**MI7 Intelligence File**

**Eyes Only Briefing Memorandum**

**The Wish Granter – Updates 29/1/34**

**Primer**

The pile of unicorn gold at the centre of the Zone.

Of all the various nonsense chased by the Awakened, this is the biggie. As conspiracy theories go this is somewhat strange. Most of the Awakened arrive in the Zone with a pet theory they’re here to investigate. Others acquire a pet theory at some point during their time as a ‘normal’ freelancer then sign up with the Awakened. This one is a theory kept almost entirely within the Awakened and within the Zone itself. A members only kind of deal.

This one stems from the idea that the Zone is alien in origin. As ever with the Awakened, opinion is divided as to exactly how aliens are involved. For some the aliens hovering above us made the Zone as a test, and the Wish Granter is the reward for passing. For others, the Government dug up something long since buried and activated a test left here by ancient aliens. The thing dug up is the Wish Granter.

Whatever the origin story, the Awakened are unified on one principle. The Zone is a test to be passed and the Wish Granter is the reward. They almost never speak of this one with outsiders and documentation is non-existent. All our data comes from conversations with Awakened had by our infiltrators. Given that 40% of the infiltrators sent in never came back, it’s clear there is something compelling to the stories, enough to convert a trained operative to a true believer.

**Aliens**

So Awakened thought on the Wish Granter is, much like everything they think about, fractured into a million factions. Broadly speaking though, they fall into two camps, with the splinter groups being very much variations on a theme.

The first group are the ancient aliens enthusiasts. This is essentially a rip-off from 2001. In that story, the second monolith is found on the Moon. Once dug up and exposed to sunlight it sends a signal to an unknown location and the heroes of the story go to that location where weird shit happens. The monolith on the Moon was a test, when your technology has reached the point where you can get to the monolith and dig it up, the aliens want to know about it. In the Zone, the Government dug something up as part of excavations for building an underground city (see addendum on various NOW-style theories about underground living) and when it was exposed to light/oxygen/whatever it triggered the device into creating the Zone.

The second group believe something similar, but the origins of the Zone are a beam weapon fired by aliens hovering above the Earth or on the Moon. That beam is the anomalous radiation detected all over the Zone. It splintered on hitting the ionosphere/ozone layer/whatever and each point of the Lake District it hit spawned an anomaly.

The two theories then come together to a single idea. The Zone is a deliberate creation to test humanity. We have built our understanding of physics up to the point where we believe we understand how the universe works. The Zone and its anomalies are the reminder we don’t know anywhere near enough, and the test lies in our ability to reject old ways of thinking and accept the new.

Once again, the unified theory of the test fractures into a million interpretations as to how the test is passed. Some believe you simply need to complete a pilgrimage to the centre of the Zone where you will find the Wish Granter and receive the reward. The test lies in bypassing the many anomalous hazards put in front of you. Others believe there is a formula, code or other some such thing that must be derived from the anomalies and then input into the Wish Granter. Others believe they will be interrogated by the Wish Granter or its alien operators, and if they pass what amounts to an oral exam, they get the prize.

The nature of the prize is also subject to a huge amount of debate. Much like 2001’s ending, the belief among most is that the Wish Granter unlocks a new stage in humanity’s development, with the prize-winner being the first of the new Homo Superior species. Others belief it unlocks alien technology, cures for diseases, space travel, you name it. A small number see it as personal gain and think they will get to choose a prize, some form of personalised wealth creation.

**How True Is This?**

It almost certainly isn’t. Granted, there’s a huge statistical likelihood there is life in space, and no reason to believe said life works the same way we do or is at the same developmental level. Despite general scepticism about aliens it’s mathematically sound.

Realistically though is aliens were coming here they’d be coming for resources in much the same way human exploration has been driven by the need for more resources. Burying a mystical vending machine seems highly unlikely. The idea of testing the tech level of a species is sound, but the reality is that the goal is far more likely to be the restriction or destruction of a species that may well pose a threat to the builder of the device. The 2001 monolith was a signal to its creators that humanity had reached space flight. That signal was most likely a warning that humanity was coming for them than anything benevolent. Nothing about the Wish Granter makes very much sense.

The Awakened have gathered very little in the way of concrete data. They know the military cordon around the centre protects something, which a four year old could figure out, and that government scientists are trying to understand the anomalies. To jump from “scientists do science” to “they’re trying to pass a test set by aliens” is a leap of near biblical proportions.

There’s a reason my opening line referenced unicorns.

**Goals**

It is ever so slightly embarrassing to talk about planned goals for this project, given the inherently woolly nature of what we’re discussing. The Awakened are a surprisingly intelligent bunch but they’re not remotely grounded in reality and chasing their shared delusion seems like a waste of time.

The key here though is that it is a *shared* delusion. They all subscribe to this belief system and they’re sufficiently coherent about it to convince two of our agents of these beliefs. Whilst the Wish Granter itself is almost certainly a myth the core belief is so ingrained that something has to be at play there. If the artefact itself isn’t worth investigating then the belief system around it is. They are so very convinced they are chasing a real object that there has to be something behind that conviction. It has been speculated that the entire faction have been subjected to brainwashing, memory implantation, drugs, you name it.

So, the goals are;

* Establish the core basis for the belief in the Wish Granter. Determine what the evidence base is.
* Acquire blood samples from as large a number of the Awakened as possible.
* Where an Awakened dies, acquire brain tissue samples. **Do not kill anyone for samples.**
* Attempt to locate any radio equipment in use and assess what frequencies are used for what purpose.

There is an additional standing order that anyone on this project is to keep a diary. Requirements are minimal, merely a brief outline of each day’s activity. Diaries are to be deposited in drop boxes every 3-4 days. This is so handlers can assess changes in mental state in the event the Awakened are being subjected to outside influence by unknown means.

Good luck.