

The Crazy File

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Because of Judge Dredd's standing as the most famous, most competent Judge in Mega-City One, almost all of the major events in the city end up involving Dredd in some way or another and are therefore chronicled in 2000AD. However, Mega-City One is a very big place and 400 million people is an awful lot of potential perps. Understandably, by no means every crime wave to hit the city is serious enough to warrant the attention of Dredd. Now whilst 2000AD covers only these major events, the Justice Department keeps very extensive records of all crimes committed in the city. These are fed into MAC, the Justice Department Computer, and analysed, both in the hope of devising methods of predicting crime (or at least spotting a potentially dangerous trend or craze early and nipping it in the bud), and also as a source of training material for prospective Judges.

One of the files that MAC keeps is known to Judges as 'The Crazy File'. This covers all those crimes which developed as a result of new crazes and fashions sweeping the city, and which had to be banned or restricted for reasons of public safety. Some of the more notable entries include those for Boinging, Fashion Flowers, and everything ever invented by the ingenious Otto Sump. Now, with special permission of Chief Judge Silver, White Dwarf is able to open up The Crazy File and report some of the more outrageous things that Mega-City One's citizens have done in their efforts to relieve their boredom.

Tastoburgers

Carter Floyd was, for a short while, one of the most successful fatties in Mega-City One - he amassed a fair amount of wealth as a result. His career took a severe nose-dive when, to the horror of his manager and fans, he became bored with food. Simply being fat was no challenge any more, especially now that Otto Sump's Flabbon had proved so effective that no professional fatty could afford to eat anything else. Floyd retired from fattidom and began to cultivate a hobby as a gourmet.

In the beginning Floyd found his new pastime quite lucrative as he managed to interest quite a few rich people in his sector in the idea of tasty, or at least varied food. However, his dreams of establishing a business empire seemed doomed to be wrecked on the rocks of popular crassness. The ordinary citizen

genuinely preferred Munce and all forms of synthi-food to anything that Floyd produced.

In desperation Floyd hired the Starchi Brothers, one of Mega-City's premier advertising agencies. They advised him to pretend that the taste of his food was the result of sophisticated scientific research rather than use of natural ingredients and quality cooking. Thus was born the *Tastoburger*, a Munce-burger with the added flavour of Floyd's secret weapon - garlic!

Tastoburgers were an overnight success, but this brought its own problems for Floyd. To start with Amalgamated Munce, Inc. were not about to give up their market dominance without a fight. This led to a number of industrial crimes as AMI executives desperately tried to find out the secrets of Floyd's 'scientific breakthrough'. Fortunately for Floyd the Starchi's had planned well. They were making a packet out of him and had the resources to provide very sophisticated security. In addition, as citizens became more and more fond of *Tastoburgers*, and therefore ate them to excess, the Justice Department noticed a massive increase in pollution offences, specifically bad breath.

Floyd's downfall came as a result of employing a cleaner with a gambling problem. AMI found out about this citizen. They blackmailed him into sabotaging the security systems and letting their espionage squad into the *Tastoburger* factory. The following day Tri-D news programs were full of pictures of Floyd's secret garlic farm and sales of *Tastoburgers* collapsed even more quickly than they had risen. The Justice Department was heavily involved in protecting Floyd and his premises from angry mobs.

Home-Synthing

The *Tastoburger* scandal was almost certainly the source of inspiration for another food-based craze, that of home-synthing. Raymond Baubier, whose hobby was home chemistry, hit on the idea of persuading people that they couldn't be sure that what they were eating was genuinely synthetic unless they had made it themselves. He sold the concept to one of the bigger Tri-D stations and thereby became Mega-City One's first Home-Synth Show presenter.

The idea behind the shows was based on the old cookery shows, which Tri-D channels used to run decades before when food was more plentiful and Munce less popular. Each week Baubier would get out his test tubes and retorts and demonstrate new ways of making food from basic materials. He was a huge success, and rival stations quickly followed suit with similar shows of their own.

Unfortunately for home-synthers, the supply of suitable materials for synthesising foodstuffs was very poor. Very little household garbage was suitable, and those few recipes which Baubier tried using scrap metal, plastic and concrete proved unappetising and a sure-fire source of indigestion. Plants could be used, but the techniques for turning Munce into burgers were too complex for most home-synthers to manage. In the absence of large numbers of organic household pets and with the local wildlife (rats, alligators, and soon) being confined to the dangerous lower levels of the city, the only real source of material for synthing meat was human flesh.

Baubier's employers quickly spotted this problem and made an exclusive deal with Resyk for supply of suitable material. Even so they had to compete with existing food companies all of whom were bitterly opposed to home-synthing and did their best to corner the market in organic waste. Demand for materials was so strong that Baubier soon became involved in body sharking on a grand scale. In addition, those keen home-synthers who could not afford the extortionate prices for what they believed to be legal supplies of materials took to going out and acquiring their own by the simple expedient of murdering their neighbours.

Justice Department dealt with the craze by banning all home-synth Tri-D shows and by placing punitive taxes on home-synthing equipment. Even so the craze still persists in many parts of the city, some citizens even refusing to eat any food except that which they have synthed themselves. Needless to say, such people are normally very poorly nourished, although for some reason they insist that their diet is the healthiest in the entire city.

Botting

Given that the vast majority of jobs in Mega-City One are performed by robots, it was only a matter of time before it occurred to the growing army of unemployed that the way to get work was to pretend that you were a robot. Thus began the craze of Botting; that is dressing up in a metal suit and walking around stiffly as if you were entirely mechanical. Cyborgs were obviously at a distinct advantage here being more or less artificial to begin with, but many citizens, through

countless months of practice, became extremely adept at their disguise and were able to fool large numbers of people. Of course, pretending to be a robot was only half the battle. The Botters then had to get themselves into a factory and replace a robot working there. The fact that robots are never paid for their work didn't seem to worry most Botters - the mere fact of being employed all day being enough to satisfy their craving for a job. However, no Botter, however competent at his impersonation, could have the stamina, strength and precision of the real thing, and thus the Justice Department was kept busy removing Botters from factories, normally charging them with trespass and criminal damage to whatever robot they had replaced.

Botting also brought to light a new and unusual breed of Spont. These people were Botters who, being either unable to get into a factory or too scared to try, turned up at Sector Houses in their robot disguises pretending to be lost robots and begging to be returned to the factories to which they belonged. Most of them knew that they wouldn't be believed but either didn't care or hoped to be arrested for something.

By far the worst outbreak of crime associated with Botting, however, was the Boltzman case. Isaac Boltzman Machinery was a large robotics company specialising in the production of servo-droids. When the Botting craze was at its height one of the company executives came up with the idea of hiring the very best Batters, disguising them as the very latest line in servo-droids, and then using them as burglars.

For a while the plan worked very well. Thanks to some smart work by the Starchi Brothers, the new Boltzman droid was a smash hit at the Robot of the Year show, and so many rich citizens ordered them that the company had difficulty meeting demand. Of course, with the droids being so popular it was understandable that they would become targets for thieves.

Thus it was that every Boltzman droid sold was 'stolen' within a few weeks of starting work - with much of the owner's property being taken at the same time. Justice Department was far too busy trying to track down the thieves to realise that the 'robots' were actually stealing themselves, and it was only when Judge Anderson bought a droid for herself in the hope of trapping the thieves that the fraud was discovered.

Botting is still practised by a fair number of citizens and was for a time the inspiration of a dance craze amongst punks. It is not illegal in itself but expert Botters are always closely watched by the Judges because of the potential for crime which they represent.

Gaxers

The craze of Gaxing was named after its originator, one Ernest Gaxan. He claimed to have invented a technique for reaching through to memories of previous incarnations so that citizens could discover and assume the personalities of their ancestors; who had lived in safer, more interesting and more romantic times.

Gaxing proved particularly popular with those unfortunate Juves who had fallen victim to unscrupulous comic-pushers such as Skinner and Sloper. Such people already lived in something of a fantasy world and, under the influence of Gaxan's hypnotic techniques, came to believe that they actually were characters from the comics they had read. Most other citizens who succumbed to the craze had Futsie tendencies and the craze is officially classified as a peculiar variant of the Future Shock Syndrome.

A typical Gaxer, then, after having visited one of Gaxan's clinics, became convinced that he was no longer a citizen of Mega-City One but was, in fact, a noble knight, a powerful sorcerer, or even some mythical being such as a dwarf or elf. In themselves such beliefs were not particularly harmful, but eventually the Gaxer became so deeply immersed in his fantasy that he was unable to accept the rest of Mega-City One as real. Instead he identified his fellow citizens as evil goblins, vehicles as fearsome monsters, towering city blocks as marauding giants, and Lawmaster bikes as terrible, fire-breathing dragons. The Gaxer would then arm himself with a makeshift sword or axe and set out to liberate the world from these abominations.

Of course, Justice Department acted to close down the clinics, but by that time Gaxan himself had become convinced by his own propaganda. Believing himself to be a powerful wizard he appeared on a Vid-in show claiming to have turned Judge McGruder (whom he saw as an evil witch) into a toad. He also claimed to have the power to do the same to any of her 'dragon-riding death-knights' and he was treated to ten years in the Psycho-cubes to prevent him from causing public disorders.