



*At some point it all fell apart ... I don't know how. One day, everyone was normal - the next day, the mobs had arrived. Blank, mindless and with strange powers: they roamed the streets, killing everyone they met who wasn't one of them.*

*A few of us are immune, but there are less of us everyday. The mob takes us. Some of us think that the controller lives in the structure they have been building in central London. Some of us think they're Martians ... Just like poor Bernard did.*

- Diaries of Professor Roney

## INTRODUCTION

The Hive is a game set in a world that has been taken over by mobs under the control of an alien mind. Sometime in the late 1960s, London Transport uncovered an alien spacecraft while excavating an extension at the Hobs Lane underground station. There was a lot of publicity about the discovery of Martians in London. However, it ended when a force in the craft awakened. The force took over the minds of those nearby, and welded them into a mob dedicated to killin any who would not join them.

The mob had strange psychic powers that they grew as more joined them. Only a few were immune. The influence of the mobs grew, until no place on Earth was safe. Then, they set about rebuilding the Earth in the image of their masters.

A few of the immune have survived.

## CHARACTERS

The players are survivors who are immune to the pschic influence of the mob. Many of them are ordinary people, frightened out of their wits. Some are dedicated survivors.

Characters have the following abilities:

**TRAITS** - These are what describe the character's

abilities. A character may have any number of Traits provided they have at least one point in every Trait. Traits should be neither too narrow, nor too wide. The score assigned to a Trait indicates how good it is.

**DRAWBACKS** - Whereas Traits are generally positive, Drawbacks are negative. A Drawback must have a score, like a Trait. The score indicates how badly the Drawback affects the character.

**POWERS** - Player characters have only one power: Immune to the Mob. This means they cannot be taken over by the force that is controlling the humans of Earth.

Players have 10 points with which to create characters. These poins should be assigned to Traits. If a player decides to create a character with Drawbacks, they receive extra points for Traits equal to the number of points they have in Drawbacks.

## PLAYING THE GAME

When a player wants to do anything in the game that is not an automatic success, they ust roll dice. The number of dice they have to roll is equal to the score in any Traits that are applicable.

The type of dice used is immaterial. An even score indicates a success, an odd score is a failure. Only successes are counted.

The referee must set a Difficulty for each task. The Difficulty is the number of successes that are required. A Difficulty can range from 1 (Easy) to 6 (Insanely Difficult). Alternatively, if the player is being opposed by another character, they can roll the applicable Traits, and the characer with the most successes wins. If a character has any applicable Drawbacks, these increase the Difficulty by the score of the Drawback,

There are a number of ways to use this mechanic:

**ONE-OFF ROLLS** - Roll against the Difficulty. Either the roll succeeds or it fails. Useful when the players can only have one attempt.

**TASK ROLLS** - If a player is trying to complete a long term task, the player may accumulate successes from each roll. Once the total number of successes beats the Difficulty, the task has been completed. The interval between rolls is up to the referee.

**COMBAT** - In combat, the number of successes scored against an opponent is subtracted from their Traits. Once one of a character's Traits reaches 0, they are out of the combat and at the mercy of their opponent.

**TOOLS** - If a character has an item that may help them, then they can have an extra dice. Some Traits will need tools to be used, so if the character does not have the required tool, the number of dice is reduced.

**COMBINING TRAITS** - If two characters have applicable Traits that are the same value, they may combine them to gain an extra dice. For example, two characters with a Trait at 3 may combine their Traits to roll 4 dice. A third character with the same Trait at 3 would not increase the number of dice rolled to 5 (3 is less than 4), but two more characters would!

**ZERO TRAITS** - There are some skills that everyone has, but which may not have an applicable Trait. These are called Zero Traits. If a character uses a Zero Trait in a skill roll, they automatically get 1 dice. The Difficulty of the task is raised by 1. Alternatively, other characters in the contest get their applicable Traits raised by 1.

## SETTING

The Hive is set in a world that has been taken over by an alien force. In the past, Martians realised their world was dying. To preserve their culture, they genetically altered primitive Man, giving him strange psychic powers (just like the Martians) and programming him to follow the tenets of the Martian culture. For some reason, the programming was flawed, and did not take properly. The Martian culture died out, believing they had failed.

When the spacecraft containing the dead Martians was discovered at Hobs Lane, the investigating scientists caused it to reawaken. The craft was a psychic battery, and the immense power stored within it awakened the Martian programming in those nearby. The mob roamed

the streets, entrapping more in its psychic snare and killing all those who were immune to the Martian influence. As the mobs grew, their power grew with them. Eventually, Man was reduced to a few wretched survivors. The rest had become Martians.

With the entire world under their control, the New Martians are rebuilding the Earth to suit a new vision. Strange structures are built for alien purposes. The mobs follow the dictates of the Martian culture.

## PLAYING THE GAME

The Hive is intended to be a survival horror game, in the style of the British sci-fi of the 1950s and 1960s. The player characters are the only people who can resist the Martian influence, and they are Humanity's last hope.

The referee should consider whether he wants the players to try and fight against their doom, or whether they will eventually be worn down by their constant struggles. The war against the Hive is almost unwinnable, but there might be hope.

The game can be set either during the immediate struggles against the mobs, as they spread the malignant Martian net across the countryside. Alternatively, the game can take place in a strange landscape that is all the more alien for being so familiar. It is up to the referee.

For more information, try reading the Quatermass books by Nigel Kneale. They depict a world where Man is alone in the universe, and uncomprehending of the horrors that await. Alternatively, try and hunt down the Hammer movies or the BBC reproduction of The Quatermass Experiment.

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## IN MEMORY

Nigel Kneale: 18 April 1922 - 29 October 2006