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Before there was *Pyramid*, even before there was a *GURPS*, there was *Roleplayer*. It was originally produced as a free supplement for *Man to Man* and as promotion for the soon-to-be-released *Generic Universal Role-Playing System, GURPS*. From there it grew to a newsletter, and then a full-fledged magazine, devoted to roleplaying, *GURPS*-style. And now, through the miracle of online technology, Steve Jackson Games brings back *Roleplayer* in all its mid-'80s to early-'90s glory! All 30 issues are here on e23 . . . so whether you're a completist, a collector, a *GURPS* fan of the first order, or you just want a look at the early evolution of one of the best roleplaying systems out there, *Roleplayer* has what you need – and it's only on e23!

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GURPS Space Preview

The Sparrials

A New Alien Race for Your GURPS Campaigns

by Steve Jackson

The Sparrials are a small, vaguely feline race, descended from a tree-dwelling predator. They are bipedal; their hands have four skeletally-thin opposable fingers with retractable claws. They are sleekly furred; most coats have varying patterns of brown or rust, but albinos are relatively common. The mouth is the most "alien" feature; closed, it does not look unusual, but it contains several fleshy organs and grids of rough, serrated bone that serve as teeth.

Environment: Sparrials are native to a .95 G Terrestrial world, with an average temperature of 65 degrees — cool by human standards. They have a wider temperature tolerance than humans, however, and can live anywhere a human can. They breathe a standard Terran oxygen mix at .97 atmospheres.

Advantages and Disadvantages: Sparrials have -3 to ST, +2 to DX and +1 to HT. They automatically have the advantages of Night Vision, +2 Acute Taste and Smell, and +3 to Detect Lies skill vs. humans, Sparrials and most other races (they can "smell" fear). If they take a turn to prepare — using the Step and Concentrate maneuver — they can make leaps of twice their normal Jump distance. They have the racial disadvantages of Kleptomania (stealing small personal items is a common form of Sparrial competitiveness), Gluttony and Stubbornness. A Sparrial has normal height and weight, by human standards, for its ST.

As the racial advantages and disadvantages of Sparrials balance out, there is no point cost to play a member of this race.

Psychology: Sparrials are active and adventuresome, but can be very patient when there is need. They tend to be quarrelsome among themselves until a "pecking order" is established, through argument, battle or clever thefts. Sparrials steal from those around them in much the same way humans trade quips and insults — to establish dominance and show their worth without combat.

Sparrials react very strongly to scent. They dislike some races, and like others, purely on the basis of odor. Human scent varies widely, in Sparrial view. The first time a human meets Sparrials, roll 1 die and subtract 3, and record the result. This determines how Sparrials like his

odor; that is the Sparrial reaction bonus (or penalty) to that person thereafter.

Sparrials have two sexes. Males are slightly smaller and faster than females.



Thinking Alien

If a campaign includes alien races, the GM should permit alien PCs whenever they can reasonably fit into the campaign.

Everyone — GMs and players — must roleplay creatively when taking the part of aliens. Even in a space-opera campaign, where all the aliens are essentially human beings in furry coats, this will add to the fun. And in a "hard" SF campaign, it will be *necessary* to play other races as genuinely I alien. A few points to keep in mind when dealing with alien races:

Charisma always works. For game purposes, we define this "force of personality" as universal.

Voice, good looks, etc., rarely work. Aliens will not respond to a pleasant voice unless it is, by coincidence, pleasant to *them*. Few aliens will notice physical beauty in a human. And so on.

Aliens will have racial likes and dislikes. This may be as simple as "reacts at +2 to Terrans," or as quirky as "will not deal with anyone wearing orange."

Aliens may not want the same things we do. Likewise, they may not fear the same things we do. Most humans want wealth, comfort and the approval of their fellow man, and fear injury, ridicule and death. Aliens may not see things the same way . . .

Aliens may like and dislike different things about individuals. The importance attached to personal odor by the Sparrials is an example of the unique standards by which aliens may judge other individuals.

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RP 10 features the winner of our adventure writing contest — "The Isle of Night," a *GURPS Horror* adventure by Scott Paul Maykrantz. Congratulations to Scott and the two runners up, Michael Cule and Aaron Stone.

Other features this issue include the officially revised version of the *GURPS* Hit Location Table, which first appeared on the new *GURPS Reference Screen*; and the first in what we hope will become a series of columns on character design, by playtester extraordinaire Walter Milliken.

— Jeff George

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