Gunner Cade was an awful disappointment; an amateurish effort cursed with a wooly plot . . .

Kornbluth and Judith Merril. The concept of one man pitting himself against the might of a Solar Empire seemed too good to pass up.

I wish I had. *Gunner Cade* was an awful disappointment; an amateurish effort cursed with a wooly plot and based on the absurd premise that the survivors of a nuclear conflagration have cloaked the art of war with arcane and elitist rituals in order to protect themselves against death from the sky. All this is pretty tame stuff even for a book written in 1952, especially when one compares it with anything that came from the pen of Robert Heinlein during the same period.

In my haste to snatch *Gunner Cade* off the shelf, though, I almost overlooked the little notice on the cover announcing I would also be receiving *Takeoff*, by C.M. Kornbluth, as well. I assumed that it would be a short story, at most a couple of pages long, thrown in as filler for good measure. Needless to say, I was surprised when I abruptly collided into it halfway through the book, mercifully putting an end to the misadventures of the gunner. After completing *Takeoff*, I had to wonder why I had not given prime billing over *Gunner Cade*. *Takeoff* is certainly the superior work, a joy to read and well worth the slog through the murk of *Gunner Cade* to get to it.

Takeoff is all the more relevant in light of NASA's twenty-fifth anniversary. Science-fiction literature can just as often be a look into the past as it can be a door to the future. The scale of government funding and intervention that went into putting a man on the moon seemed inconceivable to interested observers like Kornbluth and Heinlein in the early 1950s. The latter addressed the dilemma of how to carry out such an operation without government involvement in *The Man Who Sold the Moon*, a gem I consider to be his finest work. Kornbluth attacked the problem in a different way, but the read is just as rewarding. *Takeoff* deserves a far better fate than being shackled with *Gunner Cade*.

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Into the Void

by Carl Smith

The *Into the Void* module for the STAR FRONTIERS® game, in ARES™ Magazine issue #15, had some errors/omissions that are cleared up below.

Because of a lack of space, the statistics for the robot, Violet, were omitted. Violet is a V Series Medical Robot with arm-like extensions in the upper torso. The robot's head has vocal, audio, light/infrared, pressure, and sensor circuits for exo-biology. A Level 5 Medical robot, Violet has the equivalent of the following experience levels: Level 5 Medical, Level 4 First Aid, Minor & Major Surgery, Level 3 Control Infection, Cure Disease, Level 2 Neutralize Toxins, Analyze Eco-systems, Level 1 Activate Freeze Field, and Communication. Violet is fitted with a poly-vox, an interface for ship computers, and Level 5 security programs. Violet is used to dealing with Hota Lea, and can be difficult when dealing with other members of the crew if they improperly input information.

All ships listed as Sathar assault scouts should be Sathar frigates. The correction was made in the module, but not in the story.

The grav couches on the XV-1 were incorrectly numbered. They should have been numbered from 3-8, with 8 being Slard's seat. The deck plan key and ship map should then have been numbered from 1-27, with 5 added to each numbered location on the ship and in the key starting with area 4 (9), Gunnery Control.

NIGHTMARE HOUSE™ game

By David Marshall

A few minor glitches in the NIGHTMARE HOUSE™ game in ARES™ Magazine #15 have been identified and are herewith cleared up.

Part 4, Section H, #9: *(addition).* A Hunter can choose to use no Power Markers for this purpose only if the Hunter's Astral Body occupies or is next to the Power Point he is exorcising, and is in a different Power Point than his Psyche.

Part 4, Section H, #10: *(clarification).* The House moves any number of his

own Power Markers from his section of the POWER WHEEL to each Power Point being Exorcised, up to the value of the Circle of Energy on which the Power Point is found, or, if the Entity is being exorcised, up to the value of the Circle of Darkness occupied by the Entity.

Part 4, Section H, #12: *(addition to the end of the paragraph).* If the Hunter is trying to Exorcise an Axis Control Marker, he may add 1 to the attempt for each Exorcised Room Marker already on that Axis.

Part 4, Section H, #13: *(change and clarification).* The House rolls one die for each Exorcism being performed and modifies the result in each case by adding the numbers on any Power Markers that he moved to the Power Point being Exorcised and the number of the Circle of Energy in which the Power Point is located. Finally, if the Exorcism is directed against the Entity, the number of Controlled Axes is added to the die roll, but not the number of the Circle of Darkness on which the Entity is located.

Part 4, Section I, #1: *(addition/clarification).* In addition, the Hunter controlling any Character in the Crypt, Graveyard, Cellar, or Tower places that Character's Psyche Marker (whether vulnerable or not) in any Axis Control Point of his choice.

Part 6, #3: *(rules change).* If a Character's Soul is Vulnerable, and he or she loses a Physical Haunting, then in addition to paying the penalty of 2 Power Markers to the House, the Character rolls one die. If the resulting number is greater than that Character's Physical Strength Value, the Character dies. The House automatically gains immediate and permanent possession of the Character's Soul with the consequences described in Step 8 of the POSSESSION PHASE.

Part 7: *(addition to last paragraph).* If the Hunter was performing the Exorcism in his Astral Body and loses, he immediately becomes Lost on the Astral.

Part 8: *(addition to last paragraph).* Flip the Body Marker over to its Possessed Side. Any Tools the character possesses having a Psychic Strength modifier greater than 0 (zero) must be dropped into the Room Space that the Character's Body Marker occupies.

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