidents happened from when the new "mod-

ernization" occurred. The Cybercount is blamed for them. Asking around about Olon isn't a good idea. No useful information is recovered and the heroes are noticed by the Luddites (see below).

4. WORK TURN

The siren calls the Workers to work, heroes included. Foundry 's job is very harsh and the air hot. Each hero must do a Vigor (+2) roll or suffer a level of Fatigue until he leaves the Foundry.

The main task of the Worker, with the mechanization, is simply inspecting the automated implants functioning.

Luddite Attack! If the heroes were noticed by the Luddites, an ambush is set. A worker near them starts screaming, as if he had the hand pinched in the clockworks. When the heroes run to aid him he brandish a hidden welder torch (Reach 2, Damage 2d8) and attacks the party! In the meantime other Luddites jump out of their concealment and join the fight. The heroes must check for surprise.

The combat area is a corridor between the machinery 12" by 4" on a north-south axis. Place the heroes in the center of the area, in contact with the torch welder Luddite. The other goons starts at the two ends of the corridor. In the northern end there is also a lever. Pushing it a waste pit 4" by 4" opens in the ground at 6" from the northern end. All the characters in the area must do an Agility roll or fall inside suffering 2d6 damage. Exiting from the pit requires an Agility roll. The Luddites will try to lure the party in the pit. Due to the terrible noise no one notice the fight.

■ (M) Luddite Cultists (1 per hero + 1)

Fire and brimstone! After the Luddite attack the real threat begins. The heroes, watching around, see a hooded man exiting from a door hidden in a panel near the controls of the big molten metals bowls. The man does something to the commands, they starts fizzling and crackling and something goes terribly wrong: the huge, auto-

mated bowls, instead of overthrow their content in the proper place turn it in the working area! Thousands of gallons of hot molten metal invades the area!

The heroes must flee away to avoid a terrible death. It is a Chase. Each Range Increment equates to 5" on the tabletop. The party starts at Medium distance from the melting metal tide. Agility is the Chase skill, the tide has d6 Agility. If a hero is caught in the fire, she suffers 2d8 damage. Obstacles in this scene don't deal damage, instead they causes -2 to the Chase roll.

5. THE LUDDITES CULT

The heroes reach the safety of a catwalk, while below the fire roars and the people screams. In this moment they see the hooded man that caused all this mess slipping away into the same secret passage of before! Prying open the secret door requires a Lockpicking or Smarts (-2) roll. Following the man isn't difficult, the passage is dusty and the footprints are clear. They are going deep in the lower, more ancient, levels of the factory.

The trip ends in a big room. Many hooded cultists are preaching around a metal idol, a huge cave statue made of scrap servomechanisms and full of pieces of old tires. A cultist, a madman with a long beard, shouts aloud:

"The fullness of times is coming! The great Burning One will free us Workers from the slavery of the machines! Master, accept our sacrifice!"

Then the priest throws a torch at the idol feet. The tires inside it starts burning. A terrified scream echoes. Only now the heroes sees that, chained to the idol chest, there is a naked man. He is Cybercount Olon!

The party must intervene now to save him from a terrible death. When the heroes attack, the first thing the priest does is to invoke the Burning One. At his words the idol animates, and, engulfed by flames, attack the party!

The idol takes an automatic wound at the end of any round after the third one. At round five it is completely destroyed. If Olon isn't yet free, the poor man is burned alive.

Freeing Olon requires a successful Called Shot (-4) to the chains constraining him (Toughness 7).

- (M) Luddite Cultists (1 per hero)
- (M) Flaming Idol (WC)
- (M) Baku, Luddite Priest (WC)

6. AFTERMATH

All the cultists are fanatics and fight to death. If the heroes manages to save Olon, the man is very grateful, and can aid the party in future, given his considerable wealth. And maybe the Luddites threat isn't ended, other ones could lurk in the deepest levels of Faktory-27...

LUDDITES CULTISTS

Human Workers. Their minds are tainted by the demonic touch of the Burning One demon.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d4, Stealth d6.

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1);

Gear: Heavy worker suit (+1), dagger (Str+d4), crowbar (Str+d6).

FLAMING IDOL (WC)

Apparently only a crude statue of spare mechanical parts full of pieces of rubber, in truth this simulacrum hosts part of the Burning One demonic essence.

Attributes: Agility d4, Smarts d6 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+3, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6.

Pace: 5; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 12;

Special abilities:

■ **Construct:** +2 to Toughness, +2 to recover from Shaken status. Immune to poisons and called shots.

■ **Punch:** Str+d4

■ **Size +3:** A monstrosity 10 feet tall.

■ **Fire Aura:** Starting from round three, each character within 3" from the flaming Idol suffers 1d10 damage at the end of the Idol action.

BAKU, LUDDITE PRIEST (WC)

A cultist of the dark gods.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6.

Pace: 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6 (1);

Edges: Arcane Background (Faith), Command, Fervor.

Powers [15 pp]: *Armor* (fire aura), *blast* (cone of spare metal parts), *deflection* (psionic shield).

Gear: Heavy worker suit (+1), unholy dagger (Str+d6).

Special abilities:

■ **Gift of the Luddites:** any technological devices within 5" of the Luddite priest (including plasma weapons) fumbles with a roll of 1-2 on the skill dice, regardless of the Wild Dice.