

2009 Spring Preview – Trailers of things to come

Title: Unusual beginnings

Genre: 4th Edition D&D

The screen fades in upon an obscured man at a writing desk. His iron quill scratches along the parchment, the only sound in an otherwise empty moment in time.

“At this rate... No... we’ll think of something.” The man’s voice is weary with age, though his features suggest a man much more youthful. “Maybe regulars out of Wisner. But where will the...” A knock interrupts his thought and he rises. His clothing is simple, little more than a farmer’s overalls. His gait has an irregular rhythm, quick slow, quick slow, the hallmark of a veteran.

As he opens the door, light from the messenger’s lantern pours in. His eyes blink at the unexpected change in illumination. “My apologies sir, but they’ve returned”

“How many?”

The messenger shifts back and forth. “Well... umm... less than half”

“The Gods be damned.” He makes a sign of good luck and fortune, a small penance for blasphemy. “At this rate we’ll have no one left to protect the village. Anything else?”

“Actually yes sir. There was something... actually someone....”

“Call the Elders. The sign has arrived. Our fate is no longer our own”. The man leaves his office, his shifted swagger an afterthought. Now was not the time to focus on old wounds. Now was the time to focus on new ones.

Fade to black.

Title: The lesser of many evils

Genre: World of Darkness

Fade in on a hulking shape quickly riffling through a collection of papers. His face is hidden beneath the shadow of a trucker’s hat (Bernie’s Transmissions) and grease. At least it is dark enough to be grease.

Each page is scanned and discarded with minimal effort. Breaking routine, the shape suddenly stops and rereads one of the documents. His eyes widen slightly and the corners of his mouth turn up for the briefest of moments. Satisfied, he folds up the paper and takes stock of his surroundings. Studio apartments where never his dig, but hey they

fit some personalities right? He walks away from the table towards the large bay window, the only escape from the beige and coffee walls.

He looks out at the city below, a crawling monstrosity of modern architecture. Towering buildings taint the evening's skyline with their mechanical luminescence. Far greater villains inhabit these tombs than the one looking upon them. The jingling of keys outside the door rouses him from his musings and he scurries for cover. He thanks the landlord for allowing the door to open inwards, providing the perfect alcove for him to stand in.

A young woman fumbles her way in to the apartment. She is upset, the mascara still streaming down her face. An attractive woman, easily in her 20's, she drops her purse and peels her khaki jacket off. The door slides closed behind her and she reaches to hang her jacket, lost in whatever memory currently has taken her.

He gladly takes the jacket from her, pulling it close enough to catch a faint brush of apple blossoms.

Her hand darts to her mouth, preparing a scream that will never come.

“Shhhh”

She collapses to the floor.

Fade to black.

Title: A weekend in paradise

Genre: GURPS

“...reports are still coming in, but security forces have reassured the situation is under control...”

Fade in on a man lounging on an expensive leather couch watching a holographic image. He is wearing exquisitely tailored clothing, but exquisitely tailored to someone else based on the slouching shoulders and gaping neck.

“Yeah, you boys always have it under control don't you” he says to apparently no one in a husky, slightly slurred manner. “What do you think, security what it used to be in these parts of town?”

Pan right to the matching recliner. A middle aged man sits rigid, his head rolled back. His mouth is wide open, a mausoleum to his last failed negotiation. The crimson stain on his silk shirt stopped growing only a short time ago.

“Guess you get what you paid...” The windows of the bungalow blast in spraying the room with shards of glass. Men in black polished armor storm into through every opening, weapons at the ready.

“Oh now you’ve done it! I spilt my drink on my brand new suit.” The man on the couch rises to face the security forces expressionless reflections. He is covered in broken glass, many pieces protruding from his body. “I don’t know how much they pay you boys, but it isn’t enough.” He shakes off the glass shards, and yanks a large piece out of his face. The flesh around the cut quickly knits itself together, leaving little more than a red line. Within a blink of an eye, the line disappears. A few of the security take a step back. “Oh that’s nothing, wait till you see my next trick”. He motions towards the corpse, uttering a single incoherent word. The body’s eyes flutter open. Screams fill the COM links.

Fade to black.

Title: Divine Providence or a Chance Meeting
Genre: 4th Edition D&D

The sound of horses trotting echo in the dark.

Fade in on a dirt highway, well worth throughout the years. A group of soldiers patrols the area, though no heraldry flies above them. The leader reigns in and motions for two scouts fan out. Tense moments pass before a bird squawks off to the right. The leader strips his helm off; a lion’s mane of golden locks descends around his jagged ears. Others follow suit, and soon the squad is passing out rations and wineskins.

The piercing cry of a hawk penetrates the afternoon. Metal on metal rings out as swords are drawn and the hum of bows being strung follows.

A small group of travelers stumbles out of the woods. Days of travel have coated their clothing in a thick dust as they shamle towards the road.

“Ho friends!” cries the lion “It would appear that you’ve not seen a bed in some nights. I doubt you’ll be seeing one soon. I bring ill news. The village ahead has been sacked. We found no survivors, though it would appear the women and children escaped. We let their tracks head off to toward Point Punt, though I doubt they can walk that far”

A toddler screams from the small group of travelers.

“Take that as a warning friends” purrs the lion “there is naught but death ahead. We ride on; my tongue is no longer free.”

The soldiers swing into their saddles and thunder off.

As the camera fades, it reveals the small group of travelers forming a circle around a young girl.

Title: Let's Ring In the New Year

Genre: GURPS

“10...9...8...7...6...5...4...3...2...1...HAPPY NEW YEAR”

Fade in on a New Year's Eve Celebration. It is storming outside, yet the patrons of the bar don't seem to notice. Streamers and glitter fly into the air. Couples grab each other, the last and first kiss of various years. In the corner, a scuffle ensues...

“This thing never works when I want it too.” The man is tall, well build, and wearing a tuxedo. Some might consider him a little over dressed, but the occasion might call for it. In one hand he holds a drink, something orange and frozen. In the other, a small black rod. “What better way to bring in this new millennium? Even Johnny got dressed up”. He motions towards one of the group, a hideous man missing most of his teeth. He is wearing what can only be described as rags and a party favor hat.

“Just give it here, your flair for the theatrics already missed its chance”. The speaker this time is another tall man, this one wearing the working man's tuxedo, a white button down shirt and khaki pants. “Let me see, what did you.... Ahah! Here we go”. Thunder cracks down on the city. A few of the revelers look out the windows.

“Sure is coming down hard now” comments a passerby. “Might even get a severe thunderstorm. Look at how the sky is turning green! Boy things took a turn for the worse.”

“Hopefully only for a few of you, only for a few” replies the man in the tuxedo.

Fade to black.

Title: The lesser of many evils, Part II

Genre: World of Darkness

Fade in on a swirling image, the image resolves suddenly to be the exterior of a large brick building. At least 3 stories can be seen of this modern tomb, with an unknown number above the picture. The front door opens, and a man silently slips out. He cautiously looks around, pulls the collar of his Carhartt jacket up and his hat down (Bernie's Transmissions). Seemingly slipping from shadow to shadow, the man quickly makes his way to a busy street corner. Cars glide by noiselessly.

The man brushes by a few late night walkers, but the streets are mostly deserted. They are always deserted at this time.

Suddenly the man dodges into a shadowed doorway, crouching down like a dirty Jack-in-the-box ready to spring upon some unlucky soul. He glances up to the sky, catching the last remaining cloud pass from the moon. He tenses, hearing a forgotten siren's song.

A faint howl is heard... the image quickly dissipates into nothingness.

Pan back to find a woman, her face concealed due to the camera angle. Her silhouette covers a large glass bowl filled with water placed upon a stone table.

"That can't be, I shouldn't be able to hear through the pool". Her hand shoots to her face; a brief glimpse of young, delicate fingers is seen. She wears a ring, half a heart dangles as the charm.

A faint howl is heard...louder than the first. It is echoed by a second, then third voice...

Fade to black

Title: Boys will be boys

Genre: GURPS

"...And that's why I've called you all here. Money talks right?" Fade in on a man wearing a three-piece suit. A middle-aged man, he still carries the air of someone who's walked past a few dying men, and never once stopped to check a pulse. "Well mine could walk from here to the next city in back before any you dirtbags could wipe the drool off your mouths. But let's not personal philosophies get in the way. I have something you want, and you all are expendable enough to get something I want."

Pan back to reveal a warehouse. A makeshift stage has been erected at one end, a podium in the center. The aristocrat stands at the podium, talking down to a group of misfits. Some people in the group openly carry guns, and no small majority look like they've been on the receiving end of a barrel.

"As I was saying, this is fairly simple. Escort my son back to me, and the credits are yours"

"How about half up front!?" yells a particularly feral man from the crowd. He wipes away a drop of drool with a cybernetic hand. "Lots of tolls between here and there, could get a little pricy." The last comes out more like "cud git alil preesey"

"Because the last guy I gave half too up front decided to walk with my money. I'm pretty sure he's still slowly cooking over a barbeque. Any real questions? Good, then I expect all who are interested to be out of this building in the next.." he glances down at a watch worth more than the lives of each person in the room, nodding briefly at his security detail "...5 minutes"

“So what exactly did he do to bring that kind of heat?” someone calls out from the crowd.

“Oh you know, boys will be boys...” the aristocrat replies with a near perfect smile, the best money can buy.

Fade to black...in the darkness a deafening roar shatters the silence.

The house lights come up on the man in the suit. He’s standing behind a town car door, sliding into the patent leather seats.

“Oops, guess it was more like 2 minutes”

Fade to black, the sound of chuckling fading after.
