

Hellboy: The World's Greatest Paranormal Investigator in the WNU
By: William Redd

The strongest case for including Hellboy in the Wold Newton Universe rests with a Wold Newton family member responsible for bringing Hellboy to earth in 1944. That man is one Grigori Yefimovich Rasputin, son of Professor James Moriarty. Rasputin has met Sherlock Holmes, Watson, Dracula, and the Shadow at different points in his life.

Sometime after Rasputin's dealings with the Shadow in March 1935, he was recruited by Himmler for one of Hitler's special projects called "Project Ragna Rok." Ragna Rok is the team responsible for the paranormal phenomenon that brought Hellboy to Earth. While the Nazis expected something to manifest in front of them on Tarmagent Island, Rasputin had other plans. Those plans were dashed by Trevor Bruttonholm, who along with a team of U.S. Army Rangers, the Torch of Liberty (a World War II hero), Professor Malcolm Frost, and Cynthia Eden-Jones; witnessed Hellboy's arrival on Earth.

Hellboy was adopted by Trevor Bruttonholm and in 1952, became an operative for the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense. The B.P.R.D. has been in operation since 1945 and has a long history of successfully dealing with paranormal events. During Hellboy's long career with the B.P.R.D. he has been involved in many odd cases.

In 1994, while exploring the location at East Bromwich, England where he came to Earth, Hellboy writes a letter to B.P.R.D. agent and Hellboy's good friend Abe Sapien (more on Abe later). At the end of this letter, Hellboy states that he is going to check out new sightings of the West Virginia Moth-Man. This may be the same Moth-Man that FBI Agents Mulder and Scully encountered in Florida in 1997.

While trying to find the body of vampire Count Vladimir Giurescu, B.P.R.D. agents Liz Sherman, Bud Waller, and Sidney Leach discover a life-size homunculus in a hidden chamber. Agent Waller makes mention of seeing a small homunculus in a jar in Prague in 1982, it is possible that this small homunculus is one of many created by Dr. Pretorius. Agent Sherman inadvertently activated the large Homunculus with her powerful pyrokinetic abilities, which proceeded to kill Waller and escaped. Hellboy later captured the Homunculus, whom he named Roger. Roger is now a full agent of the B.P.R.D.

During Hellboy's search for Roger, the Homunculus met his "brother," another Homunculus created by the same alchemist as Roger. This brother had created a large body for both to reside in and rule the Earth as a god. Roger destroyed his brother and gave his stolen life-essence back to Liz Sherman. Roger was later outfitted with a new power supply. Roger's brother was using the Monastery of Capatineni as a base of operations while creating his large body from stolen corpses in the area. This monastery was built by Mihnea the second, grandson of the Impaler Dracula (yeah, that one).

During the case of the vampire Giurescu, Rasputin used the iron maiden used by Countess Elizabeth Bathory for her twisted blood baths to recreate Ilsa Haupstein as a supernatural being who may reign with Rasputin after the Ragna Rok. According to MONSTAAH agent and researcher Ivan Schablotski, Irineus Daninsky helped capture and destroy Bathory in 1614; and it was she who inflicted him and his family with the curse of lycanthropy. Rasputin failed here because the goddess Hecate, who had been

empowering Count Giurescu, but had been destroyed by Hellboy earlier, entered the iron maiden and took over the new form meant for Ilsa.

Rasputin's reasons for bringing Hellboy to Earth were to activate the great Apocalypse that was been foretold since man could speak. Rasputin wished to free the Ogdru Jahad (the seven great dragons who are one) and start a new generation of man. Rasputin brought Hellboy to Earth because he holds the "Right Hand of Doom." His large stone right hand will free the Ogdru Jahad and end the time of man. Hellboy has refused this position as the catalyst of the Apocalypse on several occasions.

Another case involving Liz Sherman, Abe Sapien, Roger, and new B.P.R.D. agent Johann Kraus (a man trapped in his ectoplasmic spirit-self and kept whole in a containment suit) has connections to a very old member of the Wold Newton Universe. While trying to gain control of her pyrokinetic abilities, Liz travels to Agartha, the supposedly mythical city that leads to the Hollow Earth which has been found by many Wold Newton family members. The people of Agartha claim to be descendants of the Hyperboreans, the race of pre-humans who existed before and during mankind's reign on this planet. A certain Cimmerian warrior by the name of Conan was kept as a slave to the Hyperboreans during his early days of adventuring. Liz's essence is taken by the ancient slaves of the Hyperboreans to fuel their war machines and fashion a great sword to conquer mankind. Abe, Roger, and Johann save Liz and destroy the dwellers of the Hollow Earth.

Now, to deal with another B.P.R.D. agent mentioned above. Dr. Abraham Sapien, like many of the Bureau's agents, is by no means a normal human. Abe was found in 1978 by two plumbers working at St. Trinian's Hospital in Washington, D.C. when they stumbled onto a room that had been hidden for years. In this room was a large life-support tube which contained a half-man, half-fish being (Abe). The room also contained another full-sized life-support tube and a head-sized container that were found broken and empty. A piece of paper pinned up near the tube read "ICTHYO SAPIEN APRIL 14 1865." The reason for the date is unknown other than it is the day President Lincoln was assassinated, thus the plumbers dubbed their miraculous find "Abraham Sapien."

Abe was quickly brought to B.P.R.D. headquarters and revived using electrical stimulation. During a long a grueling testing phase, Abe was saved from the tests by Hellboy; the two have been close friends since. Abe's origins remain a mystery. Most of the theories at the Bureau claim that Abe is an early example of genetic engineering. It is possible that Abe is some engineered attempt at producing a human/Gill-Man hybrid. It is also possible that Abe is a hybrid of one of the Deep Ones of Insmouth. On one case, the spirits of many slaves trapped on the ocean floor mistook Abe for a "fish god." Is it possible that somehow the great Dagon was recreated in a Washington lab? Another possibility is that Abe is a creation of Dr. Moreau, or one of his American contemporaries.

There is also a possible Wold Newton family member in Hellboy's past. In the thirties, many vigilantes prowled the streets. The Shadow, the Green Hornet, the Batman, and Lobster Johnson all fought crime to make the world safe, but not much is known about the Lobster. Lobster Johnson obviously served in the air at some point, wearing a costume very similar to G-8 with the flight cap, goggles, and double-breasted leather jacket. The jacket emblazoned with a large lobster's claw on it. The Lobster used the

claw as his calling card, burning it (literally) into the foreheads of any criminal unfortunate enough to run up against him; after he used his signature .45 that is.

Lobster Johnson also worked with the government, although they deny it to this day. Johnson's last mission was with a team of U.S. troops sent to investigate Nazi activity at Hunte Castle, Austria involving space flight. On March 20, 1939 (the vernal equinox), Lobster and all but one Nazi were killed in the early launch of the shuttle from Hunte Castle. The spirit of Lobster Johnson would remain to help B.P.R.D. agent Roger the Homunculus while he and Hellboy were investigating the return of the shuttle launched in '39.

I theorize that Lobster Johnson is yet another unknown relation of the Wentworth/Rassendyll family. Or possibly one of G-8's flying squad. Since I do not know enough about this group, I will leave it to other researchers to unearth the true identity of this vigilante.

For these and possible other unseen connections I claim that Hellboy should be a character within the framework of the Wold Newton Universe. So I leave you with the words of Hellboy to close this article, "I got to go do what I do."