

Busull-unaza

Description: one of an indeterminate number of clunky, stainless steel rings sized for adolescent fingers. There are no maker's marks, per se, but the item practically screams its Sov-Bloc aesthetic to the world. The rings **never** grow warm to the touch.

Ability: well, Busull-unaza allow the user to see magnetic fields. They also set up a feedback loop in adolescent brains which increases the chance of a psionic mutant ability developing. Or they can just trigger inoperable brain tumors. Or both.

And 'both' is why the old Soviet psychotronic warfare program shut down the Albanian magnetoreception program in 1966, over the somewhat heated objections of the Albanian regime itself. It was the combination of results that was the problem, of course. The Soviets wanted the psionic mutants, and did not care at all about the terminal cancer patients; but terminal cancer patients with an adolescent's rage at the world* and the ability to walk through walls as a thing of living fire can prove awkward to clean up after later. So the program was canceled, the usual percentage of researchers taken out

and shot as a precaution, and the files and actual Busull-unaza ordered destroyed.

But bureaucracies being they way are, the process had not gotten *quite* to the first preliminary review of the tentative disposal organizational plan before Albania left the Warsaw Pact in the late 1960s. It took ten years for the Soviet psychotronic agency to even remember that the Busull-unaza project had not been confirmed to have been scrapped, and by the time resources were available to check... nothing had happened. The Albanians had no adolescent mutants, terminally sick from brain cancer or otherwise; they didn't even seem to have people who could see magnetic fields. So the relevant bureaus kept passing the buck and not anticipating trouble, right up to the point where the entire Soviet system came crashing down, and took Soviet psychotronics with it. At that point, everybody involved suddenly had **actual** problems to deal with.

Ironically, something similar happened in Albania: the files and actual Busull-unaza were slated for destruction, but they didn't have the right agency signatures to sign off on the process, and eventually the materials box got shuffled away to a convenient long-term storage solution, and it's fairly clear where this is going, right? Yes: six months ago

a bunch of Albanian kids found the rings in a decaying, abandoned warehouse, and they discovered the magnetic field thing. Which was cool. And now some of them are feeling like they could do... other things.

And various black ops agencies, shadow organizations, deniable projects, and random conspiracies will be noticing all of this right about, well, now. And they're all going to Albania! It's going to be Old Home Week over there for a while, for some folks. Unfortunately, in at least some cases a proper case of nostalgia practically demands lots of automatic weapons fire. And let's remember that kids are involved, here. *Somebody* has to. And not just because the kids can maybe vaporize fuel trucks.

So: sort this all out, there's a good team?

*Admittedly, a somewhat justified emotional response in this particular case.

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