

Curse of the Infernal Euphonia: **The Cosmic Companion**

lore from Honest Tommy: Curse of the Infernal Euphonia

Rainbow Unicorn | individual: steward

Wrangler of the Unicorn Chapter of the Order of Stewards, Rainbow is a man not to be crossed unless one wants to risk a firm thump to the head and possibly a shattered rib or three. Orphaned at a young age like many of London's children, Rainbow was taken in by the Stewards and sent for conditioning to Madame Planck's Correctional School for Violent Young Gentlemen, where he excelled at the violent part and less the correctional aspect. The young man rose through the ranks by sheer physical force and caught the eye of the Fluffi-Wuffkin, the Order's supreme master, after leaving his fellow orphan Lavender with a few orphaned teeth and bones.

British royal family | group: royal dynasty

Leading the Realm and Star Territories of Great Britain, the British royal family comprises Queen Victoria and her close relations, as well as several rather more distant relatives who refuse to put her on their Christmas card lists. With the Queen indisposed within her life-preserving iron lung, the monarch's daughter Princess Victoria heads the family on festive occasions and matters of state. She attempts to teach her young cousins the value of moral prosperity and unity, though most of her beloved relatives would rather unite to prosper off their traditional Christmas banquet of roughly twelve delicious courses of fatty seasonal meats.

Wufflump | critter: sentient

A ruminating ungulate, the wufflump is a hardy creature with a hugely inflated hindgut. Although its spacious digestive system stores and processes years' worth of food over the span of a week, the resultant colonic sac is something of a bother for the wufflump, which drags its stuffed gut behind it like a stocking full of presents. Prized for its tender meat, the wufflump population of Makemake was highly surprised to see a band of very armed and very hungry British surveyors charging at them across the red nitrogen fields. Since their discovery by the British—which was followed by a grand feast that ended when the surveyors all died of methane inhalation while tucking into their wufflump drumsticks—the species has become a fixture of winter banquets across the Fifteen Galaxies.

The Euphonia | gizmo: speaking machine

Intended to revolutionise cosmic communications, the Fabulous Speaking Machine patented by Joseph Faber was ushered forth as the scientific sensation of the age. Said to be able to replicate every word in the languages of the Realm through the application of levers, keys, and bloviating pumps, the device funnelled elementary sounds through a synthetic throat and voice box to distinctly reproduce Human speech.

However, such talk preceded the Euphonia's first exhibition, performed for the British royal family on Christmas Eve. The machine, constructed largely from a piano strapped to several bellows, produced a sound the Royal Infomarium has confirmed as "pants-wettingly thunderous" on Princess Victoria's testimony, and caused a spate of colossal depression across the entire English dynasty. Fortunately for the Realm, Faber soon saw sense and took a hammer to his terrifying creation.

Cognitypes | species: sapient

As life got its act together and began climbing out of the primordial ooze of the omniverse, the first sapient thoughts came into existence. While these were usually little more than "I hope I can eat that berry" or "why do I have legs suddenly", the onset of sapience among the early life-forms of the cosmos gave rise to one of its most peculiar and insidious species: The neuroform gestalt beings known as cognitypes.

What cognitypes are is a matter hotly debated by professors of the Laplace Institute and archivists of the Royal Infomarium, ever keen to classify the manifold races of space and time. While the ancient Pencans were said to alter entire solar systems in the blink of a brainwave, the cognitypes that recently menaced London rarely showed themselves above the surface of subconscious. London citizens report hearing a legion of whispered voices during the dark winter season, though others have pointed out the same effect when perusing a particularly labyrinthine library, so consensus remains divided on the truth of these beings of pure thought.

Infirmiry for Really Mad Gestalt Entities | location: structure

As Humanity expanded its reach into the more exotic climes and realms of the cosmos, it became apparent that the definition of "life" stretches far beyond the norm of Earth-bound critters. While these endless forms were certainly most beautiful to the surveyors and adventurers who happened upon them, many proved downright bonkers and it quickly became imperative to catalogue, examine, and indeed lock up some of the more brain-twisting beasties of the omniverse. For this reason, institutes and clinics have been established to undertake the intricate and painstaking study of these richly diverse entities.

The Infirmiry for Really Mad Gestalt Entities is not one of these. Rather, it began life as an interstellar zoo ship captained by "Rotten" Bob Guffer, who zipped around the Thirteen Colonies showing off the various eldritch monsters he'd managed to cage in

fusion harnesses and obelisk chains. Ultimately Rotten Bob careened his mobile zoo into the hollow of a supercooled sun in the Maloonium system, where it remains perched as an exotic wildlife centre and treatment clinic staffed by native Loonies. Currently, the Infirmary is offering a reward for the safe return of the gestalt warlord Loose Affiliation of Writhing Eye Stalks, or at least parts of him.

Runcible's Murder Groids | gizmos: cybonics

While some might spend a rainy Sunday afternoon pottering around their allotment or catching up on some knitting, Professor Runcible of the HMRS *Jolly Good* whiles away her time by building autonomous murder robots. Constructed from clockwork scrap and whatever she finds to hand on her workbench, these so-called "groids" clank around Runcible's ship looting spare parts to add to their own skeletal assemblies, or ensuring the Leiden Chamber doesn't develop a fault and suddenly blast the crew into the madness of the Pipwhistle Dimension.

Primarily however, the mad professor utilises her groids to go about maiming her enemies—whom she defines in a rather generalised sense that could well comprise the entirety of known (and unknown) reality. She uses a hypercube interface to speak to and through her murderbots in order to recommend her victims lie down and close their eyes while undergoing disembowelment, which is about as kind as Professor Runcible usually gets unless she's enjoyed a particularly big lie-in.

Mags | individual: groid

Designated Murder Groid Thirty-Seven but more commonly called "Mags" by its insane creator, this cybionic unit harbours somewhat large dreams and aspirations for what is essentially a toaster on metallic squid legs. At the top of Mags's to-do list is the preservation of its own robotic self at all costs—a hope fatally at odds with existence in the general vicinity of Professor Runcible.

Prone to terrified screaming fits whenever anything goes wrong (which is often), Mags fears for its artificial life at the hands of its creator, whom the groid is forced to remain loyal to, but holds out hope for the possibility of a peaceful afterlife or reincarnation as a set of polished cutlery or a pleasant floral umbrella.

Celestial alignment | space phenomena: cosmic event

A rare cosmic phenomenon in which several star systems' worth of planets from the Albion Reach to the Vemodalen Obscurity line up in particularly pleasing patterns for anyone looking roughly northwest of the centre of the universe. Such happenings are celebrated and feared in equal measure, and give rise to all sorts of tall tales and fables said to herald everything from the end of all things to increased libido in the time it takes one world to eclipse the other.

Spondle 7 | location: planet

For cosmonauts and star captains jetting through space from one adventure to the next, grimy worlds like Spondle 7 are simply greasy pit stops along the hectic raceway of existence. For the poor unfortunates who eke out a living there, the reality is rather more mundane and far less sanitary.

A world close to the Wheel of Far Haven littered with the accumulated scrap left in the wake of the Jupiter Wars, Spondle 7 is a roadsweeper's paradise. The atmosphere is thick and tar-like, and while the western continent is nothing but lagoons, the southern megaburg of Krope is stacked with shelters, flops, and mud-brick insulae. Those seeking honest pay can toil at the many dockyard workhouses, though the desperate and dispossessed are usually reduced to sweeping truckles from the dockyard streets. Truckle sweepers must take care when disposing of the little critters; many a pit-dweller has suddenly found their dug-out roof collapsing under the weight of a city block's worth of truckles.

KRAMPUS | group: scientific institute

While the legend of the Krampus is a festive fable used by parents the universe over to scare their children into doing housework for fear of a terrifying hornéd demon from the netherspaces, the individual who recently assumed the title is less mythical and more maniacally demented.

Dennis Rupenment, once a revolutionary mind in group psychology and convergent ethics, began experimenting with memory tests among goldfish by setting up a large maze of fish tanks in his dorm at the Royal Academy. The resultant flood left him in hot water with the faculty, but he graduated to oversee his own scientific research team aboard a mobile base of operations, the *Moonstruck*. His Karma Research and Moralistic Program of Unified Sciences was established with very little forethought, primarily to secure a grant for a large water park on Julip, though its diligent crew was lost near the Mucklebean Vortex while attempting an ethics survey of the Blothian Thunderworlds. All that remains of the team is a last, garbled transmission warning of a spatial oscillation that, as far as bemused translators can fathom, made Overseer Rupenment dangerously horny by his own admission.