

Cambrian Rhythms A 2022 Shotgun Scenario by Pavel

An act of highway robbery, three dead Program Operatives, a missing item - is this how it all comes toppling down?

What is Happening

Yesterday

Indiana State Road 37.

An explosion at 02:17. Blue 1212-b and Blue 5981-4 advanced rapidly from where they'd been lying in wait. Four sharp pistol cracks. A pry bar for the back of the SUV. The heavy case wrestled out of the back of the SUV, popped open with key card over rides.. The silver cylindrical canister was removed from the armored case. The Majestic Faithful disappeared into the night. Two nights later, in a barn in English Indiana, they were the first victims of the Vector.

550 Million Years Ago

The Elder Thing was going to ground - its fellows hunted down, shockingly!, impossibly!, destroyed. It was a hive mind, intent on two equally entwined goals: survival, eradication of the threat. It learned from the efforts of the other Singularities - big was a mistake; The Thing was going small. Instead of creating a weapon, it created a control, a recombination - something that would cause the Threat to destroy itself from within. Meanwhile, the Thing buried itself. Waiting for the end result of the battle, waiting for the Vector to finish the job.

Now

The Vector are a self replicating worm colony - a hunter killer mechanism designed by an Elder Thing to wipe out the Spectral Polyps during the world's Cambrian Age. They replicate in the gut, gain nutrition from the central nervous system, take over control of the host for a short time, and find new hosts to repeat on an expanding model. Mindless, weak individually, but capable of destruction on a mass scale given sufficient time to follow through on their programing.

Briefing

Objectives

1. Find and Retrieve the missing Program possession (canister)
2. Find and arrest/eliminate the thieves
3. Clean up or Cover up any 'mess' or unreasonable fall out

Resources

1. JTF IDs and Clearances
2. 2 SUVs with common weapon and gear load out (GM choices - from full SWAT to simple FBI load outs)
3. Organizational Support (+20 on all equipment and service requisition rolls)

{Skill Checks: a roll works as normal, however if a skill rank is indicated the skill auto succeeds if that skill is the noted rank or higher}

Investigation

1. Indiana State Troopers
 - a. LEO assumes 'drugs' - they are putting in the work but without much interest
 - b. JTF Indiana Trooper Liaison: SGT. Mason Pelter, helpful, friendly
2. Investigative Leads to Date
 - a. Tire Tracks in the Woods Nearby - 5 year old Ford F150 stock tires
 - b. 4 9mm casings, ballistics and case forensics will point to two different Beretta M9s
 - c. Roadside bomb wasn't an IED, rather a professional explosive. Radio detonation, high end unknown explosive, bits of casing
 - i. The explosive chemical compound isn't listed in the EXP database - modified Bureaucracy, Criminology 60+ will get answers back from Control in 3 days; Forensics, Demolitions, Chemistry 60+ will get results back in 12 hours of time in the crime lab.
 - ii. The explosive used was a chemical engineered by Guy Trout, in 1997 - Guy died in 2001. The patent was

withdrawn shortly after his death - looking into Guy Trout, Agents will need to consult with their Case Officer to find out he was an MJ-12 chemical engineer

d. Highway CCTV

- i. Area of the attack out of coverage
- ii. Can see the victims' vehicle five minutes prior to the attack, diving speed limit, left hand lane, safe driving

3. Agent Investigation

a. Satellite Coverage of the site of the attack

- i. Bureaucracy, Law, SigInt, CompSci skills 60+ can get back coverage in 4 days
- ii. Burning a Bond Point (appropriate bond) gets coverage back in 2 days
 - 1. See Ford Drive Away
 - 2. 8 hours and SigInt, CompSci 60+ can follow the Ford to English Indiana, where SAT coverage is lost

b. Tracks

- i. Survival, MilSci (Land) 40+ will find foot tracks leading into the woods
- ii. 60+ will show that one of the men had a prosthetic left foot

c. Area Witnesses

- i. Troopers canvassed local farms (nothing)
- ii. SigInt, Survival, Any Natural Sciences, EPA/NPS/Other appropriate profession 40+ will twig that there may be nature cameras in the woods
 - 1. Two Cameras
 - 2. SigInt 60+ will produce grainy photos of the men and the Ford's Lic. Plate Number (reported stolen two nights before attack, in English, Indiana)
 - 3. Headed west along rural roads

English, Indiana

1. Via Satellite, via police report, or other means, the Agents will end up in English - the situation there will depend on the event time tracker
 - a. Don't let this get hidden behind a skill check
 - b. Best if Agents find English on their own, but if not, LEO will alert them to it
2. Sgt. Pelter can create a canvass of the area that will find the Ford within 24 hours of arrival in English at the Carpenter Farm
 - a. Ford is parked at Carpenter Farm
 - b. Family is missing
 - c. Two dead men in the barn, one with prosthetic leg
 - d. Worm infested horses in the barn will attack**
 - e. The Open Canister - husks of a half dozen worms in the canister

Action Point.

Horses (3) driven by the Vector will attack {stats at end of scenario} anyone entering the barn

3. Follow up
 - a. Carpenter Family Farm
 - i. House has no clues, takes a couple hours to do a thorough search
 - ii. Carpenters - 2 late 40s adults, 2 grown children, 3 minor children all missing
 - iii. Barn (full search takes three hours ($\frac{1}{2}$ that time if using a squad of troopers)
 1. A few dozen Worm husks are found - odd, until matched to gut husks
 2. There are ropes tied around the central support beams
 3. There is dried blood on the earthen floor near the support beams, matches samples taken from family home for family members (DNA takes three days to get back)
 - iv. The Horses
 1. Gut and Brains full of worms that will try and enter examiner (**SAN Loss 1/1d6**)
 2. Dried blood around nostrils, ears, muzzle, eyes

3. Riding, Survival, Any Natural Sciences 40+: the horses attack as a unit, not behaviorally appropriate

b. Dead Men

- i. Autopsy - 36 hours to wait for ME or can be done by Agent with Med/Surgery 40+ (4 hours per)

1. Brain mostly missing

- a. Med/Forensics 60+ brain remains fed on by unknown bug

- b. Entire Central Nervous System compromised - 2 days for labs to get back, revealing this

2. No fauna in the gut - but three small husks of worms are found in the stomach

- ii. ID'ing the Men

1. Prints aren't in regular system, but will ping with The Program

2. Former Blue Fly members of MJ-12, presumed dead

3. DNA comes back five days later, no longer human (0/1d4 SAN)

c. The Worms

- i. Archaeology, Paleontology, Entomology can be rolled to identify the Worms as Hallucigenia, an ancient species of aquatic lobopodia worm from the Cambrian period. (0/1d2 SAN)

- ii. Laboratory Examination, 24 hours and tests show they are not terrestrial (0/1d4 SAN)

Dynamic Events

From this point forward events are happening separate from the Agents. They can change the events, get out ahead of some - a week, maybe a little more has passed from arrival in the A0. The following table shows events from before the Agents arrival to the conclusion.

"Win" Conditions

Stop the spread of the vector past English, Indiana

Create a plausible explanation for the inevitable quarantine

When	Event	Impact
500 million BCE	Vector Created By Elder Thing	
June, 1989	Vector gathered by MJ12 after breakout event in Pasadena Texas	Placed in storage (canister)
Arrival -2	Truck Stolen from English, Indiana	If Lic. Plate is gained, can track back
Arrival -1	Highway attack - robbery	Starts current events
Arrival Day	MJ12 Faithful take Carpenter Family Hostage	Begins the spread of the colony
Arrival +1	Vector will kill the Majestic Faithful and infect the Carpenter family and horses	Carpenter host bodies begin goal of infecting additional hosts
Arrival +3-5	Agents should find the Carpenter Farm	The Carpenters are gone, horse attack
Arrival +3	Neighbors to both sides (Miscone farm, Laird farm) infected	Begins looking to spread further
Arrival +5	50 infected now spread in rough circle from Carpenter farm	Continues the spread, at faster rate
Arrival +10	Nearly half of English and surrounding area infected	Town is now considered compromised beyond saving
Arrival +15	All of English infected, the Vector moving to expand to entire state	Must be stopped at this point, or all is lost
Arrival +25	Southern Indiana Is fully compromised	Short of extreme measures the vector has broken free

Statistics

English Indiana

English is a town in Crawford County, Indiana, United States. It has served as the county seat of Crawford County 1893. The population is



645. English has a total area of 3.04 square miles (7.87 km²)

The Vector (single)

STR 1 CON 1 DEX 8 INT 6 POW 10

HP 1 WP 10

ARMOR: See OUT OF PHASE.

SKILLS: Alertness 40%, Phase 20%

ATTACKS: Burrow 20%, damage 0 - Infest
(see below)



BURROW: A worm will attempt to enter an animal through an orifice. If circumstances allow, make a Burrow check. On a success, the worm has entered the new host and will begin multiplying. (**SAN Loss 1/1D8**) Each Hour a contest between the Vector's POW and the Targets CON - if the Target Fails the contest, it is now infested - if the target

survives 5 hours, the worm dies. 6 hours from infestation and the host will die, becoming a Vessel (see below).

The infestation can be stopped with a Medicine Check and access to a veterinarian pharmacy - after the first successful check, no further checks are needed

OUT OF PHASE: The Vector exists in a multitude of dimensions. If it is damaged roll "Phase" skill (20%) on a successful roll, it is out of phase for that attack and takes no damage

NON-TERRENE: The worms are at home in nearly any environment. Radiation, pressure, cold, vacuum and other inimical environments have no negative effects on them.

SAN LOSS: 0/1

Stages of Infestation

Infested by single worm: Pain in the gut, inability to Vomit, <i>Can feel it moving</i>	SAN Loss 0/1d6
Infested by swarm: Pain in gut, nausea, inability to vomit, spitting up mucus and blood and dying worms, <i>can see movement in gut, feel them eating at stomach lining</i>	SAN Loss 1/1d8, 1d6 HP Damage, -20 to all Checks SAN Loss for witnesses 1/1d6 (1d8 if Bonded to Victim)
Infested by single worm {Hours 2 and 3} worsening pain/nausea, tingling in extremities, clumsy	SAN Loss 1/1d6, 1d2 HP Damage, -20 to all checks
Infested by single worm {Hours 4 and 5} bloody sputum, headache, feel the moving in sinuses, pain getting even worse, seizures	SAN Loss 1/1d8, 1d6 HP Damage, -40 to all checks
Hour 6 Single, Hour 2 Swarm	Death and Reanimation; witnesses to reanimation SAN Loss 1/1d8 (1d10 if Bonded to Victim)

The Vector (Group)

STR 3 CON 3 DEX 8 INT 8 POW 16

HP 3 WP 12

ARMOR: See OUT OF PHASE.

SKILLS: Alertness 40%, Phase 10%

ATTACKS: Burrow 40%, damage 0 - Infest (see Burrow)

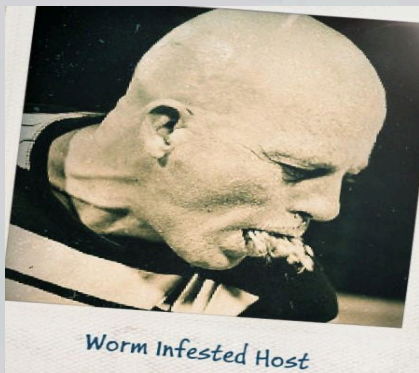
BURROW: A swarm will attempt to enter an animal through an orifice. If circumstances allow, make a Burrow check. On a success, worms have entered the new host and will begin multiplying. **SAN Loss 1/1d8**

Each Hour a contest between the Vector's POW and the Targets CON - if the Target Fails the contest, it is now infested. 2 hours from infestation and the host will die, becoming a Vessel (see below)

OUT OF PHASE: The Vector exists in a multitude of dimensions. If it is damaged roll "Phase" skill (10%) on a successful roll, it is out of phase for that attack and takes no damage

NON-TERRENE: The worms are at home in nearly any environment. Radiation, pressure, cold, vacuum and other inimical environments have no negative effects on them.

SAN LOSS: 1/1D6



Vessel (Worm Zombie)

STR 15 CON 15 DEX 5 INT 8 POW 16

HP 15 WP 16

ARMOR: See VESSEL.

SKILLS: Alertness 20%, Unarmed Combat 30%.

ATTACKS: Grab 30% - Grapple

Vomit Vector 60% (a swarm of Vector {see above} exit the Vessel's mouth and nose into the face of the target that is grappled) May only do this twice - attack may be dodged **SAN Loss 1/1d8**

CLUMSY: A Vessel cannot defend itself against attacks. Even a successful attack roll by a Vessel does not oppose any attacks against it. In fact, all attacks against a Vessel are at +20%.

VESSEL: A Vessel takes half HP damage from all non-hypergeometric attacks. A Vessel reduced to 0 HP (for example, by a successful Lethality roll) may still not be fully destroyed, only so badly mauled that it no longer poses a threat.

Life Span: 5 days from infesting, the host body no longer functions, the Vector dies out

SAN Loss: 0/1D6

Horse Vessel

STR 22 CON 22 DEX 8 INT 8 POW 16

HP 22 WP 16

ARMOR: See VESSEL.

SKILLS: Alertness 20%, Unarmed Combat 30%.

ATTACKS: Bite or Kick 30% 1d8 - STR or DEX Check or fall prone
Trample 30% Lethality 15% Can only trample a target that is already prone

CLUMSY: A Vessel cannot defend itself against attacks. Even a successful attack roll by a Vessel does not oppose any attacks against it. In fact, all attacks against a Vessel are at +20%.

VESSEL: A Vessel takes half HP damage from all non-hypergeometric attacks. A Vessel reduced to 0 HP (for example, by a successful Lethality roll) may still not be fully destroyed, only so badly mauled that it no longer poses a threat. Inspection of Worm riddled body **SAN Loss 1/1d6**

An attack that damages the horse shows worms falling from the body, dozens to hundreds based on the style of the attack. **SAN Loss 1/1d6**