ZERO DARK:

OPERATION NEMESIS

The Mother shrieks, but her cries are consumed by the dust. Her children watch as the towers of the old order crumble.

[redacted]

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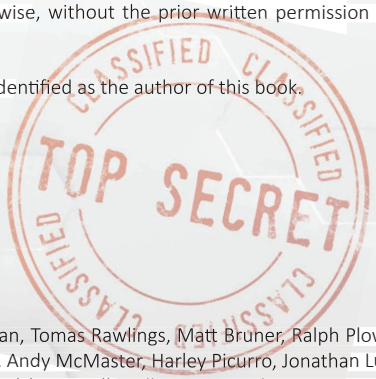

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PROLOGUE

'Step Serjeant Anya Abdalla?'

The grim-faced woman nodded, hands clasped in the small of her back, eyes on the wall. Her armoured skinsuit was in its neutral, grey-black setting, making her stand out in the stark white briefing area like an unexpected exclamation. Her kitbag slumped on the floor beside her, its rumpled dullness out of place and at odds with the context.

'Inform to me thy team.'

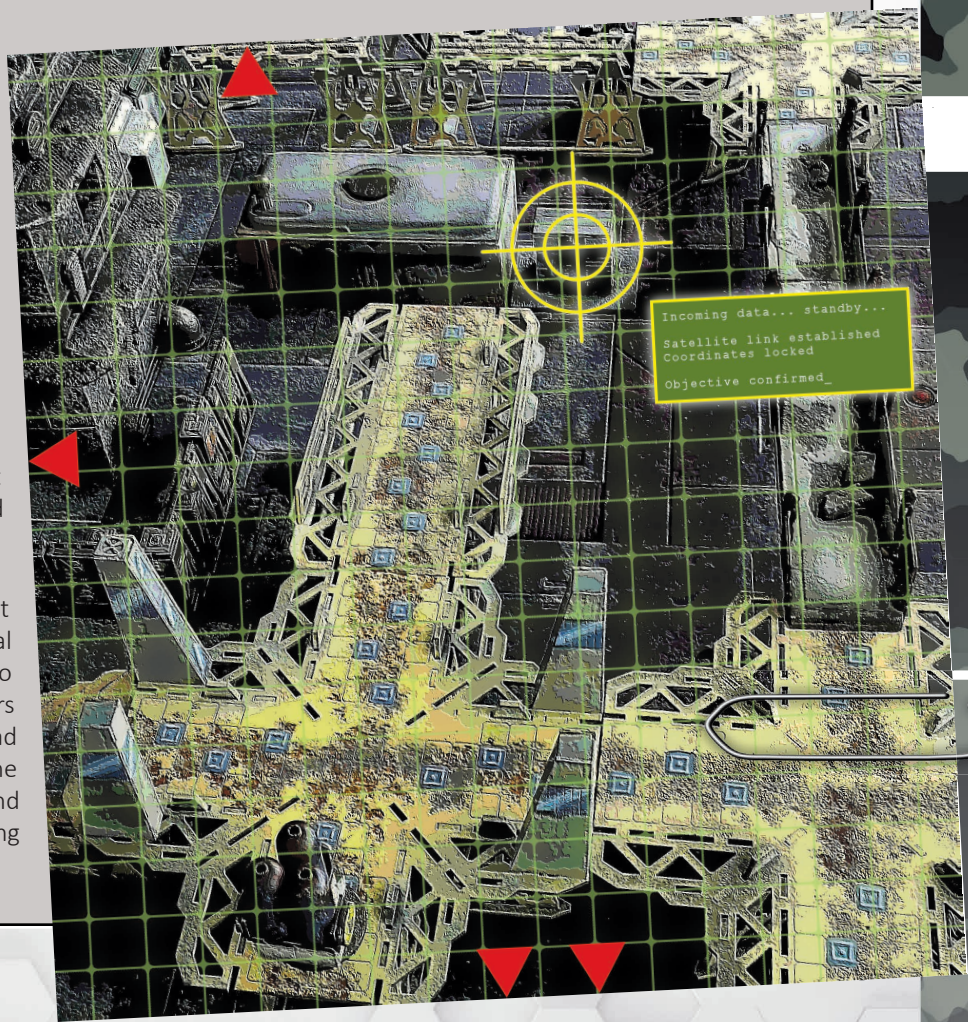
The Stepmaster on the other side of the desk was unknown to her: not from her cavern, nor from any of those she had trained with on the way here, but his speech mode was formal Venusian battle tongue. It was a sparse lingua franca, designed to convey facts and orders, not poetry.

'Lox,' she began, dropping her eyes to look at her enigmatic superior. With a gesture, she pulled Lox's dossier from her cloud and shared it to the desk. Both she and the nameless Stepmaster could see it in their retinal displays. 'Medic and second-in-line. Sebian Cavern. Three steps over seventy kilometres. His third was my fourth.'

She remembered her fourth step. It had been the closest she had come to death in any of the six she had completed to earn her Step Serjeant status and it had only been Lox's quick thinking that had saved them both. She could have no better second.

'Marquin,' she went on, switching Lox's dossier for Marquin's. 'EWOp. Versay Cavern. Two steps over twenty-four kilometres. Five-year incarceration for illicit digital infiltration. Their second was my fifth.'

Marquin was still young, but they were brilliant in the digital battlespace. They had chosen to take a second step to take two years off their sentence and Abdalla had been their parole officer for the step. They had impressed her and were now serving their remaining three years under her command.



'Ngana.' Marquin's androgynous features were replaced with the startling beauty of Miriam Ngana. Venusian society valued and promoted aesthetic beauty, but Ngana stood out, even among her peers. 'Pilot. Three steps. Forty-eight kilometres. New to mine. Mech indoctrination complete. Combat experience needful.'

Ngana was the weak link in the team, in her opinion. The military branch of the mission wanted more mech pilots to get combat experience at the infantry level, but Abdalla wasn't persuaded that they had a role in the X Teams. She couldn't even remember Ngana's birth cavern, which wasn't good.

'Kurtz,' she tucked Ngana away and pulled up the last team member. 'Engineer. Masry Cavern. Five steps. Forty kilometres. Drone specialist. Sapper.'

Kurtz was the only one from her own birth cavern. She'd known him since before her first step and he was a good part of the reason she was still alive today. He was really too old to be on this mission, but she suspected he wanted to die on Earth and she couldn't refuse him when he had asked. And he was really very good at what he did.

The Stepmaster pulled all four dossiers back up and then added her own next to them, flipping through them, pausing occasionally to look at some detail or other. Eventually he collapsed all five and looked up at her, steepling his fingers.

'Noted.' His smile had nothing humorous about it. 'Adequate unto the task.'

Once Abdalla had left, Sing considered the team Abdalla had assembled. For all that their homeworld was a violent one, the military sciences were an unfamiliar discipline to Venus. The idea of 'special forces' was one they were forced to re-learn when the existence of any forces at all was 'special' by definition. All the same, he thought, this band of outsiders and troublemakers seemed to fit the bill perfectly. Long-steppers were honoured once they found a cavern in which to settle. But until then, they were forever on the move, putting down no roots, making no connections.

They had the right skills for what his superiors needed. And if they stepped over a line, well... The motherworld was an even more dangerous place than it had been before. They would not be missed.

A face suddenly appeared on his retinal display. There had been no questioning ping. Not even a warning of an incoming call. She simply appeared.

'Serjeant Abdalla and her team are most fit,' she said, without preamble. There was no need to introduce herself. Sing had no idea how she had known so quickly, but her access to his private cloud was a clue. 'Give unto them a hazardous undertaking. Report unto me their performance.'

'Y-yes, Skylord,' he answered, feeling the chill of her determination even through the remote connection. This was his route to glory and honour. And if inglorious and dishonourable things had to be done to make that path straight, then Venus would not find him unprepared to make that sacrifice.

And they would not find Serjeant Abdalla unprepared, either.

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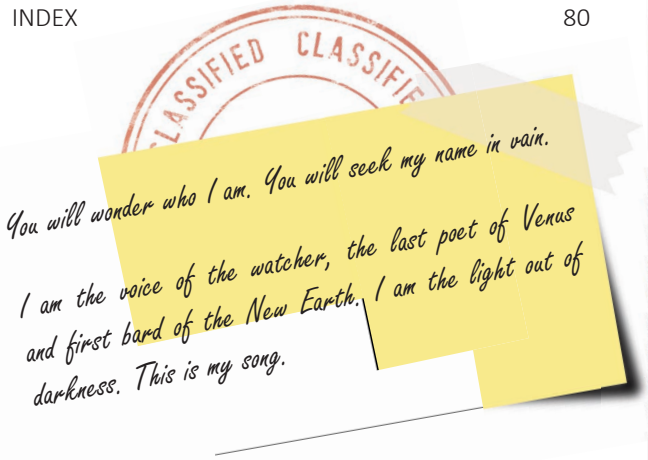


INTRODUCTION

We acknowledge our failings and the failings of our ancestors whose pride caused them to be cast out from their inheritance. We give gratitude for the crucible of our stepmother, Venus, in whose arms we burn. She sears weakness from our souls and bodies. We beg humbly to be seen worthy of ascension.

-Venusian prayer of childhood (trad.)

Welcome return, operative. Sit, catch your breath and hearken unto my words, because things are about to take a different tack.

The *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook provided you with the resources you needed to assemble a team of heroes, take on the Red Force, explore the challenges of electronic warfare and pit your wits against the ticking clock of the unpredictable Control Deck. I expect you think you're ready for ascension?

Well, it's time to face an even greater challenge.

In *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis*, we begin to toy with the default mechanics of the core rules to raise the threat level offered by the Red Force. And if making the basic Red Force tougher wasn't bad enough, we introduce several new kinds of threat: sentinels, combat mechs and the deadly Nemesis — the anti-hero waiting and watching, behind the scenes.

But we do not leave the heroes unequipped to deal with these new threats. As well as new upgrades, like motorcycles, we introduce new special character allies and, in response to overwhelming player demand, a brand new specialist: the mech pilot.

Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis, though, is also the story of a Venusian elite team, Bal Anub. This book looks at the perspective of the Venusians and introduces the shadowy Skylords and their puppet organization, Vidi. It answers some of the questions regarding what, exactly, happened on Earth before the Fall, but you should expect new mysteries to be uncovered in the process.

Of course, the missions are wide open to interpretation and can as easily be embedded in another near future or sci-fi universe or even in one you've created yourself. And, naturally, as well as the twelve new Solo/Team missions, we have six new Versus missions themed for *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis*, as well as rules for including all of the new Red Force and X Team components in the Versus game.

So feed yourself promptly, attend the armoury, review the new arrivals and prepare your team. I expect your return for mission briefing at zero three hundred local. Do not be late.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Venus should never have been colonized. If Mars had been commercial suicide for FutureZ, it could, at least, be made into a bearable environment. But Vizhnu's decision, driven by the insurmountable arrogance of its megalomaniac majority shareholder, chairman and CEO, Gideon Wang, was insane.

Venus was only able to prosecute its war with Mars thanks to Wang's trillions. But even they were a limited resource that eventually ran dry, leaving Venusian assets stranded on Mars and Venus itself cut off from further support from Earth.

No Martian force ever landed on the surface of Venus for the simple reason that Venus isn't meant to be lived on. And yet, somehow, the colony survived and, by some measures, even thrived. The population grew from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands and, a hundred

years after the end of the Colonial War, millions. But whether the existence of most of them was what anyone on Earth or even Mars would recognize as 'living' was another question entirely.

Life on Venus's surface was punishing and brutal. Its inhabitants occupy dense tunnel cities, simply called 'caverns', dug deep into the rock and sustained by hydroponic gardens and 'recycled organic tissue'. The people of Venus know they have little other option but to fall back on eating their own dead. Living with such daily fear pushed those with the mental fortitude to survive towards a theology of punishment and survival. Rituals of testing — to ensure that those in positions of leadership had the courage to face up to the harsh realities of life on Venus — became commonplace and quickly evolved into a system of mystery cults. Each cave-city was largely cut off from its neighbours and self-sufficient, and each developed cultural and ethnic mores of its own. But there was a single binding factor that linked them all: ascension; for those on the surface weren't only inhabitants of Venus.

The sky-cities had been established on enormous floating platforms, suspended beneath immense balloons filled with helium harvested from the atmosphere. Protected from the worst excesses of the surface temperature (although not from the corrosive qualities of the acidic clouds in which they made their home), the sky-cities offered perspective. They provided the means of communication between the caverns and acted as mediators, ensuring that help reached communities in trouble and standing as neutral judges in disputes within and between caverns.

But with a far smaller and older population, the sky-cities also needed to recruit the brightest and the best from the caverns to join their ranks. It soon became convention that no one could be born in a sky-city. To be Venusian was to be born in a cavern and to aspire to ascension to the sky. The right to breed, also, became a complicated privilege in a society that valued courage and strength. 'Stepping' became established as a mandatory ritual of adulthood. Everyone was expected to step — that is, to walk exposed on the insanely dangerous surface of the planet — at least once. Most would step only from one end of a habitation area to the other, a few hundred metres at most, staying within their home cavern. But those who aspired to rank and to ascension would step further and more often — aiming to reach another cavern entirely, and covering kilometres in a single step. Of these, most died — their armour eaten away by the atmosphere, their steps impeded by the perpetual hurricanes and their progress blocked by floods of molten lead and worse. The most successful, though, earned the rank of Stepmaster, and a place of authority in whichever cavern they found themselves. Ascension to the sky-cities (and a place as a Skystepper) wasn't guaranteed for Stepmasters, though, and sometimes even those without many long steps might be selected to ascend if they showed the grace, intelligence and dedication the sky-cities expected.

With an equal emphasis, therefore, on strength, courage, wisdom and beauty, Venus became masters of ectogenesis — the process of growing children outside a womb

Icarus Miniatures (OOP)

— which allowed parents to focus on their duties as community leaders and made children wards of the group rather than property of their families. Barriers between genders were largely eliminated, and intersex identities and gender fluidity became increasingly normalized.

But there was a third group in Venusian society that, ultimately, had a heavier hand on the tiller than the Duma, the bickering parliament of the Skysteppers.

Venus's space fleet was small and primitive by comparison with that of the other worlds. With a small population, only those with the most robust mental facilities and the finest problem-solving skills could be trusted to pilot the precious ships, alone in space for months or years at a time. And, in space, the pilots had the time and opportunity to reflect deeply upon their journey and that of their people. Returning pilots brought practical and philosophical insights that amazed the Duma. Their status became that of wise and respected elders, and their title was Skymaster.

AMMIT

The Skymasters knew of Ammit long before Mars. Having spent endless hours in deep contemplation of the mysteries of the solar system, their knowledge of the Transmartian asteroid belt was unparalleled and Venus had projections for the passage of millions of objects tracked and recorded. It was almost as an afterthought that someone decided to make sure that Earth was aware of the oncoming impact.

When Earth allowed the asteroid to impact, it was a shocking outcome to the Venusians. In their diverse theology, Earth had become a forbidden paradise: a land from which they had been cast out and to which they could not return, but which remained as a temptation to their strength of will.

That Earth, with its technology of unequalled sophistication, simply let Ammit strike was, to the Venusians, to willingly defile Paradise: to spit upon the face of God. Culturally, they felt little sympathy for the Terrans affected by the impact. But the Duma was unaware of a fourth force in their society. Among the Skymasters, there was a secret group who called themselves the Skylords. They were guided by visions that their members had experienced during particularly long periods in deep space, and believed in a coming time of change. For them, the impact of Ammit was the herald of that time. And with their influence, the tide of opinion in the Duma shifted and changed and Venus launched its rescue mission.

The Venusian Assistance Mission represented an unprecedented ascension for the vast majority of its members. Thousands of Venusians made ritual steps just a short distance to their shuttles (albeit still exposed to the lethal Venusian atmosphere in their heavily armoured protective suits) and up, past the sky-cities, into orbit to the slender docking ring surrounding the planet, where dozens of ships were being hastily re-fitted to accommodate their human cargo.

VENI, VIDI, VICI

Unlike Mars, Venus hadn't had a standing or organized armed force for decades. To coordinate the mission, three new bodies were assembled:

Veni coordinates shipping, transport and navigation.

Vidi controls planning, intelligence and strategy.

Vici directs the deployment of force on the surface of Earth.

Skymasters sit in council over each of the three bodies, consulting together over major areas of contention. But the still-secret Skylords dominate Vidi. In contravention of the clear areas of responsibility, Vidi has assembled small teams of hand-picked specialists that operate on Earth outside Vici's control. These X Teams are deployed clandestinely in pursuit of the Skylords' mysterious agenda and, as a result, are as likely to find themselves in combat with other Venusian groups as they are with Martian or Terran forces.

NEW RULES

The *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook contains all the rules you need to play the game, but as the community of players expands and evolves, Precinct Omega has kept on playing, trying out new ideas, being inspired by new miniatures, and responding to inspiration.

The rules that follow are additional to the rules in the rulebook. They are also available separately from *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis* as a free supplement from Wargame Vault or on the Precinct Omega website.

CYLINDER CATEGORY 7

The Combat Mech is a larger and more dangerous version of the Defence Mech, with a Cylinder Category 7 (Cyl7) and the following properties:

Cylinder Category	28mm		15mm		Examples
	dia.	height	dia.	height	
7	80	100	40	50	Combat Mech

Motorcycles were widely used by Terran mercenaries

CQB

Heroes have the option to sneak up on bogeys and silently take them out of play. Whether it's a knife to the throat, a knock-out blow or a pseudomorphine injection, we leave up to your imagination.

SILENT DEATH

If a hero becomes *engaged* with a bogey outside the bogey's field of view, roll the hero's attack first. If the bogey is placed into the *down* or *dead* state by the attack, do not roll the bogey's attack. However, if the bogey enters the *down* state, any bogey within 6" per hit will become *alert* (the *down* bogey had time to cry out). If the bogey enters the *dead* state, other bogeys do not become *alert*.

STATES

New states apply to Motorcycle and X Mech gadgets (see page 12). The rules for the *open*, *closed*, *locked* and *unlocked* states are given in detail in the rules for doors on page 11, but we've added them here to make it clear that these are states, albeit ones that only apply to doors.

DISMOUNTED

Some gadgets may enter (or begin a mission) in the *dismounted* state. Only a *mounted* hero may place their *mounted* gadget into the *dismounted* state and, if they do so, the hero loses the *mounted* state and instead becomes *engaged* with the gadget. Placing a gadget into the *dismounted* state is an automatic action. A *dismounted* gadget is also in the O state and may not be placed in the I state (see *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook page 21).

MOUNTED

Some gadgets may enter (or begin a mission) in the *mounted* state. Only a hero *engaged* with the *dismounted* gadget may place it into the *mounted* state and, if they do so, that hero also gains the *mounted* state. A gadget in the *mounted* state replaces the hero, enters the I state and gives the *mounted* hero whatever advantages and special rules the gadget confers.

To put a gadget into the *mounted* state, a hero must spend an interact action and pass an A(13) test.

OPEN/CLOSED AND LOCKED/UNLOCKED

These states apply only to doors, which are described in more detail below.

TERRAIN

DOORS

If you play *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* using terrain that permits models to be placed inside buildings, you may also want the buildings to have doors that can be opened and closed, locked or unlocked. Some missions will require such buildings and include navigating doors.

By default, doors are assumed to be *unlocked* and *closed*.

A *closed* door blocks LOS. Also, doors can be categorized by how easy they are to damage or destroy, exactly like objectives on page 65 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. By default, doors are *sturdy*.

An *open* door is simply not considered to be on the table at all. It doesn't affect movement, LOS or the *obscured* state.

A character may move a *closed* door to the *open* state or move an *open* door to the *closed* state by being *engaged* with the door, and doing ONE of the following:

- Spending 1" of movement
- Spending a bonus action
- Spending an automatic action

Example:
Bill Shaxbard performs a cautious move with M5, moving 3" to become *engaged* with a *closed* door. He spends 1" of movement to put the door into the *open* state, then moves 1" through the door. He has no more movement left with which to close the door, but he performed a cautious move and, after his test, finds that he has a bonus action to use, so he uses it to put the door into the *closed* state.

A bogey can move a *closed* door (*locked* or *unlocked*) as if they were *open*.

A *closed* door can be placed into the *locked* or *unlocked* state by a character *engaged* with the door. This is an interact A(12) action. A *closed* door can also be put into the *unlocked* or *locked* state by making it the target of a hack action. Unless otherwise stated, doors have FW1.

A *locked* door must be *unlocked* before it can become *open* (obviously).

THE TEAM

Mech pilots weren't originally included in X Teams in the early days of the rescue missions on Earth, simply because mechs on Mars and Venus alike were towering, multi-tonne machines used in dangerous, heavy labour and conventional warfare. They were deployed to Earth primarily to assist with rescues and, in a secondary role, in area defence.

But finding that Earth itself had miniaturized the mech concept to wearable battlesuits and remote-operated defence drones, which the first X Teams soon encountered on a regular basis, the newcomers responded, and a handful of mech pilots — especially the mavericks — were re-deployed to train in the new, much smaller suits called 'X Mechs'.

Motorcycles were an unfamiliar technology to Martian and Venusian X teams, but popular amongst Terran survivors who perfected hit-and-run tactics when raiding newcomer sites for resources and supplies.

Both X Mechs and Motorcycles are a modelling opportunity for players, with a wide range of available miniatures.

UPGRADES

SPECIALISMS

MECH PILOT

Mechs were an early inclusion in military hardware deployed to the Fallen Earth. Both Mars and Venus were accustomed to the use of enormous, armoured walkers to navigate the most hazardous regions of their respective planets and they seemed an obvious resource. However, X Teams rejected them as over-large and clumsy for the kind of subtle, covert work that was their stock-in-trade.

But after several encounters with Terran automated security mechs, demand for an appropriate response led to the development of much smaller — but still powerful — X Mechs, cannibalizing Terran technology to equip X teams with the latest in ambulatory support units.

Mech pilots automatically receive the X Mech gadget as part of the mech pilot upgrade. Mech pilots must have a minimum A and D of 4.

GADGETS

MOTORCYCLE

Motorcycles are a popular form of short-range personal transport on Earth that were adopted enthusiastically by X Teams looking for a rapid form of transport in the broken urban terrain. Electric drives make them virtually silent. Most X Teams leave motorcycles at the rendezvous point and proceed to objectives on foot, but a few expert riders - especially amongst Terran activists - use them to close rapidly with enemy forces or an objective.

A hero *mounted* on a motorcycle is Cyl 4. A motorcycle cannot be used by a character with AV4+ or by a synthetic drone. A hero *mounted* on a motorcycle cannot make cautious moves or climb (they can jump up/down and across). They can make urgent moves and do not become *stunned* at the end of them. A *dismounted* motorcycle leaves a Cyl4 marker to indicate its location.

The hero who was originally given the motorcycle as an upgrade may put it into the *mounted* state as an automatic action. Other heroes may attempt to enter the *mounted* state on a motorcycle that is *dismounted*, but must take an interact A(13) action as described on page 10. A *mounted* hero on a motorcycle cannot become *prone* voluntarily. If they are forced to become *prone*, the motorcycle automatically becomes *dismounted*.

X MECH

X Mechs are small by comparison to the true giants of the battlefield, but still stand more than twice the height of most people. Agile, heavily armoured and capable of carrying the heaviest of weapons, they have been developed specifically to support the covert operations of X Teams.

An X Mech is Cyl6. An X Mech counts as a hero with 10 stat points, but these must be allocated to M and F only. However, an X Mech has a maximum stat value of 7 for M and F. A mech has the same A and D as its *mounted* hero, and begins with AV3 FW3. While in the *mounted* state, it also has the Synthetic (Drone) upgrade (and therefore also has the Vigilant upgrade).

An X Mech may be given the same number of upgrades as the other heroes. An X Mech may have any of the Basic, Armour, Weapon or Gadget upgrades in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook.

A hero *mounted* in an X Mech may not be the target of an action.

If an X Mech enters the OOA state, it becomes *dismounted* as an immediate bonus automatic action. A hero who loses the *mounted* state due to their X Mech becoming OOA gains the *wounded*(+1) state.

Note: Because the X Mech counts as a hero, including a mech pilot specialist with an X Mech in your team counts as two heroes, even though, when *mounted*, they are a single model. X Mechs are also a valuable asset, not to be relinquished easily. If an X Mech is lost, because it counts as a hero, you may play a Rescue mission to attempt to recover it.

Ngana hefted the MAC to track the returns she was getting from her targeting computer. The Multi-Assist Cannon had been re-purposed from a much larger mech frame and the recoil was hard to accommodate, but the data input was spectacular. From off to her flank a weapon opened up, raking shots across her shoulder and she dived behind cover, crushing wreckage as she rolled across it. The battlesuit took most of the impact but she wasn't invulnerable and various urgent red glyphs cycled in her peripheral vision. No time to check them now, though.

She highlighted the likely target points, rose and unleashed three shots from the MAC that smashed into targets she couldn't see in the gloom. But she didn't wait to see if she'd hit what she was aiming at. She ducked back into cover, swung around the corner of the next building and sidled up to the end of the alley.

One autonomous target drone was there, smashed to pieces by the impact. A spark alerted her to the remains of the second. But what had become of the third?

A trio of shots struck her in the back. The red glyphs filled her vision and everything went black.

Ngana unsealed CUPID's hull, popped out and rolled away from the critically damaged battlesuit, lifting her rifle as she did so, only to find Step Serjeant Abdalla sighting along her own weapon, back at her.

The Serjeant lowered her weapon and tipped her head at Ngana.

'Exercise complete,' she instructed and Ngana climbed to her feet, furious. Abdalla had made the scenario completely unfair... again! The Step Serjeant simply didn't want Ngana in her team and she was going to make the pilot quit because she didn't have the guts to stand up to the Stepmasters!

She stormed over to Abdalla, fists clenched, ready to strike — then paused as she looked into Abdalla's face. The Serjeant didn't smile. She never did, as far as Ngana could tell. But her eyes gleamed.

'Performance superior, Ngana,' she admitted.

'Outcome negative!' complained the pilot, uncertain of the unexpected turn.

'Superior competence is... boring,' shrugged Abdalla, abandoning battle tongue. 'The X Mech frame is not designed to work alone. It is a team weapon. It is time to train with your team.'

White Dragon Miniatures

THE RED FORCE

The missions in *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis* introduce several new types of bogey. There is no reason you cannot transplant these into Solo or Team missions from the rulebook or other missions, though, and rules are provided for doing so.

SECONDARY ACTIONS

For the Solo/Team mode missions in this book, the rules for Red Force secondary actions on page 56 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook are replaced with the following:

After resolving the Red Force's primary action, roll a d12 and refer to the table below:

D12 Roll	Result
1-6	The active bogey moves this many inches towards the nearest hero.
7-11	The active bogey shoots at the nearest character within this many inches or, if there are none, makes a normal move towards the nearest hero.
12	The active bogey moves 6" towards the nearest hero then shoots the nearest character within 12". Identify the bogey nearest the active bogey: immediately roll again for this bogey.

If the action immediately preceding this Red Force activation was a cautious move or a Shoot action made with the Silent weapon upgrade, the player may re-roll this secondary action once. If any bonus actions were used to Shoot with a weapon that did not have the Silent weapon upgrade, you may not re-roll.

You may use these rules for secondary actions in other *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* solo or Versus missions.

SENTINELS

Sentinels may be automated guns, booby traps or synthetic soldiers, dug into shallow trenches. Sentinels deploy at the same time as the rest of the Red Force but, unless stated otherwise in the mission dossier, they deploy using the clock face method (below) with a deployment radius of 12".

Sentinels are always in *overwatch*. By default they have Att 2 Def 3 Wnd 2 but never move, never count as *obscured* and don't count as a bogey for the purposes of activation or bogey actions. An *engaged* character can move them to the *dead* state as if they were *down*. If a sentinel enters the *down* state, treat it as *dead*. They cannot have support tokens but can be *targeted* and *dominated*. A *dominated* sentinel is treated as a *deployed* sentry gun in the auto setting — at the point that it is *dominated*, it can be turned to face in any direction and must be given an operating radius (see *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook, page 42).

INCLUDING SENTINELS IN MISSIONS

If sentinels aren't mandated in a Solo/Team mission, you can exchange up to half of the Grunts in a mission for sentinels or, in hard or insane mode, you can add the same number of sentinels to the Red Force as there are Grunts.

In a Versus mission, either side may elect to add a sentinel to the Red Force. If both sides add a sentinel, they may each add a second sentinel if they wish. The decision to add sentinels is taken before rolling for their deployment location.

THE CLOCK FACE METHOD OF DEPLOYMENT

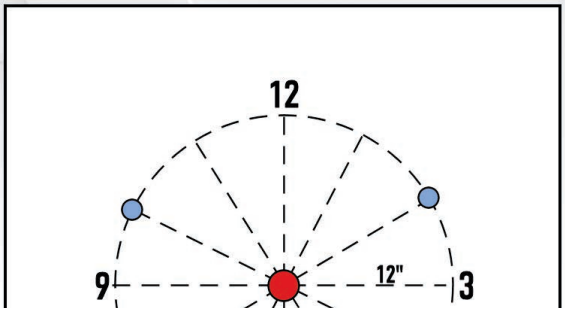
All or part of the Red Force is sometimes deployed using the clock face method.

In this method, a player nominates a direction on the tabletop as being '12 o'clock' (typically a corner of the table) and then rolls a d12. Bogeys using this deployment will deploy on the clock face 'hour' at a distance from the objective marker equal to their deployment radius. This should be stated in the mission dossier but, if it isn't, the default is 12".

As with bogeys, don't worry too much about being precise. The important thing is that bogeys deploying with this method are deployed randomly at around

the right distance from the objective. If two bogeys are deployed at the same point, adjust the result by +/-1 until you can place the bogey in an unoccupied spot. If a bogey would be deployed in inaccessible terrain, adjust the result by +/-1 until you can place the bogey in an accessible location.

The diagram below shows the deployment of three bogeys (blue) at 2, 7 and 10 o'clock at a deployment radius of 12" from the objective marker (red) in the centre of the table.



COMBAT MECHS

Defence mechs are the smallest type of combat walker, dedicated to a security and policing role. Larger mechs rarely cross the paths of X teams that operate far from the conventional battlefields that favour the mighty walkers. However, occasionally a smaller Combat Mech may be tasked with duties normally filled by defence mechs.

Combat Mechs have the following stats:

	Cyl	Att	Def	Wnd	Special
Combat Mech	7	5	5	5	Firewall 3, Agile

Agile — Despite its size, the bogey is designed for operations in close quarters and urban environments. It can climb onto or over any obstacle smaller than itself without needing to make a test. Measure movement distances horizontally only and ignore distances moved vertically.

USING THE COMBAT MECH IN MISSIONS

If a combat mech isn't specifically dictated for a mission, you can include one if you would like to raise the stakes. If the 'Defence Mech' complication is generated, roll a d12. On a 7+, a Combat Mech deploys instead.

BARRICADES

Sometimes the Red Force is prepared for the heroes. Barricades are deployed as if they were bogeys instead of deploying the bogeys. After the heroes have deployed, the bogeys are then deployed *engaged* with a barricade so that the barricade is between the bogey and at least one hero. Barricades are Cyl2. A bogey *engaged* with a barricade is *alert*.

Modeling Barricades

Barricades are Cyl2, which means they should ideally be modelled on a 25mm base and be at least 20mm tall, if you are playing with 28-32mm miniatures. If you are playing with smaller scales, refer to the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook for guidance. However, you should not feel too obliged to build specific pieces to represent barricades. An empty base or marker is enough as long as it is clear that it is a barricade.

THE NEMESIS

The Nemesis is an option for an operation or campaign, or it can be used in any Versus mission if the players agree. The Nemesis represents an opposing hero: someone with remarkable skills, special powers or unique abilities who has become aware of the X Team interfering with their plans and who can, if matters require it, step in to personally prevent their success. You, the player, have a degree of control over the timing of when you face them so, although they may deploy at random, surprising you, you can also elect to face them at any time. If you defeat your Nemesis, though, you will find that it was a false summit. Rather than your Nemesis, you have defeated one of their senior lieutenants. The true Nemesis remains

behind the scenes, awaiting the moment to strike!

BUILDING YOUR NEMESIS

A Nemesis begins with Att3/Def3/Wnd3 and one upgrade generated at random from the Nemesis upgrades list. Subsequent upgrades are chosen by the player(s). The same upgrade cannot be chosen twice.

NEMESIS UPGRADES TABLE

Each upgrade can be taken only once. Nemesis upgrades are described in the table on page 17.

DEPLOYING THE NEMESIS

The Nemesis replaces the '12' option on a complications table or, at any time a complication is generated, the player(s) may choose to invoke their nemesis and deploy the nemesis instead of rolling a complication. Once the Nemesis is deployed, the normal result of a '12' roll on the complications table is restored.

ACTIVATING THE NEMESIS

The Nemesis counts as both a Boss and an Elite for activation purposes.

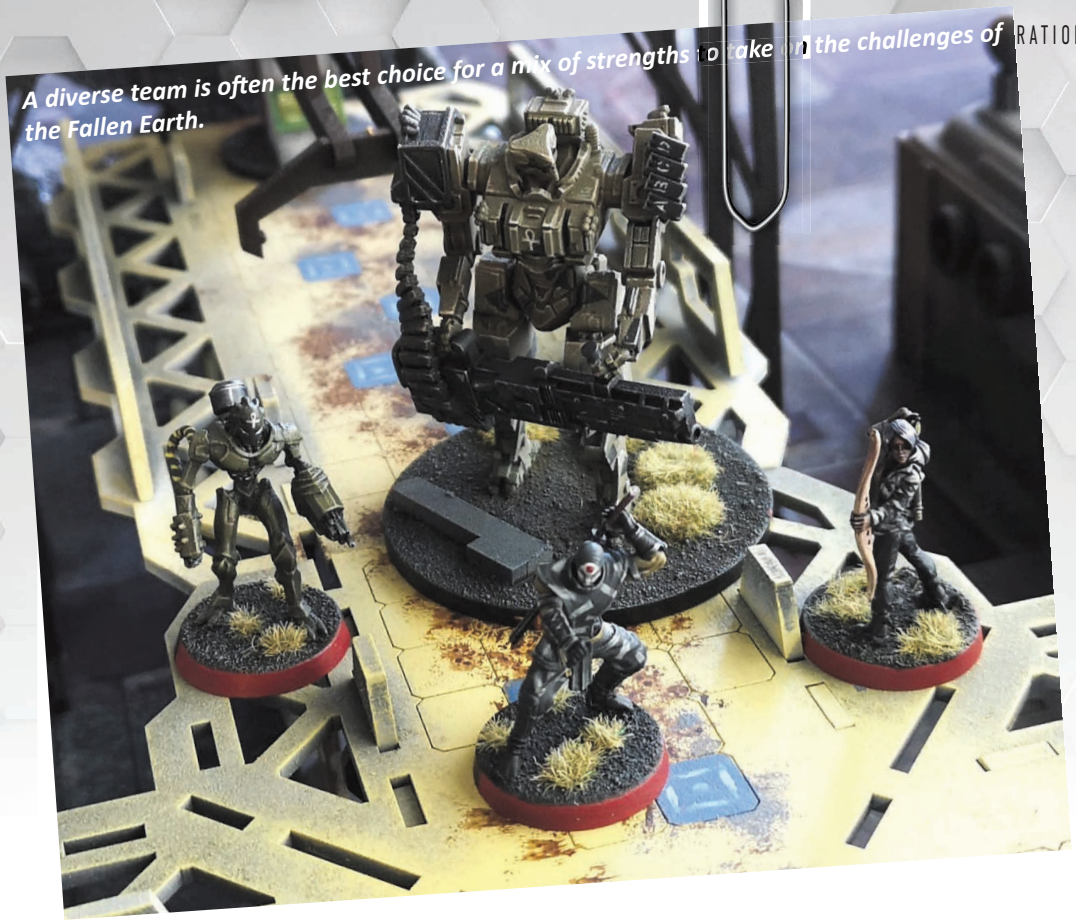
INCLUDING THE NEMESIS IN VERSUS MISSIONS

If both sides agree, a Nemesis may be added to a Versus mission. Generate the basic Nemesis with a single, random upgrade as normal. Each side then picks another upgrade. You may not select the same upgrade twice. The Nemesis will deploy on the first complications table roll of a '12' or, when a complication is generated, the side whose activation just finished may elect to deploy the Nemesis instead of rolling on the table.

Reaper Miniatures

D12 Roll	Upgrade	Effect
1	*Dangerous*	Roll again: • 1–4 **+1 Att** • 5–8 **+1 Def** • 9–12 **+1 Wnd** If you are randomly generating upgrades, this upgrade may be taken more than once.
2	*Bodyguard*	The first time the Nemesis would be *down* or *dead*, remove the nearest bogey instead. If the Nemesis is the only bogey or the bodyguard has already been used, the Nemesis is *down* or *dead* as normal.
3	*Hunter's instincts*	Whenever a bogey other than the Nemesis performs a secondary action, the Nemesis makes a normal move towards the nearest hero.
4	*Natural leader*	Whenever the Nemesis performs a secondary activation, the two bogeys nearest the Nemesis also perform a secondary activation.
5	*Synthetic*	Roll again: • 1–6 — **Drone** — The Nemesis is piloting a drone from a distant location. If the Nemesis becomes *dead* in a mission, do not create a new Nemesis but remove this upgrade. The Nemesis may be given this upgrade again. • 7–12 — **Avatar** — The Nemesis has been a robot avatar of the enemy AI all along! It is synthetic and cannot be *dominated*. It is an EWOp and uses the EWOp actions table. All Red Force synthetics have FW2 unless it is normally higher.
6	*Perfect visor*	The Nemesis is not affected by the visibility level.
7	*Hard to kill*	The Nemesis ignores the *down* state.
8	*Defensive arts*	The target to hit the Nemesis in CQB is 9.
9	*Offensive arts*	The Nemesis adds +1 to its Att in CQB.
10	*Hidden reserves*	If the Nemesis is the only bogey on the table not *down* or *dead*, after the Nemesis performs its secondary action, immediately deploy two Elites.
11	*Agent of Chaos*	Whenever the Nemesis would activate, instead resolve a complication, then the Nemesis performs a secondary action.
12	*Personal vendetta*	Nominate one hero. When the Nemesis performs a secondary action, it will target this hero if possible. If the hero is already *dead*, the Nemesis acts normally.

OPERATION MANUAL



A diverse team is often the best choice for a mix of strengths to take on the challenges of the Fallen Earth.

You can read through this operation manual from cover to cover if you wish but, if you plan to play through the operation, you may prefer to only read each mission as you are ready to play it. There are a few twists and turns along the way and you'll enjoy the narrative more if you let it come as a surprise.

We have marked the document with this symbol — ⧗ — so you know when you have reached a section you shouldn't read until you're ready to play.

However, there's plenty to read in the manual without playing the operation all the way through.

THE RED FORCE IN OPERATION NEMESIS

NEMESIS LEVEL

Add the Nemesis Level to the result of any complications table roll, treating a result of greater than 12 as 12. Once the Nemesis deploys, this effect is no longer in play.

THE REWARDS OF VICTORY

If the team kills its Nemesis, they receive +5 XP each.

The Nemesis receives an additional upgrade:

- For every 5 XP the team earns in a mission.
- If the team invokes the Nemesis but doesn't kill them.

If the team manages to kill their Nemesis, a new Nemesis should be created. The new Nemesis should be given the 'Dangerous' upgrade immediately, then randomly generate two upgrades, re-rolling any duplicates.

MAPS

The mission briefings' maps show suggested terrain lay-outs. You are free to use more, less, or different distributions of terrain.

CHAPTER ONE
WELCOME TO NAIROBI

The Nairobi landing zone was still chaos. Abdalla tightened her cloak across her face as she navigated past the still-burning wreckage of a lander that had failed to anticipate the ferocity of the storm and hit the surface too fast and hundreds of metres off target. Madness. That pilots who had trained in the atmosphere of Venus should die at the hands of the Motherworld was madness. They had made the mistake of underestimating Earth. Abdalla would not make the same mistake.

She pulled the door open, fighting the wind that sought to rip it from her grasp, and yanked it shut behind her. A guard on the other side of the chamber tensed her hands about her weapon until Abdalla pulled off her hood, revealing the dark, polished skin of her bald head and the distinctive tattoos of Masry Cavern. The guard pointed to the ad hoc admission scanner and Abdalla pulled off a gauntlet, pressing her palm to the device. Once her arrival was recorded, the guard stood aside and she passed through into the Vidi office.

The Stepmaster looked up as she entered.

'Ah, Serjeant Abdalla,' he greeted her. 'Timely come.'

Since their first meeting, Abdalla had found out more about the Stepmaster who had decided she was his personal tool. His name was Sing, and he had a poor reputation. He had done the absolute minimum to attain his rank — not without risk, she had to admit, but always taking short, safer steps, well marked by previous steppers and always using tried and tested materials and technology; never experimenting, never taking risks. Worse than that: he had interfered with the steps of others he had seen as potential challenges to his ambition to ascend, never seeing the very behaviour he was using

to advance himself would stand between him and the sky-city.

And now there was Vidi, providing the sly, the manipulative and the devious a fresh path to ascension with the added benefit of service on the Motherworld and all the opportunities it offered.

'Operation is blind,' said Sing, gesturing to the map in front of him. 'Data is old. Martian intelligence is partial. Now designated as opposition.'

Because, thought Abdalla, we refused to establish ourselves at the spaceport in Macapa and cooperate with them. They think we're a threat.

'Securing Nairobi position is imperative. Vici seeks local submission. Vidi seeks local compliance.'

'Local intelligence is inferior.' Abdalla interrupted him. She had seen the C2 briefings.

He looked irritated at having his flow broken. Sing was technically her superior, but he was equally technically a civilian in Vidi, whereas she was a serjeant in Vici's special actions division. It meant she had to follow his orders but, at the same time, Abdalla had no obligation to show him any respect and she didn't plan on starting any time soon.

'Affirm,' he agreed eventually. 'Vidi concurs. Vici seeks limited military insertion. Covert. Identify local sunray to become primary intelligence asset.'

Sunray was a generic term for an operational leader — an influential Earth native they could control and, through them, control at least part of the local population. But Abdalla had already seen the locals at work. They were tough and determined, and unhappy to see the Venusians.

'Sunray will refuse.'

Sing pulled a file up onto his holo display, highlighted it and flicked it into her cloud. She glanced at it in her peripheral vision then tucked it away. Sing stared at her.

'Persuade.'

An X-Mech fires upon a Red Force defending one of the mysterious gates.

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA001
INTELLIGENCE GATHERING

New on the ground and unable to act decisively without knowing more about both the area and the people, you must identify, track down, restrain and extract a local community leader for interrogation and induction. Engagement with local survivors is authorized. Lethal force is authorized.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 4
NEMESIS LEVEL 0

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Unfamiliar Territory
The team has had little opportunity to reconnoitre the area and there is insufficient intelligence for them to know exactly what to expect. By contrast, the locals know the area very well. As a result, the Red Force is not affected by the visibility level in this mission.

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place the terrain as required.
- Deploy the team as described below.
- Place an objective marker on the line to the opposite corner, 12" from each table edge as shown in the diagram.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

Select one corner of the table. The team deploys in a restricted entry (green) as described on page 66 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. You may spend 2 XP or run down the clock 2 cards to deploy in a planned line of departure on one of the sides (blue), or 4 XP or run down the clock 4 cards to deploy in a flanking entry (green and one red).

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

The Red Force deploys as described on pages 54-55 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook, using the objective marker as the centre point of the grid.

OBJECTIVE

The objective marker represents the community leader you need to kidnap. When a character is *engaged* with the objective marker, it counts as an Elite. To subdue her, a hero must succeed in a CQB that puts her into the *down* state. If you put the objective marker into the *dead* state, you have failed your mission. Remember that you do not have to roll all of your available dice in the test.

Once you have subdued the objective, designate each

corner ♣, ♦, ♥ and ♠. The suit of the next Control card flipped that isn't a Joker then indicates the corner to which the objective must be taken. The exit zone is a 6" square in the relevant corner.

Once the objective is subdued, the objective stays *engaged* with the character that subdued it unless passed to another character. The *engaged* character must perform drag actions to move and may only move up to half their M with bonus move actions. The objective may be passed to another character *engaged* with the character who is currently carrying it. This is an automatic action. If the character *engaged* with the objective is put OOA or *dead*, another character may pick up the objective by becoming *engaged* with it and spending an automatic action.

The mission ends when the card deck runs out, when the objective and all characters are in the exit zone, OR when all characters are OOA.

When play ends, determine the level of success:

Khurasan Miniatures

If the objective is in the exit zone, it is a Mission Success. If not, it is a Mission Failure.

Assuming a Mission Success, you can determine the level of success as follows:

- If two or fewer heroes are in the exit zone, it is a Partial Success.
- If three or more heroes are in the exit zone, it is an Acceptable Success.
- If all characters are in the exit zone, it is an Outstanding Success.

The objective marker in this mission is *delicate* except when attempting to subdue it.

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Mission Success	1 XP each
Acceptable or Outstanding Success (heroes not OOA)	+1 XP each
Hero who subdued the objective	+1 XP
Hero who moved objective to exit zone	+1 XP
Hero dragged a *down* Boss to the exit zone	+2 XP
Hero dragged a *down* Elite, Heavy or Sniper to the exit zone as long as at least one Boss was also scored	+1 XP

After this mission, the heroes automatically replenish expended weapons as if they had purchased a supply drop. A Rescue mission (see *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* page 68) may then be undertaken before the next mission if required.

CHAPTER TWO
THE AFRICAN VENUS

'You invade my land, kill my children, kidnap me and then you expect me to cooperate with you!?'

In the face of superior enemy firepower, the inhuman nature of a synthetic hero can be a deciding advantage.

Mama Akinyi was a handsome woman, her black skin polished by a life of hardship that had also toughened her body and soul. Abdalla stood opposite her in a skinsuit still decorated with the blood of those she had killed to secure Akinyi. The local woman had spat in the faces of the Vidi interrogators and insisted that Abdalla was the only one to whom she would speak. More specifically, she had said 'I will give the bitch who did this a piece of my mind!' but it all added up to the same thing in the end.

'Mama,' said Abdalla quietly, trying to speak the looser Terran dialect. 'I know you will, because you care about the lives of your children.'

The serjeant stood in the shadow at the edge of the room, her face and shoulders still wrapped in a stormcloak she wore in the style of a local shuka blanket. Akinyi was cuffed to a chair under the light.

'We came because what alternative? An army,' she went on. 'Your children cannot stand against us if we come in force. Hundreds will die. And we cannot rescue the lost, the injured or the starving without knowing our place here is secure. This we can do by crushing, or by cutting. Have you seen a leg crushed? Or an arm? Or a head? I have. Many times in the tunnels of my homeworld. Our people know what it is to be crushed. But cutting? A little cutting bleeds, but with a stitch here and there, all there will be soon is a scar.

'You will not forget the scar. You will not forgive the scar. But it is still better than the alternative.'

Akinyi glared at her, and Abdalla knew that the Terran woman would comply, even if reluctantly. And if the Vidi operators treated her and hers well, eventually she would do so willingly.

'I will have restitution for my children,' she snapped.

'We will pay you back in honour. We will pay you back in status. We will pay you back in safety, food and water,' said Abdalla, stepping into the light and pulling the cloak off her shaved head as she sat down. 'All we ask in return is that you tell us where to cut.'

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA002
ESTABLISH DOMINANCE

The local militia will respect a show of strength, but resist a massed force. Your team must infiltrate a defended militia position where they will be outnumbered and overpower the targets — non-lethally if possible — to win the cooperation of their leaders.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 3
NEMESIS LEVEL 0

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Enemy Territory
The area has been prepared and reinforced by the militia group. All bogeys begin with a support token. In addition, the Red Force includes four sentinels (see pages 14-15).

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place the terrain as required.
- Deploy the team as described below.
- Place an objective marker at the centre point

An X Mech and its allies prepare to remove the last obstacles between them and their objective.

Anvil Industry

of the table.

- Deploy the Red Force and Sentinels as described below.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys with a flanking entry as described on page 66 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. You may spend 2 XP or run down the clock 2 cards to deploy a maximum of one hero in the unused flanking zone, as shown in the map.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

The Red Force deploys as described on pages 54-55 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook, using the objective marker as the centre point of the grid.

OBJECTIVE

The objective marker is only used in this mission to govern the deployment of bogeys. The objective marker in this mission is *invulnerable*.

The object of the mission is to overcome and intimidate the enemy by placing as many of them into the *down* state as possible.

The mission ends when the card deck runs out or when at least six bogeys are in the *down* state. When the mission ends, if at least six bogeys are in the down state, it is a Mission Success. If not, it is a Failure.

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Mission Success	1 XP each
Each additional bogey in the *down* state	+1 XP each
At least one *down* bogey is a Boss	+1 XP each
At least one *down* bogey is a Heavy, Sniper, EWOp or Mech	+1 XP each
All sentinels *dead*.	+1 XP each

CHAPTER THREE
PRESSGANGED

Sing crossed his arms and leaned back against the briefing table. His friendly smile fooled no one.

'Plaudits, Serjeant,' he began and looked at the rest of the team, sitting to attention behind her. 'The locals bark on command. Exalted to the Skymasters are you.'

He flicked a document into Abdalla's cloud and she quickly scanned it.

'And to Vidi control, also,' he went on. 'No longer Vici. Effective immediate, I designate "Bal Anub". Reporting to me, exclusive.'

The certification checked out. It was countersigned by some very senior Skymasters. It was watermarked 'TOTAL SECRET'. It made no sense at all, given the parameters of Vidi's operating remit as civilians, with no military assets or authority. But she wouldn't give Sing the satisfaction of seeing her discomfort. Instead, she simply glanced over her shoulder at the team and nodded. Ngana and Kurtz didn't even look at her. Lox looked upset, although you'd have to know the medic well to spot the tension at the corners of his blue eyes. Marquin met her look with one of their own. The EWOp's virtual limb reached into her cloud, copied the authorization certificate - completely illegally - and quickly scanned it themselves. She saw the pursing of his lips that meant they had the same reservations.

'Questions?' asked Sing.

'Nil,' replied the serjeant.

'Render to me proper respect,' he ordered, abandoning battle tongue and, annoyingly, correct. The authorization certificate had awarded him a brevet rank of major. Again: insanity.

'Nil, sir,' agreed Abdalla. Sing smiled again.

'Group Akinyi is superior. Ally groups now compliant, but opponent groups resist. Contact with sniper. Relief operations undertaken. Inferior. Vidi will communicate to opponent group. With force.'

He stood up and gestured at the briefing table.

'Local sunray designated "WARLORD" is located at point ECHO, with potent deadly assets. WARLORD will not be permitted to disperse assets to other local opponent sunrays.

'Vidi will communicate the message that the will of Venus is not to be defied,' said Sing, slipping again into the vernacular. 'You will send it with his corpse.'

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA003
ELIMINATE THE CHALLENGER

The most powerful local militia group still opposes you. Make an example of them and the others will fall into line. They must be destroyed, their territory invaded, their leaders killed and their weapons seized.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 3
NEMESIS LEVEL 1

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

The Terminus

This militia seems weirdly motivated to defend a device resembling an enormous gate or arch. When within 12" of the objective marker, the Red Force all gain +1 Att.

Terminal Complications

This mission uses a special complications table:

D12 Roll	Complication
1-2	Deploy 3 synthetic Grunts
3-4	Deploy 2 synthetic Elites
5-6	Deploy a synthetic Boss
7-8	Deploy a synthetic Defence Mech
9-10	Deploy a synthetic Combat Mech
11-12	*The Terminus Speaks!* - All *down* bogeys within 12" of the objective marker are no longer *down*.

The first result of '12' is still replaced with the deployment of the Nemesis.

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place the terrain as required.
- Deploy the team as described below.
- Place an objective marker at the centre point of the table.
- Deploy the Red Force and Sentinels as described below.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys with a flanking entry as described on page 66 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. You may spend 2 XP or run down the clock 2 cards to also deploy a maximum of one hero in the unused flanking zone, as shown in the map.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

The bogeys deploy as described on pages 54-55 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook, using the objective marker as the centre point of the grid.

Sentinels deploy using the clock face method and have a 12" deployment radius (see pages 14-15).

OBJECTIVE

The objective marker is only used in this mission to govern the deployment of bogeys. The objective marker in this mission is *invulnerable*.

The object of the mission is to destroy the enemy - especially its leaders.

The mission ends when the card deck runs out or when at least two Bosses or one Boss and one Nemesis have been put in the *dead* state.

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Heroes earn XP individually in this mission as follows:

Nemesis in the *dead* state.	+5 XP
Each Boss in the *dead* state.	+3 XP
Each Elite put in the *dead* state.	+2 XP
Each Grunt put in the *dead* state.	+1 XP

CHAPTER FOUR
GRAND THEFT AERO

Vici was on the scene heavily, now. Several medium combat mechs had been deployed to make a clear statement to the locals about where the Venusians considered the perimeter to be, and a full platoon of infantry were there to underline that in practice. But inside the inner tape, Vidi made it clear that this was their site.

Abdalla and the team hadn't been released back to the landing site, but instead were lurking outside Vidi's cordon, pretending they were regular troops, but not too well. They didn't want any passing officer to feel inclined to give them directions.

Ngana stood at the edge of their isolated circle, CUPID's bulk discouraging questions. Marquin was covertly exchanging data packets with the Vidi team. The others stewed.

'Time is available. Team conference?' asked Kurtz. His combat drone, KB3, was in its dormant state beside him while he patched up the impacts it had taken with supplies from his pack. He exchanged a look with Abdalla and, after a beat, she nodded.

Kurtz asked: 'Vidi now? This is "Bal Anub"?'

'Vidi delivers intel and strategy,' agreed Lox, sitting on a collapsible chair he had produced from his pack. 'Civil authority. This team is military authority.' He switched to common tongue: 'Are we not? Serjeant, are we soldiers still?'

Abdalla gestured curtly at her throat and the others fell silent.

'Vidi? Vici?' she replied, holding out her hands like a pair of scales. 'We operate for Venus. The Skymasters provide our orders. We patrol the Motherworld.' She dropped battle tongue to talk in the sacred language of the step tongue, used for poetry and prophecy. 'We find clarity in our mission briefing and appreciate the blessings we have been given. We work for whoever we are told to work.'

She glanced at Kurtz, though, and continued: 'Venus made us soldiers, not Vici. We are soldiers, whoever gives the orders.'

'Objective contains a massive data buffer,' Marquin reported, raising their head from whatever space it had been occupying. Battle tongue was bad for this kind of conversation, so Marquin was using spellcaster jargon from their criminal days. Bad memories, but it was good for technical discussions, like this. 'I mean massive. Beyond exabytes. Yottabyte level.'

They all took a moment to digest this. It was hard to parse that quantity of data.

'What's in it?' asked Lox.

'Nothing. It's a void. Completely empty.'

'Not nothing. The objective contained a simple routing algorithm,' said Sing, some days later, back at the briefing table. The mix of common tongue dialects that had hampered the mission at first had begun to give way to a new dialect, exclusive to the mission. They were calling it Earth Common or just eCom: a mix of dialects and battle tongue, with some sky-tongue and some Terran phrases. 'The buffer was purged. The content was dispatched to a vault in a European citystate called NeuFrankfurt. And I — that is, Vidi — wants very much to know if there was anything in that buffer.'

He paused, waiting expectantly for Abdalla to interrupt him. She said nothing, stood at ease with her hands in the small of her back. She was two inches taller than Sing and standing slightly closer to him than politeness would dictate. If he backed off, he lost.

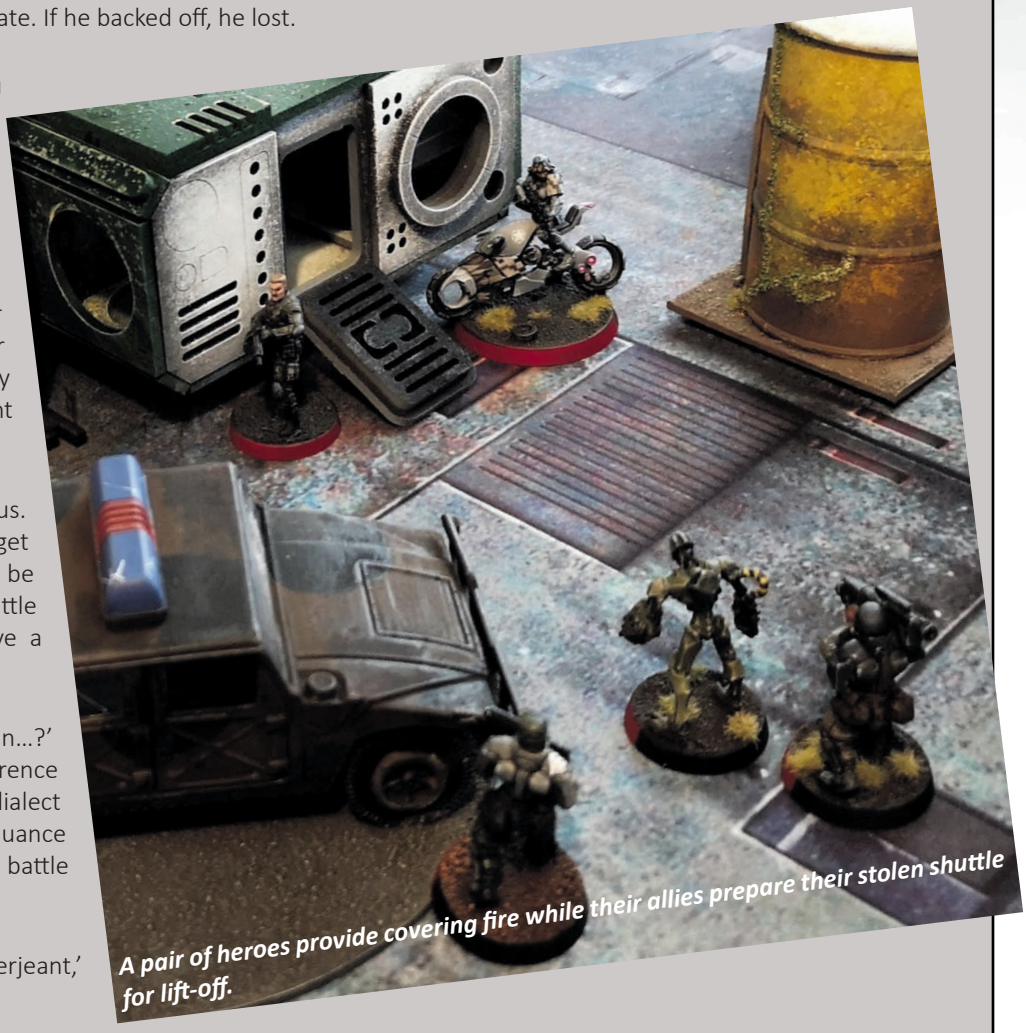
'We need to get you to NeuFrankfurt,' he went on, eventually. 'But Mars has organized quicker than we did.'

Being on Earth for three months longer than us probably helped, thought Abdalla.

'They are watching us. The best way to get under their radar will be to use a Terran shuttle and you already have a pilot on the team.'

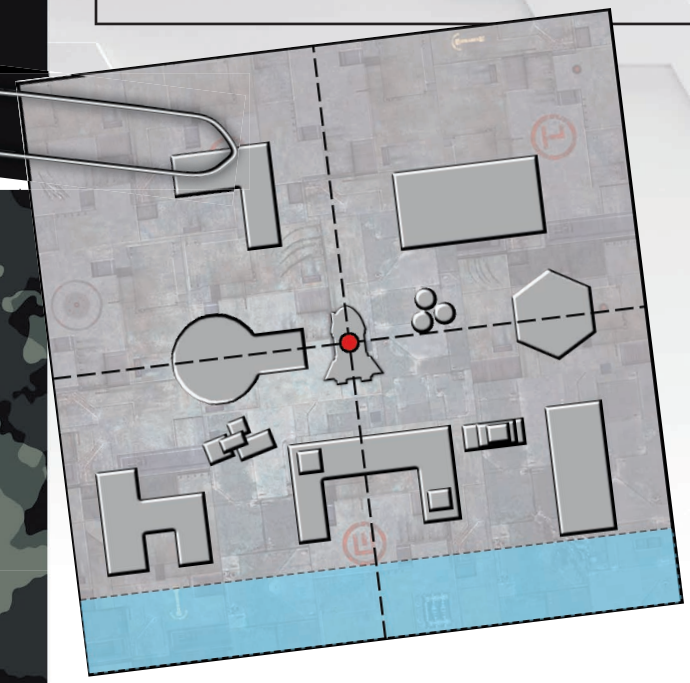
'By "use", you mean…?' Abdalla left the inference hanging. The new dialect allowed for levels of nuance and ambiguity that battle tongue lacked.

'I mean steal, Serjeant,' agreed Sing.



A pair of heroes provide covering fire while their allies prepare their stolen shuttle for lift-off.

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA004
HIJACK



Your team needs to borrow a vehicle and neither time nor circumstances allow the luxury of asking nicely. Get in there, deal with the objections, take the vehicle and get moving.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 4
NEMESIS LEVEL 2

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

The Shuttle

In this mission, the objective marker represents the control centre of the shuttle. If you have a suitable miniature to represent the shuttle, this is ideal, but a 40mm objective marker must still be placed on, in or near the shuttle miniature to represent the objective.

Flying the shuttle requires the heroes to complete the following steps:

1. The objective must be *dominated*. The shuttle has FW2. An EWOp hero can perform this action normally (if *engaged*, this is an automatic action for an EWOp). Any other hero may put the objective into the *dominated* state if they are *engaged* with the objective marker and pass an A-FW(13) test.

2. Gain access to the shuttle and its systems. This requires a hero to be *engaged* with the objective marker and pass an interact A(16) test. An EWOp may re-roll this test.

3. A hero must then upload a flight plan. This requires a hero to be *engaged* with the objective marker and pass an interact A(13) test. An EWOp or Sapper may re-roll this test.

4. A hero must then start the shuttle's engines. This requires a hero to be *engaged* with the objective marker (or, if you have a suitable miniature, to be on board and in the cabin of the shuttle) and pass an interact A(16) test. A Sapper may re-roll this test.

5. A hero who is *engaged* with the objective marker (or in the shuttle's cabin) may spend an automatic action to take off.

Each step must be completed before the next step can be attempted.

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place an objective marker as shown in the

diagram.
- Place the terrain as required.
- Deploy the team as described below.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys with a planned line of departure as described on page 66 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. You may spend 2 XP or run down the clock by 2 cards to make the deployment zone 9" deep, or 4 XP or run down the clock by 4 cards to make it 12" deep.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

There is no Red Force on the table at the start of the mission. Note that, when there are no bogeys to activate, a Control Deck flip will automatically generate a complication. Use the rules for deploying random reinforcements on page 54-55 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook.

OBJECTIVE

The objective marker in this mission is *sturdy*.

The object of the mission is to steal the shuttle and fly it away.

The mission ends when the card deck runs out or when a hero spends an automatic action to take off in the shuttle.

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Mission success	+2 XP each

All heroes not in contact with the objective are lost on take off and cannot be rescued.

This represents the end of the first act in Operation NEMESIS. The team will have the chance to rest, re-equip and pick up necessary reinforcements on their way to NeuFrankfurt, so XP may be spent on buying upgrades or fixes as described in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook as well as on a supply drop.

The shuttle shook and rolled in the unforgiving weather of the Fallen Earth. Once they were away from the landing pad, Kurtz had to fly on instruments, which meant being high enough to avoid obstacles. But up here, the effects of Ammit's impact on the atmosphere was felt keenly. A pilot without the experience of a Venusian atmosphere would have lost control in minutes.

'We won't make it to NeuFrankfurt without a stop,' he reported.

Abdalla's cloud completed handshake protocols with the shuttle's and she flicked coordinates into its mapping program. Sing had already prepared for this.

'Can we get here?' she asked, pointing at the location she had been given in the classified briefing.

'... Just,' Kurtz acknowledged.

CHAPTER FIVE
HOT ON A COLD TRAIL

Ngana handled the nimble flyer down into the clearing. The downdraft of the shuttle's magnetic rotors hurled dust, ash-snow and leaves in every direction and pushed the branches of the stricken trees away from the crumbling concrete walls hidden in the deeper darkness beneath them. Figures emerged from the vague doorways like openings into the void, dressed in rags and carrying unfamiliar weapons.

Abdalla gestured in urgent battlesign and, as Ngana touched down, the shuttle's door popped open and Bal Anub — less its pilot — dropped efficiently into as defensive a perimeter as the four of them could provide. But even as Abdalla sighted along the barrel of her rifle, one of the ragged band held up an illuminated hand in Venusian battlesign.

'Steadiness unto thee, Step Serjeant,' she called out over the shuttle's engines. She stepped forward, empty hands spread. 'I am of Vidi. My designation is Lao. I have been placed here as your contact.'

Abdalla relaxed slightly, but the rest of the team held their positions.

'Alea jacta est,' she called back.

'Rubicon, Carthage,' replied Lao — the correct countersign. Abdalla stood up and gestured to the others. Ngana cut the engines and they whined down to a stop. The shuttle was at the end of its power reserves. Before Ammit, it would have fully repowered from two days of normal daylight. But the endless clouds of ash and dust meant none of the solar systems were working.

'A diesel generator has been found here,' explained Lao, guiding them into the shelter of one of the hidden ruins. 'And a buried fuel stockpile. Two centuries has it lain undisturbed, at least, but still it works… most of the time.'

'Who're these?' asked Abdalla, cautiously, gesturing at the others. Now she could see them closely, it was obvious that they weren't ragged. Their upper clothes were deliberately torn and shredded as improvised camouflage — a clever workaround for the shattered Terran landscape. Beneath the grey and brown rags, they were warmly dressed in modern fabrics. Their weapons and equipment looked well maintained. And now Abdalla could see them closer, she could see that the antique weapon cases housed sophisticated upgrades. What looked at first like a centuries-old black powder assault rifle in fact had a solid-state magazine and magnetic rail flechette launcher.

'Locals, Step Serjeant,' said Lao, leading her to a smaller room where there was only space for a narrow camp cot, a desk and a chair. Lao sat on the cot and gestured at the chair. 'Useful adjuncts unto our mission. Vidi engages in establishing protected sites across Europe. Thus do we secure the resources and locations that are needful unto our mission. Without the Terrans, it would be impossible.'

'Mercenaries,' sneered Abdalla.

'A necessary compromise,' shrugged Lao. The door opened and one of the locals wandered in with two steaming tin mugs which Lao accepted with a grateful nod.

'Knocking is unknown to them?'

'They are not like unto us, Serjeant,' said Lao, passing one mug to Abdalla. It turned out to be sweet, black tea. 'They are not even like unto other Terrans. These men and women abandoned the city-states and illegally did they live out here in the wilderness. Many of them, now, were born unto this life, knowing no other. To them, words are precious. They speak little. Their fate has been to develop a culture entirely different to the city-states, more like unto our own world — isolated communities, separated by vast tracts of hostile wilderness. They don't like us, though. But they like what we can give unto them.'

'Which is?'

'Their world back.'

Two days later, the team watched more Terrans patrolling the edge of the building their militia had occupied. These were a contrast to the near-silent woodspeople they had met with Lao. Shaven-headed and dressed in

garishly painted light armour, the all-male force seemed to be little more than a criminal gang, looting and fighting to fulfil their own desires.

Abdalla was some distance away, in their rendezvous point, networked with Sing. The radio communication was struggling with the high metal content of the ash clouds that had consumed northern Europe.

'Vici are deploying a company to secure the city, Step Serjeant,' he told her, the connection strong but still stuttering occasionally. 'The Martians will notice, and complain and, probably, send their own people to interfere. Venus must stake our claim on Europe quickly, before the Martians wake up. But wake up, they will.

'You will secure the contents of that vault before Vici arrives.'

Two weeks ago, I *was* Vici, thought Abdalla. But she nodded consent anyway.

There was a knock on her cloud from Kurtz and she opened a voice channel.

'A problem, Step Serjeant,' the sapper reported. He was using his main drone unit, plus a pair of zippers to survey the approach. 'You will wish to observe.'

The hulking security unit was surprisingly light on its feet as they watched it patrol, its weapons swinging back and forth menacingly. It still bore the colours of its former corporate master, making it clear that the ragged-looking gang had at least enough capacity to have liberated the super-light mech or robot or whatever it was from the bank's armoury. The choppy video was coming direct from one of Kurtz's zipper remotes into the team cloud and into an overlay map beamed down to them from a passing Venusian satellite. With a gesture from Abdalla, the mech was given the floating designation GOLD.

Ngana was at her elbow.

'I can take it, Step Serjeant,' she said, popping a series of explosion GIFs onto the map, over GOLD. Abdalla heard Marquin chuckle on the open voice line.

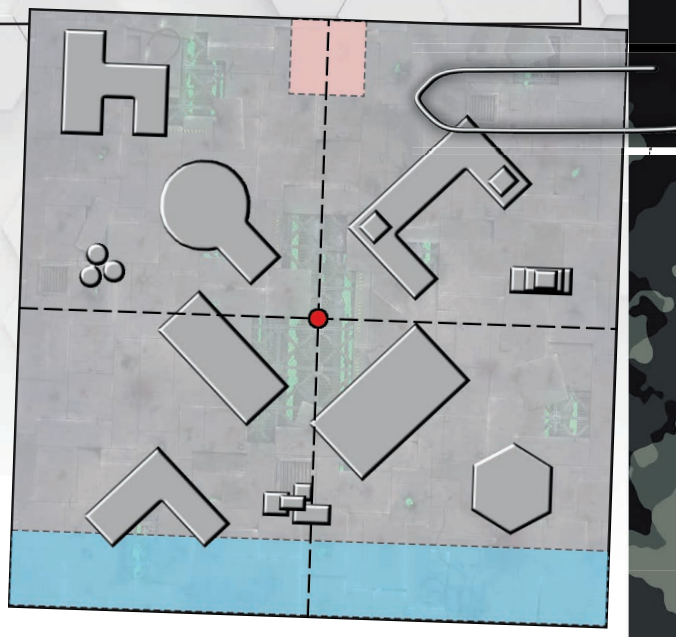
'I know you can,' she told the mech pilot, whose own battlesuit was squatting, dormant, beneath a camouflage net half a kilometre away. 'If it was just the mech, I would have no concerns. But could you take it *and* take an armour-piercing rocket to the back at the same time?'

She gestured, pin-pointing the figure of the largest of the building's guards, marked COPPER on the overlay. His gut sagged from beneath his armour, but his meaty arms were thick with muscle as much as fat and the weapon he carried was one Abdalla knew only from old tech/int reports. Ngana blanched beneath her visor.

'Marquin, accompany Ngana. Retrieve CUPID,' she ordered. 'We will eliminate COPPER first, then GOLD. Then we will proceed to the objective, destroying any other obstacles as we go.

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA005
BREADCRUMBS

The team must infiltrate a building controlled by an armed enemy, access a central data terminal to unlock the building's vault and then enter the vault. The building is well defended and the enemy is reinforced with at least one Defence Mech.



VISIBILITY LEVEL 4
NEMESIS LEVEL 1

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Silent Running

It seems likely that the local enemy have more forces nearby. To avoid alerting them, the mission must be performed with maximum stealth. Make a note of how many enemy are placed into the *dead* state. This tally need not include any enemy made *dead* in CQB or with a Shoot action using the *silent* weapon upgrade.

Central Security Terminal

To open the vault doors requires a hero to access the central security terminal (the objective marker). Any hero can access the terminal with an interact A(16) test.

An EWOp can also hack the terminal to place it in the *targeted* state. If the terminal is *targeted*, the interact test is A(10). A successful hack on a *targeted* terminal will also access it (opening the vault doors). The terminal has FW3. The terminal cannot be placed into the *targeted* state except with a hack.

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place an objective marker as shown in the diagram.
- Place the terrain as required.
- Deploy the team as described below.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys with a planned line of departure as described on page 66 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. You may spend 2 XP or run down the clock 2 cards to make the deployment zone 9" deep, or 4 XP or run down the clock 4 cards to make it 12" deep.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

The Red Force includes a Defence Mech from the start. Otherwise, the Red Force deploys as described on page 54-55 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook.

OBJECTIVE

The objective marker in this mission is *delicate*.

The object of the mission is to gain access to the vault. The vault doors are accessed via the 6" square exit point on the opposite side of the table (red) and can only be passed once the central security terminal has been accessed (see above).

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Each hero who enters the vault	+2 XP
Hero who puts Defence Mech into *dead* state	+2 XP
No alert bogeys at the end of the mission	+1 XP each

You may not play a Rescue mission after this mission.

You may not include heroes who do not access the vault as objectives in a Rescue mission until after Chapter 7.

Important
At the end of this mission, if you intend to play Mission 6, The Vault, you will need to make a note of how many *alert* or *down* bogeys remain on the table.

The immediate support of technical specialists, overhead satellites and BattleNet artificial intelligences gives X Teams near-perfect knowledge of the battlefield threats.

CHAPTER SIX
IN DEEP

The vault door slid shut behind Abdalla and she slumped back against the reinforced steel, the militia leader's knife protruding from her chest. The plan had gone perfectly, in theory. Using the poor visibility to their advantage, she and KB3 had approached GOLD, apparently the militia leader, and with KB3 distracting him, the serjeant had closed rapidly with the big man and put two rounds into his chest. The resilience of the armour at that range had been just enough of a surprise for him to have time to stab her before her third shot took him through the forehead. KB3 had dragged her into the building and from there to the vault.

Her vision began to ebb and she was only half-conscious of Lox speaking quietly and urgently, then there was only the numb warmth of the psuedomorphinate.

When she came to, they were still in the same place.

'Steadiness unto you, Step Serjeant,' whispered Lox urgently in her ear. 'The nanogel works hard on your behalf but will not be aided if you move too much. This vault is immense. Kurtz is running KB3 deeper in and we believe they have located our objective.'

'Why have we not yet secured it?' asked Abdalla through gritted teeth, as the microscopic, semi-intelligent repair bots in her bloodstream worked furiously to stitch up her damaged tissue. They were drawing power and biometric data from her personal cloud, feeding back information on progress. She would finish a month of natural healing in under an hour. But it hurt like fire in her veins. She could see Ngana, out of her battlesuit and bent over CUPID, quietly patching damage with metalfoam and plastic bandages. The step serjeant was pleased to see the young pilot had obviously got the better of the lumbering Terran security drone.

'More Terrans have it barricaded and defended,' he replied, watching a more complex analysis of the same reports scroll across his retinas. 'Automated defences seem to be in place, also.'

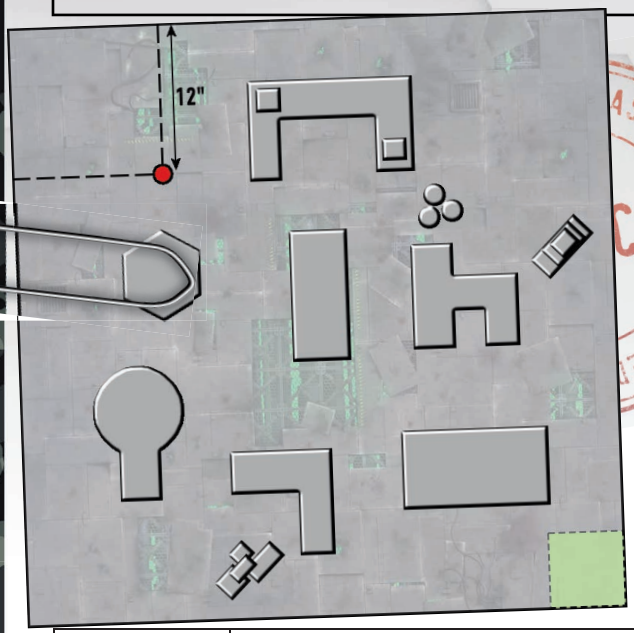
'Marquin?'

'Doing their best, Step Serjeant,' shrugged Lox. 'They say the localnet dialect is completely different to Nairobi. Kurtz knows more about such systems, anyway.'

'Five ceecees of pseudomorph,' she ordered, gesturing at her neck for him to inject her. 'It'll get me through.'

Lox restrained himself to a frustrated sign and an arch of his thin eyebrows, but he put the injector to her neck anyway and punched the painkiller into her bloodstream. She would not be at one hundred per cent, entering the next encounter with the Fallen Earth's anarchic denizens with her system damaged and judgement impaired with pseudomorph. He would need to stay close if she were going to make it out alive.

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA006
THE VAULT



The local militia's hard core has already occupied the vault and created a fortified position. You will face a tough challenge. Luckily, though, they have no reinforcements to call upon.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 4
NEMESIS LEVEL 0

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Militia Complications

Replace the complications table in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook with the one below:

D12 Result	Complication
1-2	**Perimeter alarm** – Deploy a sentinel with a deployment radius of 6". All characters become targeted. If they are already targeted, they become *stressed*(+1). If they are synthetic or already *stressed*, they become *stunned*(+1).
3-4	**Betrayal** – All bogeys get a support token up to their maximum. If a bogey already has the maximum support tokens, the character nearest to the bogey becomes stressed(+1). If they are synthetic or already *stressed*, they become *stunned*(+1).
5-6	**E/M Pulse** – All synthetic characters become *wounded*(+1) immediately. EWOp characters must use an action to reboot a spelldeck before any hack or program actions can be performed (this is an automatic action). Characters in the *interference* state immediately lose that state.
7-8	**Booby Trap** – Deploy a sentinel with a deployment radius of 12". The character closest to the objective becomes *wounded*(+2). If the character isn't OOA, he or she also becomes *stunned*(+1).
9-10	**Automated Defences** – Deploy two sentinels using the clock face method with a deployment radius of 6" (see pages 14-15).
11-12	**Fanatical Defence!** – All *down* bogeys are no longer *down*. If the Boss was *dead*, re-deploy the Boss.

Reaper Miniatures

Hunkered Down
If the active bogey is *obscured* from the LOS of the active hero, then as a secondary action they will shoot at the nearest hero in LOS. Otherwise, they gain a support token.

Central Data Terminal
The objective marker is a central data terminal. This is exactly like the central security terminal in Mission 5, but requires an interact A(21) test or, if targeted, an A(16) test. The central data terminal is FW4.

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place an objective marker as shown in the diagram.
- Place the terrain as required.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.
- Deploy the team as described below.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

The Red Force consists of 1x Boss, 2x Elites, 1x Elite per hero and 1x Grunt for every *alert* bogey — including *down* bogeys — still on the table at the end of Mission 5. You will also need one barricade per bogey. Instead of deploying bogeys, deploy the barricades as if deploying bogeys as described on pages 54-55 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. Then deploy each bogey *engaged* with a barricade, so that the barricade is between the bogey and the heroes.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys with a restricted entry as described on page 66 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. You may spend 2 XP or run down the clock 2 cards to move one hero 6". You may spend 4 XP or run down the clock 4 cards to move two heroes 6" or one hero 12".

OBJECTIVE

The object is to kill all the bogeys and access the data terminal.

The objective marker in this mission is *delicate*.

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Mission success	+2 XP each

If the mission is a success then any *dead* heroes are returned to the team at the start of Chapter 7, in the *wounded(1)* state.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CULTISTS OF LONDON

'Empty?' snarled Abdalla. 'Again!? Vidi has us on a wild goose chase!'

Marquin held up their hand to pause her Step Serjeant's anger. From the glare that Abdalla awarded her, it was clear that the fact said hand remained attached to their arm was only happy chance.

'The data packet transferred from Nairobi is gone,' they agreed, lowering their hand to gesture at objects no one else could see. 'The capacity of this data vault is enormous but, even so, it must have taken hours to transfer. Someone must have been physically present to re-route each chunk as it arrived. There is no routing algorithm. The transfers were initiated manually.'

'Manually?' Abdalla demanded. 'By whom?'

Ngana was scouting the perimeter in her X Mech, checking they could safely exit the vault once Marquin was done. Kurtz was scavenging parts and ammunition from the dead to patch up KB3 and replenish his supplies. Lox fussed around whoever was in reach. None of them had got through that last encounter unscathed.

'This entire vault was registered to a private individual,' replied Marquin.

'Who?' demanded Abdalla.

'Professor Orpheus Vorn,' said Marquin, unjacking her spelldeck and slamming the access port shut. 'The bank's mainframe has surrendered his address unto me.'

'Where?'

'London.'

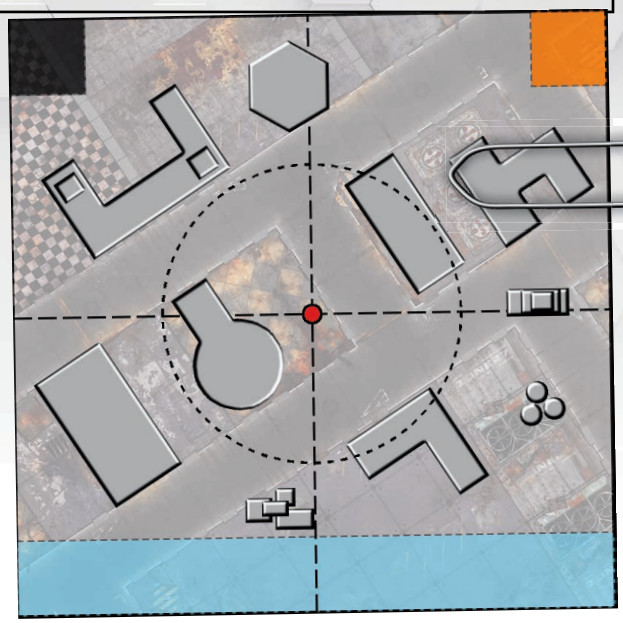
Kurtz pulled the video feed from the hovering drone he had sent to scout ahead out of his cloud and passed it to Abdalla, who watched it without comment.

The man they were looking for was there, which was good. He had been stripped naked and tied out on a large chunk of masonry with thick bundles of copper wire. That was inconvenient. And a tall figure in a black robe was standing over him, waving a long, serrated steel blade at the centre of a circle of similarly-clad others. The audio feed returned a mix of chanting and inarticulate shouting. That was bad and weird.

Earth, she decided, was just weird. And London was the weirdest of all. But their orders were clear.

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA007
CUTTING IT FINE

Your team has been dispatched to rescue a VIP but, on arrival, you discover that he has already been 'rescued' by a group of religious zealots, determined to sacrifice him to their deity.



VISIBILITY LEVEL 4
NEMESIS LEVEL 3

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

The Cult of Humanity
All bogeys in this mission are human (i.e. not synthetic). There is only one Boss. If you have to deploy another Boss, deploy the Nemesis instead. If the Nemesis has already been deployed, deploy a Heavy Elite.

The Ritual
Until the VIP and all Grunts are *down* or *dead*, treat Elite activations as Grunt activations. Once all Grunts are *dead*, the first Elite to activate will be the only Elite to activate until it is *down* OR *dead*, then repeat the process. Once the VIP is *dead*, activations return to normal.

The Sacrifice!
A Boss that is *engaged* with the objective marker will automatically put the VIP into the *dead* state as its secondary action if the VIP isn't *dead*.

The VIP
If the VIP is *dead*, do not remove the objective marker from the table. Whether *dead* or not, it is an automatic action for a hero *engaged* with the objective marker to interact with the VIP. If the objective marker is *engaged* with a bogey, a hero may not interact with the VIP.

If a hero interacts with the VIP, the hero becomes the objective marker for the purposes of deploying Red Force reinforcements and must now move using only drag actions (the VIP has AV0).

It is an automatic action for a hero who is the objective marker to pass the VIP to another hero with whom they are *engaged*. In this case, the new hero becomes the objective and must move using drag actions. The previous hero may now move normally.

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place an objective marker as shown in the diagram.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.
- Place the terrain so that no terrain item is closer to the objective than a Grunt.

- Deploy the team as described below.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

The Red Force consists of 1x Boss, 2x Elites, 1x Elite per hero and 1x Grunt per hero. Deploy the Boss *engaged* with the objective, then deploy the Elites using the clock face method (see pages 14-15) with a deployment radius of 8" and deploy the Grunts with the same method and a deployment radius of 12".

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys with a planned line of departure as described on page 66 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook aand shown in the diagram. You may spend 2 XP or run down the clock 2 cards to move one hero 6". You may spend 4 XP or run down the clock 4 cards to move two heroes 6" or one hero 12".

OBJECTIVE

The objective marker in this mission is *delicate*.

The object is to rescue the VIP. Once a hero has interacted with the objective marker, the next Control Deck flip will indicate the exit zone by which the VIP must be extracted (red or black, depending on the colour of the Control Deck card, and as indicated in the diagram above). Once a hero enters the exit zone, they are removed from the table.

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Escaped with the VIP	+1 XP each
VIP not *dead*	+2 XP each
Hero who killed the Boss	+3 XP
Hero who was the objective marker at any time in the mission	+1 XP
Hero who was the objective marker at the end of the mission	+1 XP

CHAPTER EIGHT
BORDER CONTROLS

Abdalla skidded to a halt in the lee of one of the low buildings on the perimeter of the landing zone where they had left the shuttle. Breathing hard behind her ash scarf, she lowered Vorn to the ground unceremoniously. He was unconscious but otherwise unharmed, against all probability. The leader of the cult that had done its best to send him to the Great Beyond had been ranting about being 'left behind' and that Vorn was some kind of... what was that word he had used? 'Pontifex'? She had heard it before somewhere.

Yes. It had been a long time ago. Pontifex. Bridge builder. It was a rank among the Skysteppers for senior people in their ranks who led the appraisals of steppers worth of ascension. She wondered what bridge it was that Professor Vorn was supposed to have built. Certainly he would have built nothing with that dagger in his chest.

Lox was close at hand and immediately dropped down beside the kidnapped Terran, checking his vital signs as best he could.

'These implants are non-standard, and my knowledge is inadequate,' the medic admitted, his voice muffled behind his scarf, having to raise his voice to be heard over the perpetual rumbling of thunder overhead. 'Cranial implants are recognized, but here are twelve or more. Their function is unknown to me. Medikit's universal jacks cannot recognize the interface. Half his organic brain is missing.' He waved at Vorn's limbs, which seemed to be a strange amalgam of metal and flesh. 'This is engineering, not medicine. Ask Kurtz.'

He looked up at her, struggling to really articulate his bafflement.

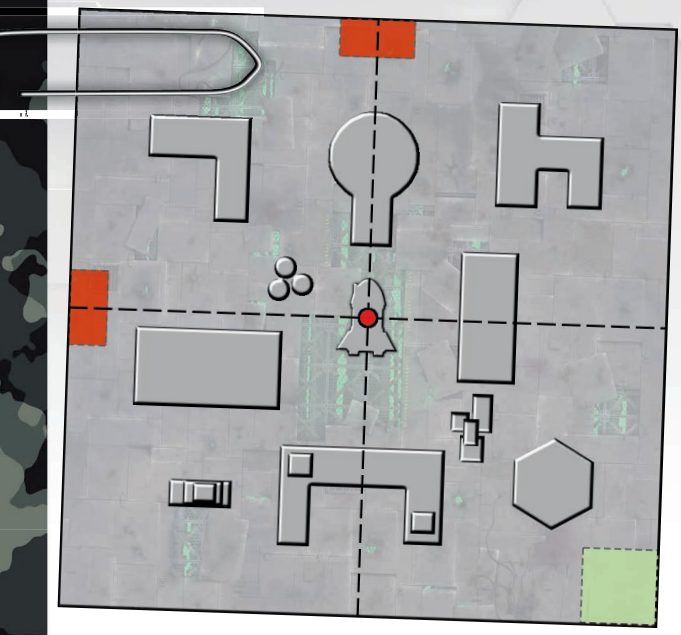
'Keep him unconscious, if you can,' she ordered. 'We can find out more when we are safe. First, the shuttle must be re-acquired from our enemy.'

She nodded to the corner and Lox closed the tools of his medikit back into his gauntlet and edged past her. The storm had descended again and the ash and dust poured across the open landscape, billowing in gusts through the weak light of the landing zone's spotlamps. The whole team wore goggles, now, with storm cloaks wrapped around their shoulders and faces against the fierce weather and darkness. It was lucky they had been able to take even a couple of sets of heatlight visors from Lao.

According to Lox's chronometer, it was a few minutes after noon. And, peering around the corner, he could see dim figures moving in the gloom, surrounding the still-dimmer shape of their shuttle in the distance.

He was aware of Abdalla issuing instructions to the team. Ngana was heading up the flank in CUPID, which had survived the last mission by the skin of its teeth. Marquin was moving up on their position. Kurtz, meanwhile, had peeled off a while back against just this eventuality. He had a pair of zipper drones deployed, guns at the ready. He and KB3 would draw the enemy towards the far end of the landing zone. Lox, Marquin and Abdalla just had to get Vorn onto that shuttle...

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA008
ESCAPE FROM HEATHROW



When you stole the shuttle, you had the advantage. This time, your enemies got there first. The team must fight through the Red Force to the shuttle, burdened by their objective from the last mission.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 5
NEMESIS LEVEL 6

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

I'm not dead!
If the team killed the Nemesis in the last mission, guess what? Not actually dead. The first time a complication is generated, don't roll on the table. Instead, deploy the Nemesis. However, the Nemesis gets no upgrades from the last mission.

Dead Weight
One hero must be designated as carrying the VIP. This hero may only make drag moves. If, in Mission 7, the VIP wasn't *dead* at the end of the mission, or if you are playing this as a standalone mission, then each time the hero carrying the VIP in this mission becomes *wounded*, roll a d12. On a 1 or a 2, the hero is not *wounded* but the VIP enters the *dead* state.

The VIP may be transferred to another hero *engaged* with the one carrying the VIP by either hero spending an automatic action.

The Ride Home
In this mission, the objective marker represents the control centre of the team's stolen shuttle. If you have a suitable miniature to represent the shuttle, this is ideal, but a 40mm objective marker must still be placed on, in or near the shuttle miniature to represent the objective.

Flying the shuttle away requires several key steps:

1. Gain access to the shuttle and its systems. This requires a hero to be *engaged* with the objective marker and spend an automatic interact action.
2. A hero must then upload a flight plan. This requires a hero to be *engaged* with the objective marker and spend an interact A(10) action. An EWOp or Sapper may re-roll this test.
3. A hero must then start the shuttle's engines. This requires a hero to be *engaged* with the objective marker (or, if you have a suitable miniature, to be on board and in the cabin of the shuttle) and spend an A(13) action. A Sapper may re-roll this test.
4. The hero carrying the VIP must be on the shuttle/*engaged* with the objective before step 5.
5. Finally, a hero who is *engaged* with the objective marker (or in the shuttle's cabin) may spend an automatic interact action to take off.

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place an objective marker as shown in the diagram.
- Place the terrain as required.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.
- Deploy the team as described below.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

Deploy the Red Force as described on pages 54-55 in the *Horizon Wards: Zero Dark* rulebook.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys with a flanking entry as described on page 66 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. You may spend 2 XP or run down the clock 2 cards to deploy one hero in both flanking zones (red), as shown in the diagram below.

OBJECTIVE

The objective marker in this mission is *delicate*.

The objective is to start up the shuttle and fly it away with the VIP on board.

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Mission success	+2 XP each
VIP (still) not *dead*	+1 XP each
Hero who carried VIP to the objective marker	+2 XP

This brings us to the end of the second act in *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis*. But things are about to go poorly for our heroes who will find that the rest and re-supply they had enjoyed when flying in the opposite direction are suddenly unavailable. Their messages go unanswered and they have no idea what is going on back in Nairobi or anywhere else.

In short, you may not spend XP on weapons, gadgets, traits, fixes or a supply drop. However, there may be other contacts and allies the heroes have made along their journey, so you may still receive reinforcements and allies.

Khurasan Miniatures

CHAPTER NINE
CRASHDOWN

Ngana did her best after taking a stray round through the power relay, but it was impressive they made it across the Channel at all. Coming down inside the perimeter of the Paris city-state was borderline miraculous. With no power left to deliver a conventional landing, there was no option but to bring the shuttle down hard. The towers of Paris still stood, dark and monolithic but not visibly affected by the Ammit strike on the other side of the world. But there was no time to appreciate what little view the ash storm outside was prepared to offer them on the approach.

'Brace!' yelled Ngana as what looked like as empty a space as they would find loomed in the forward windows.

When the chaos finally stopped, there was silence. Abdalla broke it.

'Sound off,' she ordered as she checked over her own injuries. The slice across her ribs felt like it had split open before the microderm could finish its work but, other than the usual bruises that attended a crash landing, she felt fine.

A chorus of 'aye' from the team confirmed that all of her people were conscious and responsive.

'Vorn?'

'Still out,' replied Lox, unbuckling himself. 'But present.'

He bustled from one to the other with his scanner pulling vital data from each person's cloud.

'A mild concussion lies upon Ngana,' he reported. 'Your ribs re-broke and the dressing on your shoulder is in need of replacement. Unto me is a mild whiplash and tomorrow I will curse my fate. But for now, all walk.'

'But only unto the train station,' Kurtz interrupted, clambering back from the pilot's seat. 'It is Paris Nord. As we flew over, it appeared operational. We can appropriate transport.'

'Whence?' asked Ngana, checking over her X Mech, folded awkwardly yet still taking up six times the space of any other team member.

'Barcelona,' said Abdalla. 'Vici has established a support base.'

'First, though, a problem,' said Marquin quietly, their fist raised in the signal for silent attention. They gestured and the display they had been examining appeared for everyone to see. The team's location was marked at the centre of the active map and, ringing it and approaching rapidly, were the symbols for unknown enemy units.

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA009
TANGO IN PARIS

After crash landing, the team finds itself at the centre of a constricting ring of enemy forces. They must hustle towards safety before the net tightens and they are overwhelmed.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 3
NEMESIS LEVEL 0

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Crash Landing
All heroes begin *wounded(1)*.

Dead Weight
See page 46.

The Hunted
The objective marker in this mission is always the hero who last activated. It is used only for deploying Red Force reinforcements.

Off-script
The Nemesis does not deploy in this mission.

The Endless Tide
Every time a Control Deck card is flipped, after resolving any secondary action, if there are fewer than six bogeys deployed (not counting *down* bogeys), roll on the table on the left. This table is also used in lieu of the normal complications table.

D12 Result	Complication
1-2	Deploy three synthetic Grunts
3-4	Deploy two synthetic Elites
5	Deploy two synthetic Grunts and one synthetic Elite
6	Deploy one synthetic Grunt and two synthetic Elites
7	Deploy a synthetic EWOp
8	Deploy a synthetic Heavy
9	Deploy a synthetic Sniper
10	Deploy a synthetic Boss
11	Deploy a synthetic Defence Mech
12	Deploy a synthetic Combat Mech

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.

- Place the terrain as required.
- Deploy the team as described below.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys in a concealed position using the yellow deployment marker. The team may expend 2 XP or discard 2 Control Deck cards to move one hero 6" from their concealed position. You may move each hero once at the relevant cost in XP or Control Deck cards.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

The starting Red Force consists of three Grunts and an Elite. These deploy using the yellow deployment marker.

OBJECTIVE

The objective is to get the VIP to the 6" exit zone (red), as shown in the map.

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Mission success	+2 XP each
VIP *still* not dead	+1 XP each
Hero who carried VIP to the objective marker	+2 XP

A pair of heroes defends their escape shuttle from the contracting net of the enemy Red Force.

CHAPTER TEN
IN THE DARK

The rail pod was so smooth. The power supply was uninterrupted. The tunnels that had made up most of their journey were unblocked, and when they had emerged, from time to time, into the open as their line flew across deep gorges and valleys, the views were remarkable, even given the thick blanket of smog and ash that stirred around the pod's journey.

They were moving at somewhere in the region of 300kph and in an almost perfectly straight line. When nothing seemed to disturb them for an hour, Abdalla made the mistake of starting to relax. As they approached the end of the journey, even though her mind was prompting her to be ready for whatever awaited them at the end, she was almost entirely off-guard.

She only realized that they had come to a stop when the lights went out, plunging the whole team into total darkness.

Fortunately, the near-instant transition from relaxed to alert was part of what it meant to be one of her team.

'Network online,' Marquin reported immediately. 'Location data incoming.'

'Drone is ready,' said Kurtz. 'The emergency hatch can be its egress to recce this location. If this vehicle recommences, it may be lost.'

Ngana was silent. Her mech had taken one too many hits in protecting their retreat to the rail station and she had been forced to abandon it on the platform. But she pinged the cloud anyway, to indicate that she was at the door, weapon ready. Lox tapped Abdalla's shoulder to confirm he was up and ready to go.

'Lox, Vorn is your burden,' she ordered. 'Marquin, details.'

'We stand less than a klick from our target point,' the EWOp replied, their implants illuminating gently in the darkness. 'Break in the line. Power failure to the pod. Further movement impossible.'

She had Kurtz force the door and sent Ngana and one of the sapper's drones up the line to reconnoitre. An answer came back, quickly. The roof of the tunnel had collapsed less than three hundred metres ahead of them. It can't have been Ammit. They were practically on the opposite side of the planet. The damage must have come later.

Who and why were important questions, but not ones she could answer, right now. But a ping into all their clouds from Marquin showed a nearby emergency exit and a map of the maintenance tunnels that should get them to the surface.

'The internal camera system provides us with a feed,' they told her. 'Power remains unto it. But the emergency

An X Mech comes to the assistance of its comrades in the face of an on-coming horde of enemy synthetics.

lighting generator is deceased. It has been thus for many days.'

'OK,' she acknowledged. 'Illuminators are authorised. Evidently, enemies in this place must care not for light. We shall move out. Stay close. Lox, how is your burden?'

'Semi-conscious,' replied the medic. 'He mutters of strange things.'

Abdalla paused and went back to where Lox held the scientist up, shining her flashlight into his face. His pupils dilated but his expression was vacant, the only expression she could read there being confusion

'What say you, scientist Vorn?' she demanded.

'The melds could lie,' he told her. 'Who knew they could lie? How long have they been lying to us?'

'What lie?'

'Stardust,' muttered Vorn. 'We are all stardust.'

Abdalla grunted. There was no sense to be got from this one. She would be happy to turn him over to whatever means Vidi had at its disposal to extract what little remained of his brain.

'We go.'

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA010
TUNNEL VISION

Forced into a network of tunnels, the team has split up to find their way out. After many adventures, they finally converge on what they believe is the exit only to find that they must fight through an enemy force determined to stop them at all costs.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 6
NEMESIS LEVEL 0

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Tunnels

The table for this mission represents tunnels rather than an open area, so you wil need some way of indicating the tunnel walls marked on the map as dotted black lines. The heroes may not leave the

An unidentified enemy Heavy engages an advancing hero from behind the cover of prepared barricades.

tunnel except via the exit zone (red). The maximum height of terrain is Cyl6, which represents the tunnel roof, so the combined height of a character and any terrain they are on top of must be 6 or less.

Dead Weight
See page 46.

SET UP

The table is reduced to two passages, crossing at the centre of the table as shown in the diagram below. If played on a 4' x 4' table, the passages are each 12" wide. If played on a smaller table, reduce the width of the passages accordingly. It is recommended that the tunnels be liberally littered with obstacles and cover.

There are three objective markers, each 12" from the table edge and in the middle of the tunnel.

Select Difficulty.:

- Deploy the team as described below.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

Roll a d12 for each member of the team. On a 1-2, they deploy in the 3" x 6" blue zone. On a 3-4, they deploy in the yellow zone. On a 5-12, they deploy in the 6" x 6" green deployment zone.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

Deploy the Red Force using the rules on pages 54-55 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook, randomly selecting a yellow objective marker for each deployment. The Red Force also includes three sentinels (see page 14) that deploy the same way.

Red Force reinforcements will deploy on a randomly determined objective marker.

OBJECTIVE

Objective markers in this mission are *sturdy*.

The objective is to get the VIP to the 12" x 6" zone marked in red. Any character in the red zone may exit the map but, once they have done so, they may not return.

Characters in the red zone at the end of the mission do not count as lost. Characters within 6" of the red zone are not lost if there are no bogeys within 6" of the red zone at the end of the mission.

The mission ends when the last Control Deck card is flipped or when there are no characters on the map that are not OOA, whichever comes first.

THE REWARDS OF SUCCESS

Mission success	+2 XP each
VIP *still* not dead	+1 XP each
Hero who carried VIP to the objective marker	+2 XP

Reaper Miniatures

CHAPTER ELEVEN
MY ENEMY'S FRIEND

'Unhold your weapon.'

Abdalla looked up at the ring of rifle barrels in confusion. There was no mistaking the Venusian battle tongue of the woman who had spoken.

'We are of Venus,' Abdalla replied, hands raised, but her rifle still held loosely, barrel pointing upwards. 'We have come halfway across the continent. We seek sanctuary.'

'You are known to us, Abdalla,' replied the woman, coldly. Now that Abdalla's eyes, adapted to the dark of the tunnels, began to adjust to the bright lights that surrounded them, she could see that the woman wore the tight-fitting black skinsuit of a senior Stepmaster, but the polished scalp of a Skystepper. The badge on her chest bore the silver VICI emblem on a black field. 'Your desertion brings shame upon your fasthold.'

'Desertion?'

Even as Abdalla spoke, she could see pings from Marquin hitting her cloud — BOLO notices, arrest orders, a reward for capture… Was that a dead-or-alive notice? A small explosion of 'wtf?' icons marked the end of the update.

The VICI officer looked down at the late Professor Orpheus Vorn, the twitch of a sneer on her lips. Lox had lugged him out of the service duct despite the pair of bullet holes now decorating his centre of mass.

'Murder, also?' she sneered. 'A fortuitous addition of evidence to the mountain against you. Now unhold your weapons or we shall exercise the "dead" clause of the warrant.'

They were secured together in a room that was essentially a metal box, at Barcelona's seafront. The site wasn't set up to handle prisoners, so there had been no alternative but to keep them together. But they had been disarmed. Their access to the Vici and Vidi networks had been disabled and a low-power microwave transmitter in their cell made it impossible to communicate through their personal clouds. A single guard sat by the door, armed with a shock stick. Two others were outside with carbine rifles.

'You stole a Terran shuttle from a site near Nairobi and disappeared,' explained the young Skystepper who had been sent to explain the charges. 'Your CO reported you as absent without leave. Our forces saw you in NeuFrankfurt before they found evidence of the executions. We nearly caught you in London, after you kidnapped Professor Vorn. We thought you might explain yourselves when we detected you on the way to Barcelona, but you sought to sneak into the city. It was obvious you were on your way to enact some further assassination.'

Abdalla said nothing. She looked, instead, from one face to another of her team, meeting their eyes one by one. They had been stopped from exchanging digital messages from cloud to cloud. But Abdalla could read their expressions as easily as a chat box.

'The only thing between you all and summary execution is an explanation of what you were doing — who you work for,' said the Skystepper, turning in a circle, looking at each of them. Not one of them met his eyes. 'Speak now and you'll be moved from here to another space. I guarantee you will live. If you are the first to speak up, you will have immunity. What do you say?'

As he turned, Ngana caught Abdalla's eye. The serjeant made the tiniest of nods.

Ngana stood.

'I'll tell you everything you want to know,' she said.

The others immediately leaped to their feet, going for her. The guard by the door was out of his chair a split second later, swinging his baton at Lox, closest to him. Abdalla was behind the Skystepper.

Ngana caught the shock stick, reversing it into the stomach of the guard and Lox dropped him with a single blow as Ngana tossed the stick to Marquin.

As the EWOp shoved the shock stick into the microwave transmitter, zapping it into silence, Abdalla's arm went around the Skystepper's neck in a sleeper hold.

'Forces you do not understand are moving in this place,' said Abdalla into his ear as he slid, struggling, into unconsciousness. 'You will be better off in darkness.'

Rackham Games (OOP)

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA011
BETRAYAL

Your whole team has been captured but have launched a daring improvised escape attempt. You have one chance to regain your freedom.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 2
NEMESIS LEVEL 3

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

All On Your Own
Any weapons, gadgets or allies the team usually has are not available in this mission. Synthetic drones don't count as synthetic (or drones) for this mission - they are replaced by their all-too-human operators.

Disarmed
Nominate one hero to be armed at the start of the mission. All other heroes may not perform a shoot action or bonus action until they have acquired a weapon. A hero acquires one weapon by being engaged with a *down* or dead bogey or with a hero with two or more weapons. Each bogey will surrender one weapon. The only advantage to having more than one weapon is the ability to convey a weapon to another hero. You will want to pay attention to the rules for Silent Death on page 10.

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place the terrain so that that there is at least room for a square space, 6" on each side, at the centre of the table. This is the holding cell and can be marked with masking tape or suitable walls. Each of the cell walls contains a door (red) (see page 11). These doors are *locked*.
- Deploy the team as described below.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys in a concealed position, using the yellow objective marker on the map. The team may expend 3 XP or discard 3 Control Deck cards to have a door begin the mission in the *unlocked* state.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

The starting Red Force is the default force described in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. It deploys using the clock face method described on pages 14-15. Reinforcements generated by complications will deploy with the default method described in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook, using whichever hero is closest to a table edge as a deployment marker. If two or more heroes are closest, pick one of your choice.

OBJECTIVE & REWARDS

The objective is for all heroes to exit the table by the same table edge. Escaping the area will be a team effort, so if any heroes are lost, the mission is a failure. If all heroes escape via the same table edge, the mission is a success.

The endless, incomprehensible variety of life overwhelms and baffles. And sometimes... it kills.

CHAPTER TWELVE
ENDGAME

'Bal Anub has come unto our attention once more,' said the woman Sing knew only as Amunet. She was standing in the lee of a storage unit at the edge of the Nairobi site that had now been firmly established as Vici's principle base on the surface. Her face was swathed in a local shuka blanket, its bright colours muted by dust and ash. Her features were hidden in darkness.

'In Baghdad, Skylord,' he agreed. 'The report is inconclusive. But the modus operandi…'

'A swift and decisive strike against an asset of ours to the general advantage of the local Terran factions by a small team? It leaves no trace except for the comprehensive scraping of our latest intelligence from the battlenet?' She didn't even turn to look at him. 'It was Bal Anub. Now unto the Terrans they are known as the "V Team".'

Sing did not dare to ask how she could know what the Terrans called their errant team.

'Within hours of the report, had I Bal Thoth on site,' Sing insisted. 'Galen shall find them!'

Amunet shrugged.

'Withdraw them.'

'Skylord? But-'

'It is not the habit of the Skylords to repeat themselves,' Amunet interrupted him. 'We do not act without thought, nor without understanding do we speak. Vorn's secrets lie before us, unlocked and bare to our illuminated scrutiny. Bal Thoth is required in Namibia. You also.'

'And Bal Anub-?'

She turned and the light from the nearby unloading platform fell across her face for an instant, revealing eyes of polished silver, without visible pupils.

'Also are Bal Anub's desires made clear unto us,' she told him sharply. 'To them it shall be offered. To them shall we present irresistible temptation and, when unto it they reach, we shall cut them down once and for all.'

'What is their desire?' asked Sing, fearful that he already knew the answer.

'You.'

Sing had set them up.

The decision to break the agreement and create the Bal department, working for Vidi directly, had been taken far, far above his slimy head. But Sing had almost given the game away, mishandling their early missions in Africa and their dispatch to NeuFrankfurt. Through no fault of her team's, Bal Anub and Sing's operation had risked exposure to Vici and to the Duma. He had been ordered to tidy up the mess and his craven solution had been to concoct an evidence trail of desertion.

It had taken them weeks just to get out of Europe, after disappearing into the Barcelona underground. But the various Terran factions had been happy enough to hire them on as 'problem solvers'. Lao, the Vidi agent they had met back in the forest with the Terran mercenaries, had been sniffing after their trail every step of the way and, more than once, they had crossed paths with another Bal team — this one, apparently, more convicted of Vidi's plan, whatever it was. Bal Thoth were good at what they did, and their Step Serjeant, Galen, was a hulking brute of a woman. Anya respected her enough to have resisted putting a bullet through her head, on the couple of opportunities when it had crossed her mind. But she didn't like her. If push came to shove, Galen would go down along with her team.

Kurtz had found a new drone to replace KB3. He called it Zot. It was technically a step up from Venusian technology but full of redundant systems that Kurtz was gradually bringing back online to maximize its utility. He thought Lox could be taught to run it as a medic drone if he were ever wounded.

Lox and Marquin, though, were in their element. Few Terrans had their kind of know-how. It seemed like almost all the medical and digital professionals had been among the Disappeared. The team could hire out their services at a premium and, as a significant advantage, it gave Marquin unfettered access to data networks on a level they'd never dreamed of.

Meanwhile, Ngana had got all the combat experience she could ever want, but still had no X Mech to replace CUPID, left behind in Paris. As far as Anya could tell, Ngana was out of touch with her unnamed sponsor and showed no signs of trying to reach out to them. This was fine by her, but she still found the pilot hard to trust. Nevertheless, the exoskeleton she had acquired, with its loping power legs, made her a potent force, able to keep up even with Anya on her new motorcycle. Oh, yes. That was a change. Ripping into the enemy at close range on her two-wheeled steed was so far from the patient slog of a long-distance step that, increasingly, Anya found it hard to imagine going back to Venus.

But that didn't mean any of them wanted to keep living with a price on their heads. Several strategic hits on isolated Venusian facilities had given them the information they needed with minimal casualties and had earned them credibility with the Terran resistance. They had tracked Vidi's Bal team movements and, with insight from the Terrans, worked out that the scientist, Vorn, had been the titular owner of several manufacturing facilities all over the world. But every one of them had used sand and rock extracted from a single site in vast quantities. Surface mining would have left a hole visible from orbit. But as Marquin's hijacked satellite made it clear that no such hole was visible, it could only mean an immense subterranean facility. But for what purpose?

And now Sing was going to that very site in Namibia, outside the protection of the Nairobi base and with only Bal Thoth to watch his back.

They wouldn't get a better chance.

MISSION DOSSIER #V/BA012
VENGEANCE

You were set up, but a chance to even the scales has just come your way. Unfortunately, you don't know that you're being set up again. And this time, they don't plan to let you walk away.

VISIBILITY LEVEL 2
NEMESIS LEVEL 6

MISSION SPECIAL RULES

Fresh as a Daisy
The heroes have had time to gather their strength and recover. All *wounded* states are removed. All expended weapons and gadgets are replenished automatically. Any allies earned in the operation may be taken, even if already used.

Mirror Mission
The enemy is an X Team, very like your own, made up of specialists and experts in their fields. All bogeys begin with one support token.

The Nemesis Revealed!
If it hasn't already deployed, the Nemesis will deploy immediately when the Boss is *down* or *dead*. At the same time as the Nemesis, deploy three Elites. All other complications that result in Red Force reinforcements in this mission are replaced with the following:

Reinforcements — Deploy 2x Grunts

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'. If playing on a smaller table, start the mission with a random complication and remove 5 cards from the Control Deck, shuffling any Jokers back into the deck.

Set up in the following order:

- Select Difficulty.
- Place the terrain to suit.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.
- Deploy the team as described below.

RED FORCE DEPLOYMENT

The starting Red Force is 1x Boss, 1x Sniper, 1x Heavy, 1x Defence Mech and 1x EWOp. Place the Boss in contact with the red objective marker. The Boss will not move from this spot. If an action or secondary action would require the Boss to move then, instead of moving, the Boss will shoot at the nearest hero in LOS. This is in addition to any other shooting the Boss may perform in the same action. If there is no hero in LOS, the Boss will do nothing.

TEAM DEPLOYMENT

The team deploys with a flanking entry as described on page 66 of the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook. You may spend 2 XP or run down the clock 2 cards to deploy one hero in both flanking zones (2), as shown in the diagram below.

OBJECTIVE

The objective is to put the Boss into the *dead* state and exit the area via the main deployment zone (green). While the Boss is alive, Red Force reinforcements deploy using the red objective marker. If the Boss has been killed, the character who killed the Boss is treated as the deployment marker for the Red Force.

REWARDS OF SUCCESS

This is the end of *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis*. The rewards of success are survival and the satisfaction of having evaded the clutches of Amunet and the strange plans of Vidi.

Amunet stared down at her hand, where it lay on the Namibian sand, two metres away from the rest of her arm. The pathways implanted into her brain to help her cope with the endless years of solitude in space had already responded to the shock, pushing her into detached analysis.

Sing was quite, quite dead. There had been no mistaking the outcome of the encounter between her and the formidable Anya Abdalla. Venusian technology didn't yet extend as far as providing a prosthetic head. She had thought Lieutenant Galen was dead, but no. There she was, heading this way with a triage bag in hand.

'Steplord!' she skidded to a halt at Amunet's side. 'Be at ease. You will live.'

Amunet was entirely at ease with her physical situation. The strategic one, though, troubled her. Bal Ra had entered the facility three days ago and still had not reported back. This distracting attempt to bring Bal Anub back into the fold had not gone to plan, but the bigger picture continued to unravel. Bal Thoth would need to descend next.

VERSUS MISSIONS

The challenge of the Versus mission, of course, lies in one's opponent. But taking on a living, breathing opposing player in *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* is infinitely more entertaining with a compelling narrative for your heroes.

The missions that follow have symmetrical objectives for each player, to make them as objectively fair as possible, ensuring that the deciding factors in victory will be your strategic planning, tactical acumen and, of course, luck. They are also written with the context of the *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis* narrative in mind, and make use of rules that are new to this book. So if you've already played some of the missions in the Operation Manual you'll find yourself already familiar with most of the novel components.

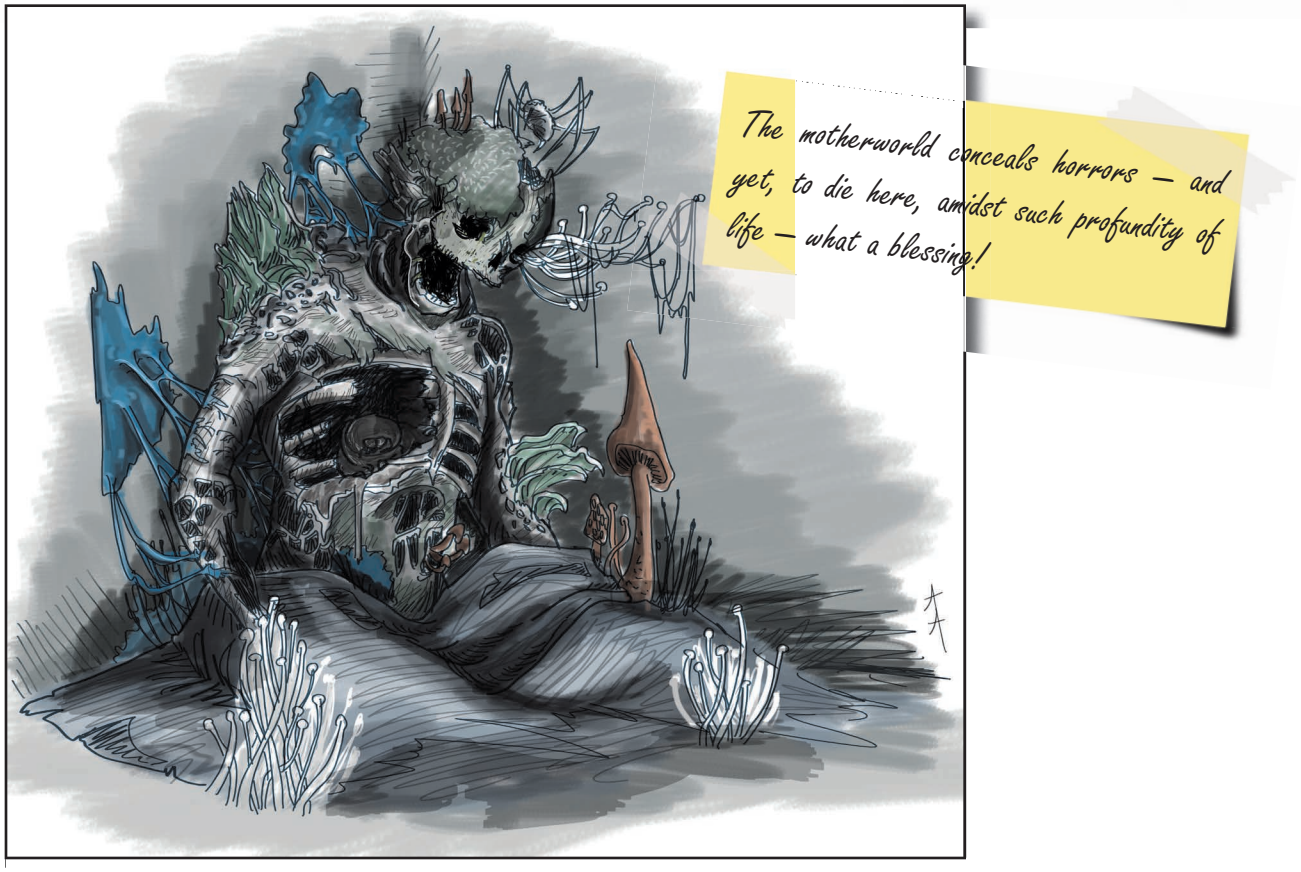
PRIORITY

At the start of each mission, the opposing teams make a D(6) test using the D of the hero with the Leader upgrade or the D of the hero with the highest D if none has the Leader upgrade. Whichever team wins decides whether to have priority of deployment zone or of deployment order.

VISIBILITY LEVEL

For all missions, roll a d12 before team deployment to determine the visibility level:

D12 Roll	Visibility Level
1	1
2	2
3-5	3
6-8	4
9-11	5
12	6



MISSION 1: GRAND THEFT MECHA

A technology company had a new design of light combat mech in prototype testing when Ammit fell. The company's people have gone - dead, disappeared or part of one of the seemingly endless militias and neighbourhood defence gangs- but its work remains. Your team has been sent to secure this valuable asset… for the protection of the local community, obviously. But when you arrive, it seems that one of the gangs has had the same idea and beat you to it. And an opposing X Team is also in the area.

Set Up

Default table size is 4'x4'.

Set up in the following order:

- Place the terrain as required, leaving a space 12" in diameter in the centre of the table.
- Place the combat mech as shown in the diagram.
- Deploy the teams as described below.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

Team Deployment — Planned Line of Departure

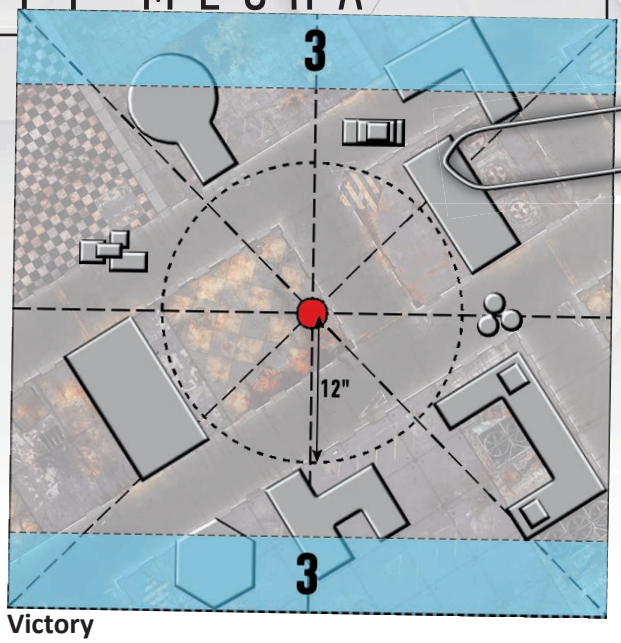
The side with priority of deployment zone deploys on the table edge of their choice. The other side then deploys its team in the opposite deployment zone and has first activation.

Red Force Deployment

Place a combat mech in the centre of the table, facing in any direction. Once the heroes are deployed, the rest of the Red Force deploys as described in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook using the combat mech as the deployment marker.

Mission End

The mission ends at the end of the activation in which all the members of one team are OOA or not on the table, or when the Control Deck runs out.



Victory

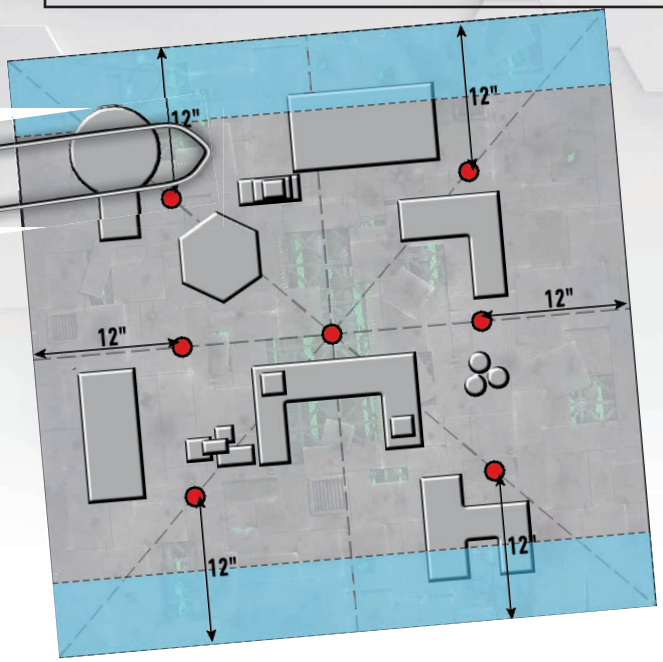
The winner is the team that has dominated the combat mech at the end of the mission OR, if neither team has dominated the mech, the team with the highest score.

Points

Each side scores points as follows:

All enemy heroes OOA	**10**
Each friendly hero not *wounded* or *dead*	**2**
Each *wounded* friendly hero not OOA	**1**
Each enemy hero *wounded*(3)	**3**
Each enemy hero *wounded*(4)	**4**
Each enemy hero *dead*	**5**
Dominated the combat mech at least once	**5**
Each Grunt or EWOp put in the *dead* state	**1**
Each Elite, Sniper or Heavy put in the *dead* state	**2**
Each Boss or Defence Mech put in the *dead* state	**3**
Put the combat mech in the *dead* state	**-5**

MISSION 2: RUNAROUND



Since the Ammit impact, Earth has been noticeably more geologically active, with formerly extinct volcanoes and sedentary faultlines lurching back into life unpredictably. After a major shake, you receive word that your position will shortly be swamped in a pyroclastic storm (a pyroclastic flow so vast that it includes acid rain and lightning). Your careful planning is ditched and you must grab as much of your objective as possible. But even as you rush to get it, you see another team, apparently after the same thing…

SET UP

Default table size is 4'x4'.

Set up in the following order:

- Place terrain as preferred.
- Place the objective markers as shown in the diagram below.
- Deploy the teams as described below.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

Team Deployment - Planned Line of Departure

The side with priority of deployment zone deploys on the table edge of their choice. The other side then deploys its team in the opposite deployment zone and has first activation.

Red Force Deployment

Once the heroes are deployed, the Red Force deploys as described in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook using the central objective marker as the deployment marker.

Mission End

The mission ends at the end of the activation in which all the members of one team are OOA or not on the table, or when the Control Deck runs out.

Victory

The winner is the team with the highest score.

Points

Each side scores points by succeeding on an interact A(16) test on any objective marker. Each objective marker is worth points as follows:

The objective markers nearest a team's deployment zone	**1**
The objective markers furthest from a team's deployment zone	**3**
The objective markers on the halfway line (except the central marker)	**2**
The central marker	**3**

Once a team has interacted with a marker, they may not interact with it again. If interacting with an objective marker that the opposing team has already interacted with, the interact test is A(19).

MISSION 3: GETAWAY

Something has caused the local force of maintenance robots to turn on any human they see. You need to get out of here and there's only one shuttle left at the spaceport, but it turns out that you're not the only ones who want to take it.

Set Up

Default table size is 4'x4'.

Set up in the following order:

- Place the terrain as required, leaving a space 12" in diameter in the centre of the table.
- Place an objective marker in the centre of the table.
- Deploy the teams as described below.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

Team Deployment — Flanking Entry (1) OR Restricted Entry (2)

The side with priority of deployment zone deploys their whole team in one of the allowed deployment states. The other side then deploys their whole team in whichever state their opponent didn't choose and has first activation.

Red Force Deployment

Once the heroes are deployed, the Red Force deploys as described in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook using the central objective marker as the deployment marker. In this mission, all bogeys are synthetic.

Mission End

The mission ends at the end of the activation in which the shuttle takes off, or all the members of one team are OOA or not on the table, or when the Control Deck runs out.

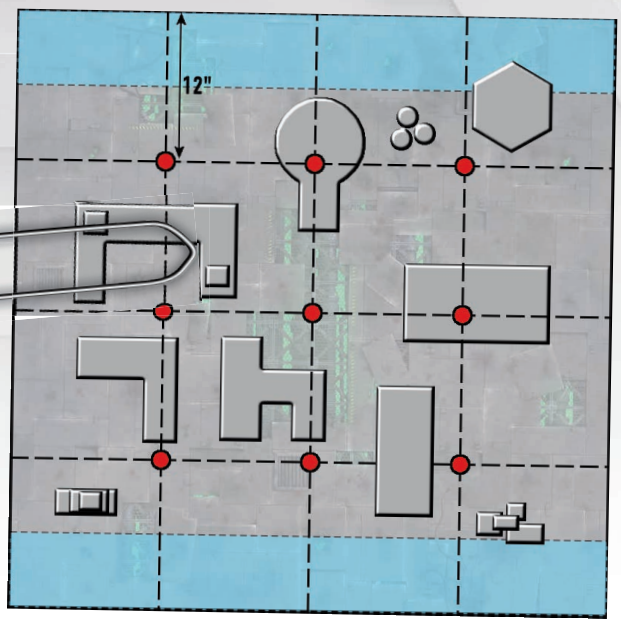
To have the shuttle take off, a hero must interact A(16) with the objective marker twice. The mission ends immediately after the second interaction.

Points

Each side scores points as follows:

Caused the shuttle to take off	**5**
Each friendly character *engaged* with the objective when the shuttle took off (even OOA or *dead*)	**5**
Each enemy hero *wounded(3)*	**3**
Each enemy hero *wounded(4)*	**4**
Each enemy hero *dead*	**5**
Each Grunt or EWOp put in the *dead* state	**1**
Each Elite, Sniper or Heavy put in the *dead* state	**2**
Each Boss or Mech put in the *dead* state	**3**

MISSION 4: RELAY RACE



Vital intelligence has been traced to a data vault, deep beneath NeuFrankfurt. To keep it from being easily stolen, the intelligence has been fragmented and encrypted, with the various fragments and encryption keys all being mixed between several data banks. Still, getting it all out should be straightforward, except that another team has also found its way into the vault. You can only assume they are after the same thing!

Set Up
Default table size is 4'x4'.

Set up in the following order:

- Place nine objective markers as shown in the diagram below, then place terrain as you wish. The objective markers must be on the table surface, not on top of or inside terrain.
- Deploy the teams as described below.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

Team Deployment - Planned Line of Departure
The side with priority of deployment zone deploys their whole team on a table edge of their choice. The other side then deploys their whole team on the opposite table edge and has first activation.

Red Force Deployment
Once the heroes are deployed, the Red Force deploys as described in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook using the central objective marker as the deployment marker.

Mission End
The mission ends at the end of the activation in which members of one team are OOA or not on the table, or when the Control Deck runs out, or when all nine objective markers have been *deactivated*.

Objective Markers
To interact with an objective marker is an A(13) test. For each success (including bonus actions), a player may:

- Extract the encrypted data fragment.
- Extract an encryption key.
- *Lock* the objective marker.
- *Unlock* an objective marker.
- *Deactivate* the objective marker.

A *locked* objective marker must be *unlocked* before anything else can be done with it. A *deactivated* objective marker is removed from the table. Each player may remove the data and the key from an objective marker only once. Objective markers may be *locked* and *unlocked* as often as the players wish.

Objective markers may be interacted with as a hack action and bonus actions on the hack action may also be used to perform the above tasks.

Points
At the end of the mission, count up the number of encrypted data fragments your team acquired and number them from 1 to 9 (up to however many you managed to steal). Then roll a d12 for each encryption key your team took. Each result that matches one of your

fragments decrypts it. Duplicate results do nothing.

Example:
Rosa's team secured seven data fragments and six encryption keys. She numbers the fragments from 1 to 7 and rolls a d12 six times, getting 1, 3, 3, 5, 7 and 12. She therefore decrypts fragments 1, 3, 5 and 7.

Once you've rolled all of your encryption keys, score as follows:

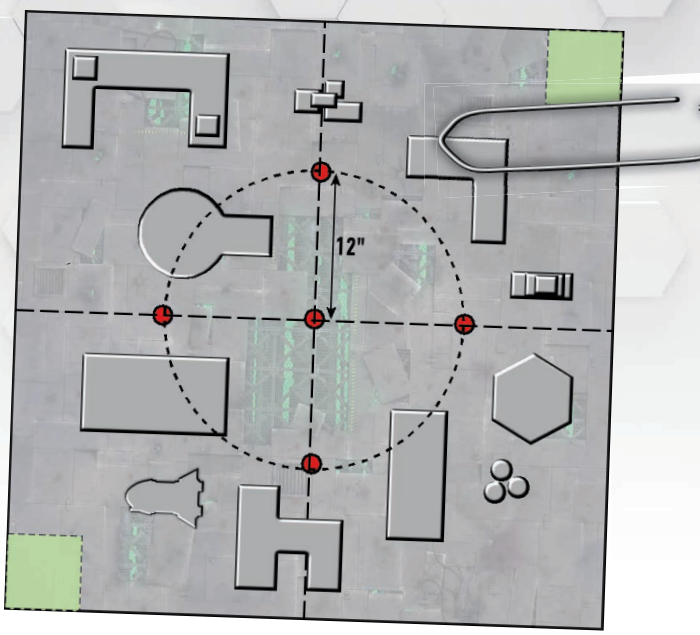
Each *decrypted* fragment	**5**

Each encrypted fragment	**2**
Each encryption key	**1**
Each enemy hero *wounded(4)*	**2**
Each enemy hero *dead*	**3**
Each Grunt or EWOp bogey put in the *dead* state	**1**
Each Elite, Sniper or Heavy put in the *dead* state	**2**
Each Boss or Mech put in the *dead* state	**3**

The attack of a fully-equipped Red Force Boss should not be underrated. These potent enemies prefer to send their minions to die, but will easily defeat the unprepared hero when the odds are in their favour.

MISSION 5: DIPLOMATIC INCIDENT

Your team has been sent to rescue (or possibly kidnap, depending on your point of view) a number of delegates from a diplomatic meeting. You anticipated interference from their bodyguards, but the simultaneous arrival of an enemy team with the same mission is a complication you didn't expect!



Set Up

Default table size is 4'x4'.

Set up in the following order:

- Place six objective markers as shown in the diagram below, then place terrain as you wish. The objective markers must be on the table surface, not on top of or inside terrain.
- Deploy the teams as described below.

- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

Team Deployment — Restricted Entry

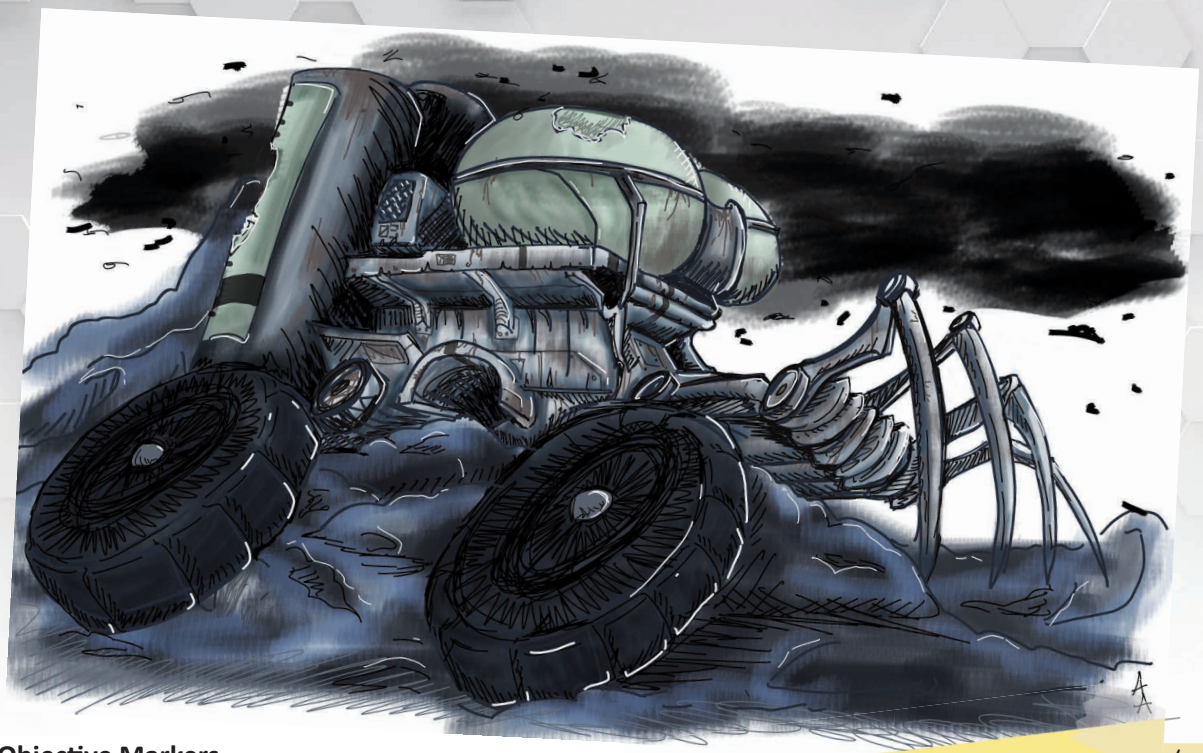
The side with priority of deployment zone deploys their whole team on a table corner of their choice. The other side then deploys their whole team on the diagonally opposite table corner and has first activation.

Red Force Deployment

Once the heroes are deployed, the Red Force deploys as described in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook, but on a randomly-determined objective marker. Designate each objective marker from 1-6 and roll a d6 (or a d12, dividing the result by 2 and rounding up) to determine which objective marker each bogey will deploy using.

Mission End

The mission ends at the end of the activation in which all members of one team are OOA or not on the table, or when the Control Deck runs out, or when all six objective markers have been removed from the table.



The old order's bones lie scattered about what is left of the world they destroyed. Their monsters are dead. What glories might we assemble from their remains?

Objective Markers

To interact with an objective marker is an A(13) test. A successful test means that the hero becomes the objective and may only move using drag actions and bonus move actions.

If a hero returns to their original deployment zone as an objective marker, they cease to be an objective and may move normally again. If Red Force reinforcements attempt to deploy on an objective marker that has already been removed, the reinforcements do not deploy.

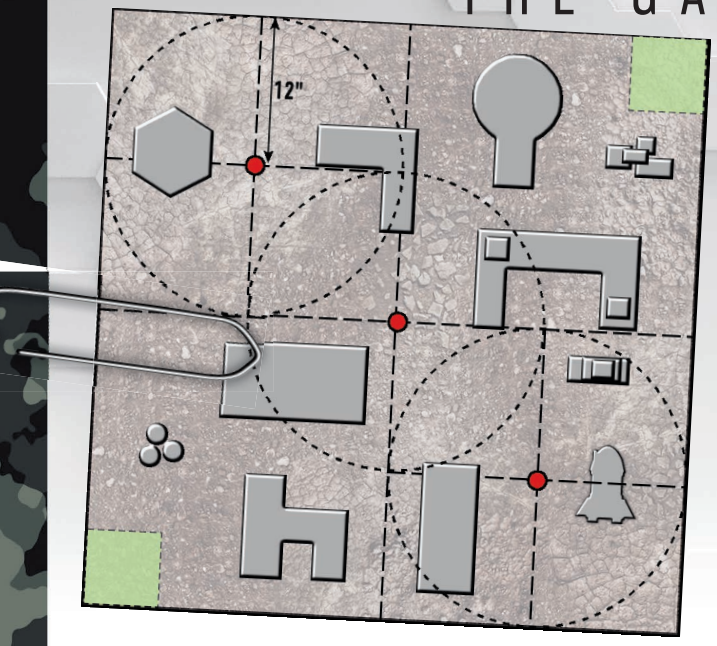
Points

Each side scores points as follows:

Each objective removed by this team from the table	**5**
Each objective held by this team at the end of the game	**3**
Each enemy hero *wounded(3)*	**3**
Each enemy hero *wounded(4)*	**4**

Each enemy hero *dead*	**5**
Each Grunt or EWOp put in the *dead* state	**1**
Each Elite, Sniper or Heavy put in the *dead* state	**2**
Each Boss or Mech put in the *dead* state	**3**

MISSION 6: THE GAUNTLET



Your team has been dispatched to take and hold a critical location. It is well-defended and you expect resistance, but yours is not the only side holding the area.

Set Up

Default table size is 4'x4'.

Set up in the following order:

- Place three objective markers as shown in the diagram below, then place terrain as you wish. The objective markers must be on the table surface, not on top of or inside terrain.
- Deploy the teams as described below.
- Deploy the Red Force as described below.

Team Deployment - Restricted Entry

The side with priority of deployment zone deploys their whole team on a table corner of their choice. The other side then deploys their whole team on the diagonally opposite table corner and has first activation.

Red Force Deployment

Once the heroes are deployed, the Red Force deploys as described in the *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* rulebook, but on a randomly determined objective marker. Designate each objective marker from 1-3 and roll a d3 (or a d12, dividing the result by 4 and rounding up) to determine which objective marker each bogey will deploy using.

In addition, deploy three sentinels on each objective using the clock face method and a deployment radius of 12" (see pages 14-15).

Mission End

The mission ends at the end of the activation in which all members of one team are OOA or not on the table, or when the Control Deck runs out.

Objective Markers

To control an objective marker, a hero must be engaged with it and no other enemy character or bogey is within 12" of the objective marker.

Points

Each side scores points as follows:

Each objective controlled by this team	**7**
Each enemy hero *wounded(3)*	**3**
Each enemy hero *wounded(4)*	**4**
Each enemy hero *dead*	**5**
Each Grunt or EWOp put in the *dead* state	**1**
Each Elite, Sniper or Heavy put in the *dead* state	**2**
Each Boss or Mech put in the *dead* state	**3**

DESIGNER'S NOTES

Although writing *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis* was not as time-consuming as writing *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark*, it was a challenge of an entirely new sort. Most small-scale, independent game designers have to work in a vacuum as they design, with feedback and criticism mostly based upon the experiences of demo games which, perforce, must wait until a game is nearly complete, design-wise, and which invariably benefit from the perfect knowledge and understanding of the designer.

BIRTH OF A NEMESIS

Once a game is released into the wild, though, we can be sure of a steady flow of feedback and criticism — far too late for it to do much good for the book, but of enormous value to everything that follows.

As the first major supplement for *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark*, then, *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis* benefited from that feedback and, far more importantly, from the input of my beloved patrons: dedicated backers of the project who, for a modest monthly subscription, get a peek behind the curtains and also get to give their thoughts and feedback both on the general sweep and thrust of the game but also upon the specifics.

A good deal of this book, then, saw the light of day in beta format in the Patreon community and for that reason I have, other than in these notes, referred to 'we' rather than 'I' as I did in the original rulebook. This has two enormous benefits for the designer: first, it means that these rules have had a sense check from people who already know *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* and who have an interest in helping it be as good as it can be; and second, it means that anything wrong here is at least partly their fault and it's always good to be able to share the blame ;).

VENUS RISING

When I first wrote *Horizon Wars*, the battle game first published by Osprey Games, Venus was something of a mystery to me. Why would anyone try to colonize such a death-trap? What kind of life could you lead there? But as the setting evolved, I took inspiration from the history and mythology of the ancient mystery cults and medieval gnostic movements for the idea of a culture guided through rituals, secrets, and ideas of higher consciousnesses. There's plenty of room, within such cultures, for corruption and conspiracy, but also for sincere mystical experience. As such, I wanted to give Venus the spotlight as a very human culture, with the same tensions and problems as any other human culture, but also one in which the ideas of good and evil were unconventional.

So *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis* was a chance to unpack that idea, just a little. In the mystery schools, stories weren't just stories, but were presented as lived experiences that repeat, over and over. This idea lends itself perfectly to a narrative operation like this one. You can play it in whatever setting you want, with whichever heroes you like. It doesn't have to be the *Horizon Wars* setting. It doesn't have to be Earth. The heroes don't have to be Venusian or even human.

Pragmatically, *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis* was also a wonderful opportunity to respond to feedback, requests and suggestions from early adopters of *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark*. Motorcycles were something I scratched my head over in early play-testing and decided to shelve as a distraction. By the time I'd worked them out, it was too late to try to retro-fit them to the core rules. Hero mechs, meanwhile, were something I held out against for ages but I capitulated on several grounds: first, *Horizon Wars* has always been a mech-based setting, so it seemed perverse to not include them as an option for teams; second, soldiers always want the same cool toys their enemies use to kill them, so with Defence Mechs being a regular opponent, it was logical that the X Teams would demand something similar; and, finally and most pressingly, players wanted them.

That said, I continue to be asked about other vehicles in the game.

Horizon Wars: Zero Dark is a small-squad skirmish game. Whilst I will never say that there will never be rules for vehicles, it definitely isn't on my agenda to push vehicles into the game any further than they have already got.

So, where next? Well, the obvious next direction would be Mars, and then Earth, as themes for future operation manuals. But there are a number of other projects in the works, at time of writing, of which my patrons get first

sight and input. But suffice to say that there's plenty of material to mine, and plenty of new content to come for *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark*. I hope that each new project will unpack a little more of the mystery of the Fallen Earth, and reveal new enigmas even as it answers some of the readers' questions.

MINIATURES

I'd like to take the opportunity here to talk at more length about miniatures in *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* in a way that I didn't in the rulebook.

The game was built from the start on a simple premise: use the miniatures you love.

In a world of tabletop wargames dominated by a handful of manufacturer-led games, innovation has often been left to a large group of independent but often unseen boutique manufacturers. If you are reading this, there's a good chance that you already know companies like Hasslefree, Heresy, Khurasan and Bad Squiddo. But we are entering a new age of miniatures, when innovation is moving towards the 3D printer and the designers who can build and market digital products that can be downloaded directly to our tabletops. These are early days in an exciting new world. No doubt the industry-dominating manufacturers will have their own responses. But for the new market of digital miniatures to thrive, we also need a new market of accessible, entertaining and exciting tabletop games within which those new designs can find a place. I hope *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* can be such a place.

That said, I remain delighted by the wealth of imagination to be found in miniatures design and manufacture all over the world. As well as the companies I've already mentioned, I'd like to thank everyone who contributed — either directly by giving me samples of their products to feature in this book when I asked nicely, or indirectly by just making stuff I couldn't resist buying anyway.

Reaper Miniatures has always been a market disruptor, offering opportunities to new sculptors for decades, and outlets for established artists, but also pushing into new markets and new technology. Their Bones products transformed what we believed plastic miniatures had to look like. Although most of their range is fantasy, feeding the needs of traditional tabletop roleplay games, their sci-fi range is imaginative and interesting and deserves more attention.

GCT Studios are the creators of the wonderful oriental fantasy game, *Bushido*, which deserves to be better known. Their ninja, Ghost, had a blend of traditional and fantastical that made him a pleasing choice of a modern, sci-fi ninja.

Anvil Industry struggled to get their own miniatures-led game, *Afterlife*, into the market but have continued to thrive as a manufacturer of original miniatures and are one of those at the leading edge of the new wave of digital miniatures, as they offer new releases as digital products before putting them into traditional manufacture.

Zandris IV Miniatures were generous enough to provide one of each of their Pendekar and Satria battlesuits to be two of our X Mechs

Other miniatures were taken from the Precinct Omega Studio collection and include items from Corvus Belli, Hasslefree, Rackham Games, White Dragon Miniatures, Khurasan Miniatures, Ground Zero Games, Maelstroms Edge and Statuesque Miniatures.

SCENERY

Precinct Omega owes an enormous debt of thanks to Gamemat.EU, who provided a lot of the terrain and scenery that appears in this book as well as permission to use images of their range of rubber-backed mats as the backgrounds on our mission briefing maps. Their MDF industrial gantries and walkways look spectacular painted, and lend themselves well to added detail of pipes, cables and scattered debris. Their resin industrial ruins set comes pre-painted and is a quick and cost-effective way to quickly add some statement pieces to any tabletop.

Acknowledgement must also go to Iliada Game Studio. Sadly, the awesome shuttle model that appears in our photography was an experimental piece that hasn't gone into retail production. But Iliada continues to experiment and innovate in the field, especially using laser-cut card to add detail and interest to your scenery and terrain.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: BAL ANUB

If you have enjoyed the adventures of Step Serjeant Anya Abdulla and her team, in *Zero Dark: Operation Nemesis*, you might like to try fighting through the campaign with the team. Their story occasionally requires some use of your imagination.

For example, you might well ask how Kurtz can be on the shuttle after Mission 4, if he was operating a remote drone. The answer is simply that they stop the shuttle to pick him up, shortly after escaping from the airport.

Probably.

Similarly, in later missions, Kurtz's drone, KB3, is destroyed. The 'reinforcements' the team receives actually represent Kurtz then having to join the team directly in his 'sapper' role rather than operating through KB3.

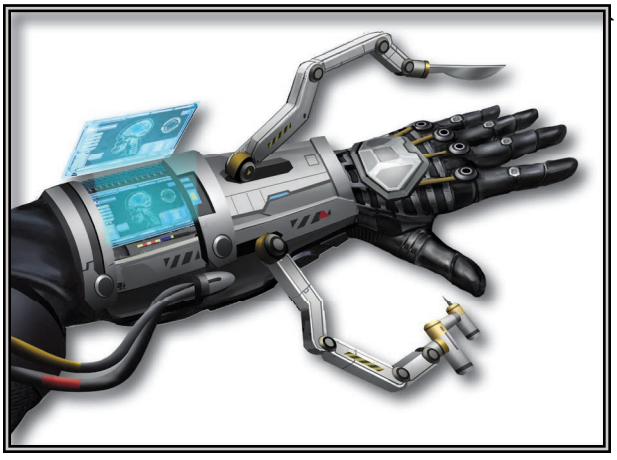
So your experience of the campaign may differ from how it panned out for Bal Anub in the historical record.

Step Serjeant Anya Abdalla
The closest thing to a professional soldier that Venus has are the Long Steppers, who spend years training to perform the long-distance journeys on Venus's surface necessary to keep the caverns connected, socially and legally. When Vici needed leaders, they looked to the Skymasters for officers, but for their NCOs, they went to the Long Steppers. Anya, though, is not a typical Long Stepper. Imaginative, unorthodox and often insubordinate, she was long overlooked for an ascension she didn't, in any case, seek. All of this made her an ideal choice for the leader of one of Vidi's covert X Teams.

Serjeant Beau Lox
Technically a nurse, Lox has a gift for emergency medicine and a taste for adventure — a combination that means that at least half of his many scars were stitched up with his own hands. His rank was earned telling junior doctors how to save lives under pressure in the Caverns. He isn't a natural soldier but he deeply respects Abdalla, making him a capable second.

Corporal Artur Kurtz
A lifelong tinkerer, Artur is a jack of all trades with a fascination for machines and mechanics. A Long Stepper in his younger days, he took up the job of training and coaching young steppers — especially in how to improvise repairs in extreme circumstances. Vici sought him out as a trainer for their Engineering Corps but he was hunted down by his former student, Anya Abdulla, to join her special actions team as its resident drone pilot, engineer and weaponsmaster.

Corporal Miriam Ngana
Ngana was a candidate for ascension before Ammit. A brilliant philosopher and pilot, she was offered her choice of appointments in Vici, but angered her sponsors by choosing the poorly-considered mech regiment. It's unclear how she came to be assigned to Bal Anub, but Anya suspects at least one of her sponsors continues to



keep an eye on her progress.

Private Hiro Marquin

The team's 'baby', Hiro swears they are nineteen, but they could easy pass for a tall fourteen. Their list of prior misdemeanours, though, could match those of a hardened criminal twice their age. When their parole officer, Abdalla, was drafted for the mission to Earth, Marquin had a choice between going with her or going back into prison. It wasn't a difficult choice. That said, they have found military life — at least the special actions side of it — quite appealing and their secondary role of team sniper has uncovered a useful side to her sociopathy that, for now, Abdalla is tolerating.

PLAYING BAL ANUB

Bal Anub is played as a 6/6/1 team that starts with Abdalla, Lox, Ngana, Marquin, KB3 and Cupid. Kurtz comes in as a reinforcement if KB3 is lost. In early missions, you may want to leave Ngana and CUPID behind to make it easier to extract the whole team in time, representing Ngana's need for more training and Abdalla's distrust of the role of the X Mech during the early months of the Venusian deployment on Earth. However, as the threats grow — and the Nemesis evolves — you may well value the addition of CUPID's reliability. The X Mech's combination of mobility and firepower means that it can move rapidly up the table into cover and draw Red Force attention while the rest of the team pursues the objective more covertly.

	Cyl	M	F	A	D	AV	FW	Special
Abdalla	3	5	3	3	5	1	1	Leader
Lox	3	4	3	5	3	1	1	Doc
Kurtz	3	3	4	4	4	2	1	Sapper (Sentry gun)
Ngana	3	3	3	4	5	1	1	Mech Pilot
Marquin	3	5	3	5	2	1	1	EWOp
KB3	3	5	3	4	3	2	1	Synthetic (Drone)
CUPID	6	5	5	-	-	3	3	X-Mech

New life. New life in death. What brave, New Venus, what New Earth, that has such creatures in't?

APPENDIX 2: THE LONG GAME

Horizon Wars: Zero Dark was written to present the solo or co-operative player with a puzzle to solve. There are many solutions, but the fun is finding one that suits you. However, it isn't the only way to play.

The core rules and extra rules given here offer a lot of fun options to players to do cool stuff — parkouring across rooftops or sneaking along alleys — for which the pressure of the puzzle-solving option doesn't always permit the necessary time or leisure.

So we offer, here, three alternative ways of playing a more leisurely game of *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* that we have found give the solo or co-op player a bit more time to explore the game's possibilities.

THE DOUBLE DECK

The simplest option, the Double Deck just involves playing through the whole Control Deck twice. When you've played through it once, shuffle the discard pile, place it face down and start again.

The Double Deck is a good way to approach tricky missions where you just keep running out of time or where rushing to complete it on time results in too many heroes left behind, one way or another. A Double Deck is also a good approach to take if you want to play on a larger table, up to 6'x4', or if you want to use a table with very dense, multi-level terrain. The Double Deck leaves plenty of time for sneaking around gantries and climbing up to sniper nests, as well as time for getting down again to make it to the exit point!

FLIP OR FACE

In a Flip or Face game, you play as normal but, each time you have to flip a card on the Control Deck you can choose to either flip the card as normal or to play the face-up card on the top of the discard pile. However, when you play the face-up card, it is removed from the game.

This option means you can plan your actions to take advantage of what you think the Red Force may do, but you won't want to do every face-up card twice! As the endgame approaches, you will have to choose between having more time — but potentially repeating cards you'd rather not repeat — and running down the clock to the finish.

LET THE DICE DECIDE

If you Let the Dice Decide, then each time you flip a Control Deck card, roll a d12. On an 8+, shuffle it back into the facedown deck.

On average, this will make your game about 33% longer, but bear in mind that it will also reduce the value of abilities that let you peek at the facedown cards at the top of the deck.

THE MEGA DECK

To run a Mega Deck, you'll need two full, identical decks of cards. Shuffle them together and then simply run the Control Deck as normal. This approach is very like the Double Deck, but in the Double Deck you can be sure that, once a card has been used, it won't be used again until you shuffle the Control Deck. In the Mega Deck, you may get four complications in a row, or up to eight Boss activations!

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As ever, the list of people who helped make this book possible is endless. My patrons have been a constant source of encouragement, inspiration, advice and constructive criticism. My artists have been models of professionalism. My industry supporters have been such enthusiastic contributors that I am continually humbled by their faith in Precinct Omega. Everyone who has already bought *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark*, please know that I have noted with gratitude each and every sale. The members of the *Horizon Wars* and *Horizon Wars: Zero Dark* Facebook groups, too, in the rare instances that they do not fall into one of the aforementioned categories, have been a welcome source of positive energy and, when called for, memes.

My most committed supporters, though, continue to be my family who have not only tolerated my decision to give up the white-collar office life to dedicate myself to the writing and promoting of tabletop games, but have endorsed it with love, patience and energy, even occasionally deigning to throw some dice and play toy soldiers with me.

Precinct Omega, as a company, is a one-person business (at time of writing!). But as an idea it embraces hundreds if not thousands. If you would like to be one of them then why not join any of the online communities mentioned above, or tune in to the Precinct Omega Weekly Miniatures News Podcast for more from Precinct Omega.

'Is this possible?' asked Amunet, leaning in closer to inspect the scrolling data on the wafer-thin screen before her. The screen stood modestly beside a towering arch, five times the size of the ones they had found in city-states all over the world and, unlike those, this one was unbroken.

The Namibian facility had not given up its secrets easily, but at last there was something resembling an answer. There were months if not years of research to be done to truly understand what they had found, but Mars would not give them that opportunity without demanding to share. And Mars had not been inclined to ask nicely in recent months. Vidi would have to take what it could. It was clear what was most important.

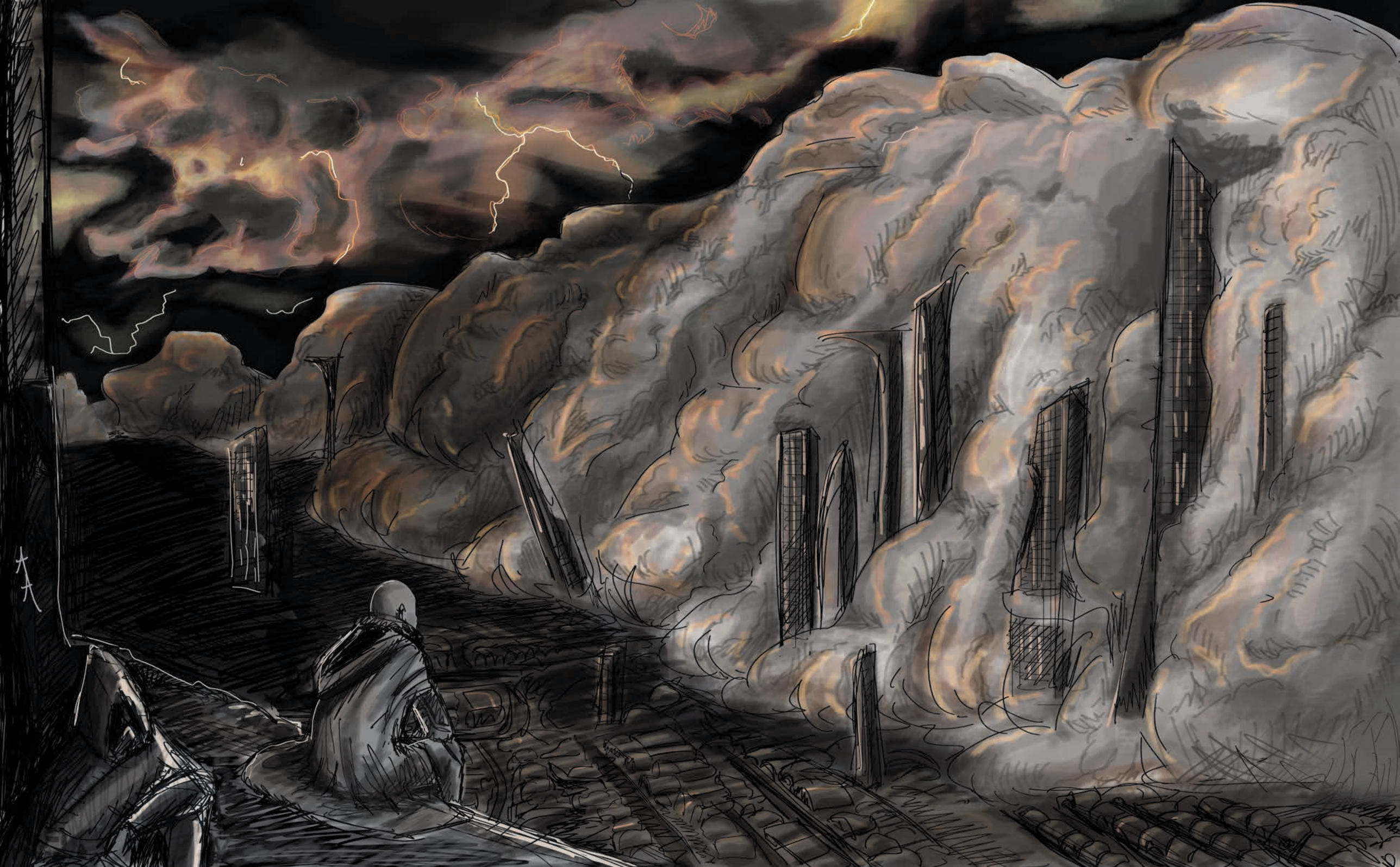
'Another world,' said a voice behind her and she turned slowly.

'Kekui,' she greeted the other Skylord. She had not known he was nearby but he, like all of them, was secretive and deceptive. Her honorific in their sodality was The Hidden One. His was Walker in Darkness. It seemed appropriate as he stepped from the shadows to approach her.

'Upon the face of a hellscape we crawled,' he hissed. She knew he wasn't talking to her. 'For the simple privilege of breathing air into which we were not born. Tens of thousands of steps to earn the right to gaze upon the Sun. And they?'

'A single step unto another world,' she finished.

From beneath her sand cape, Anya peered through the binoculars at the activity around the site. Several aircranes had arrived with a massive extraction effort. And now they were bringing something up — shrouded in storm canvas but clearly ring-shaped and tens of metres across. They would be away before the main Martian force arrived — the same Martian force that had hired her and her team as scouts, thinking they were Terrans. But Anya knew that, once the dust had settled, physically and figuratively, the Martian commanders would be very keen to ask their Venusian counterparts in Vici what had gone on here. And she knew, also, that Vici would have no idea.



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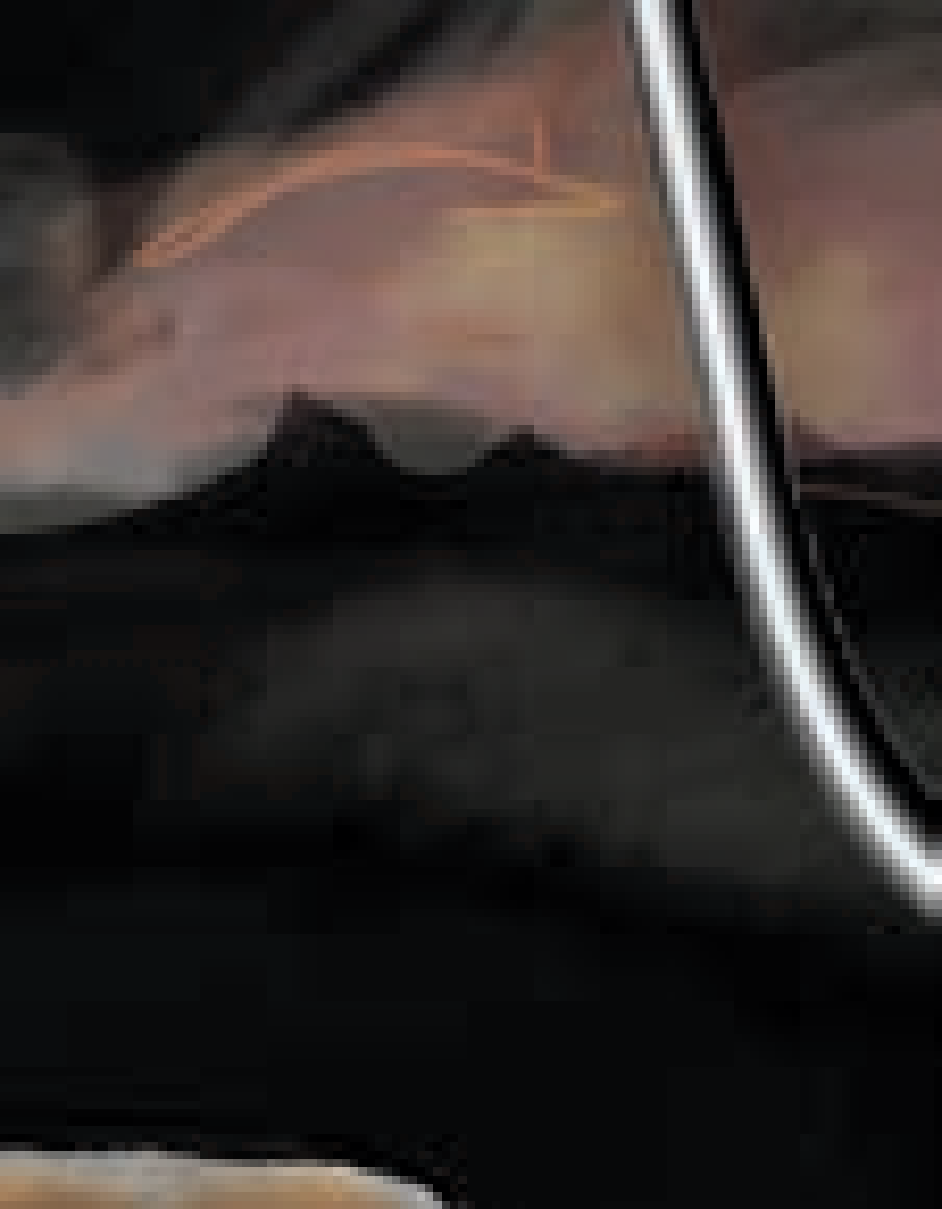

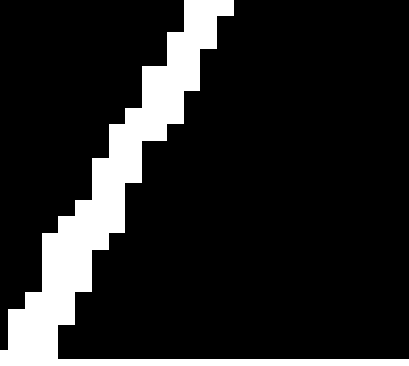

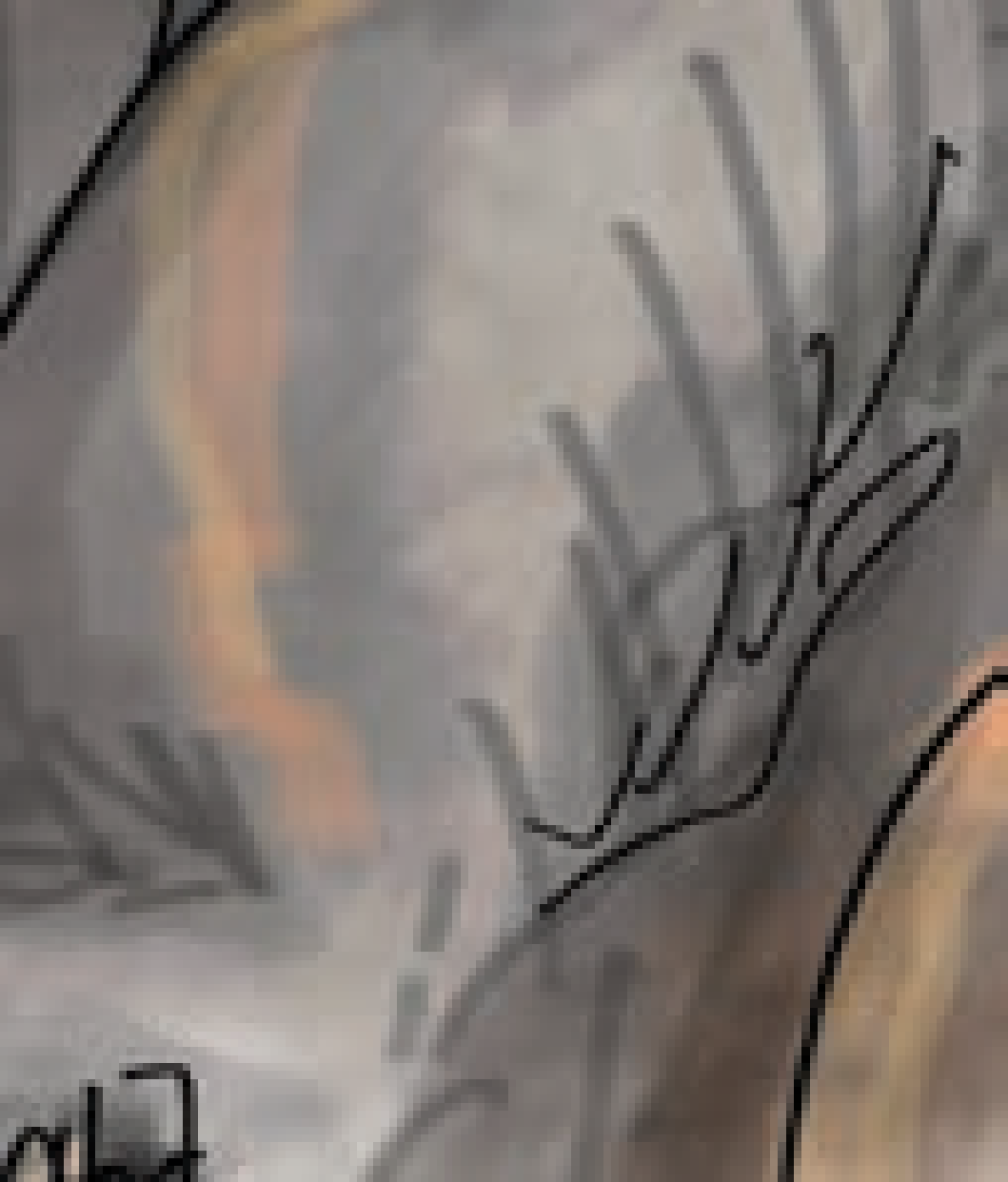

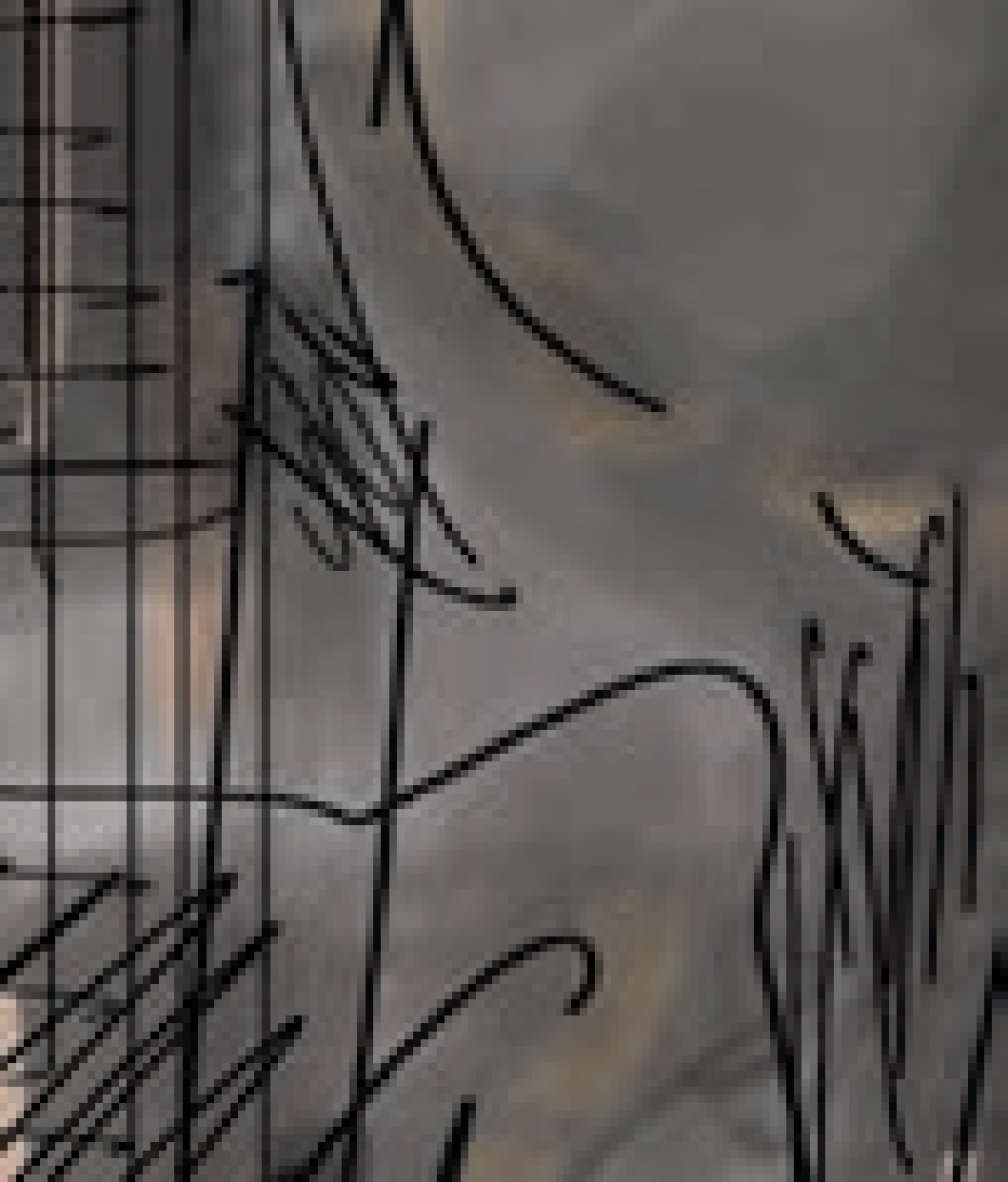

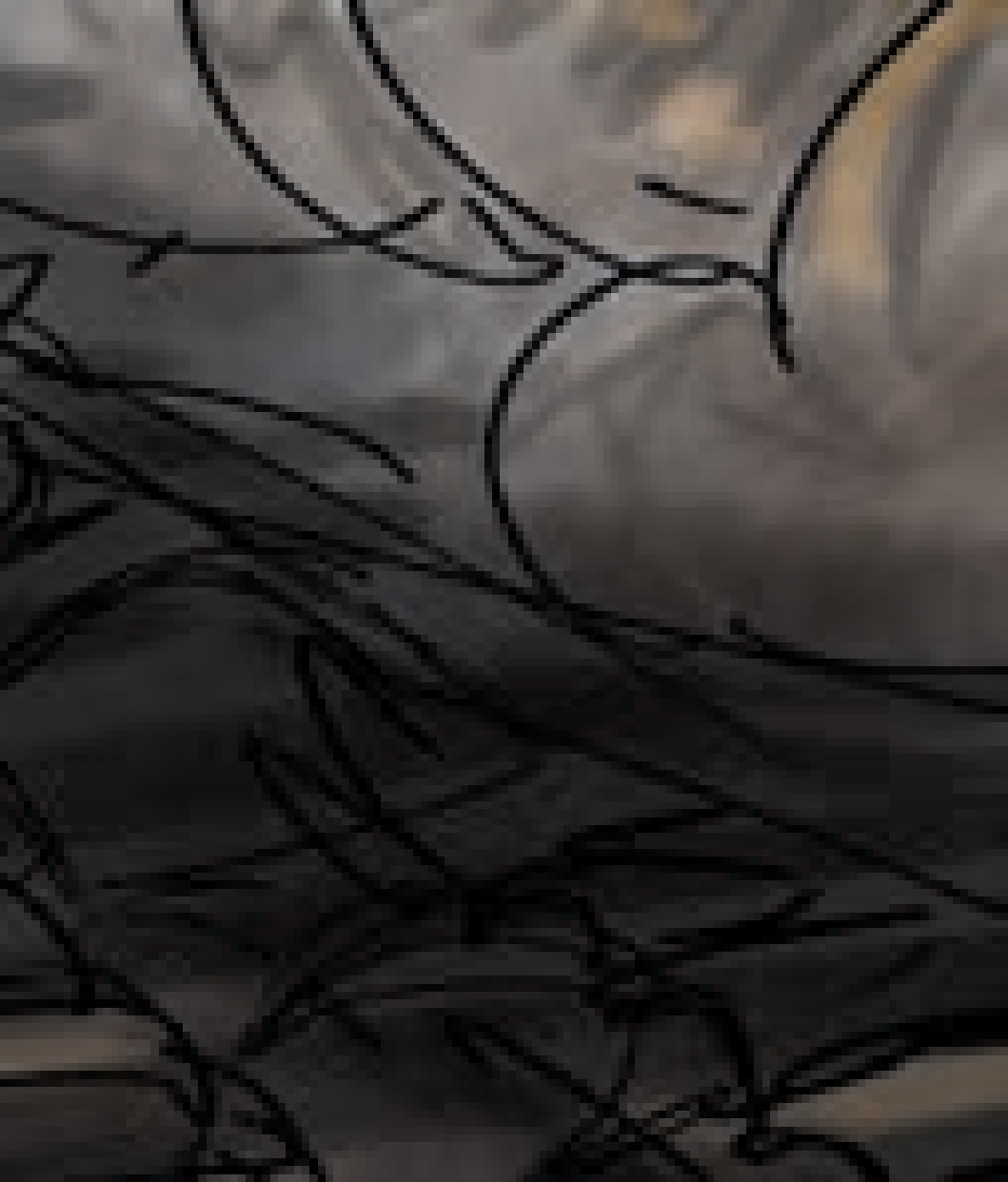

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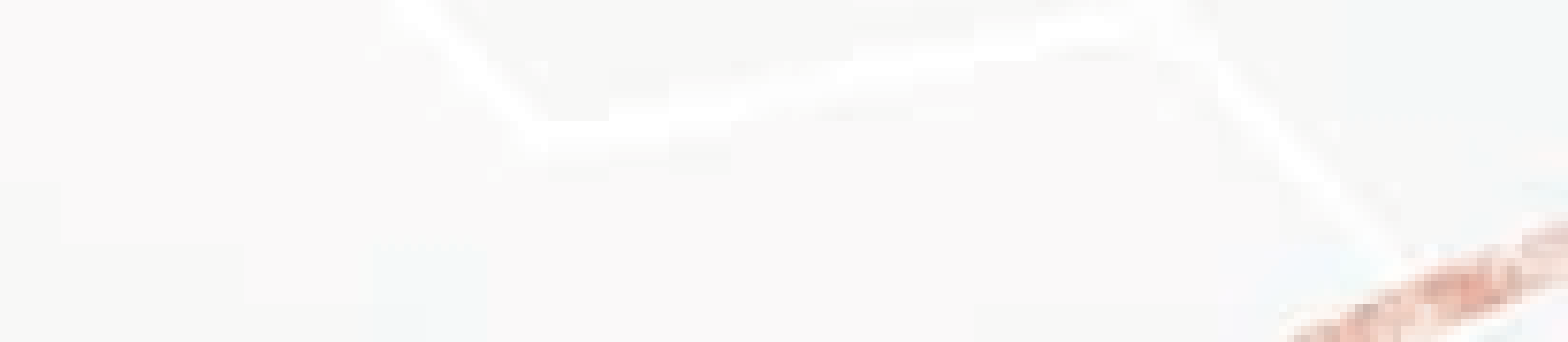

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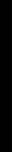

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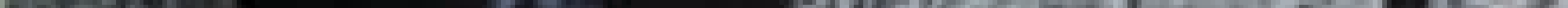

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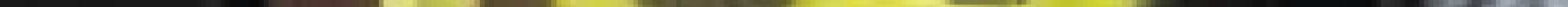

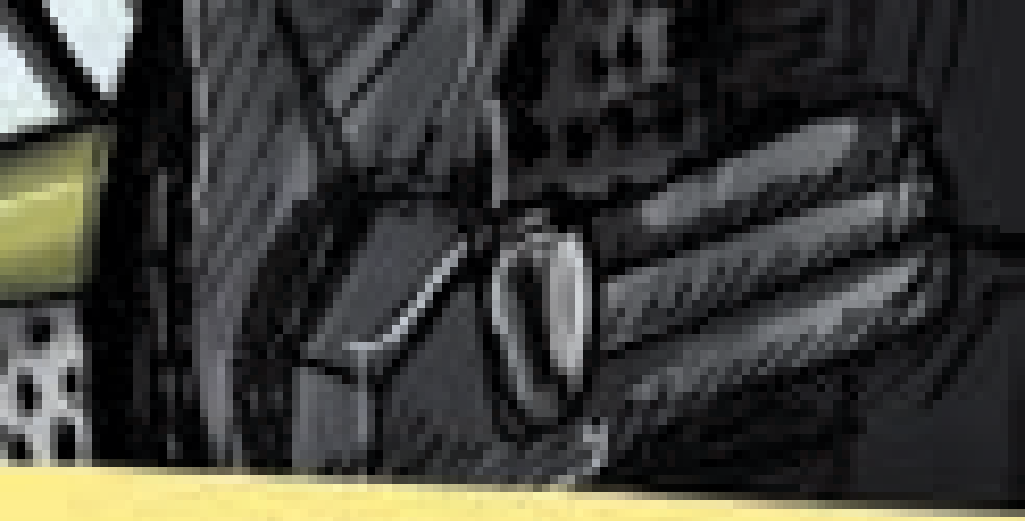

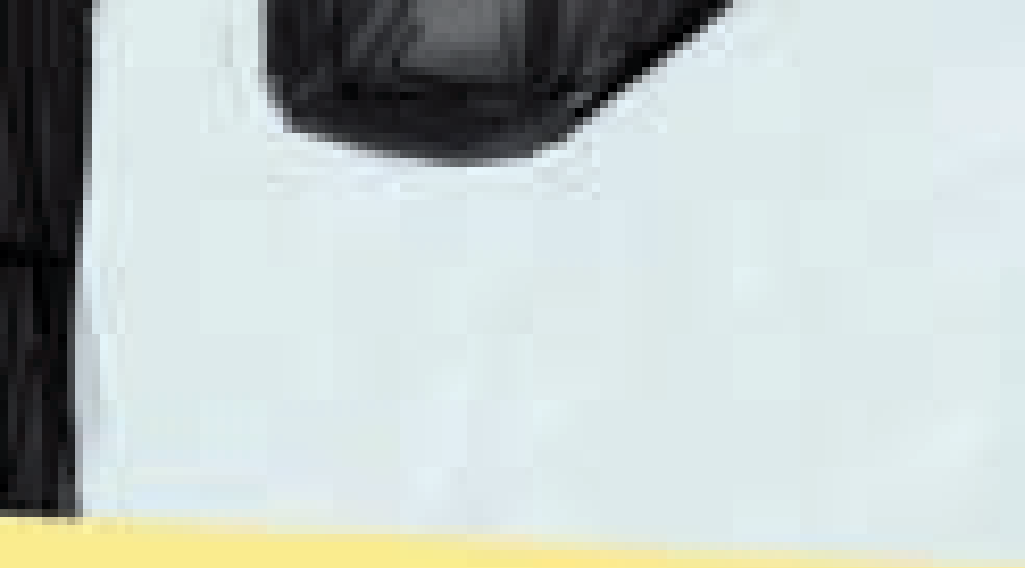

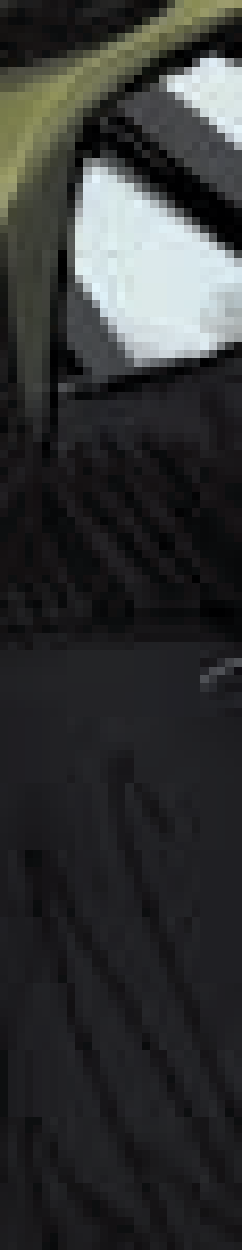

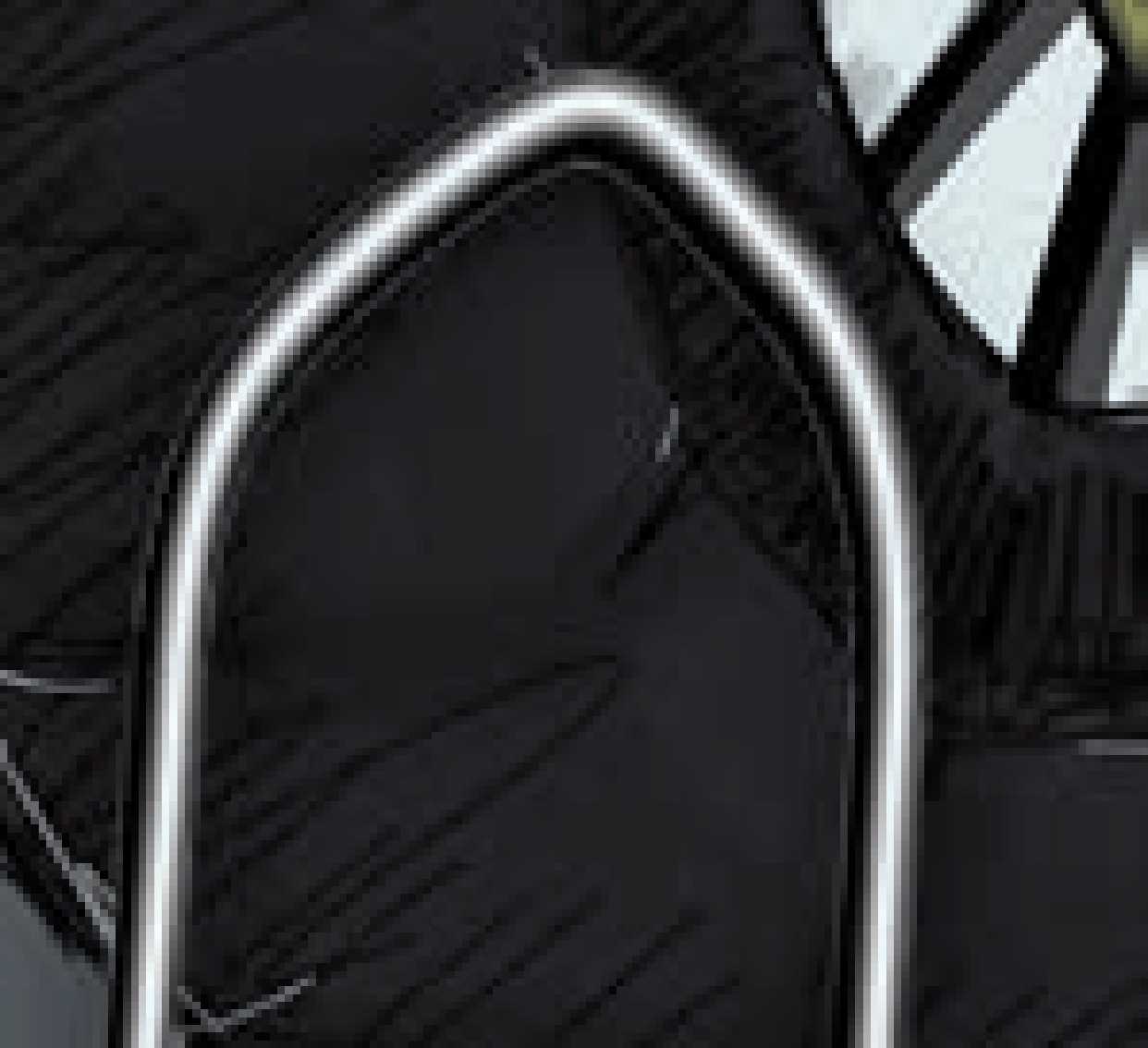

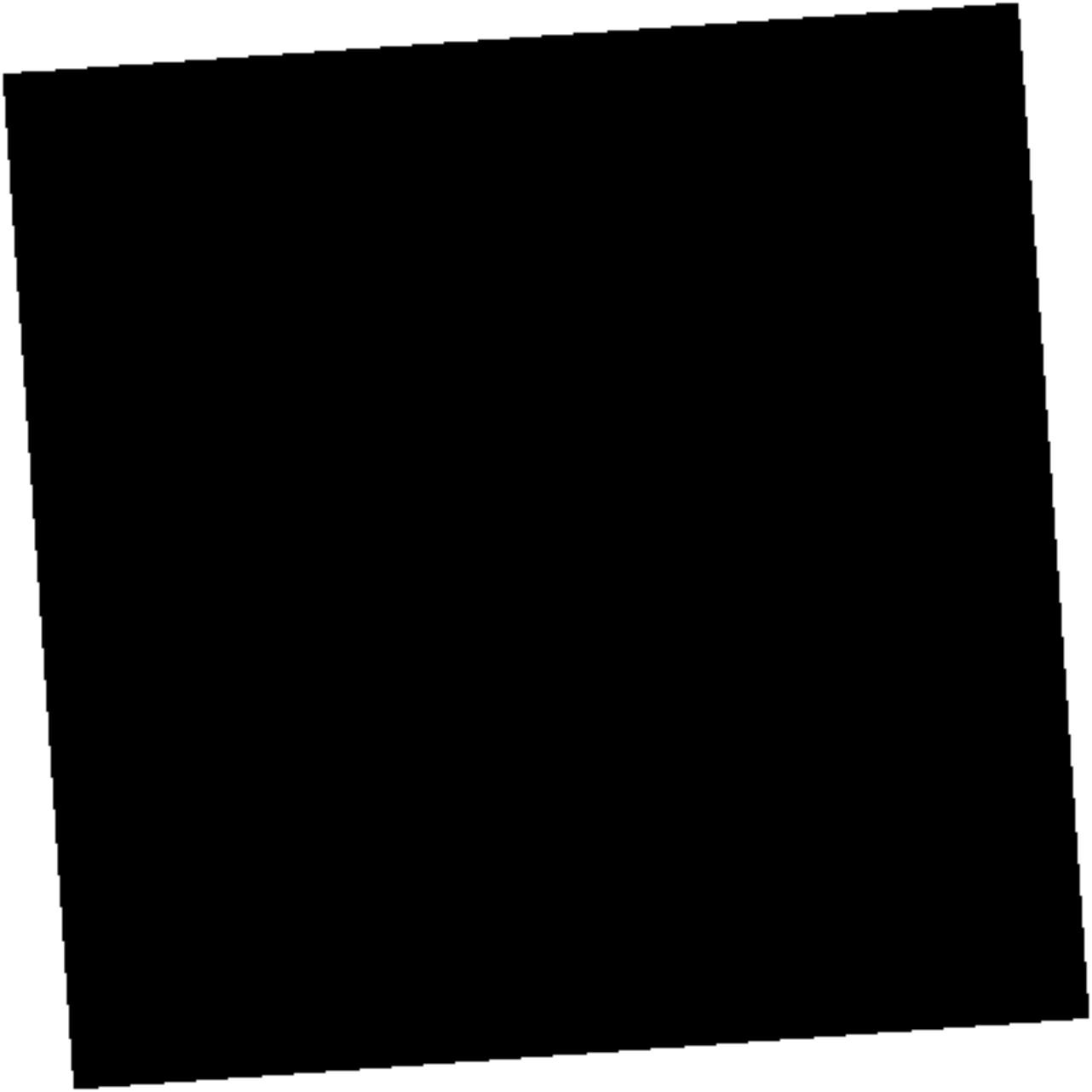

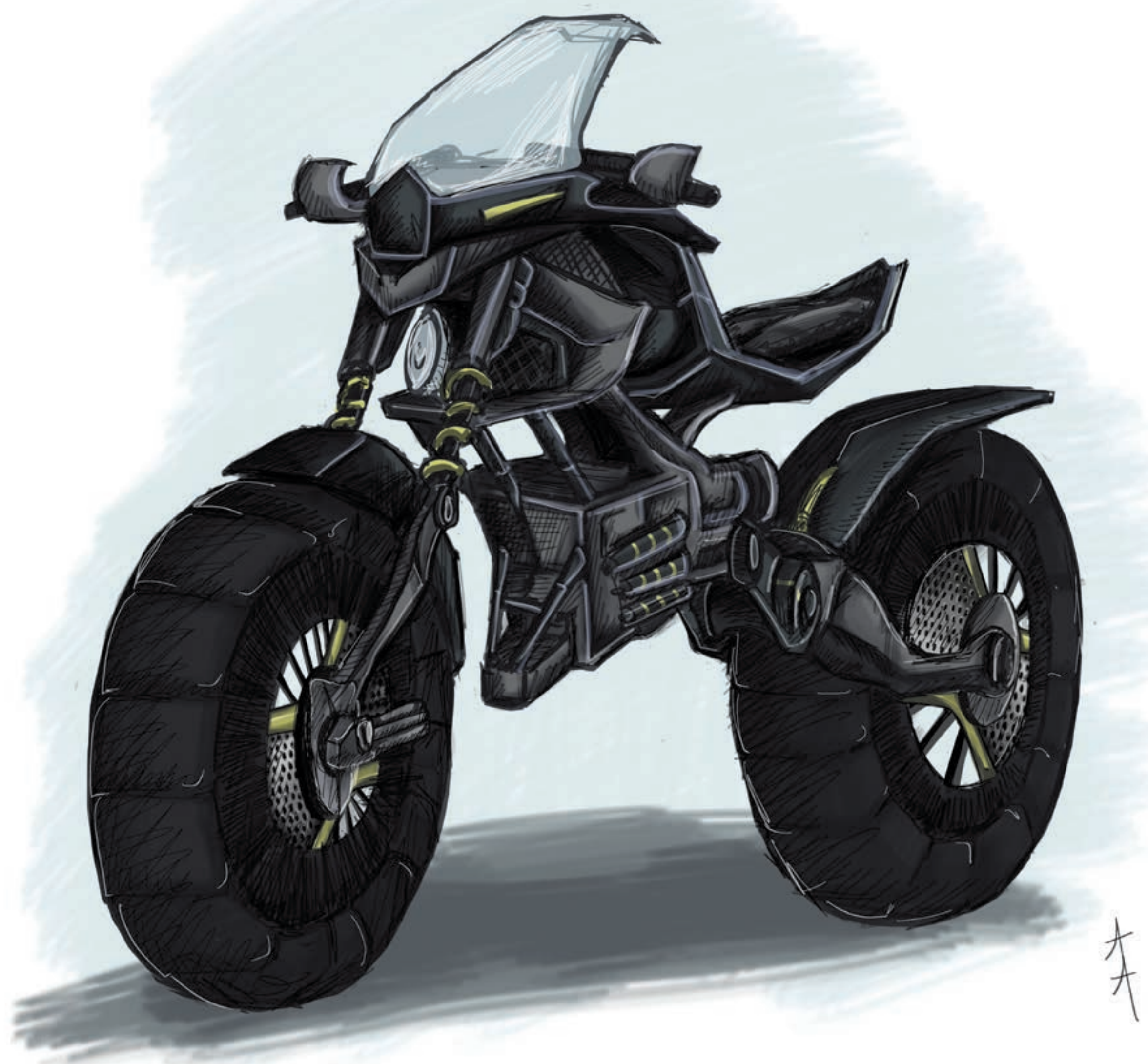

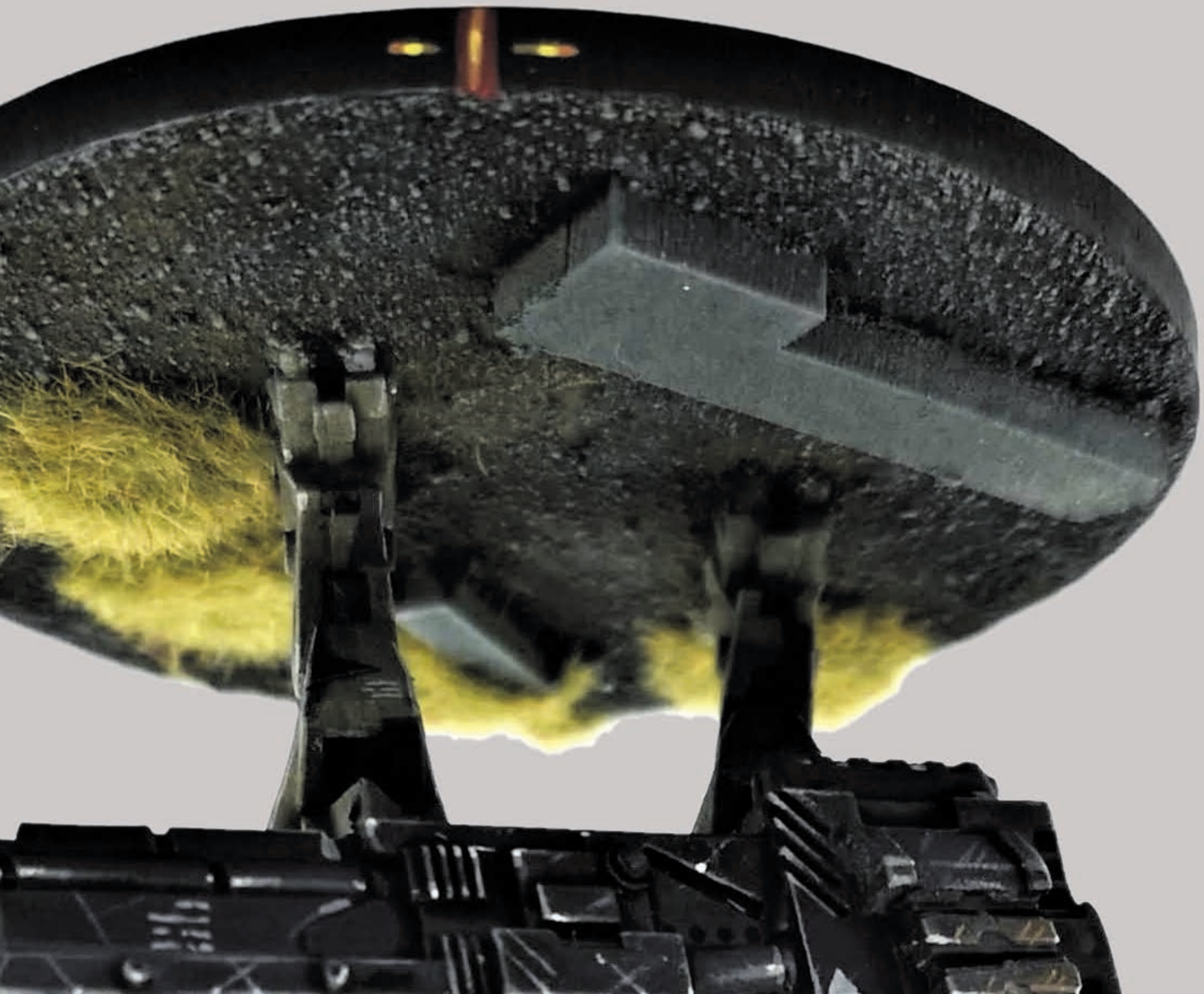

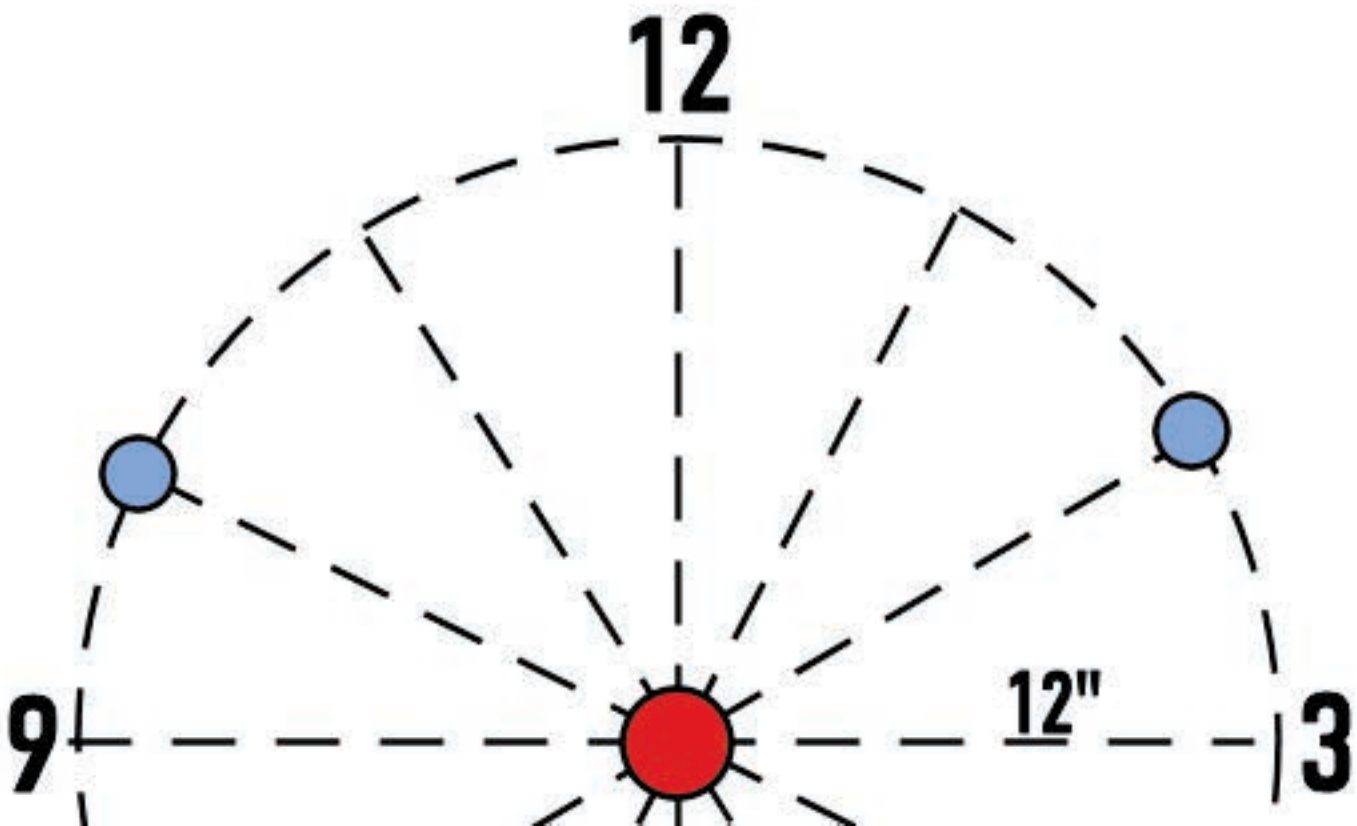
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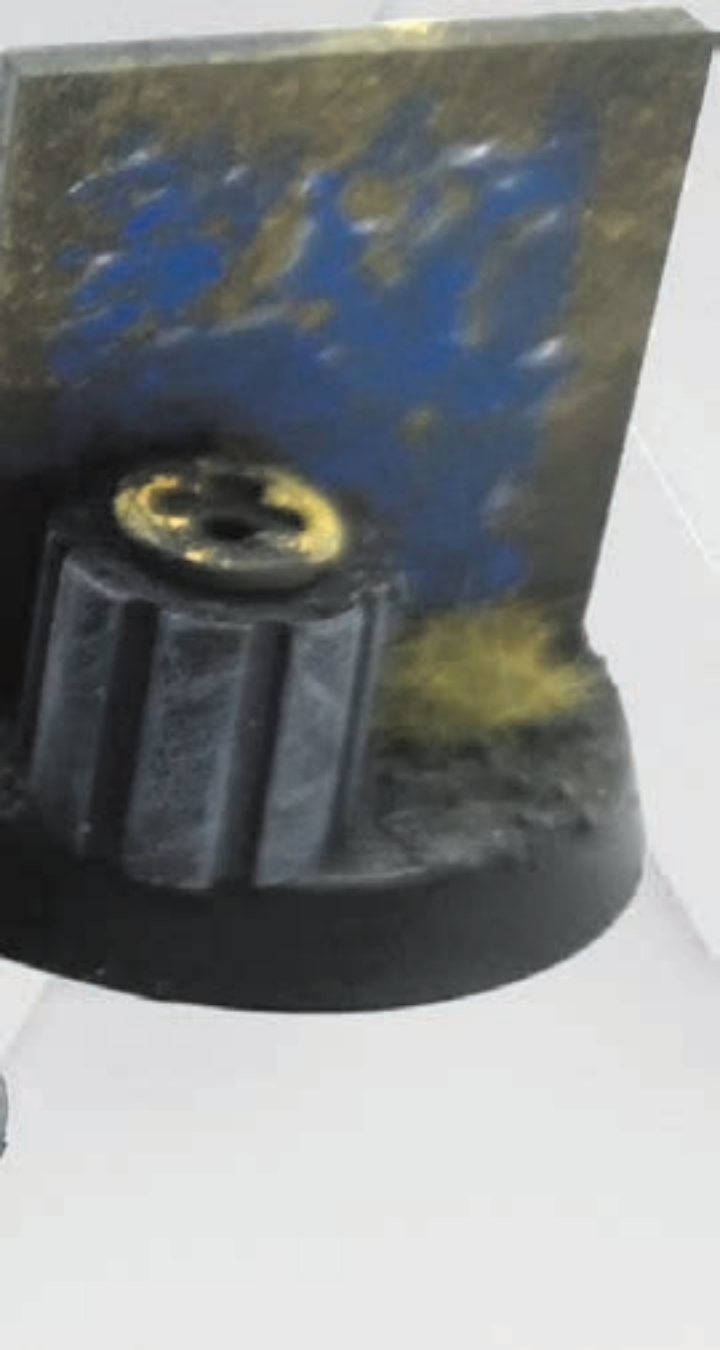

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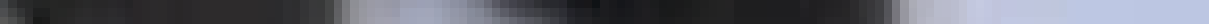

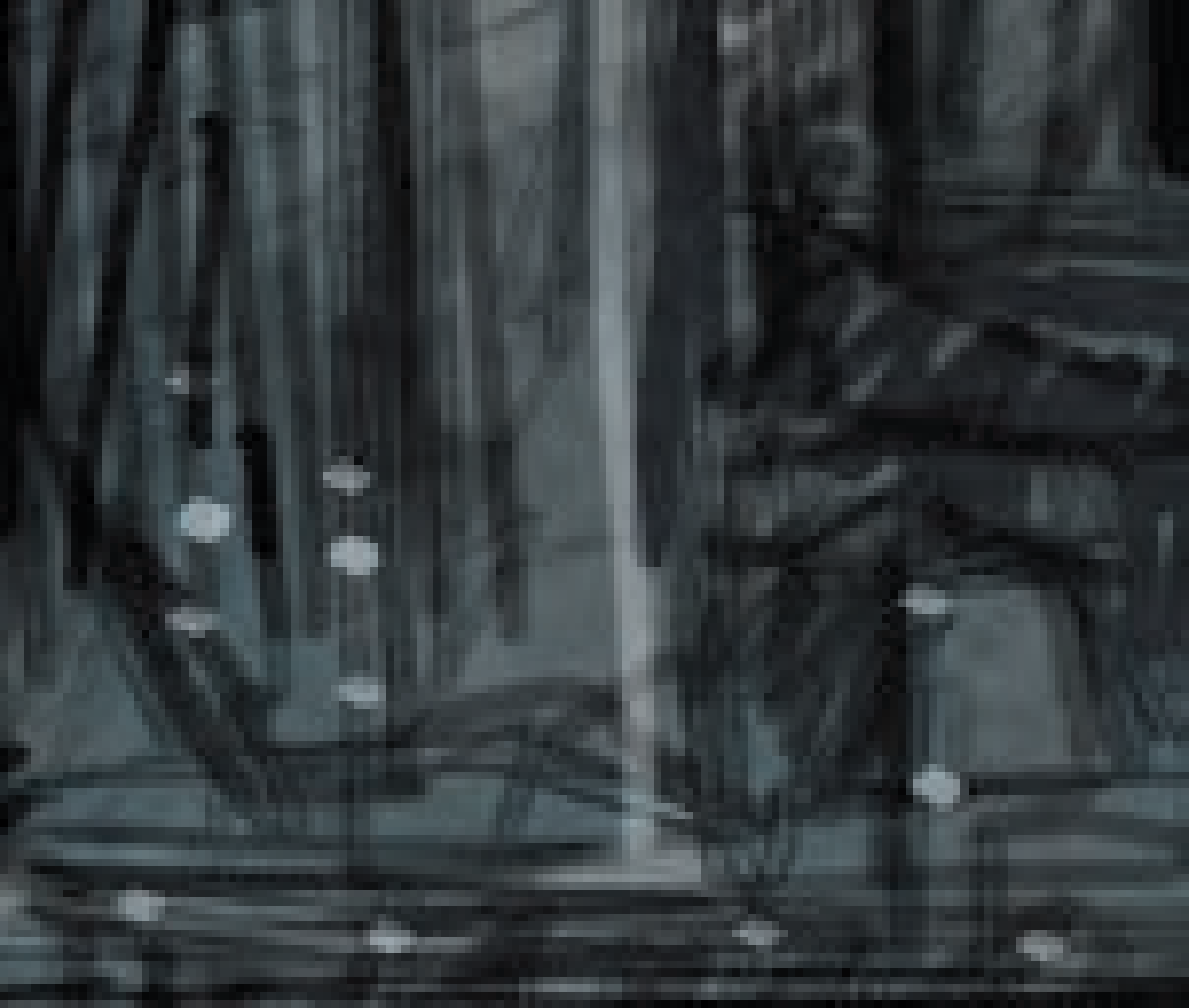

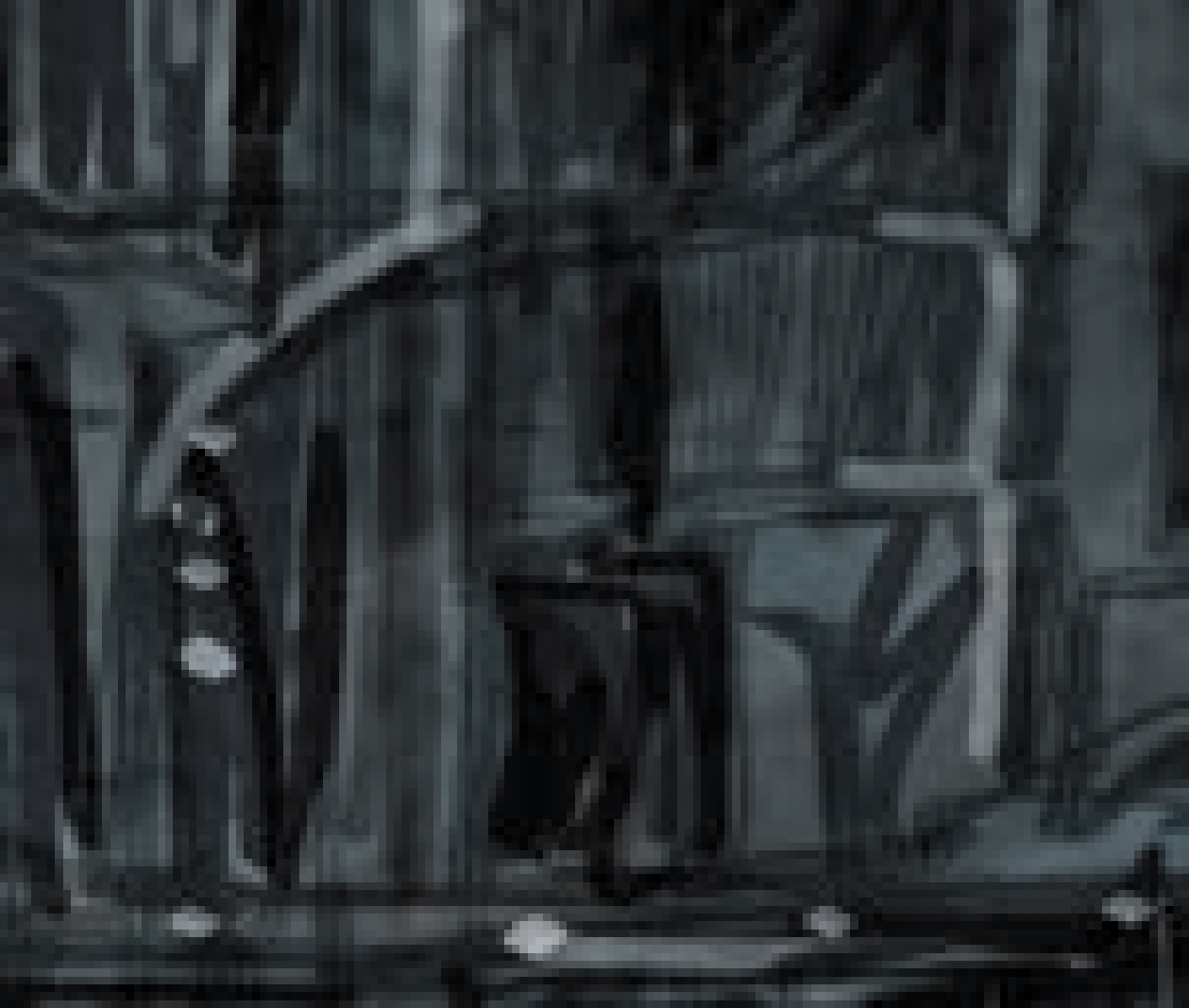

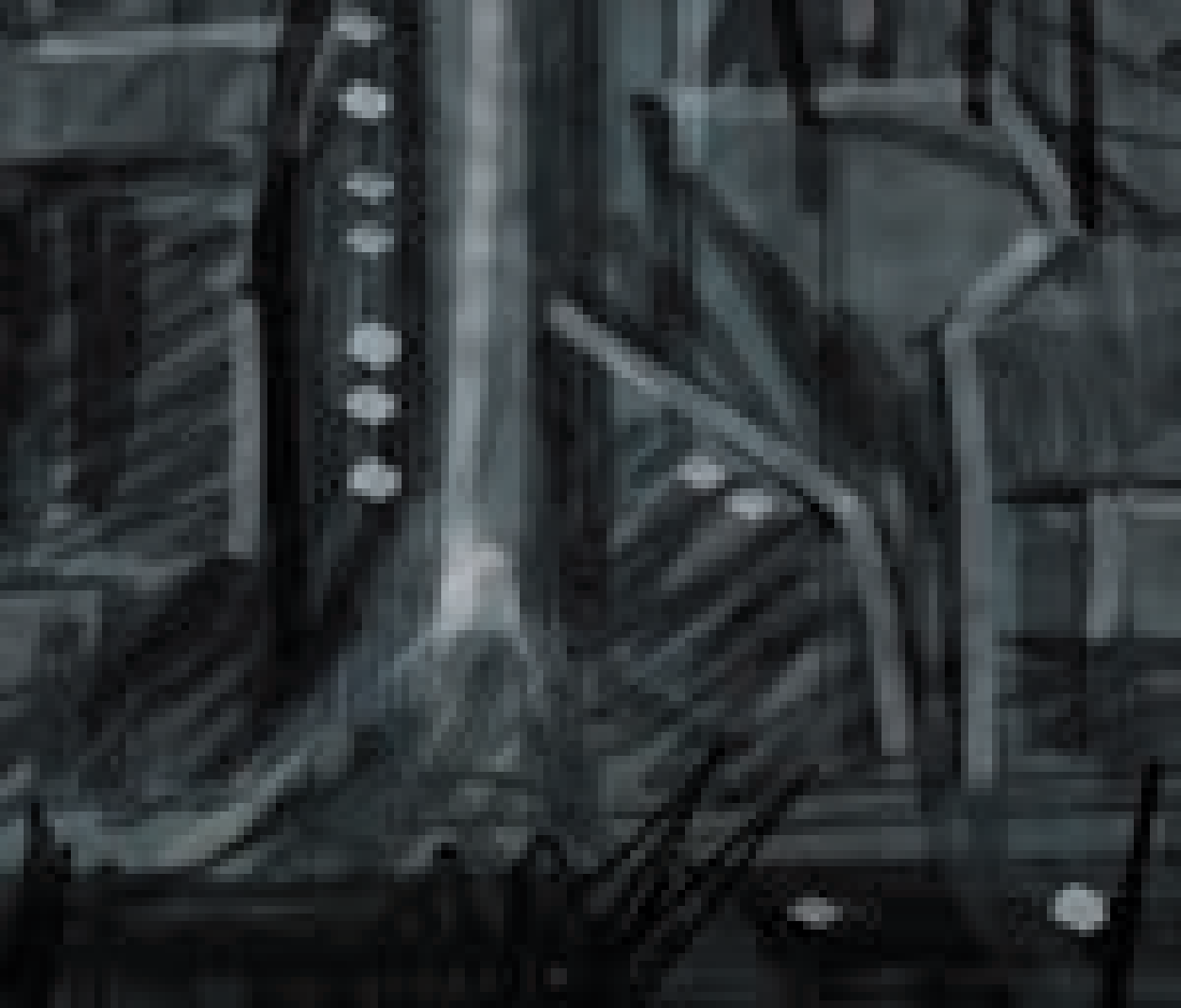

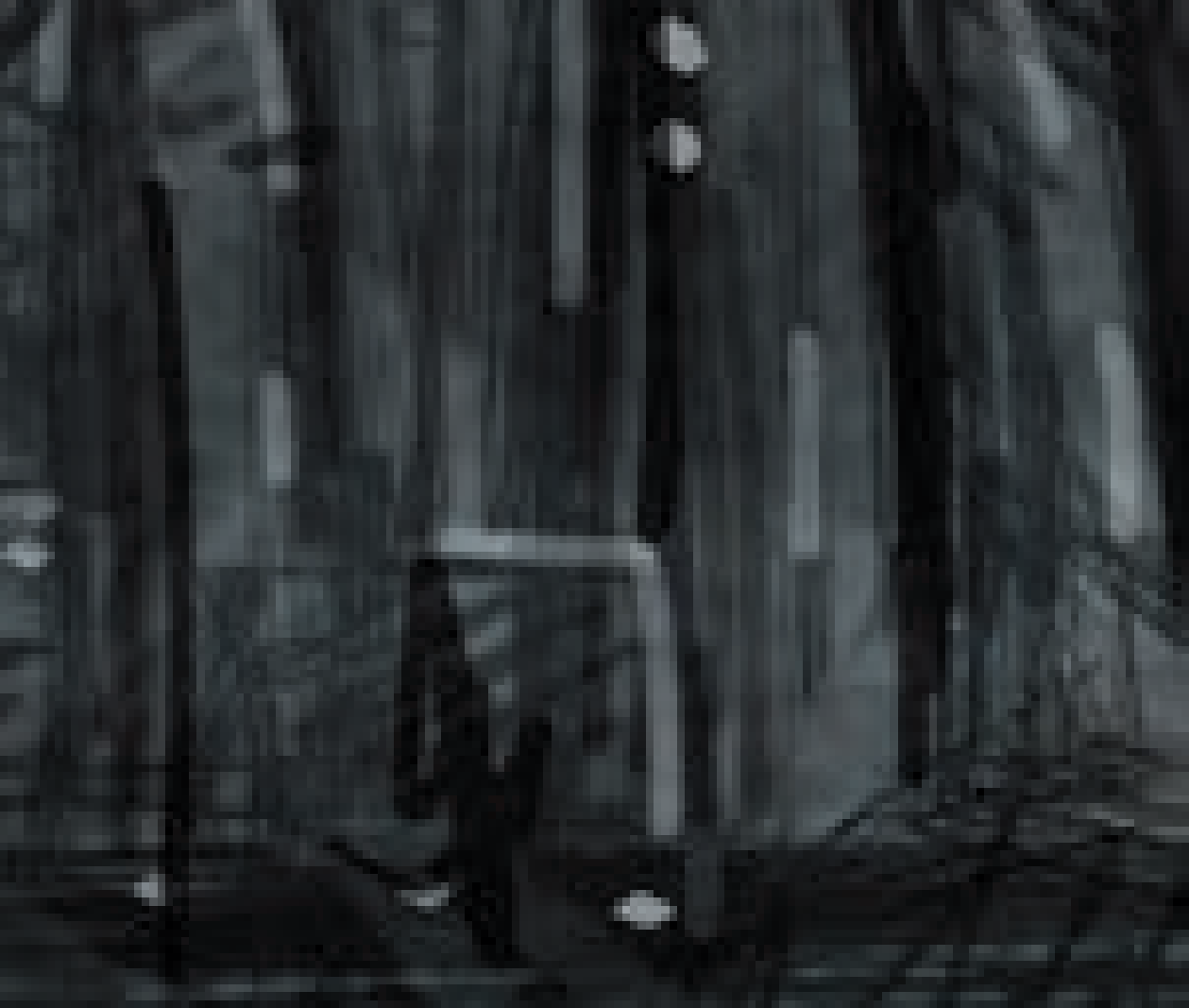

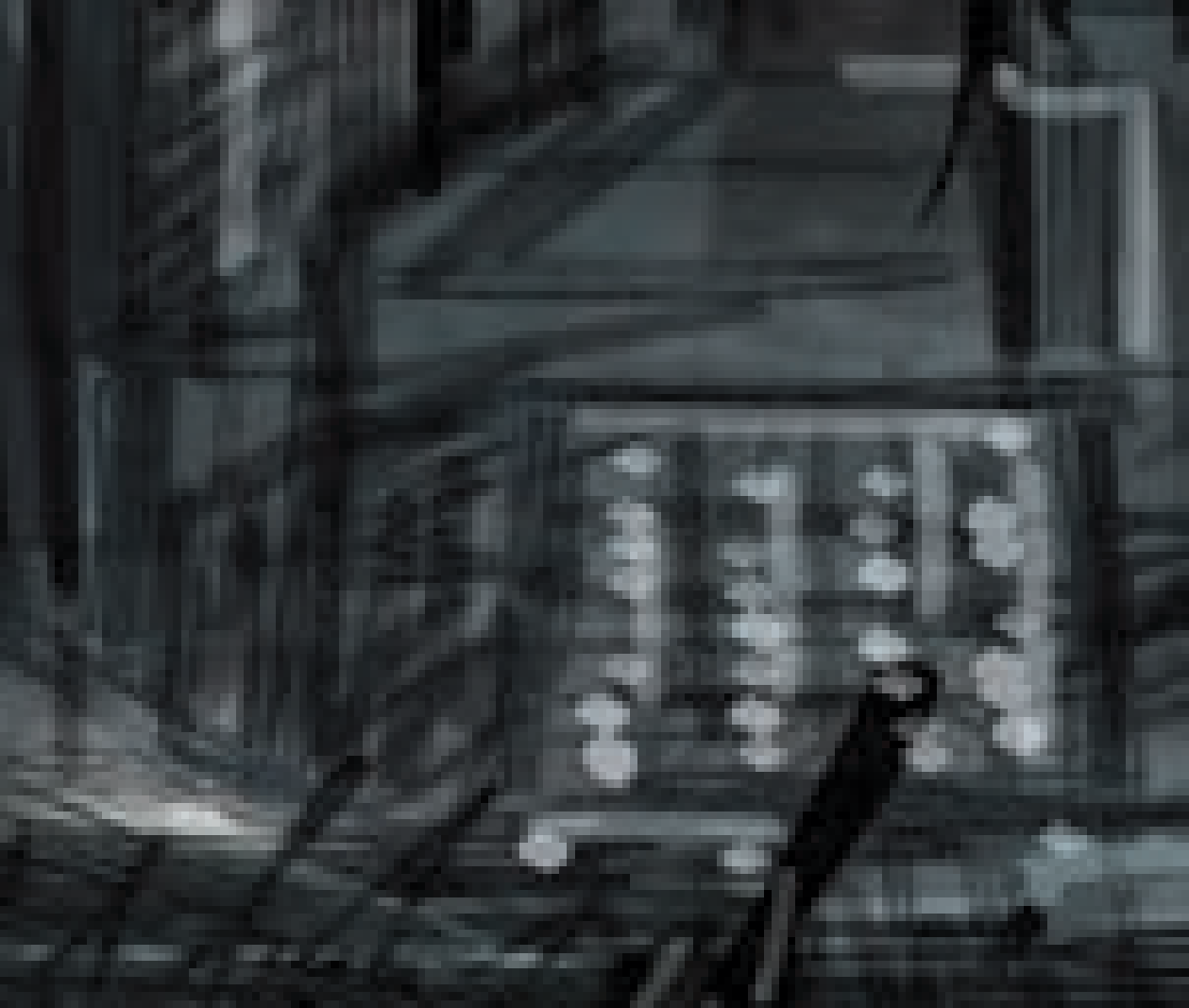

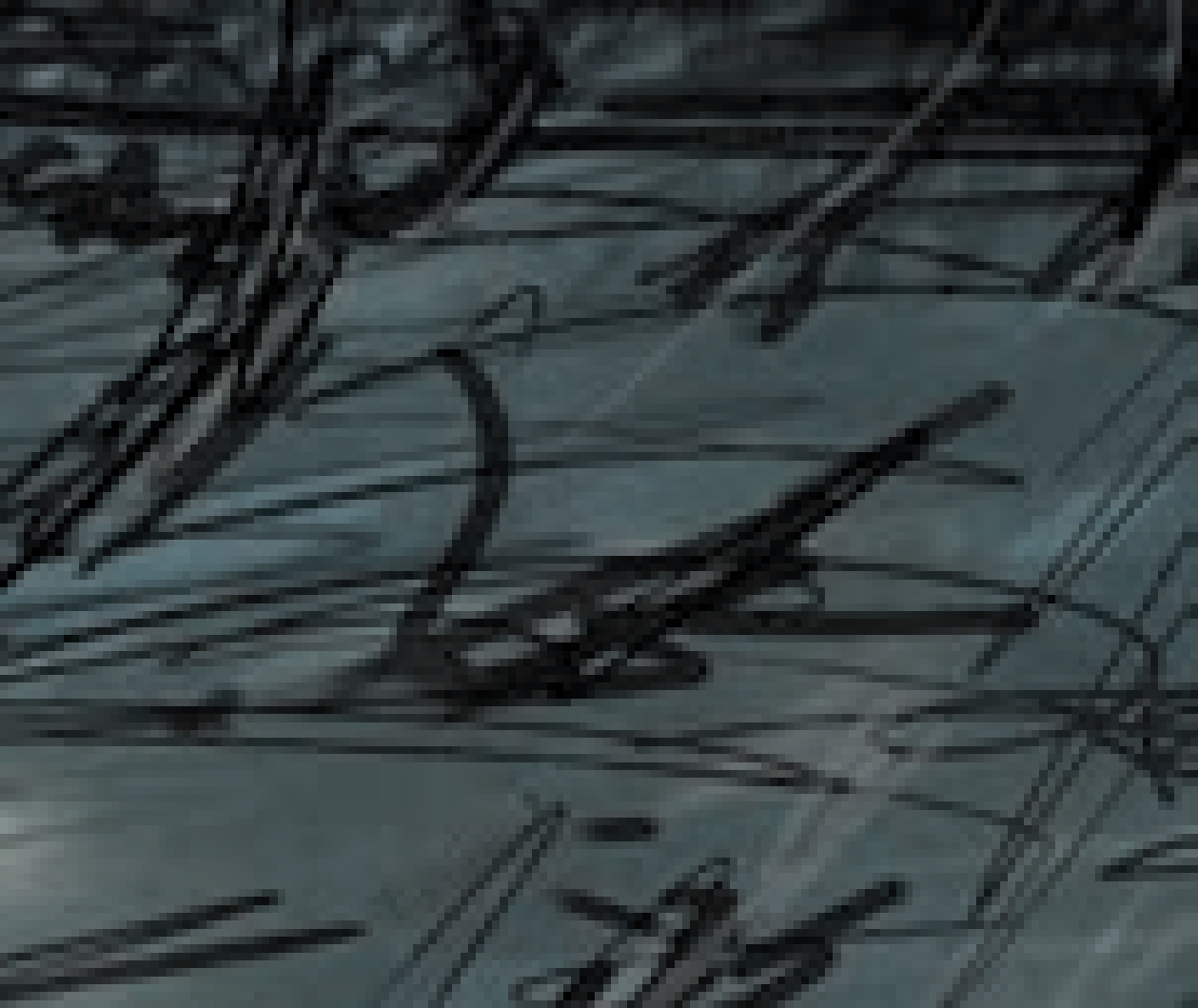

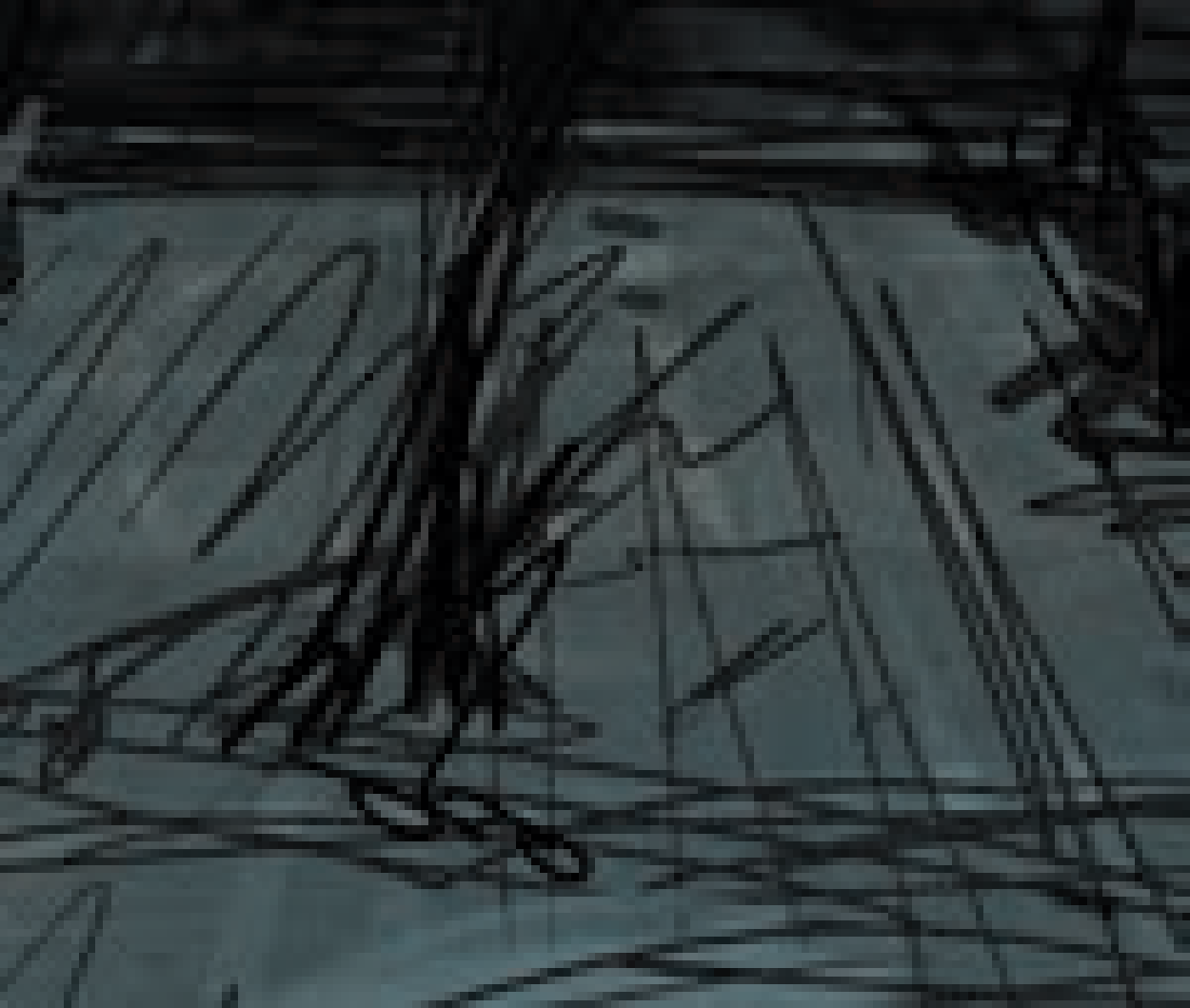

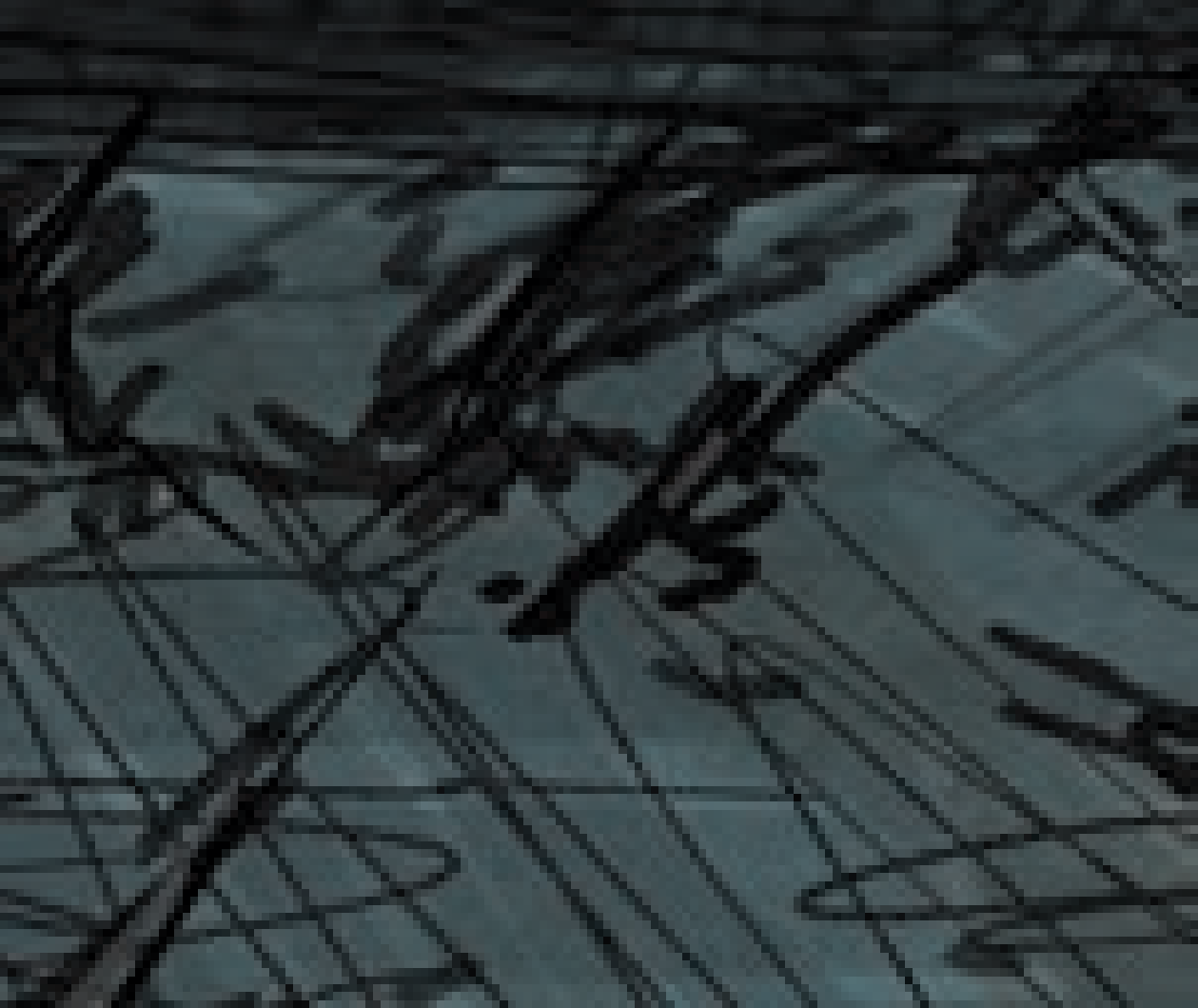

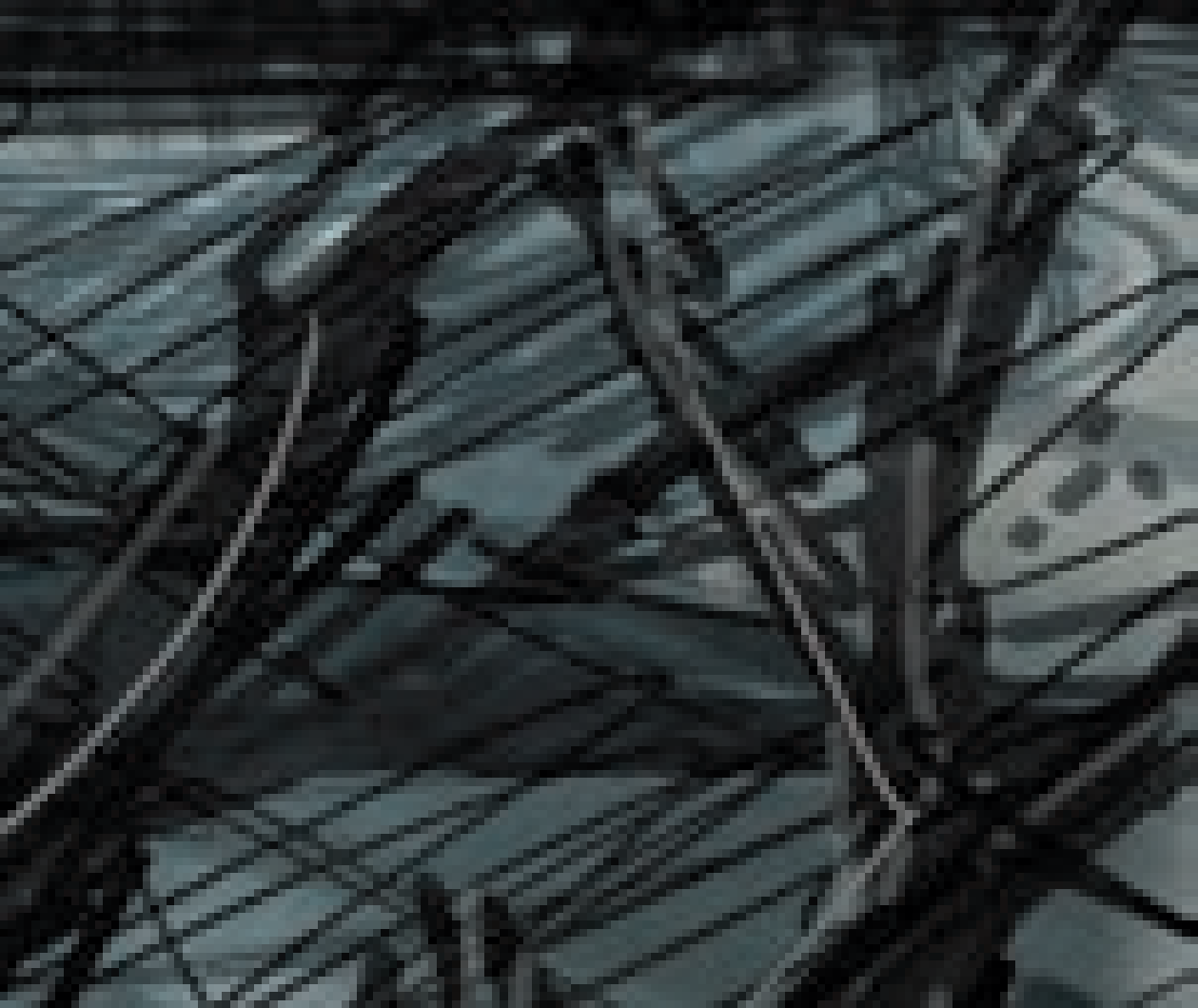

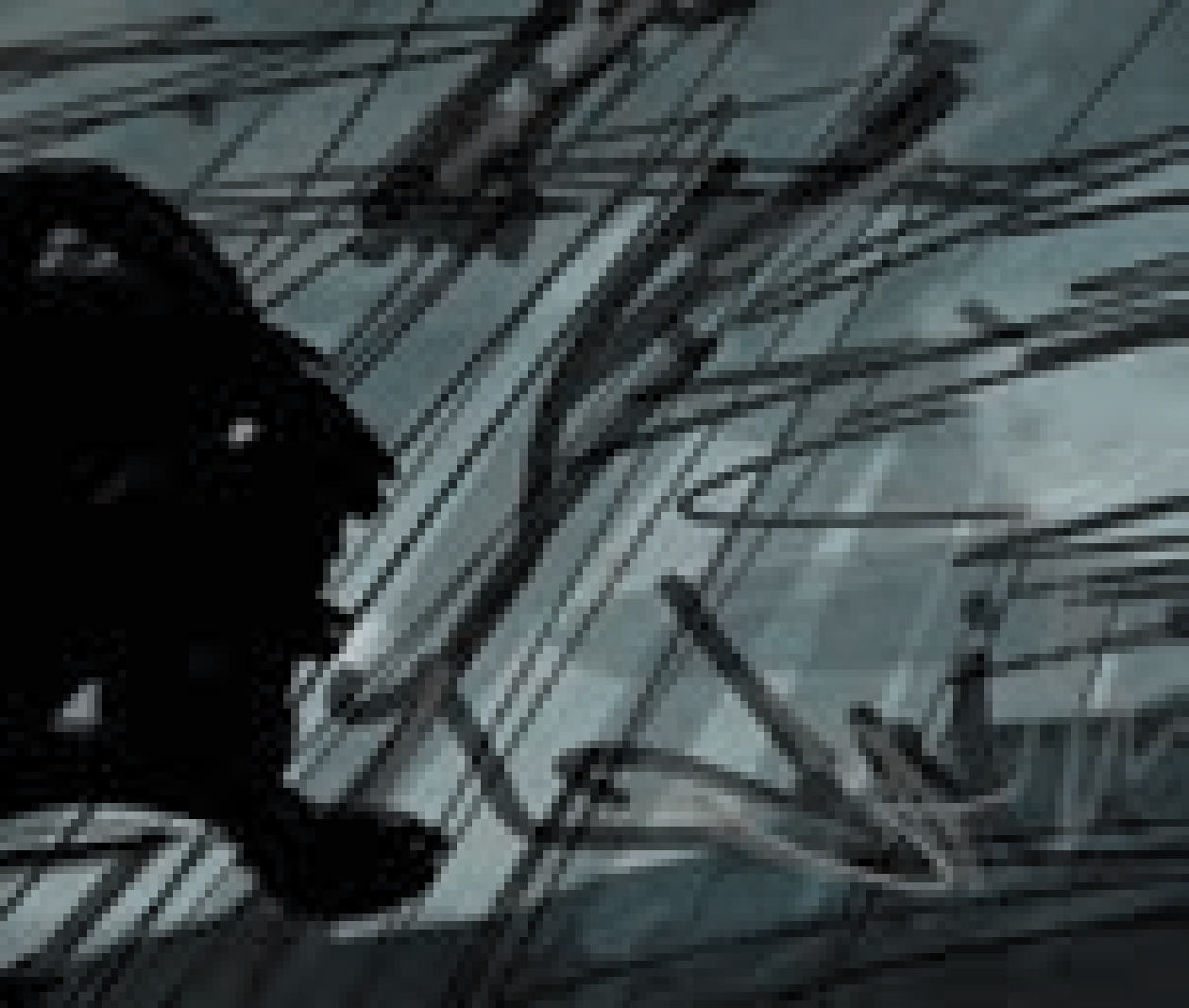

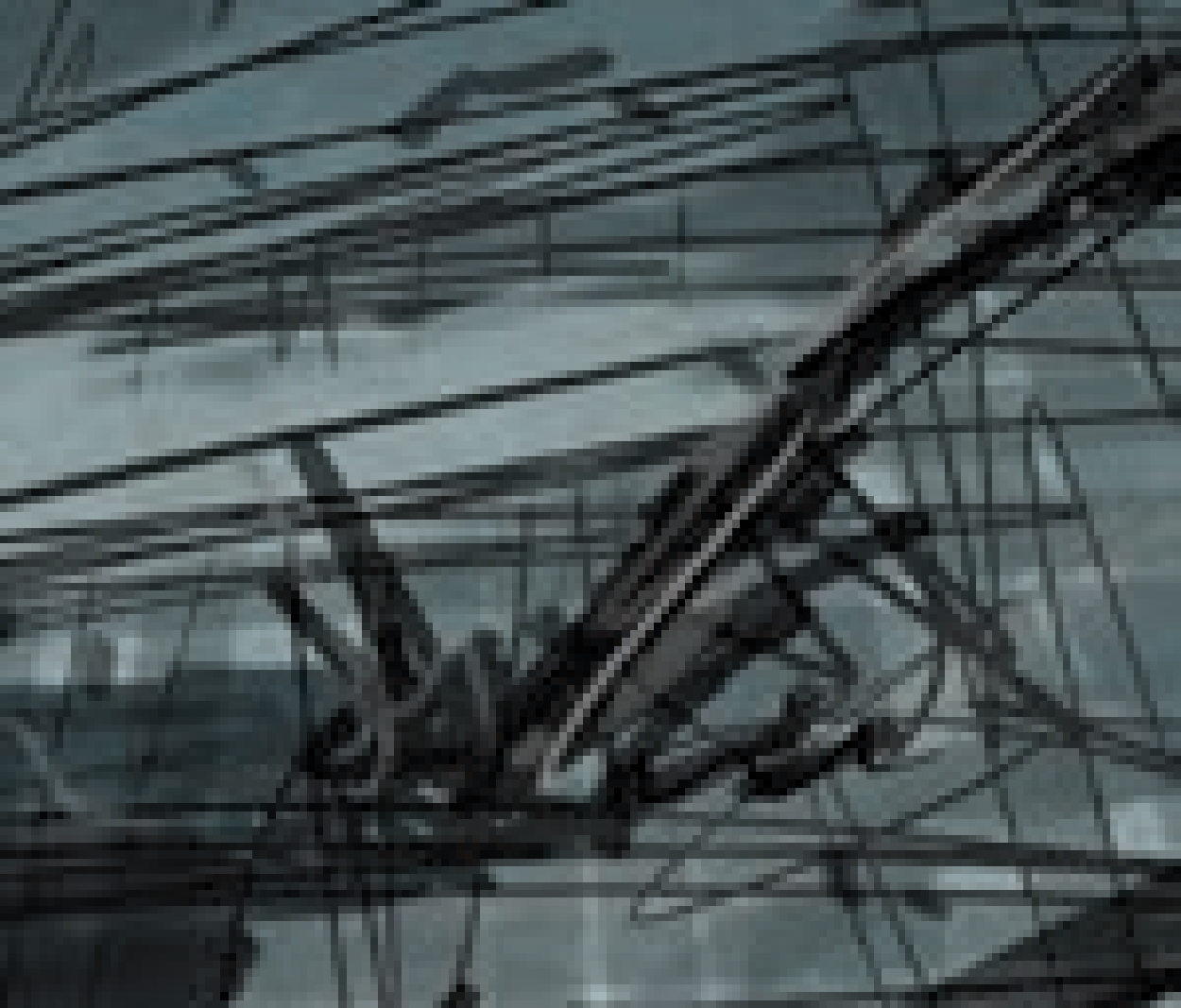

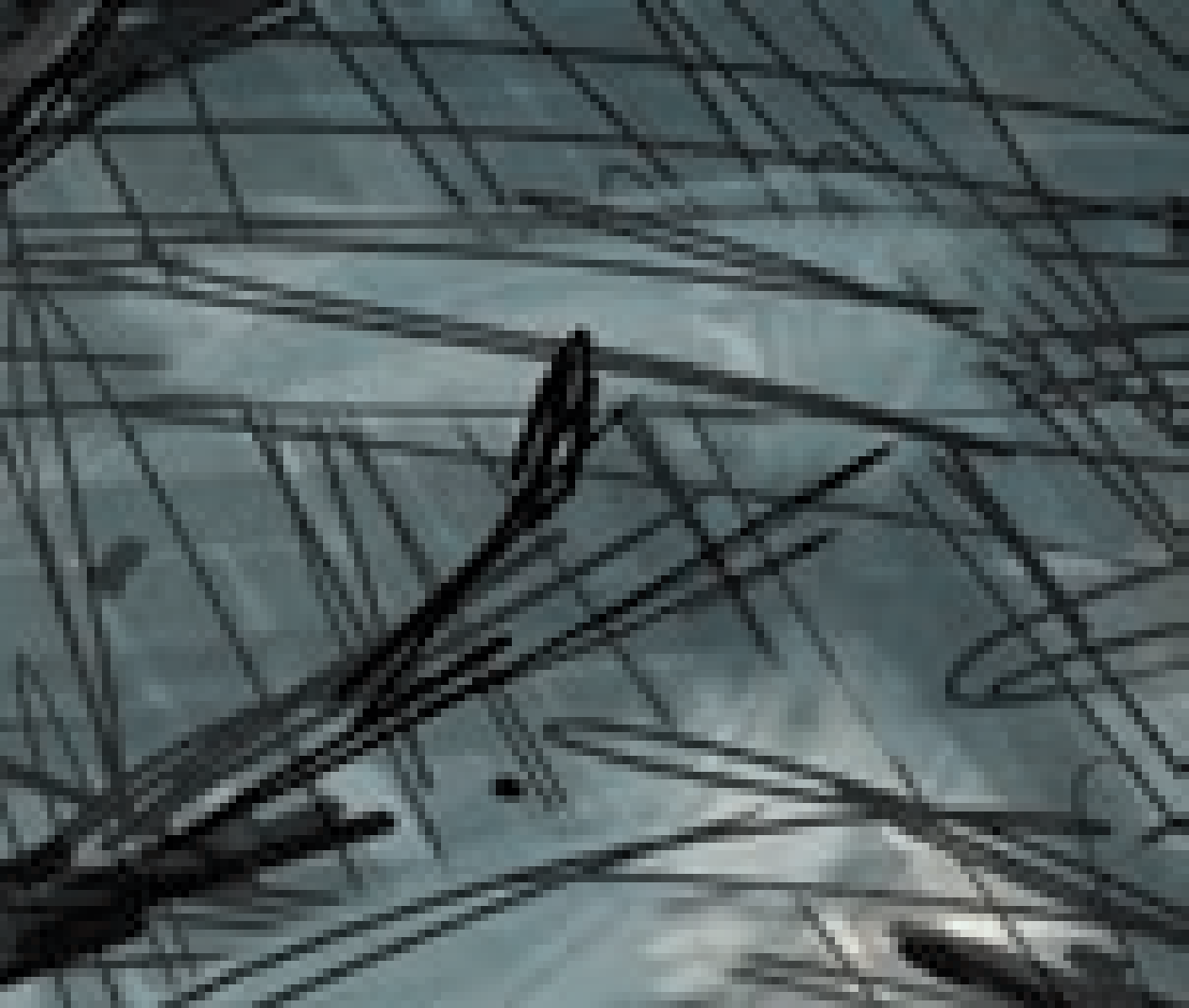

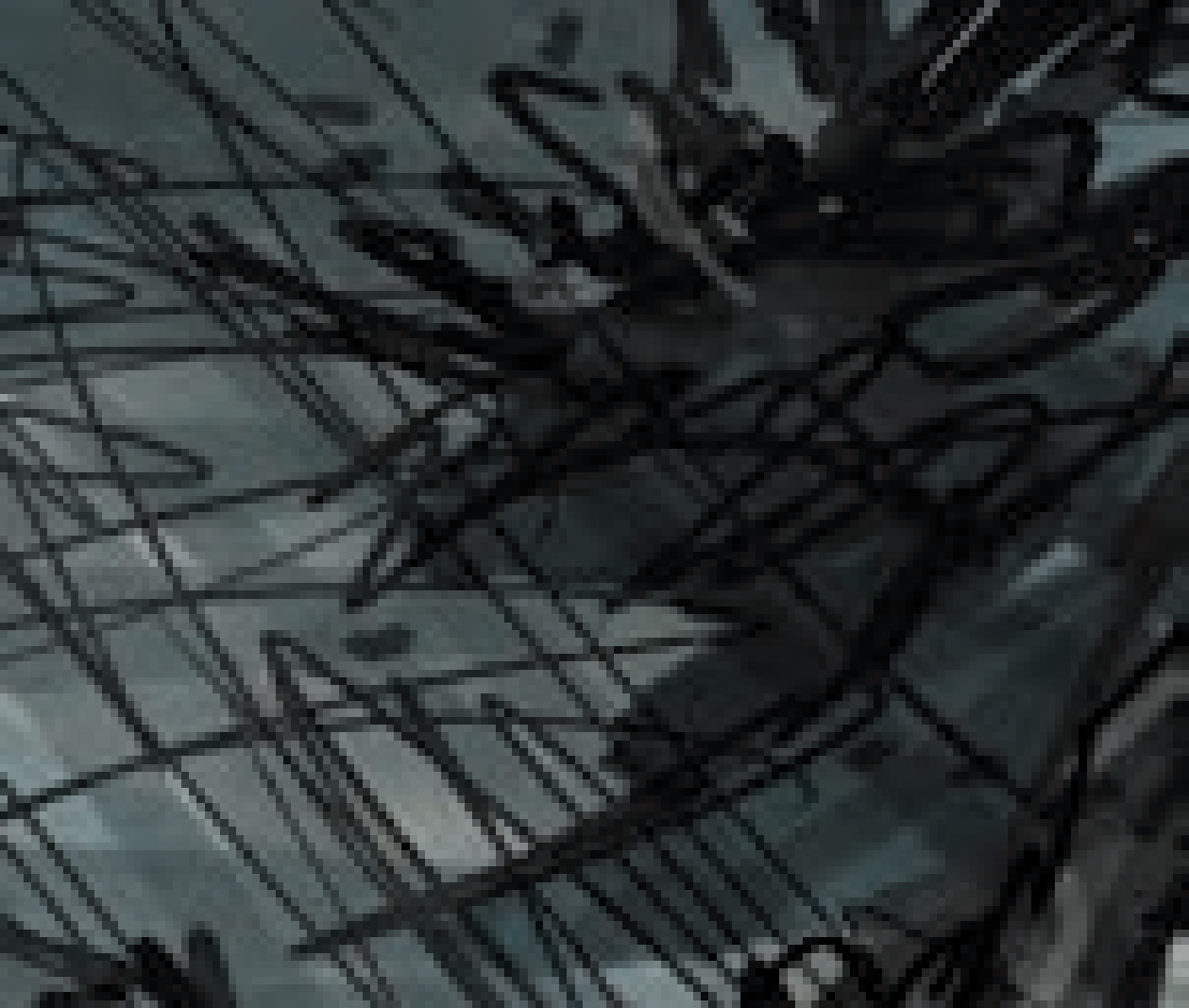

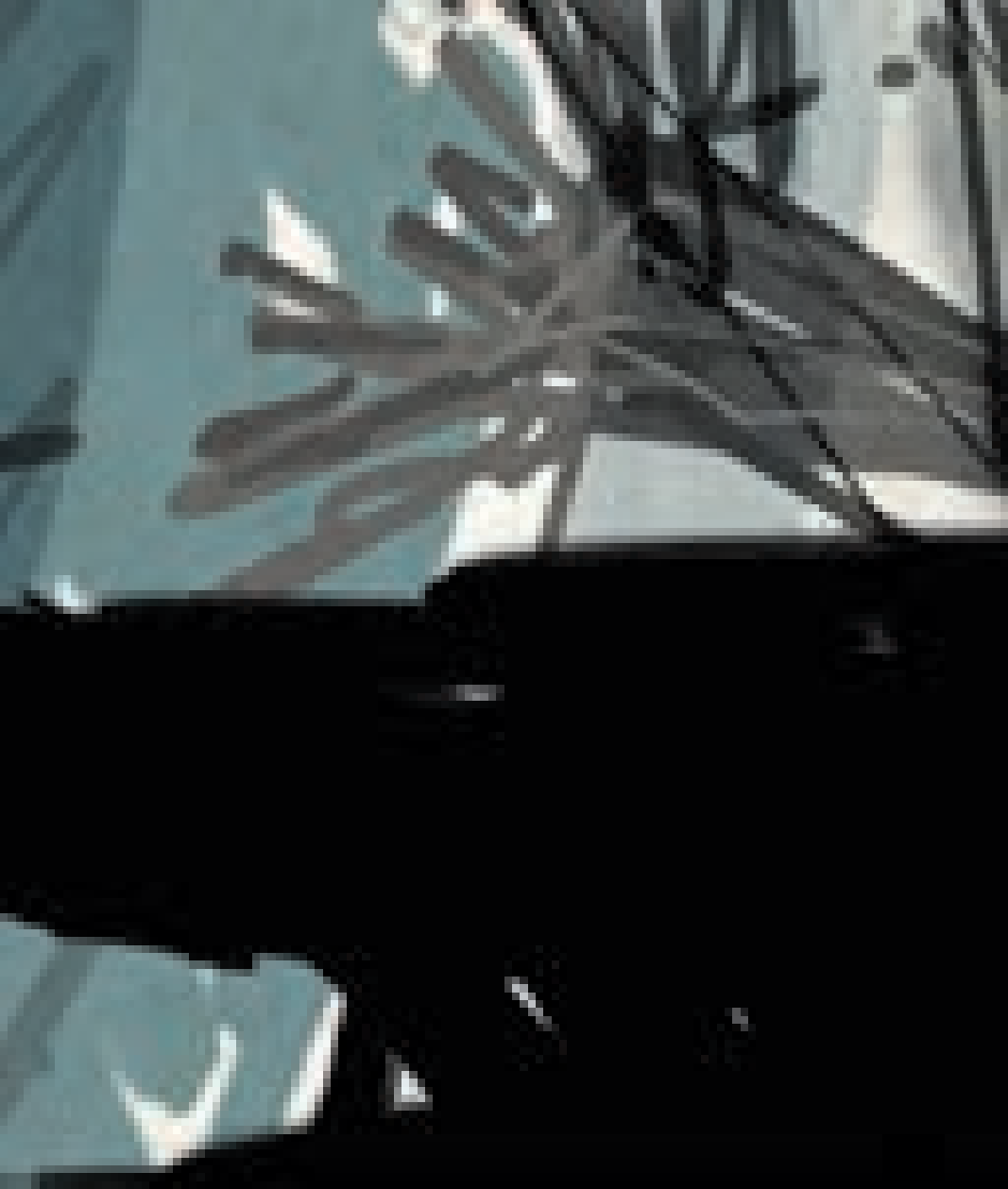

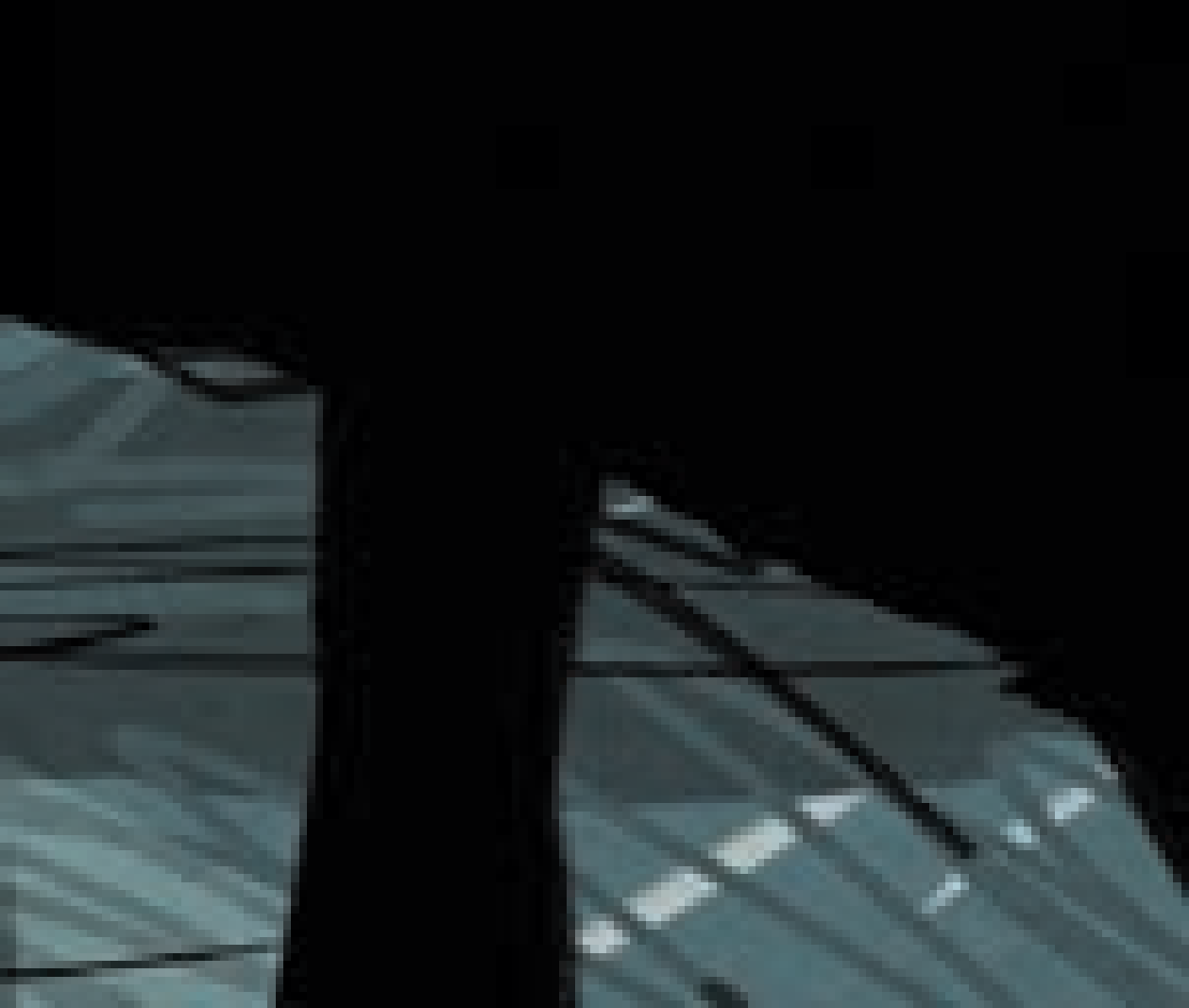

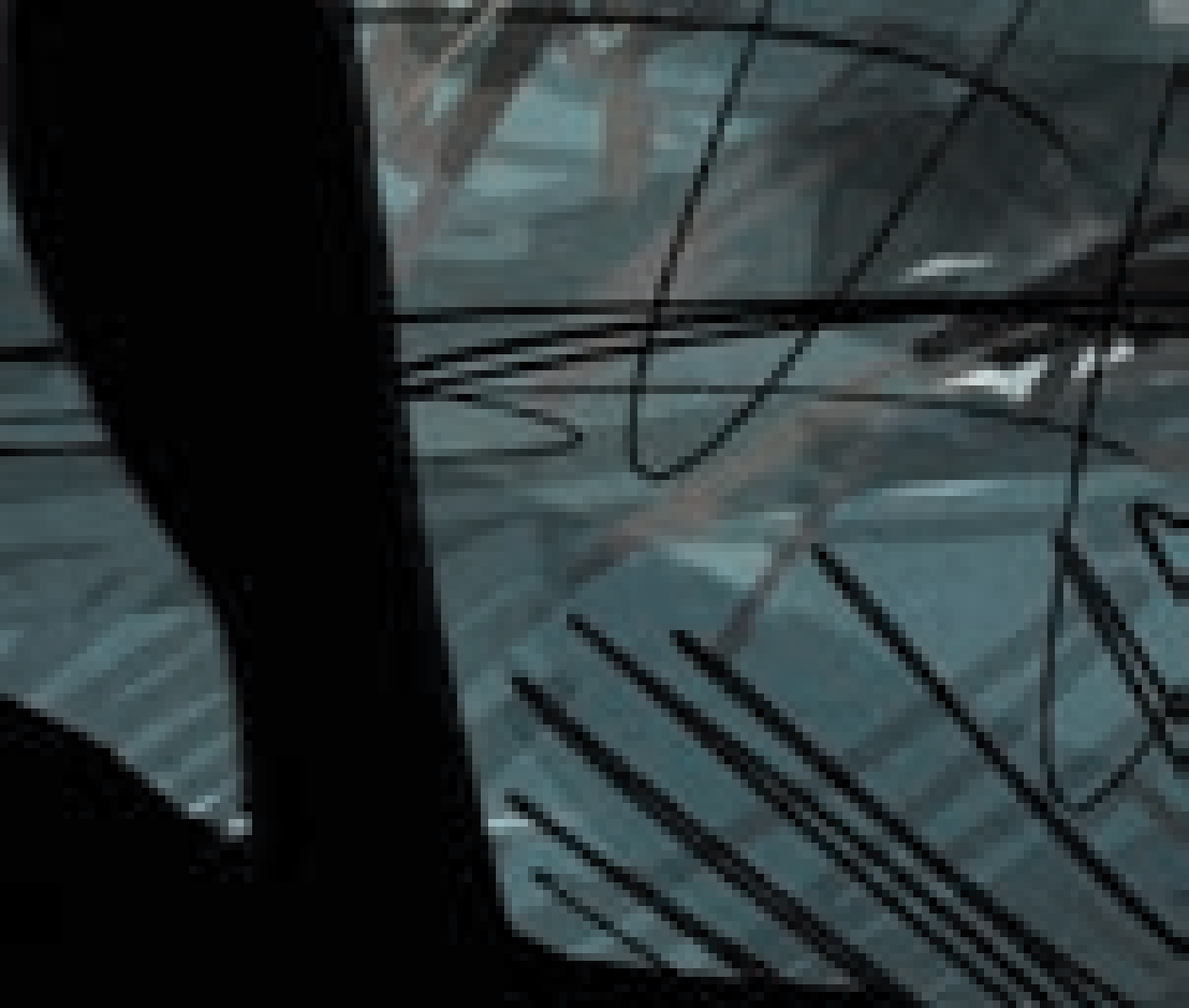

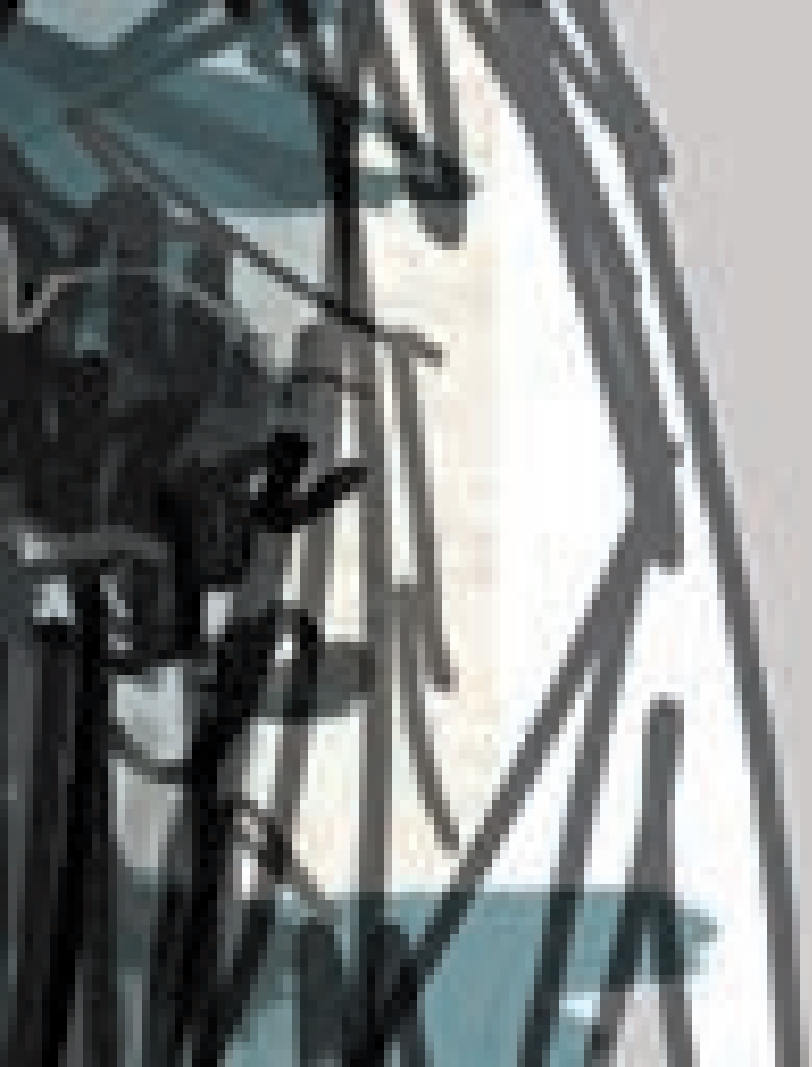

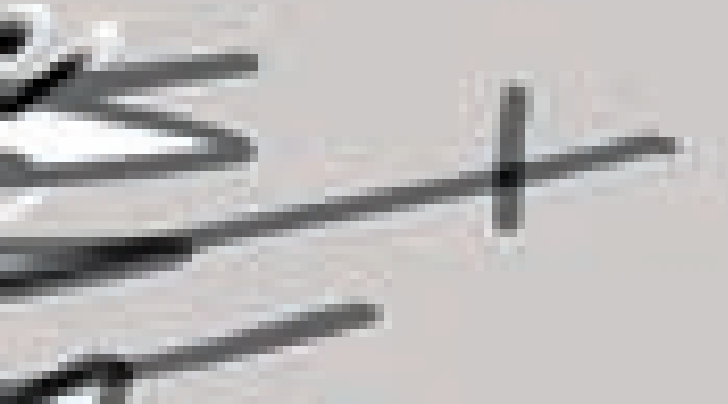

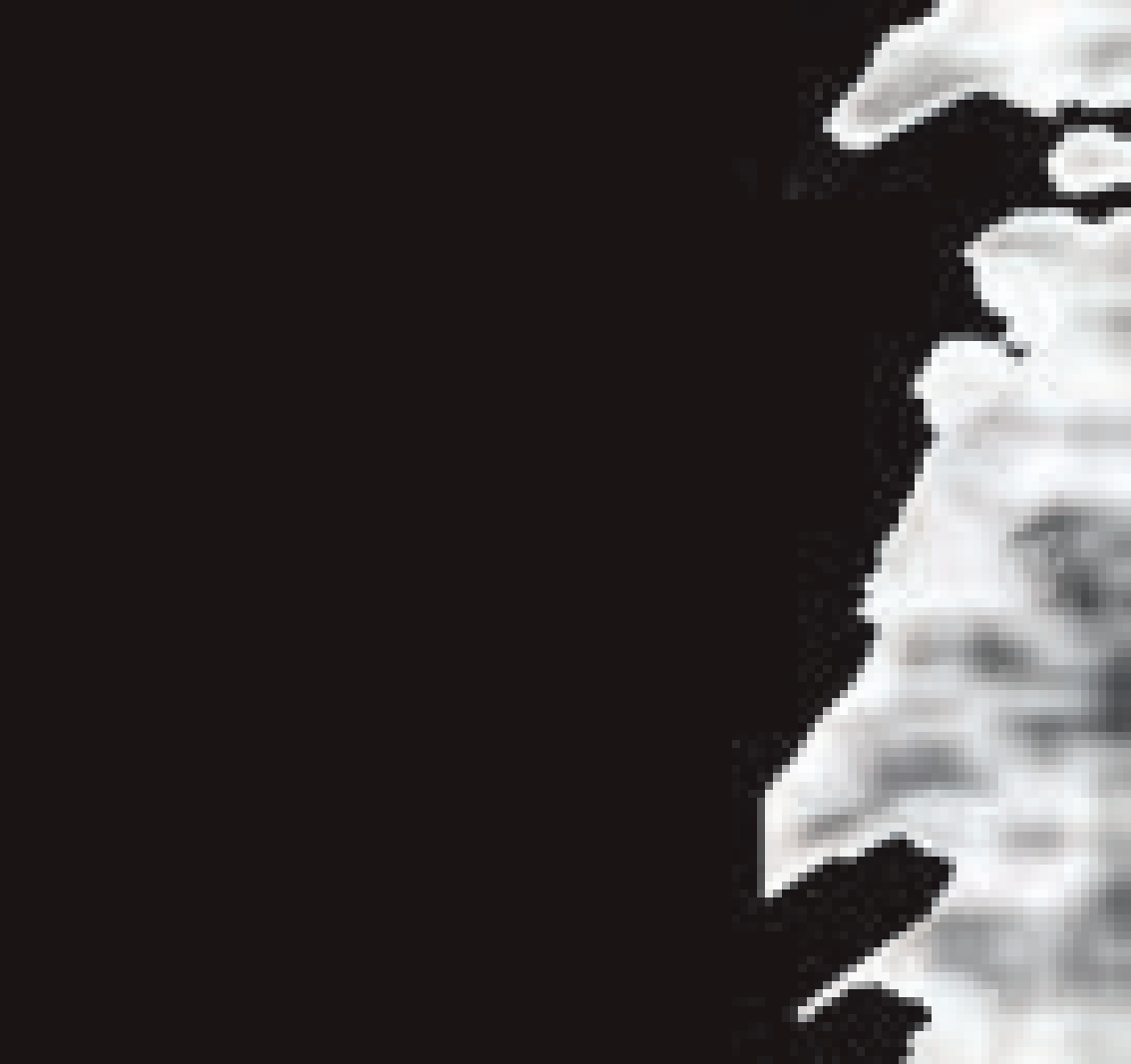

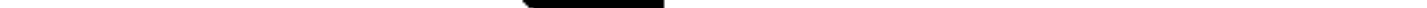

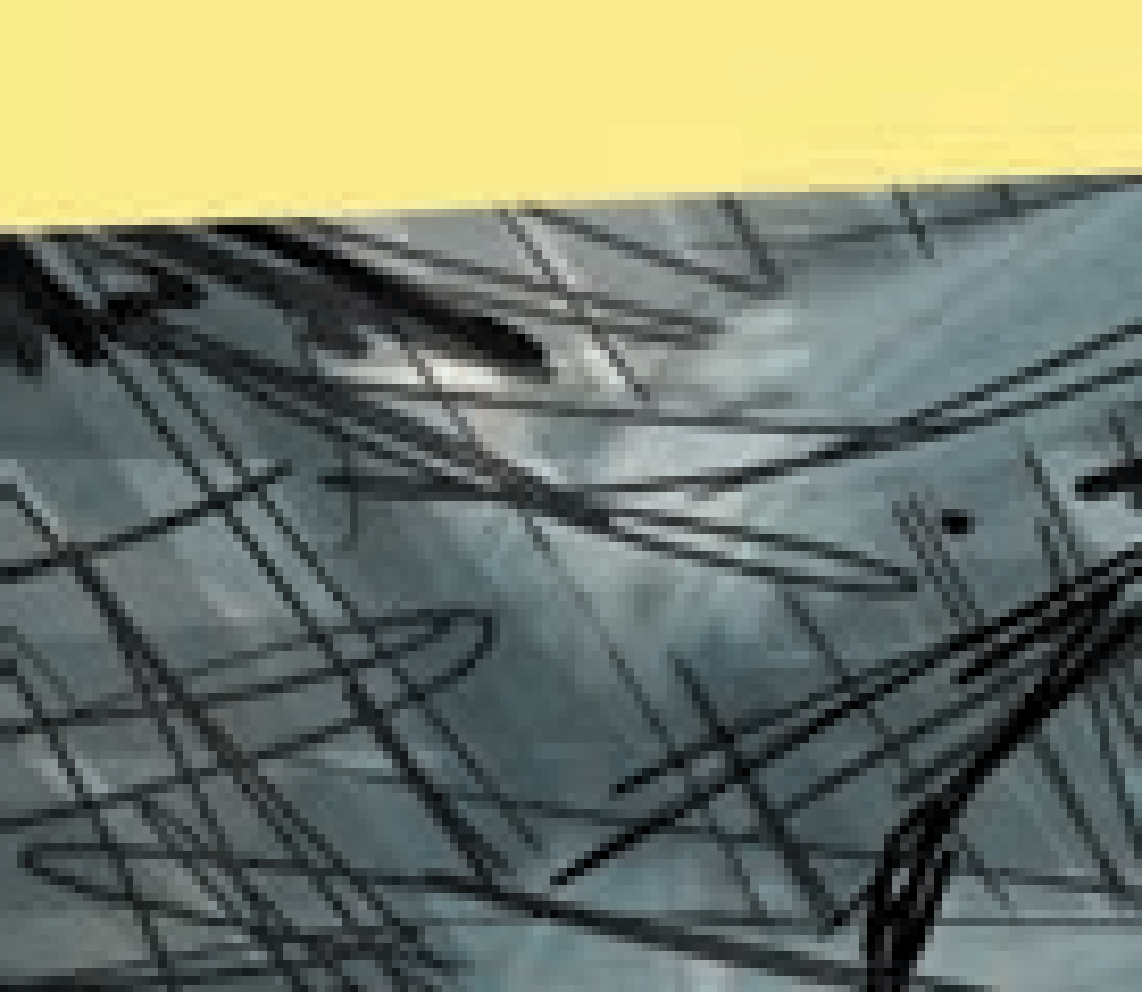

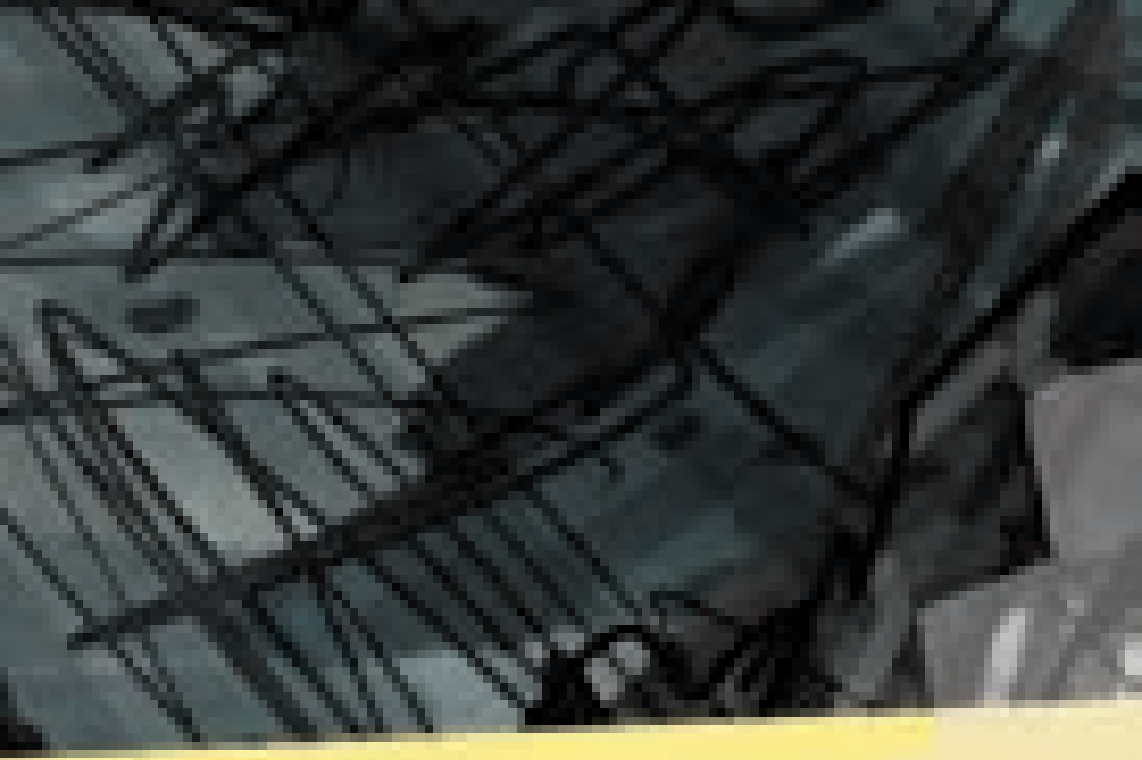

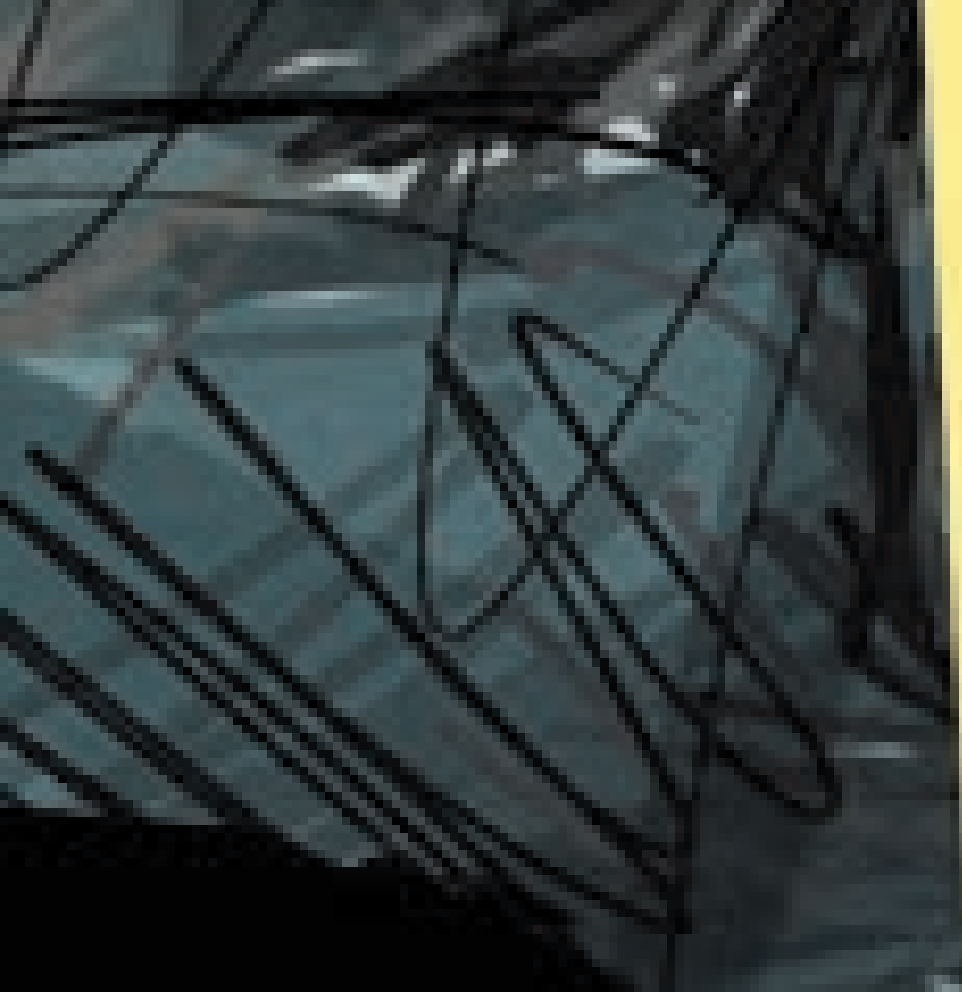

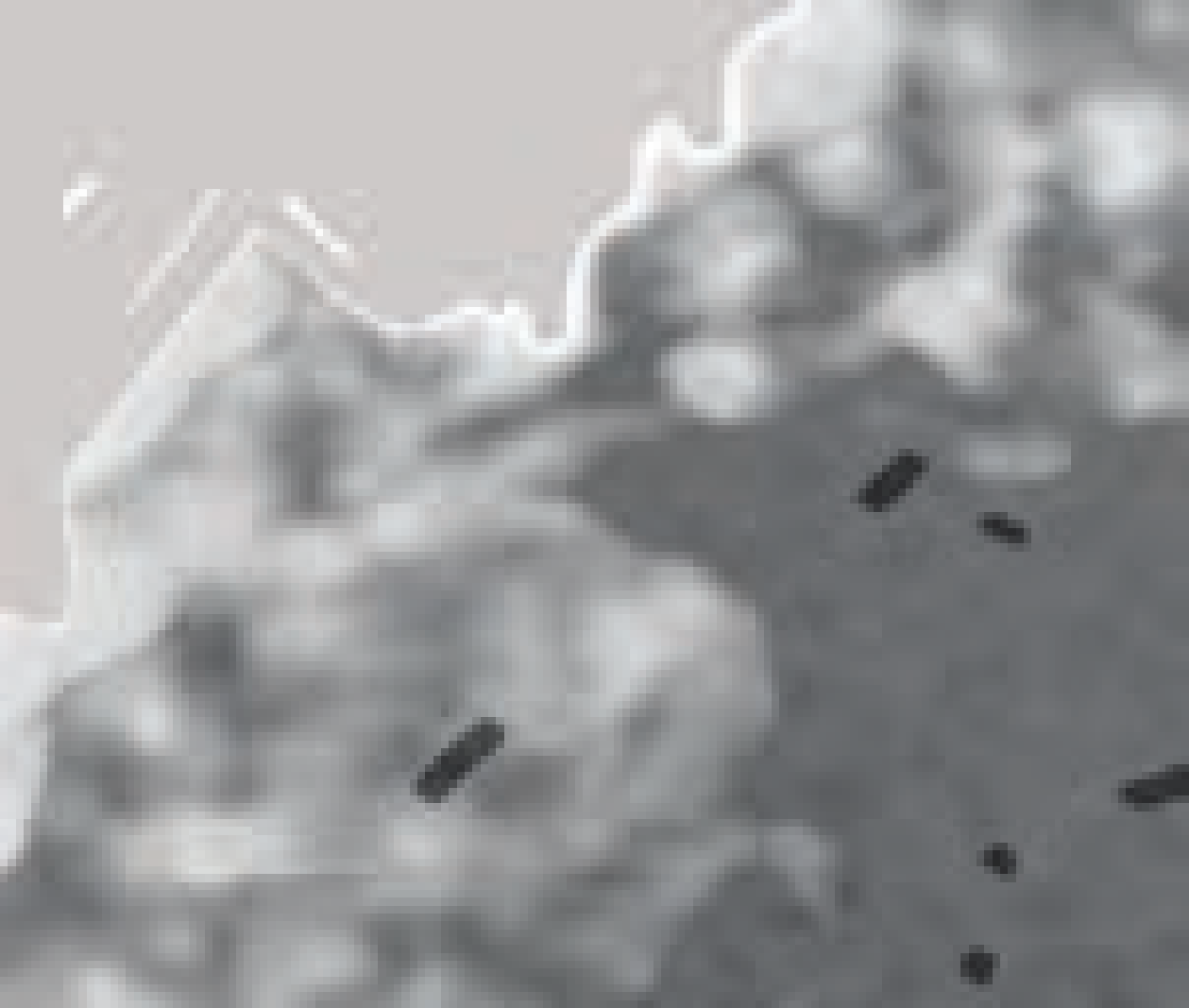

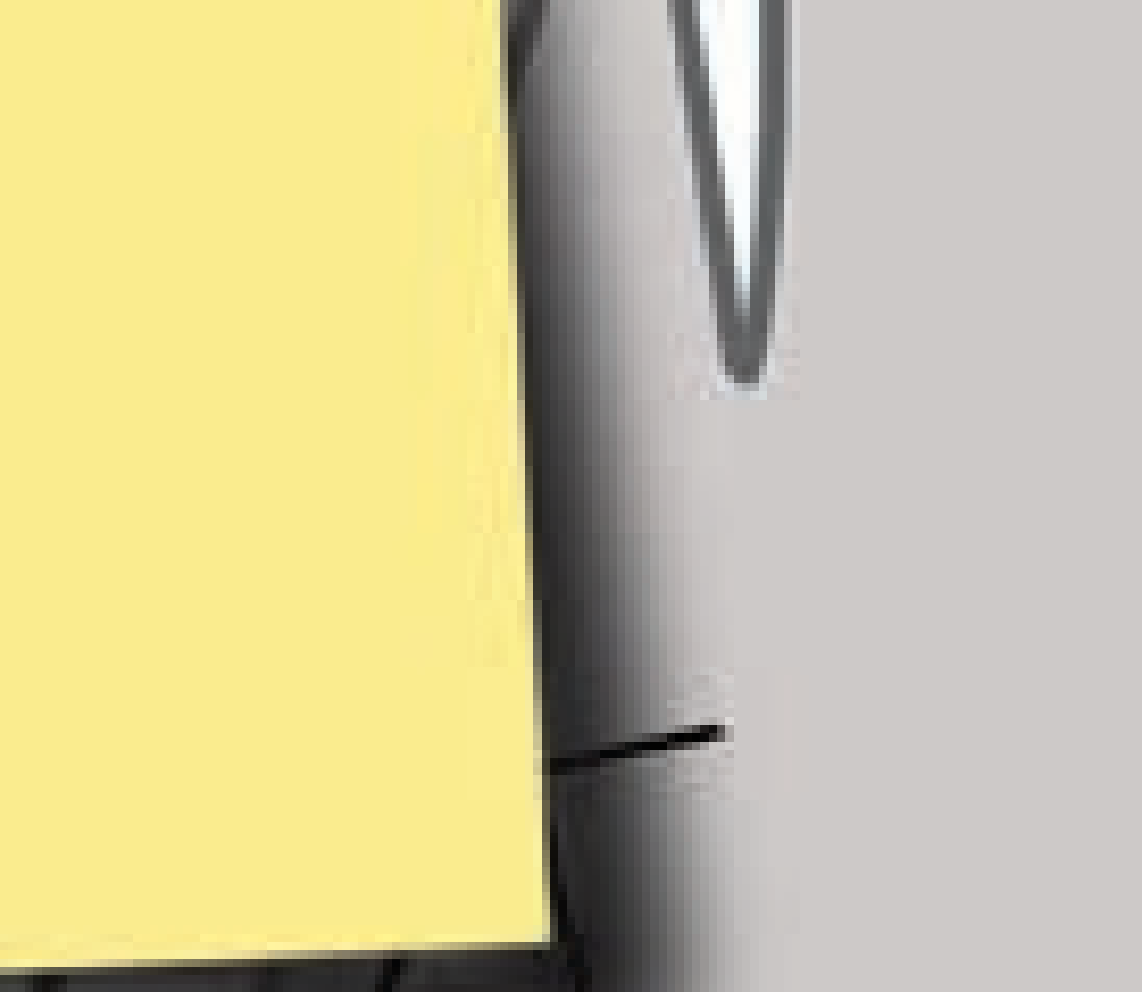

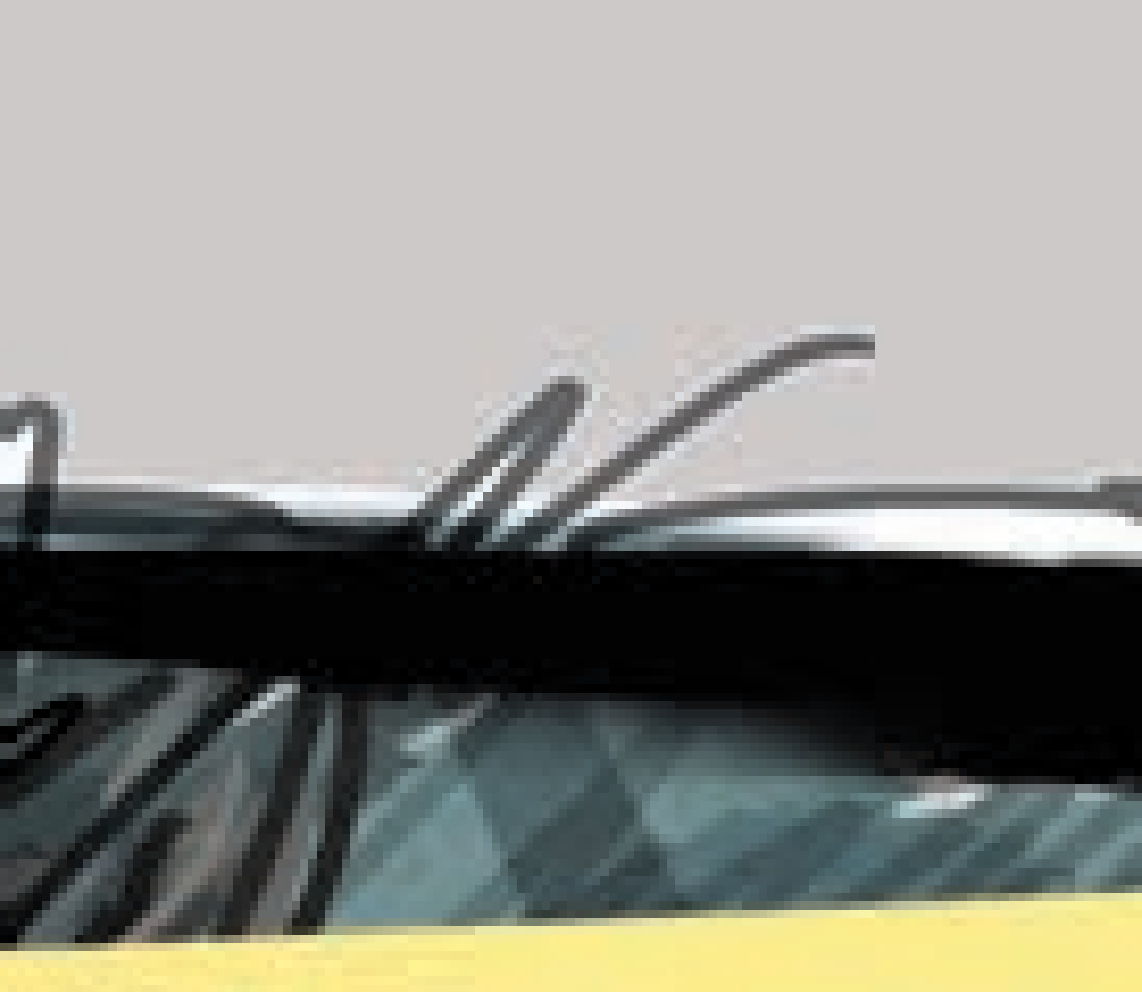

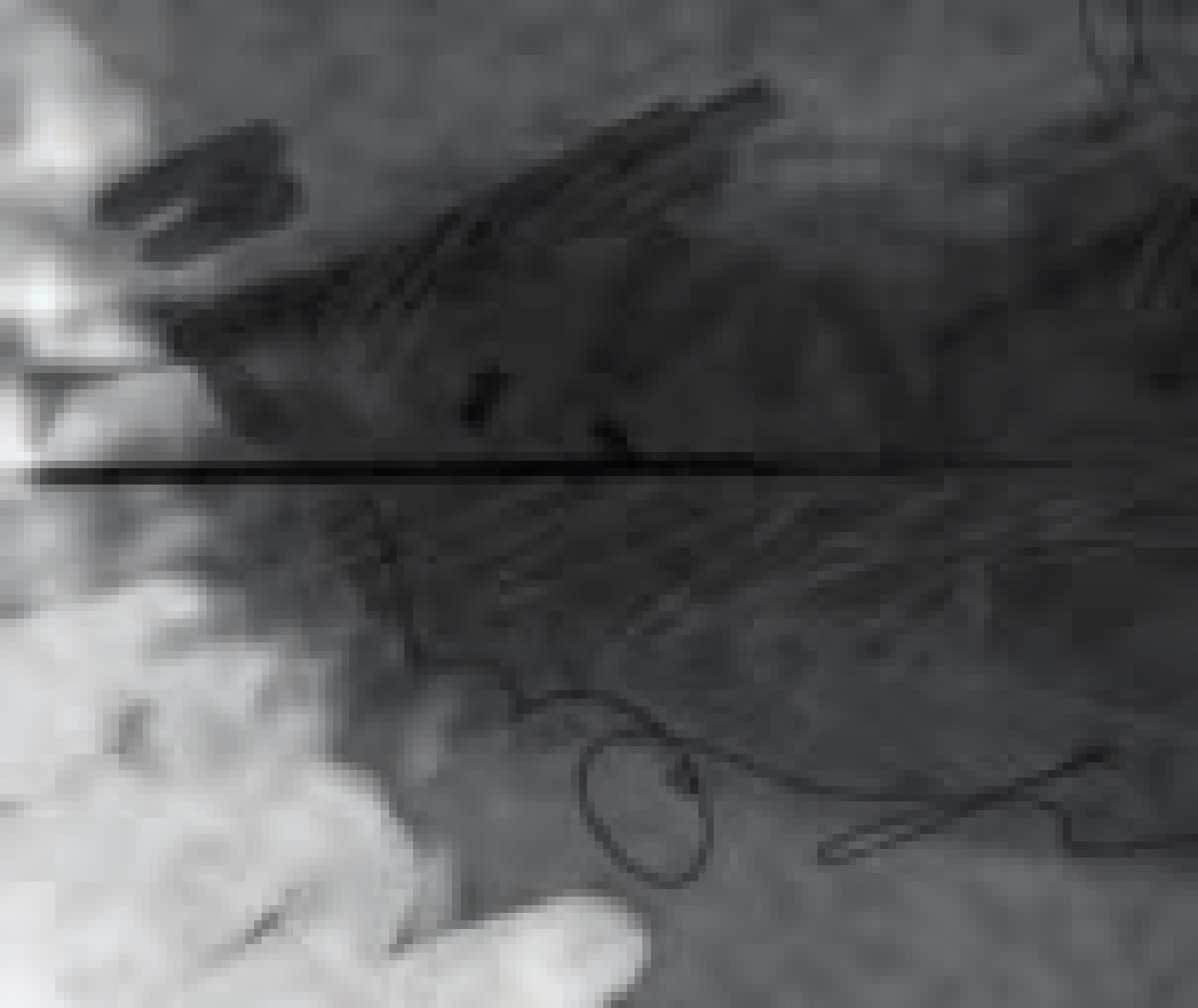

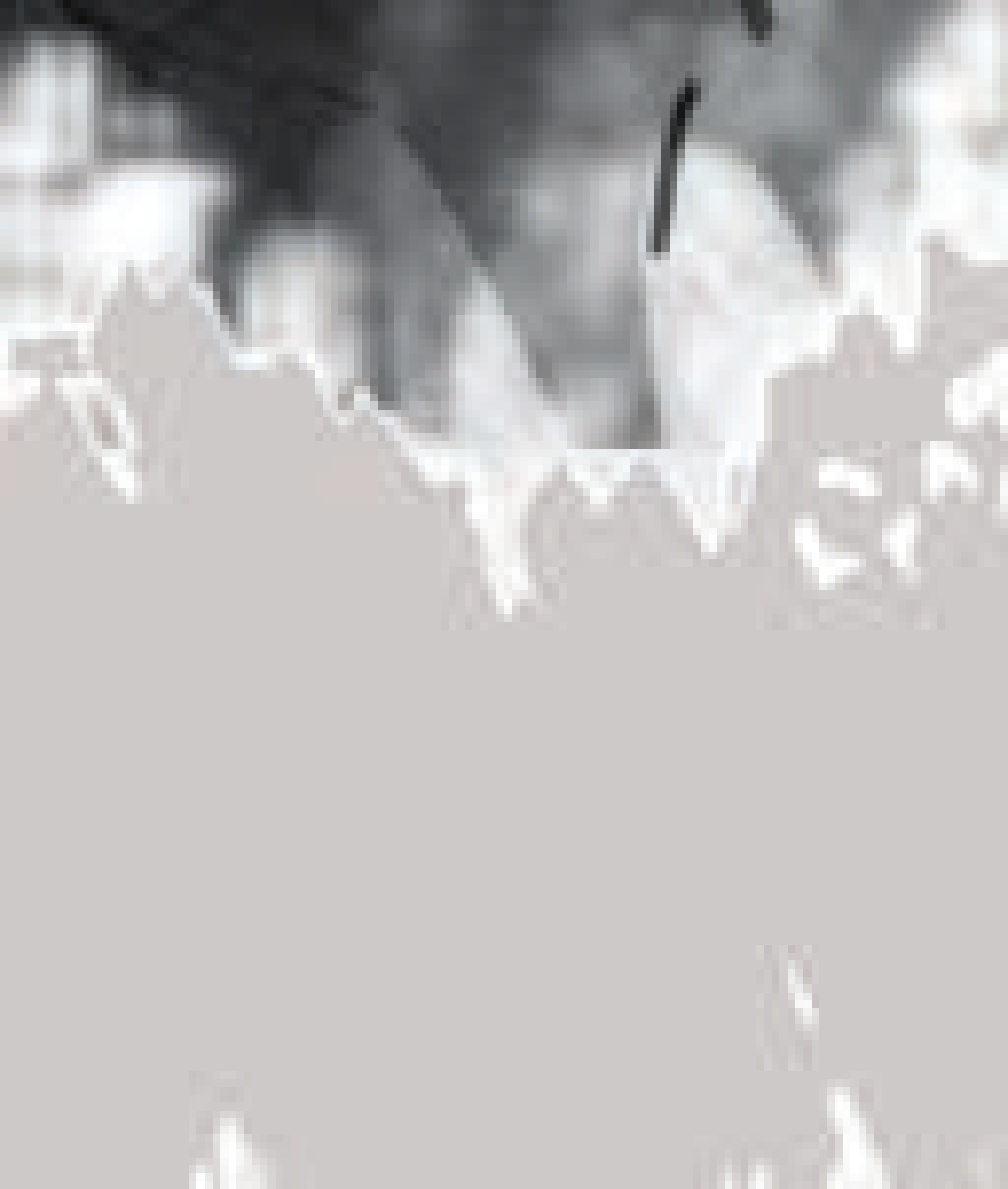

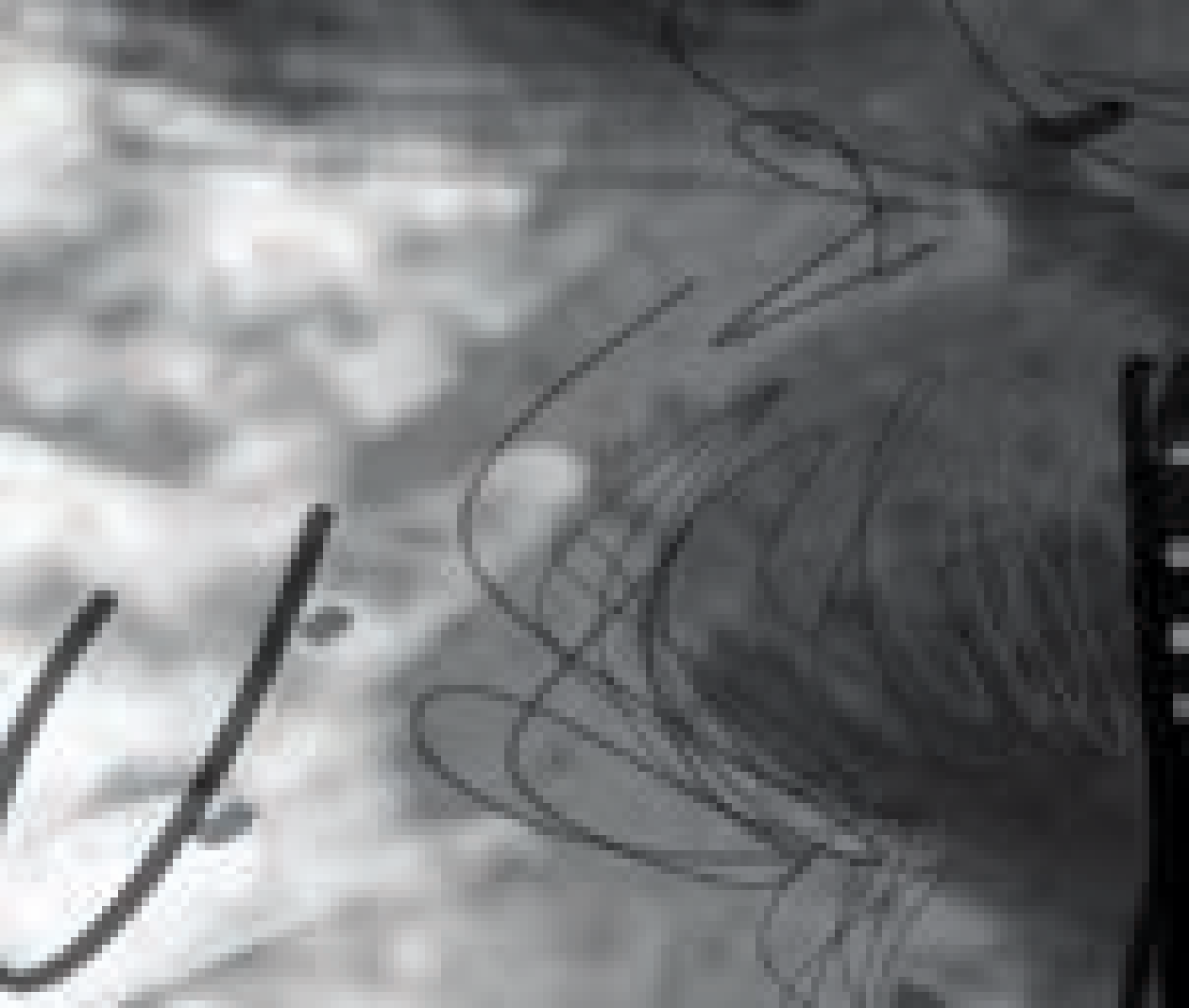

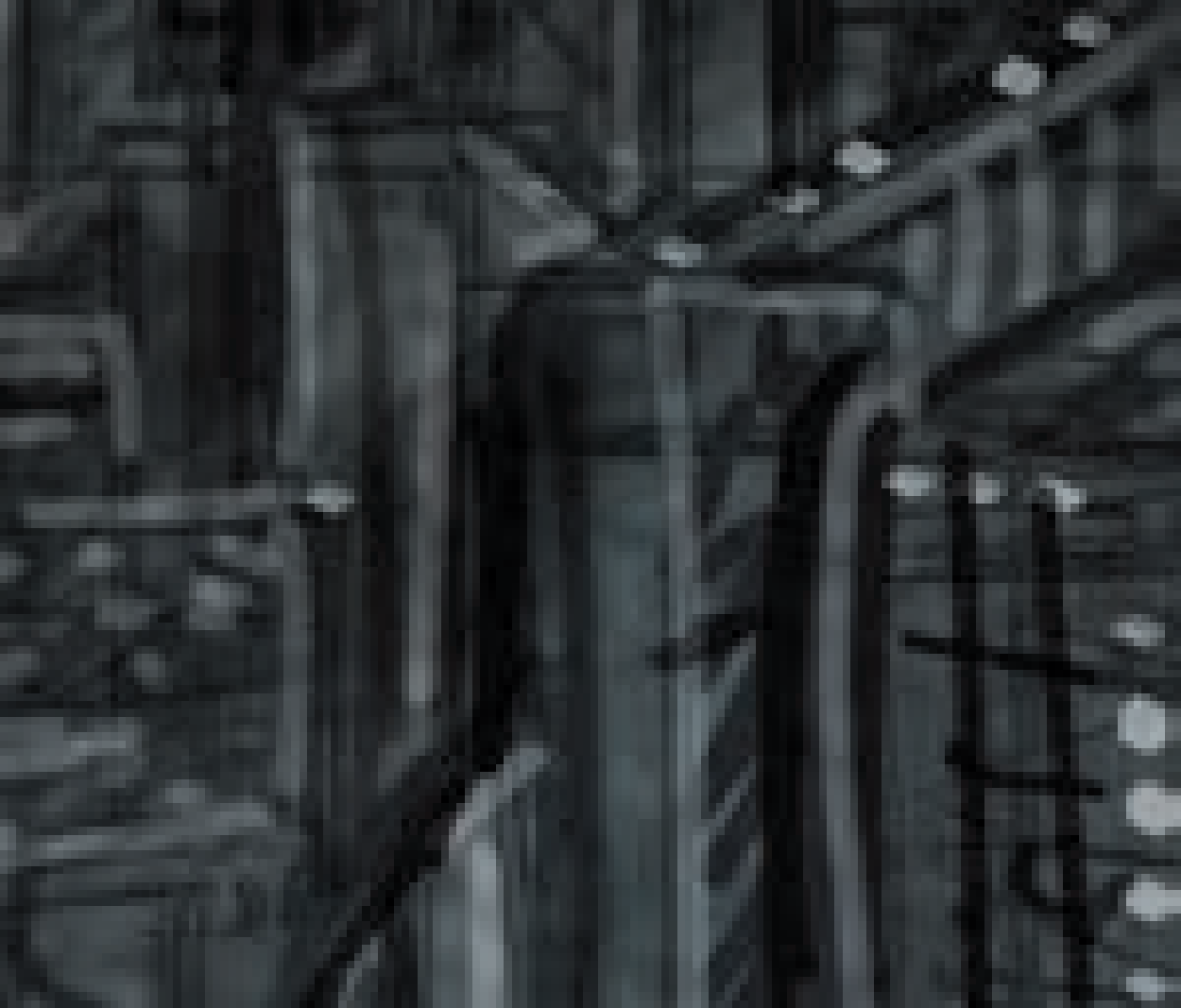

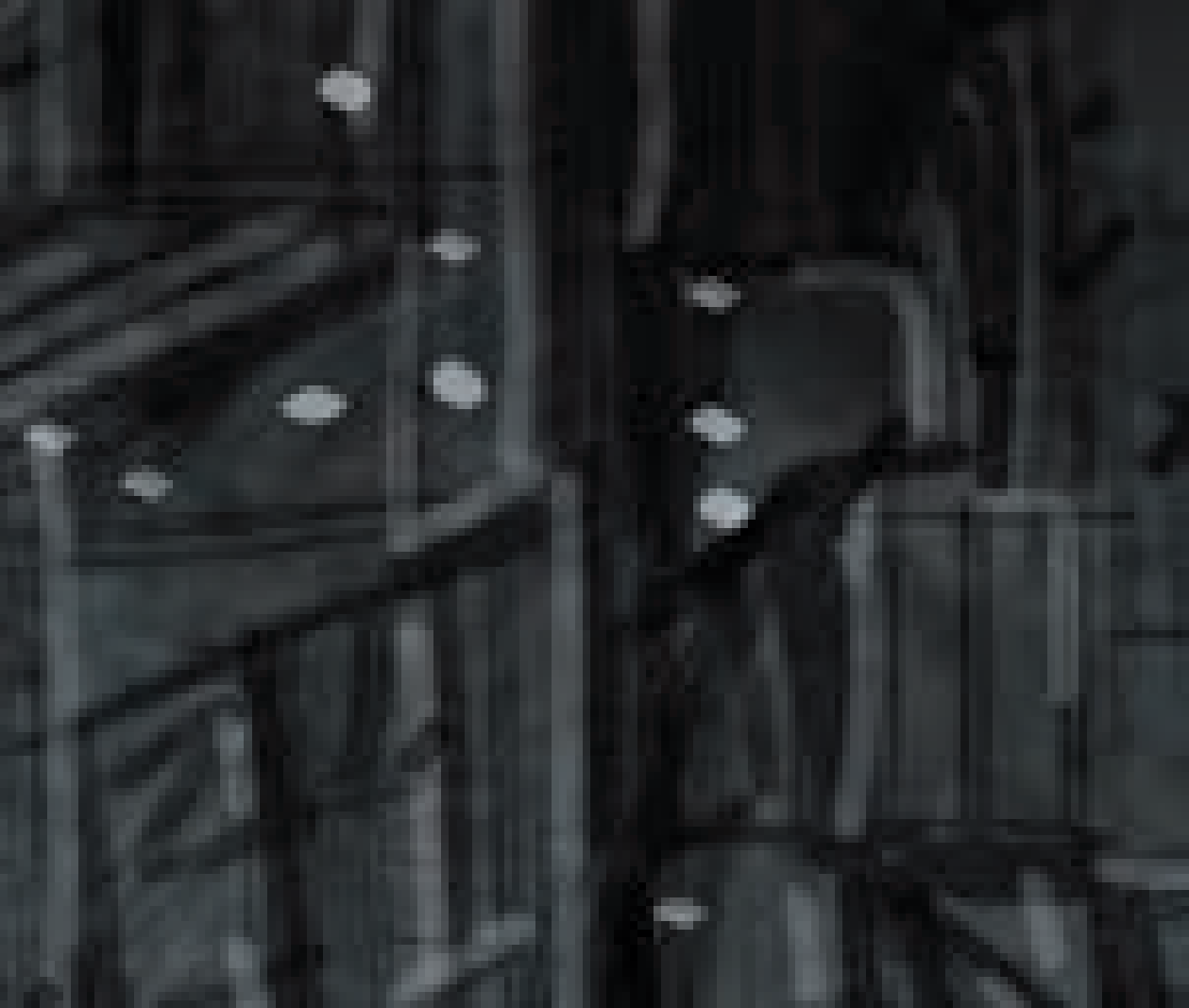

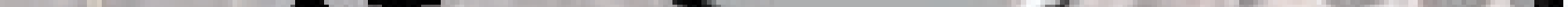

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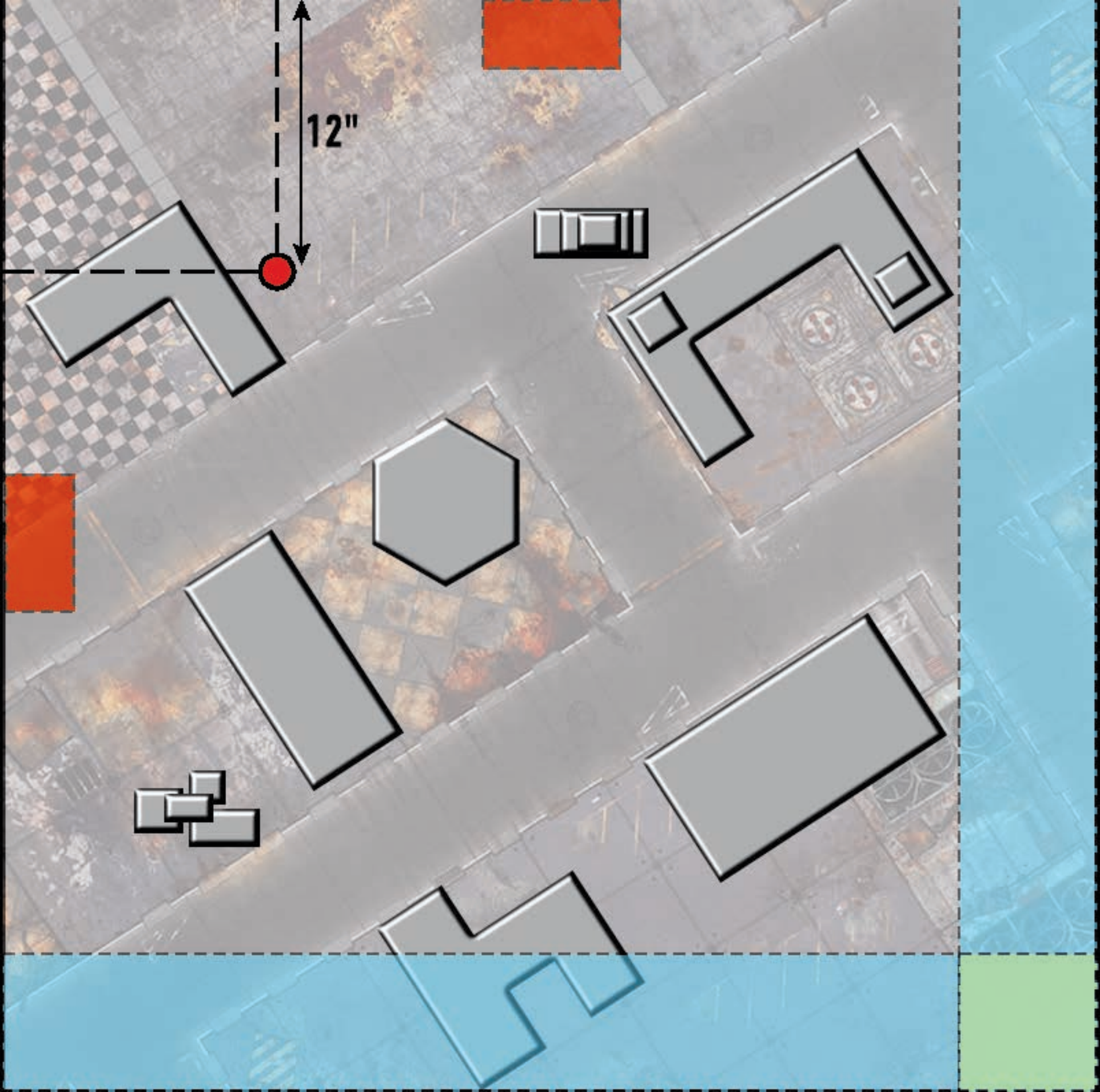
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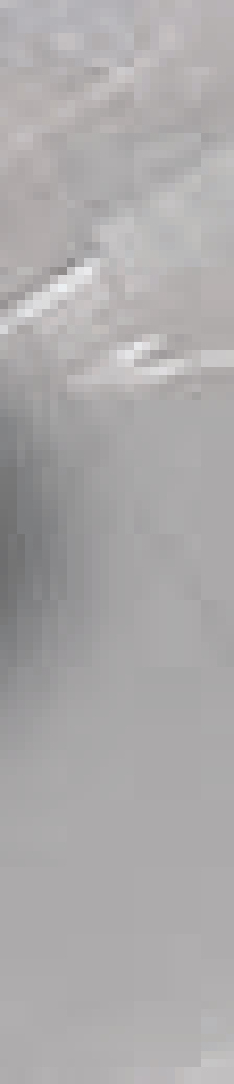

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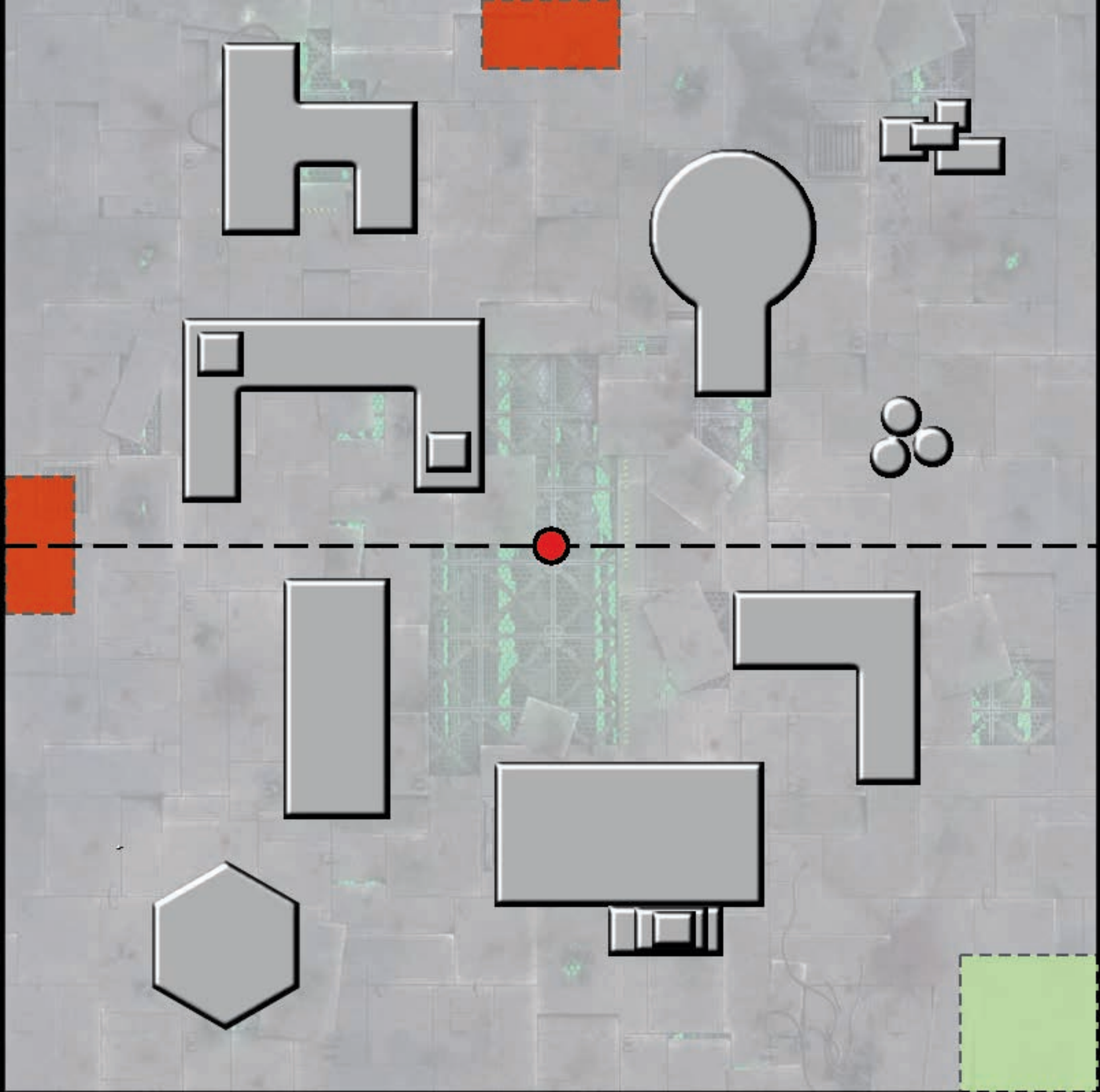

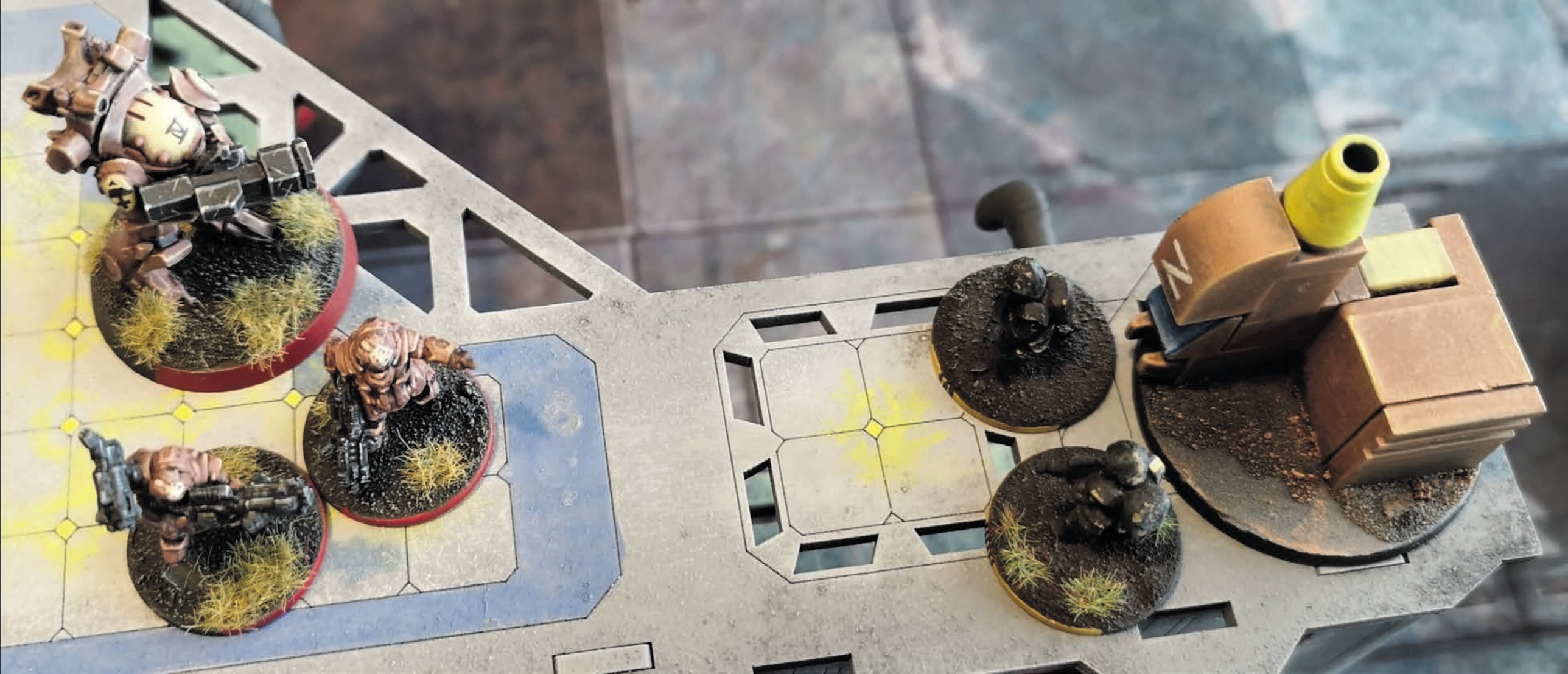

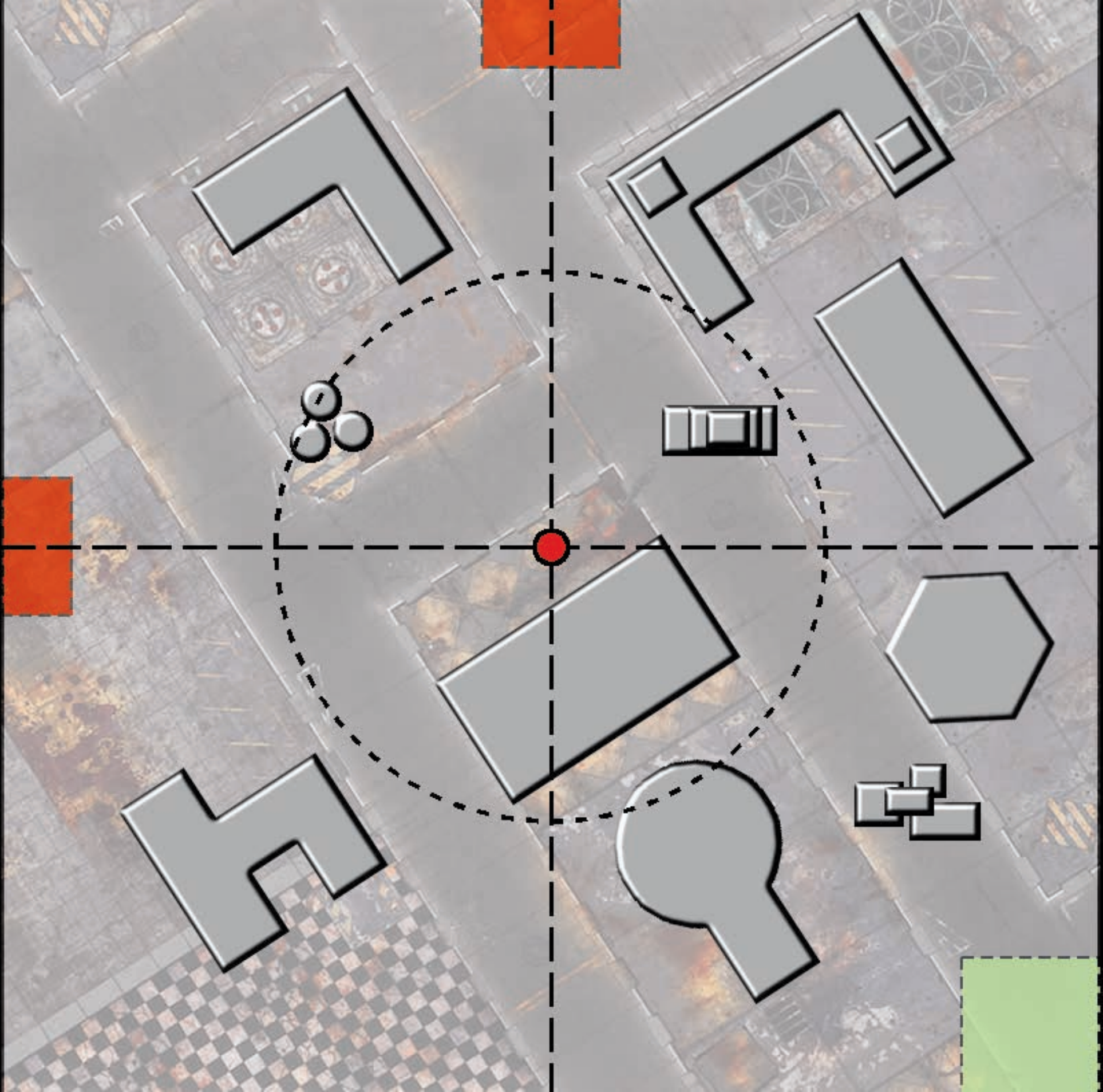

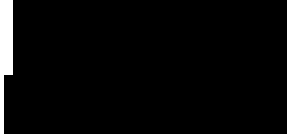

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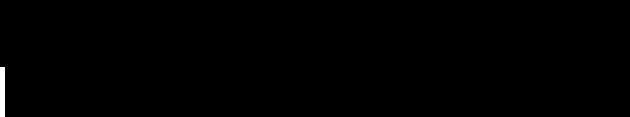

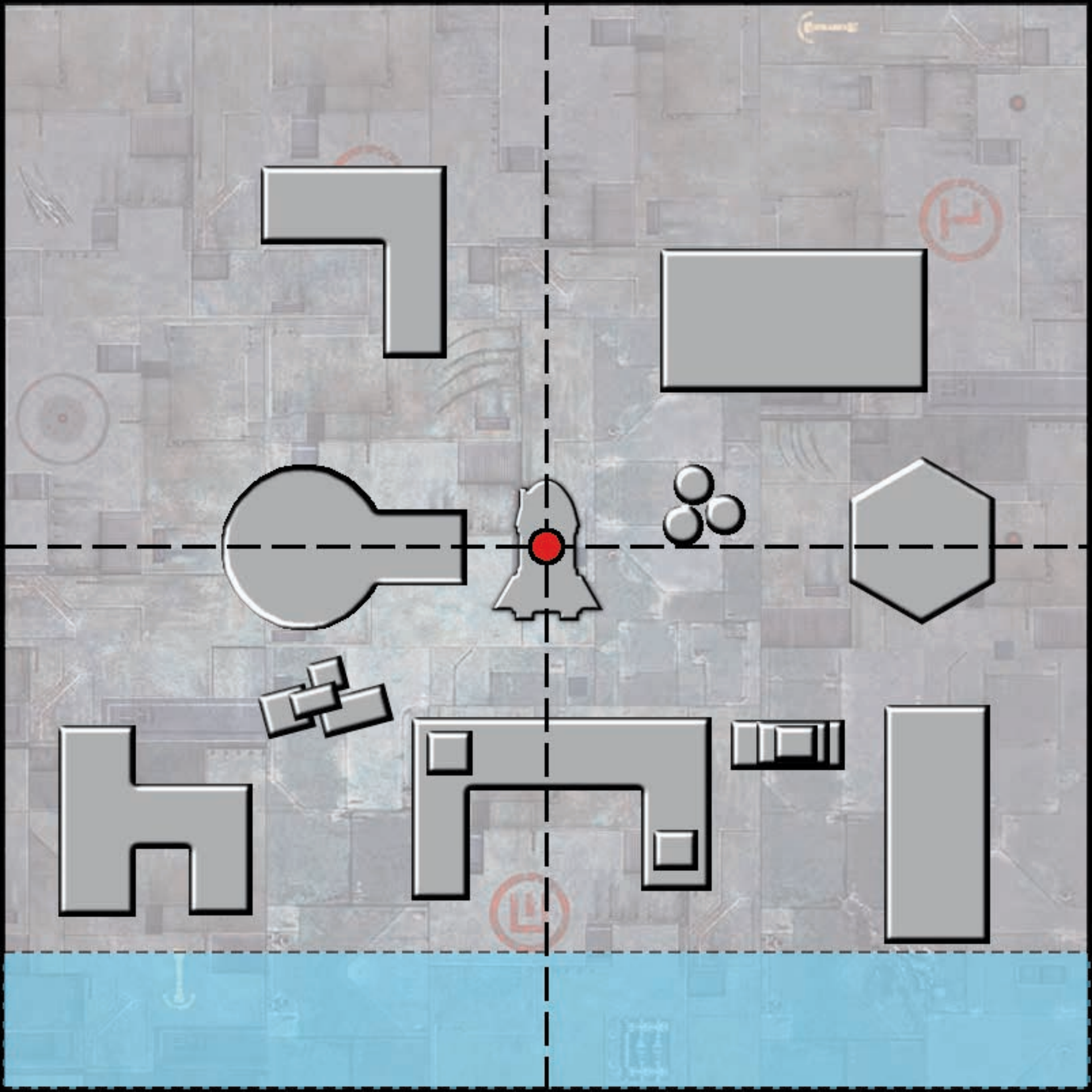

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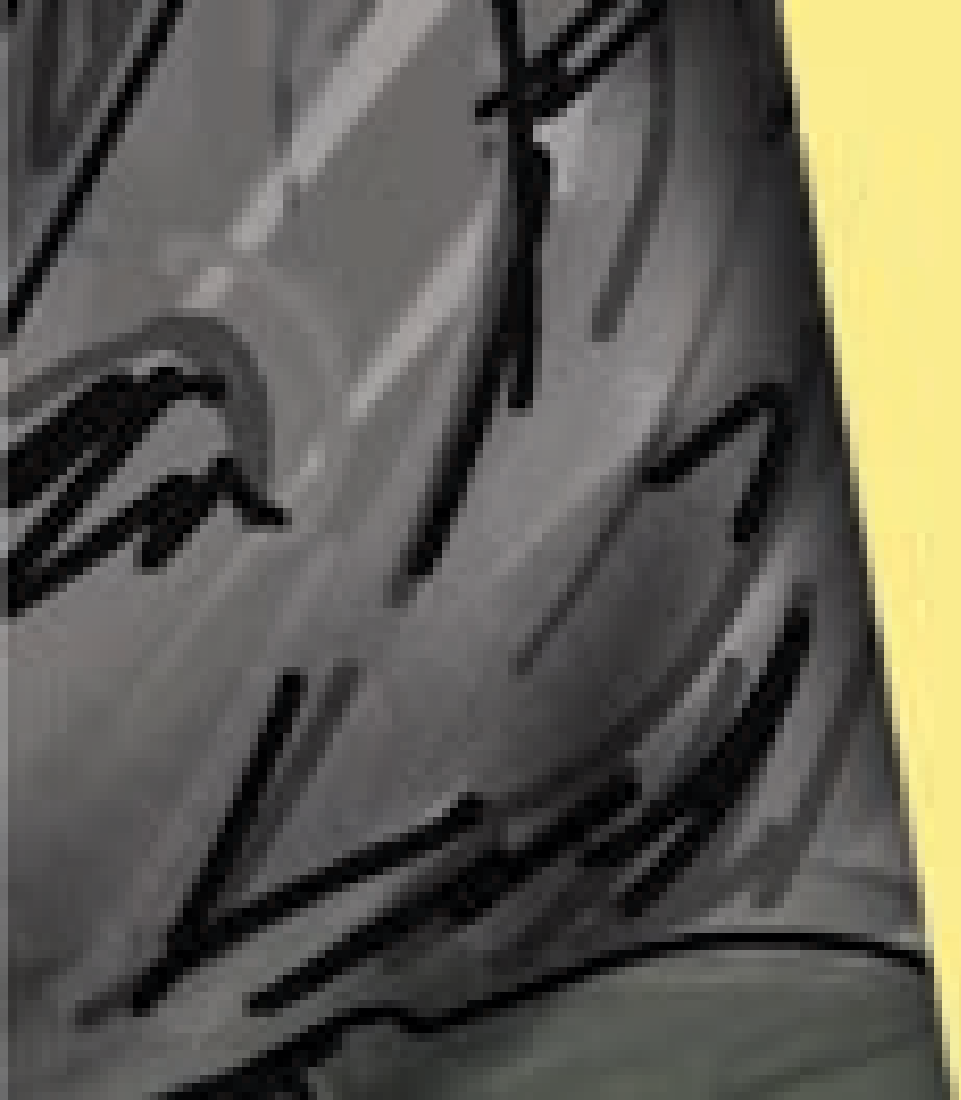

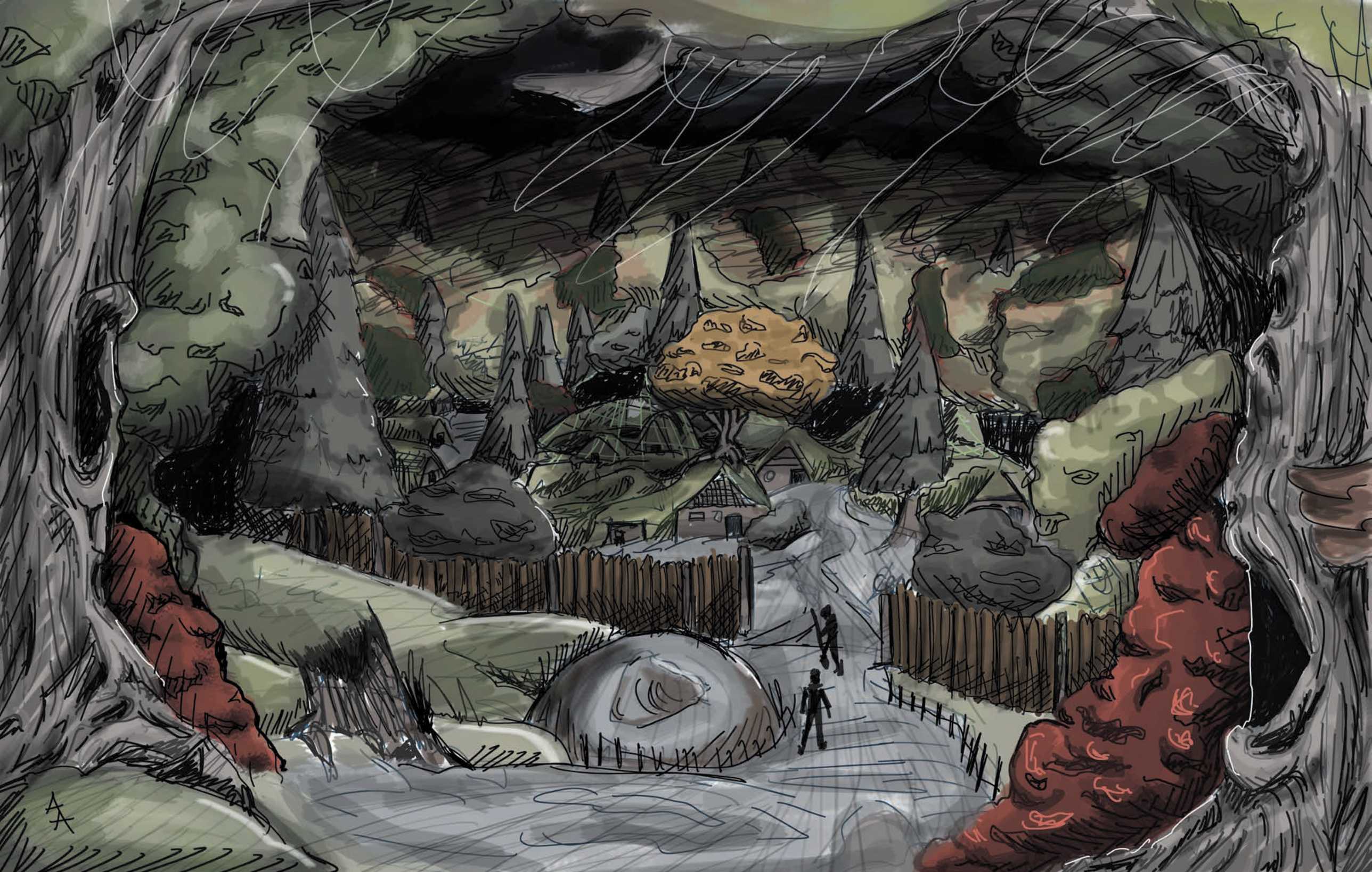

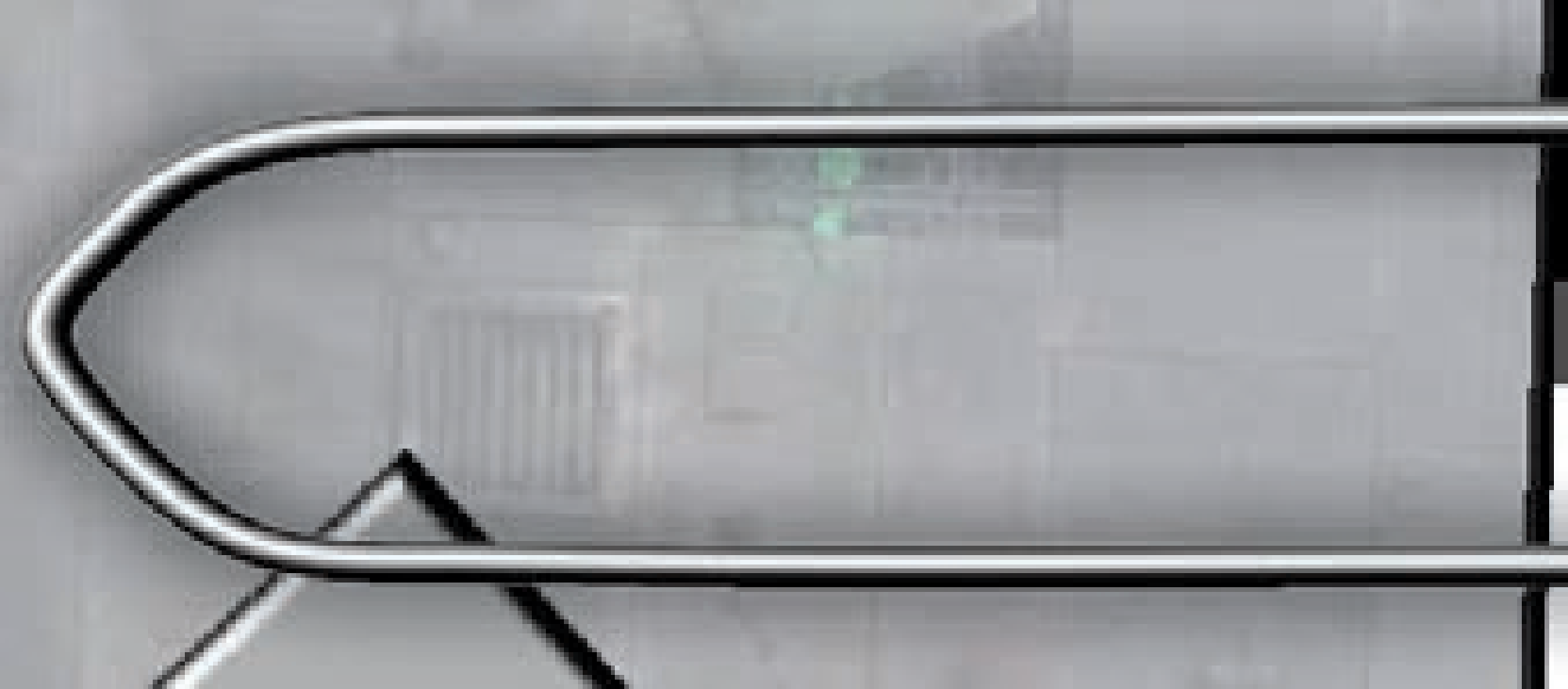

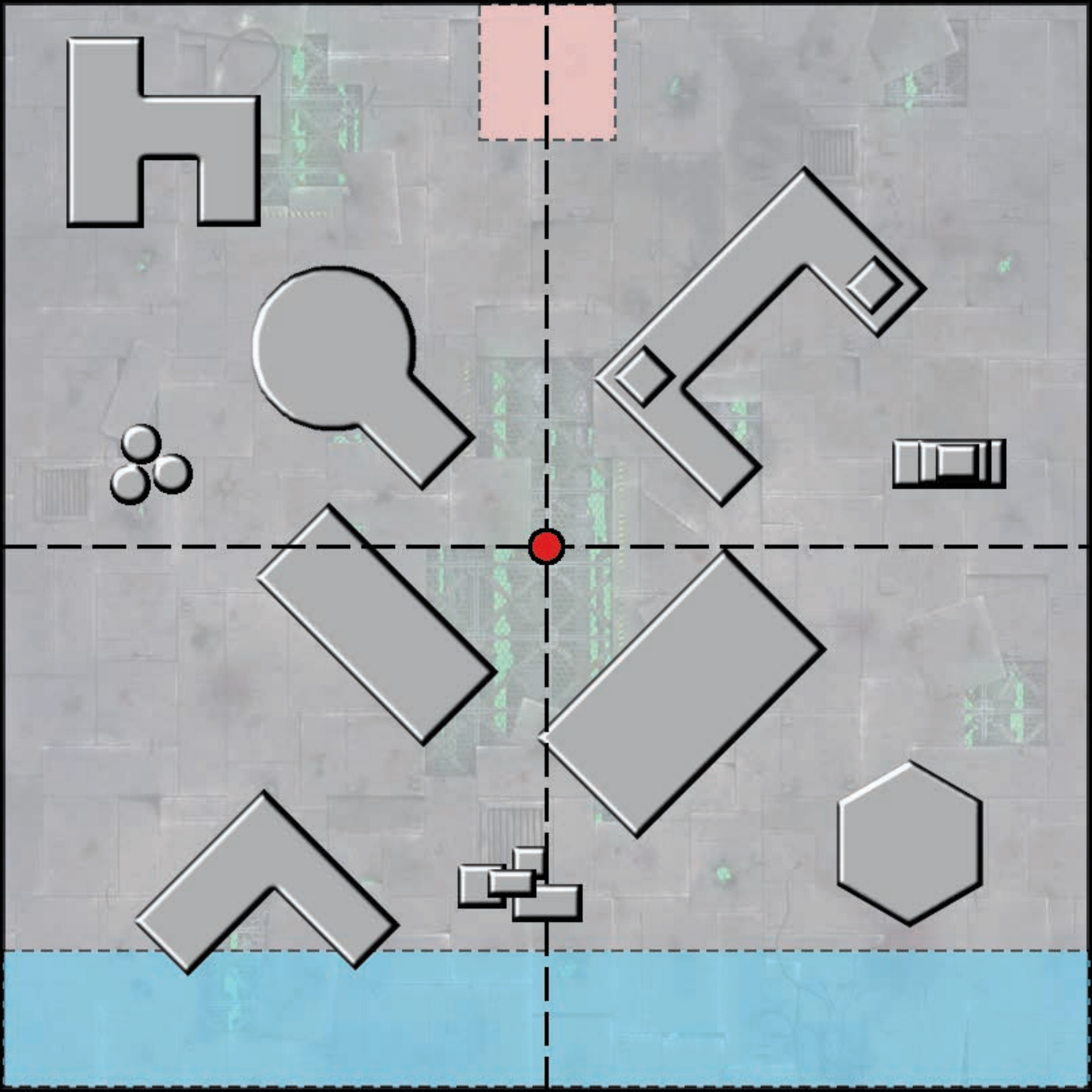

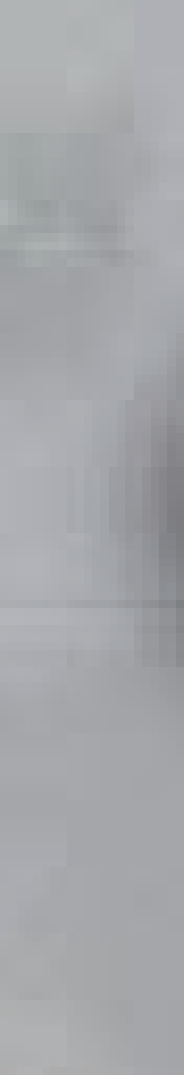

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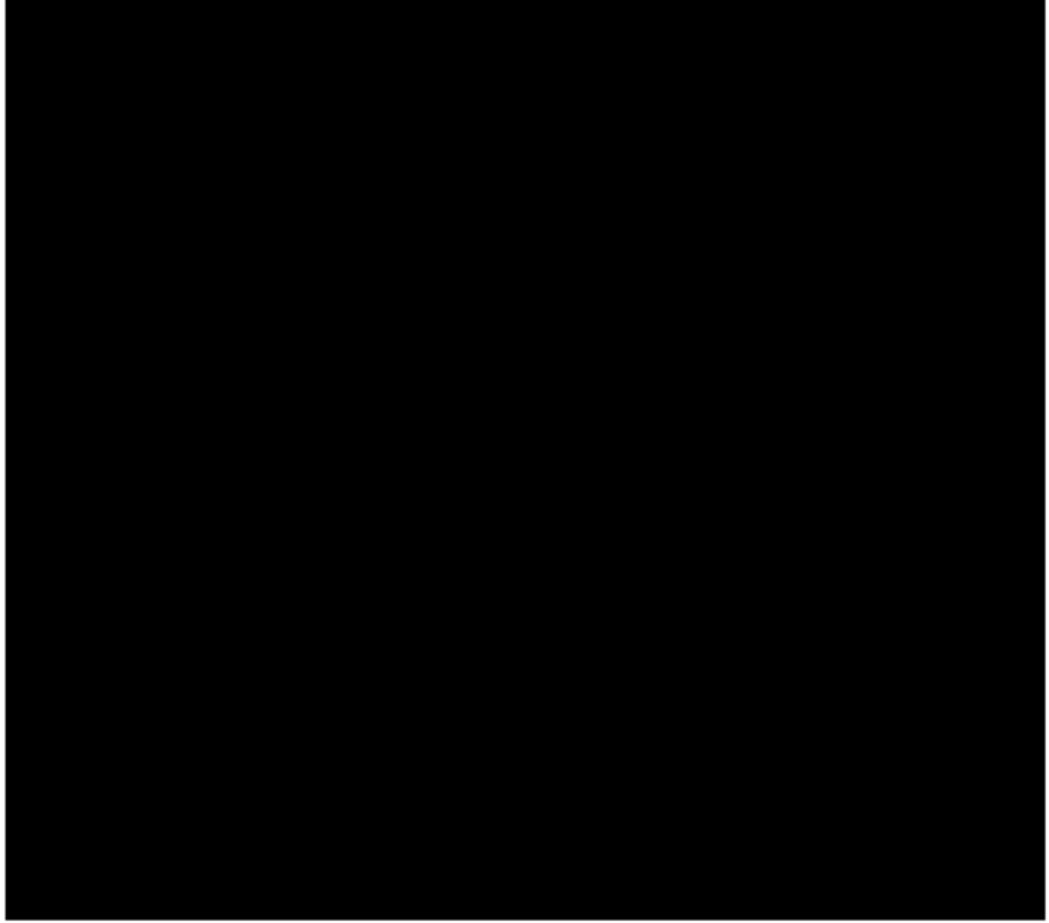

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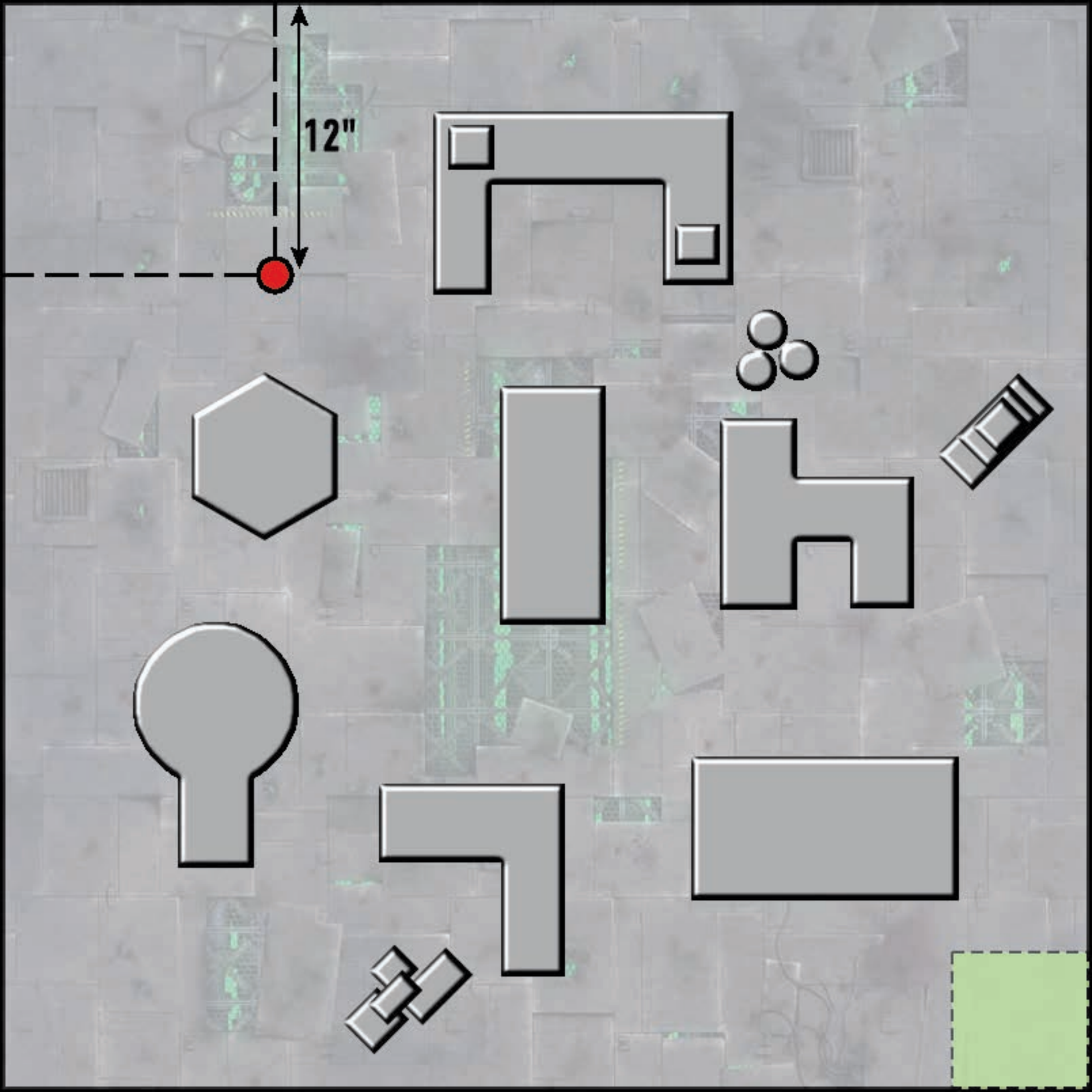
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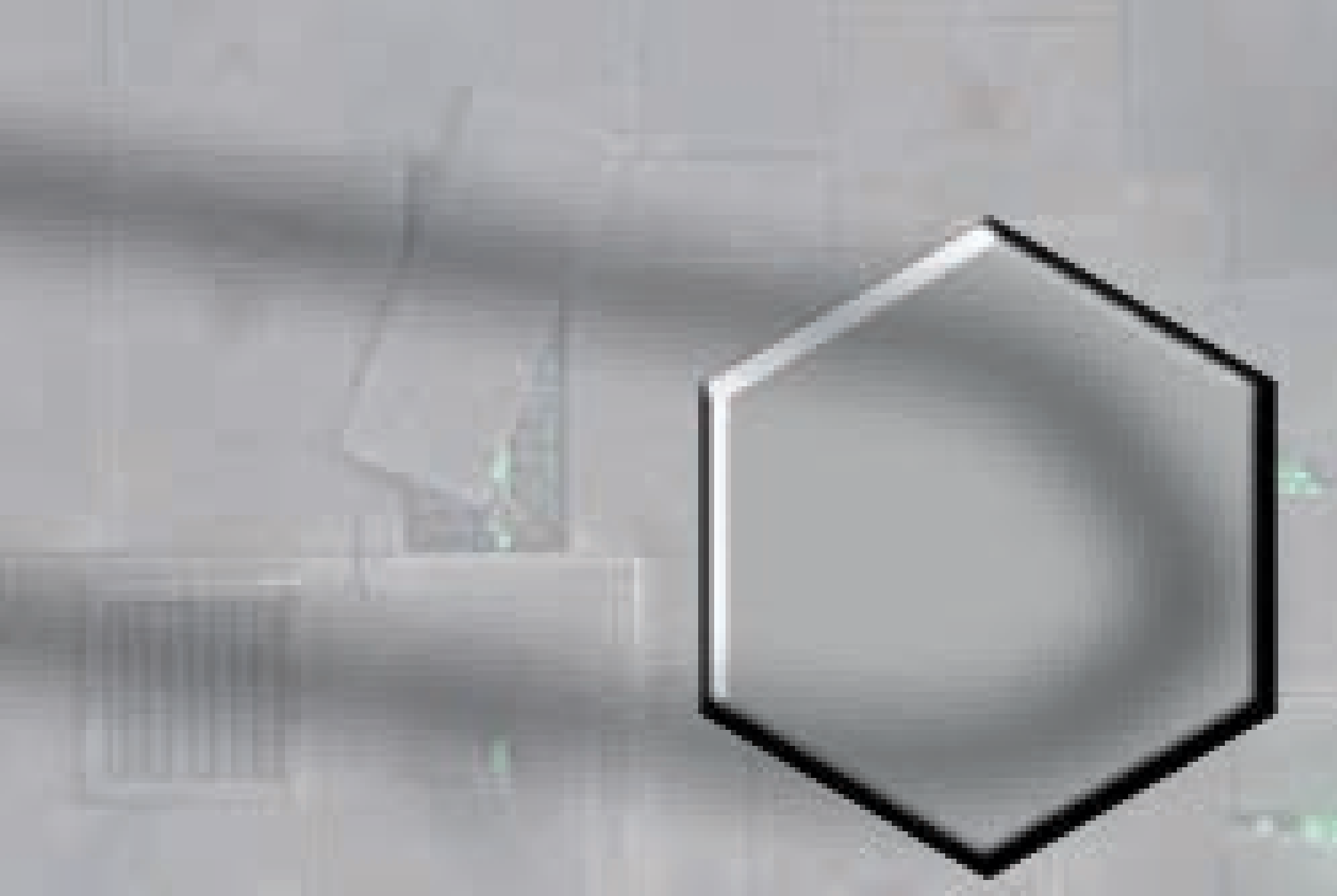

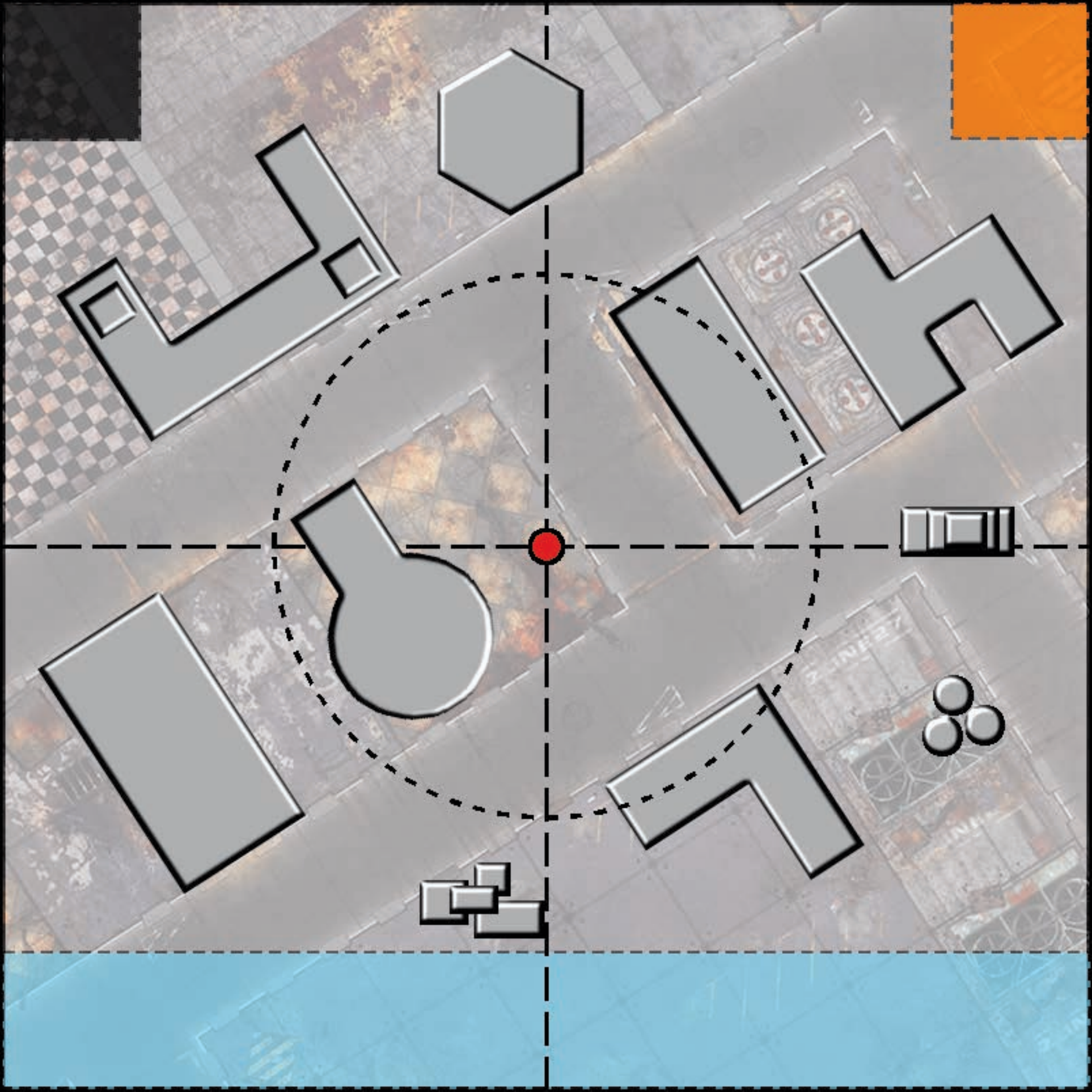

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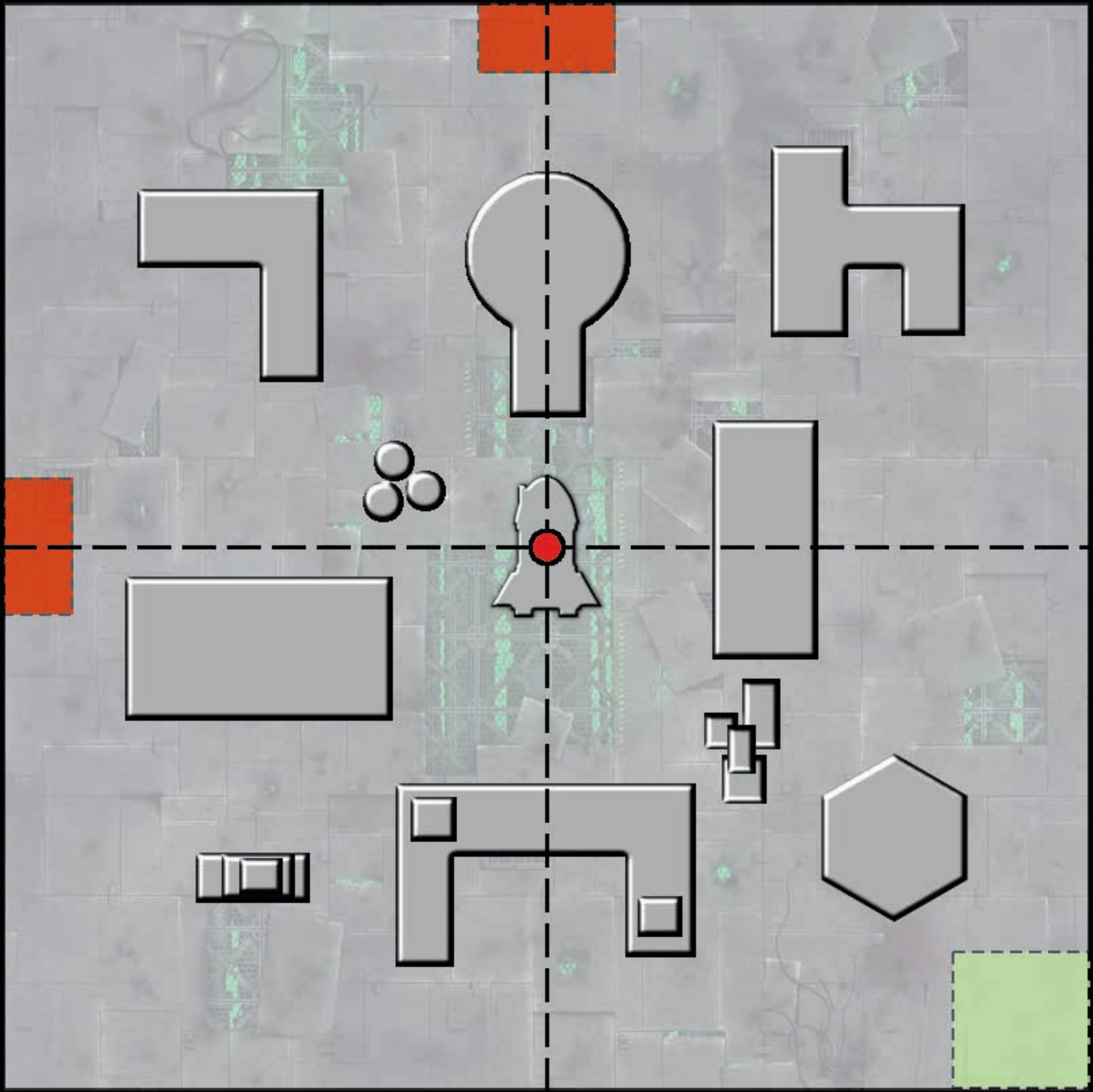

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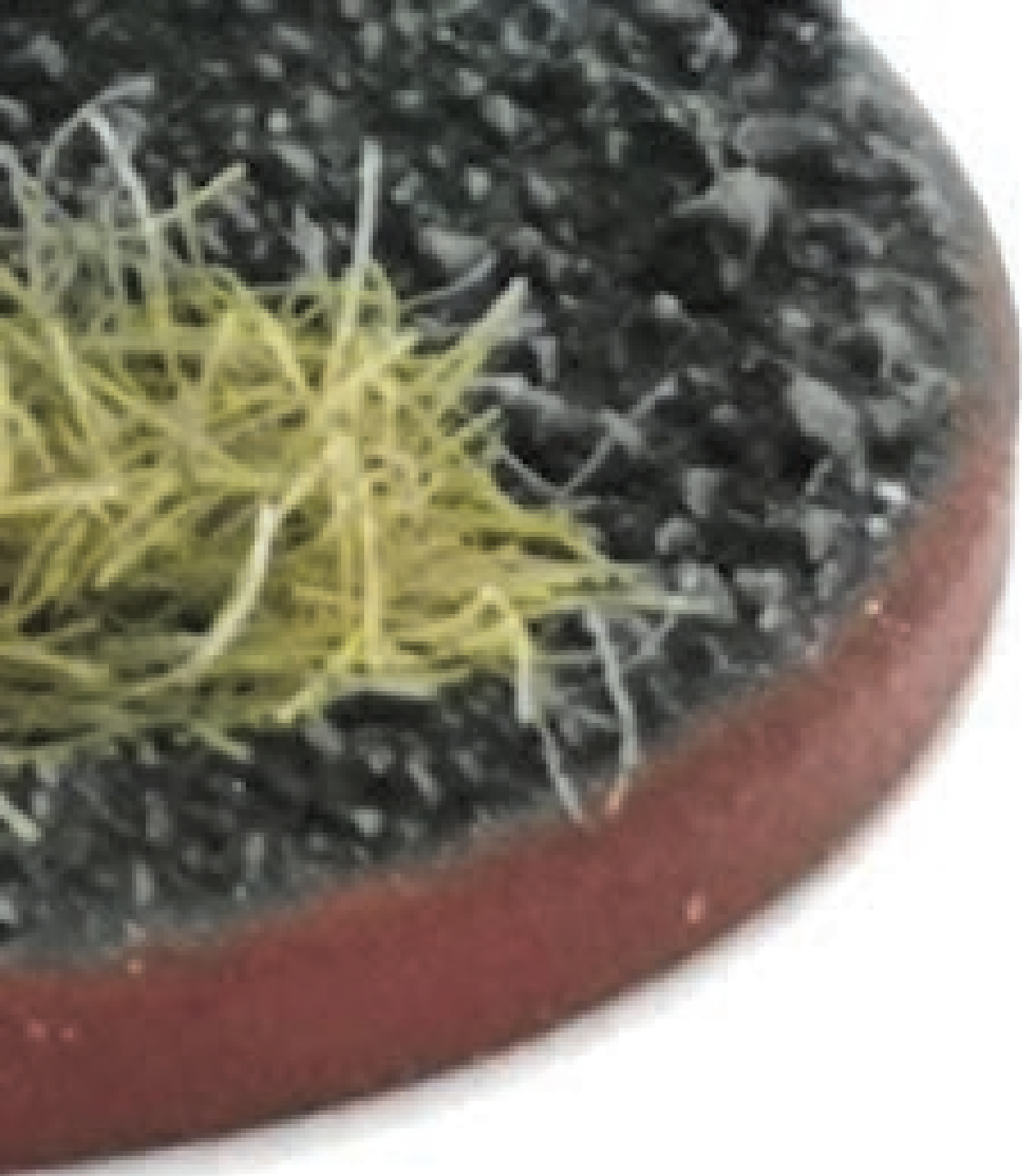

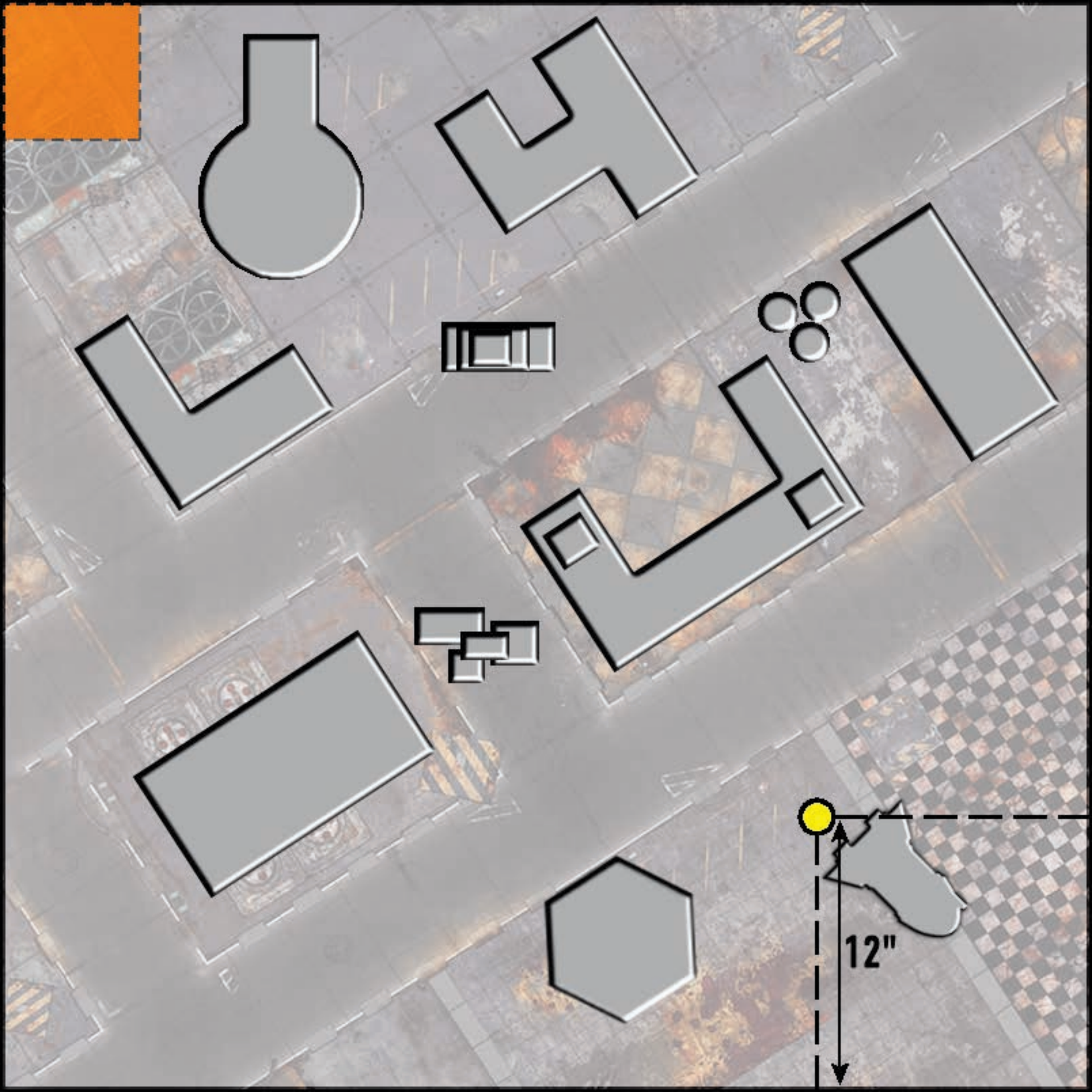
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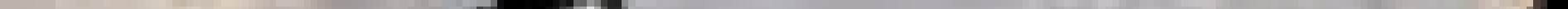

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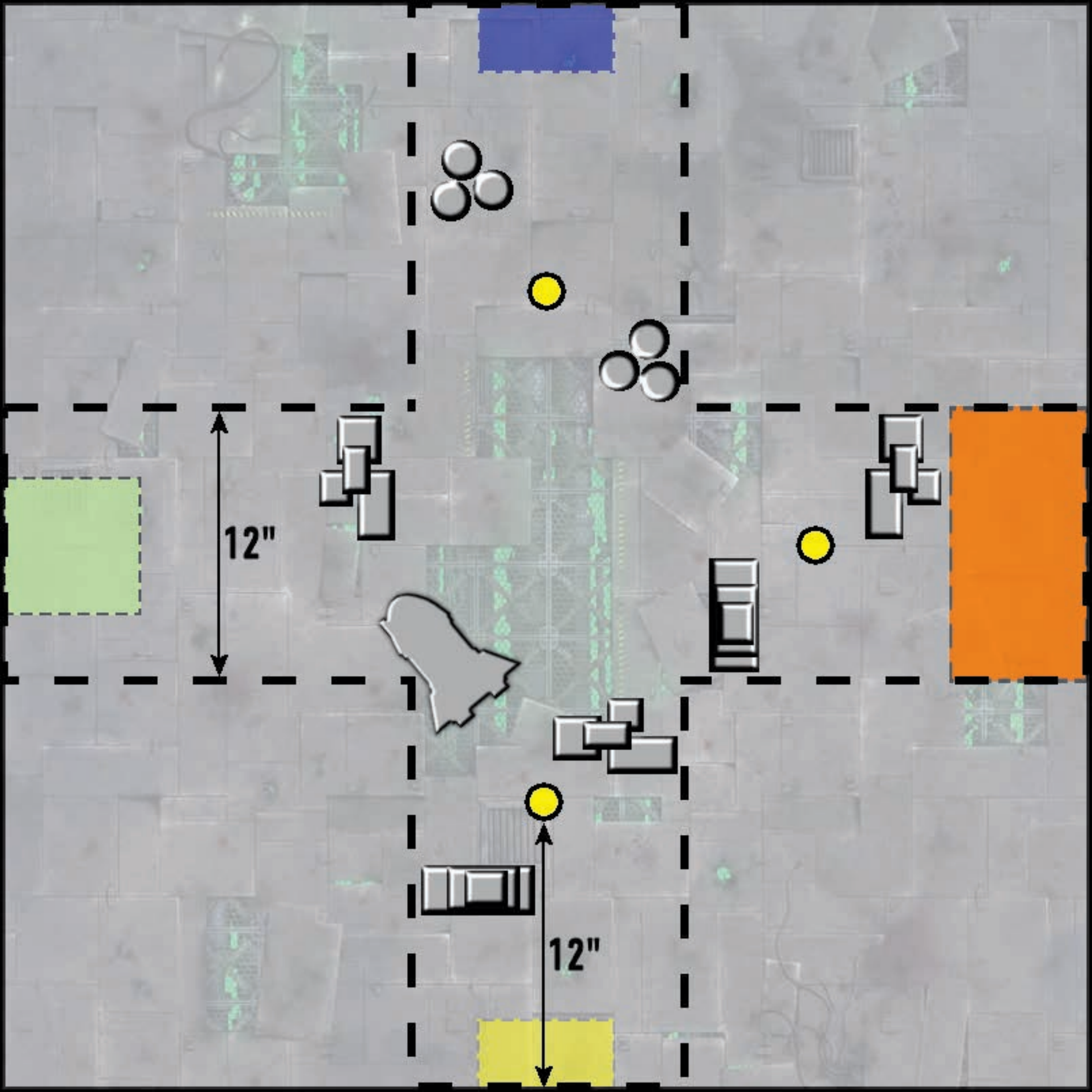
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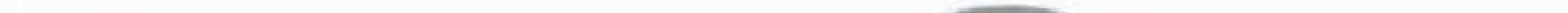

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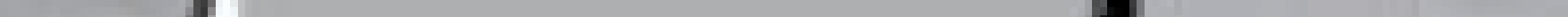

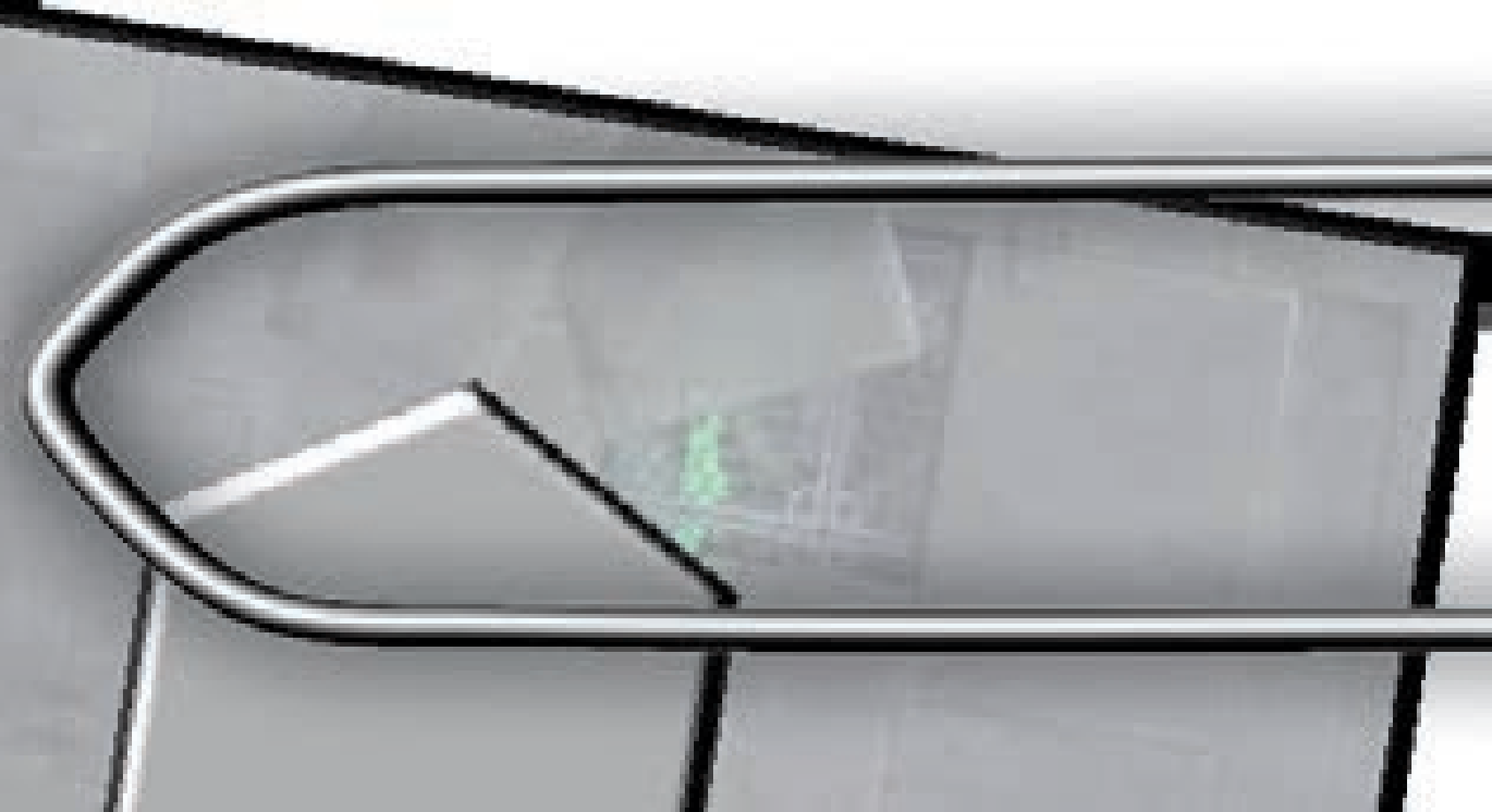

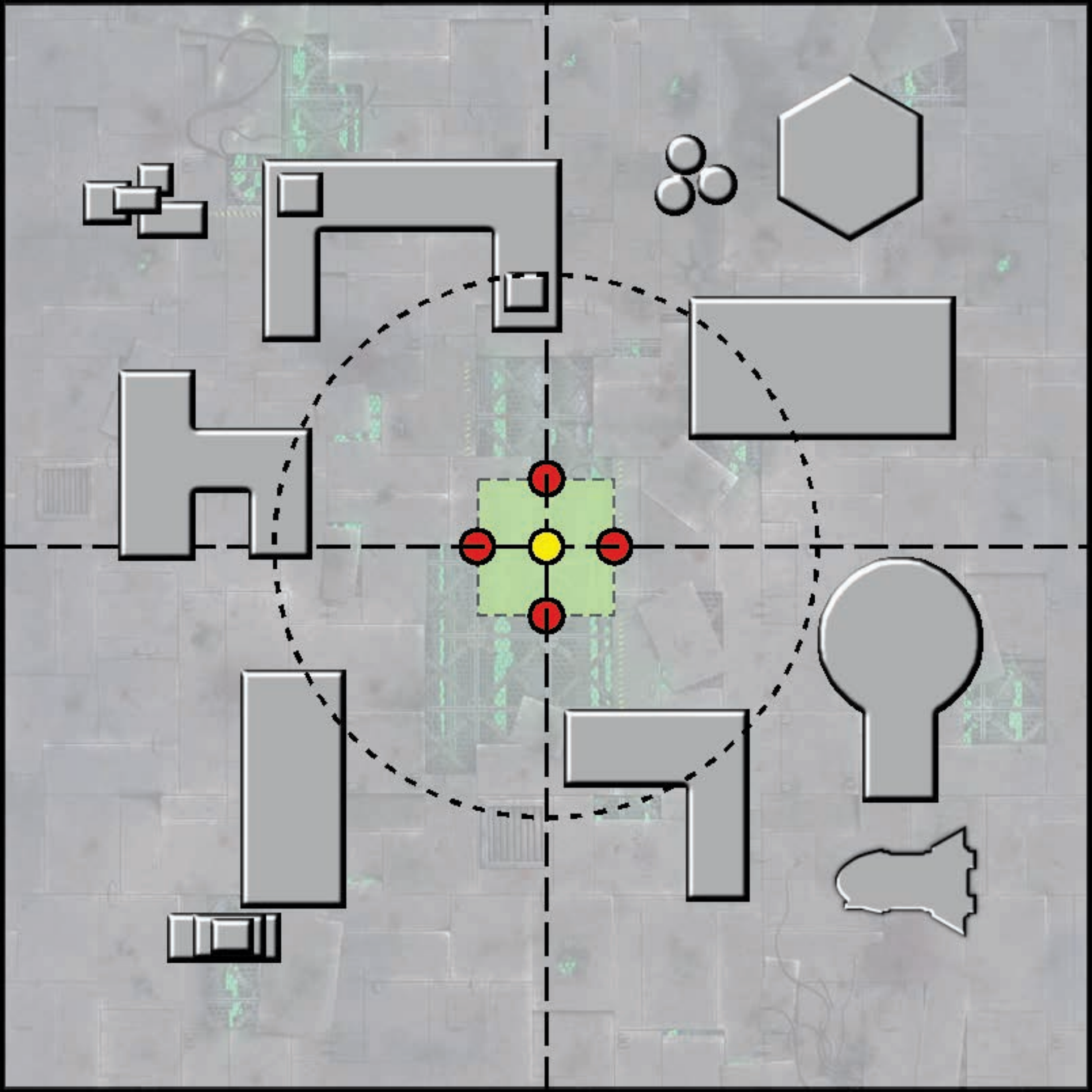

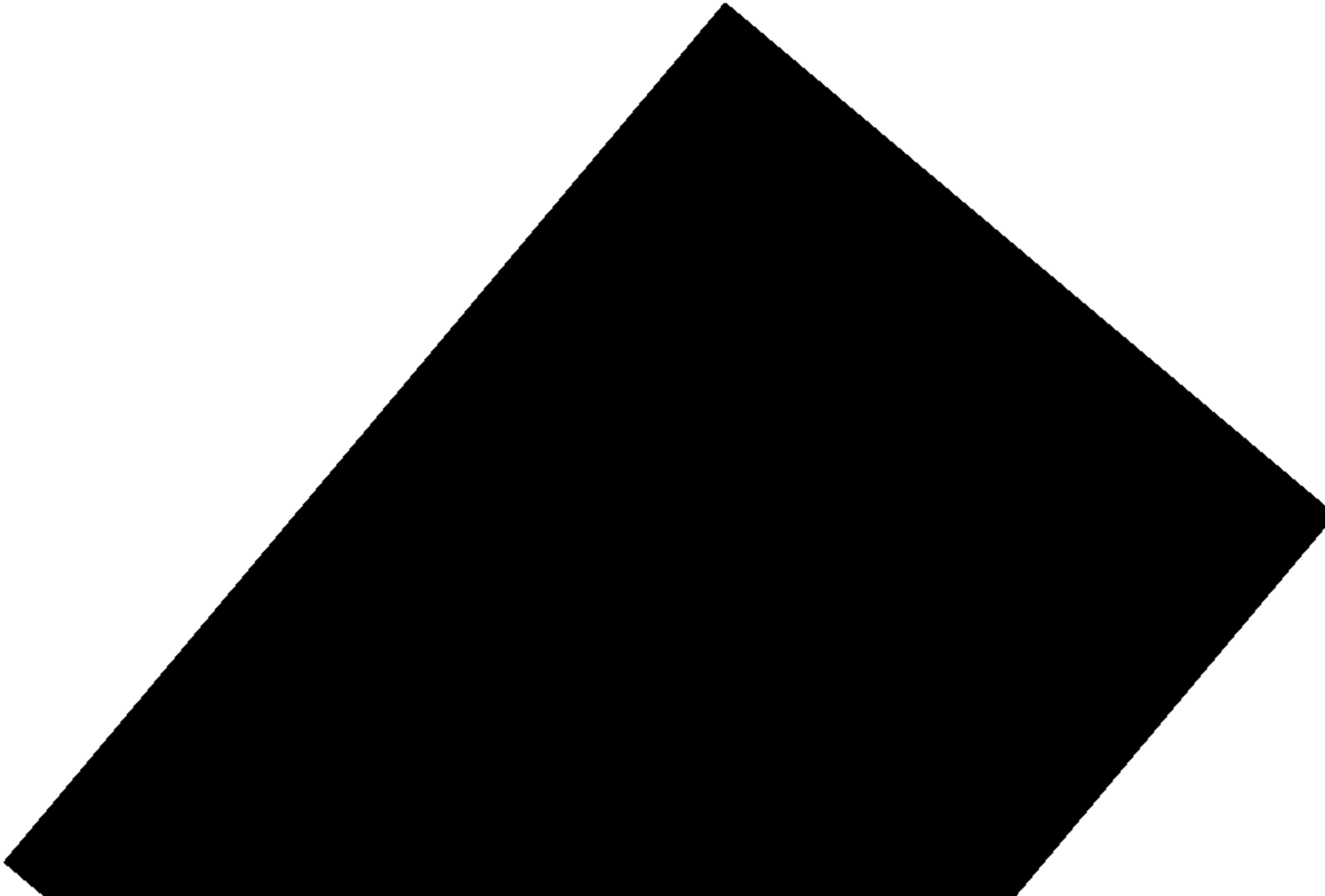

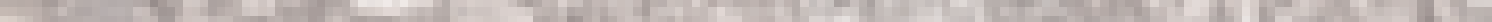

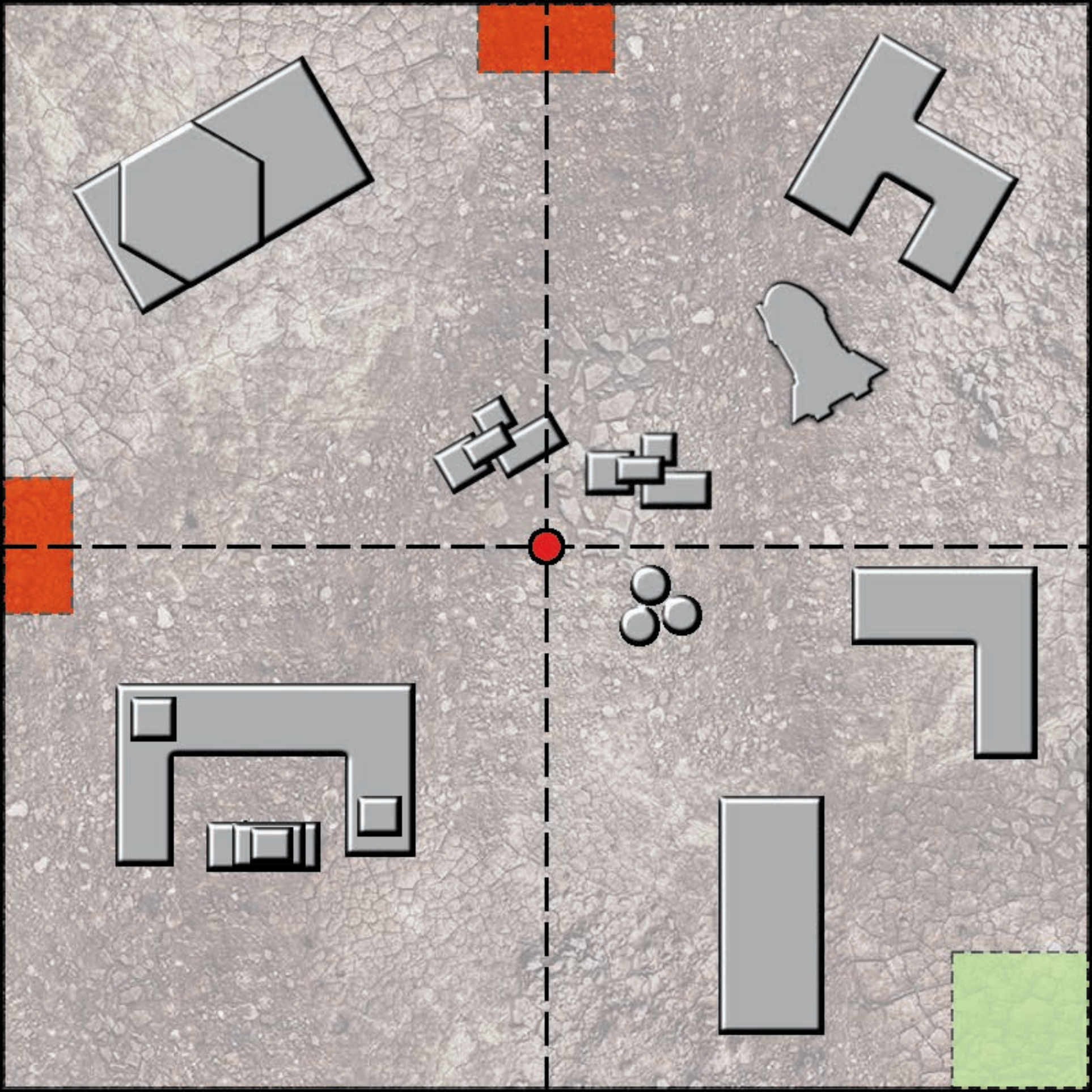

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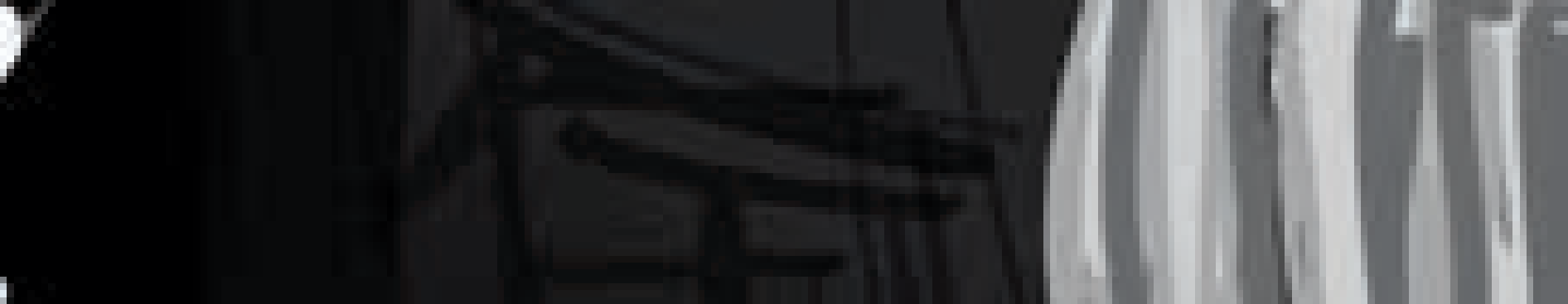

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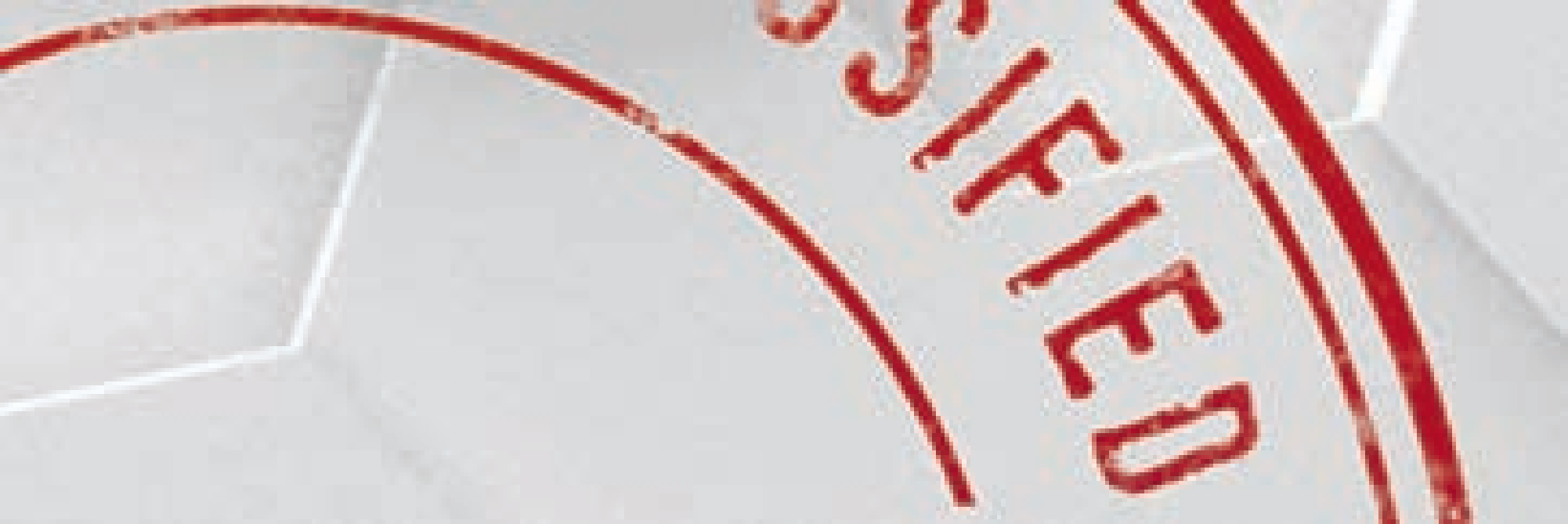
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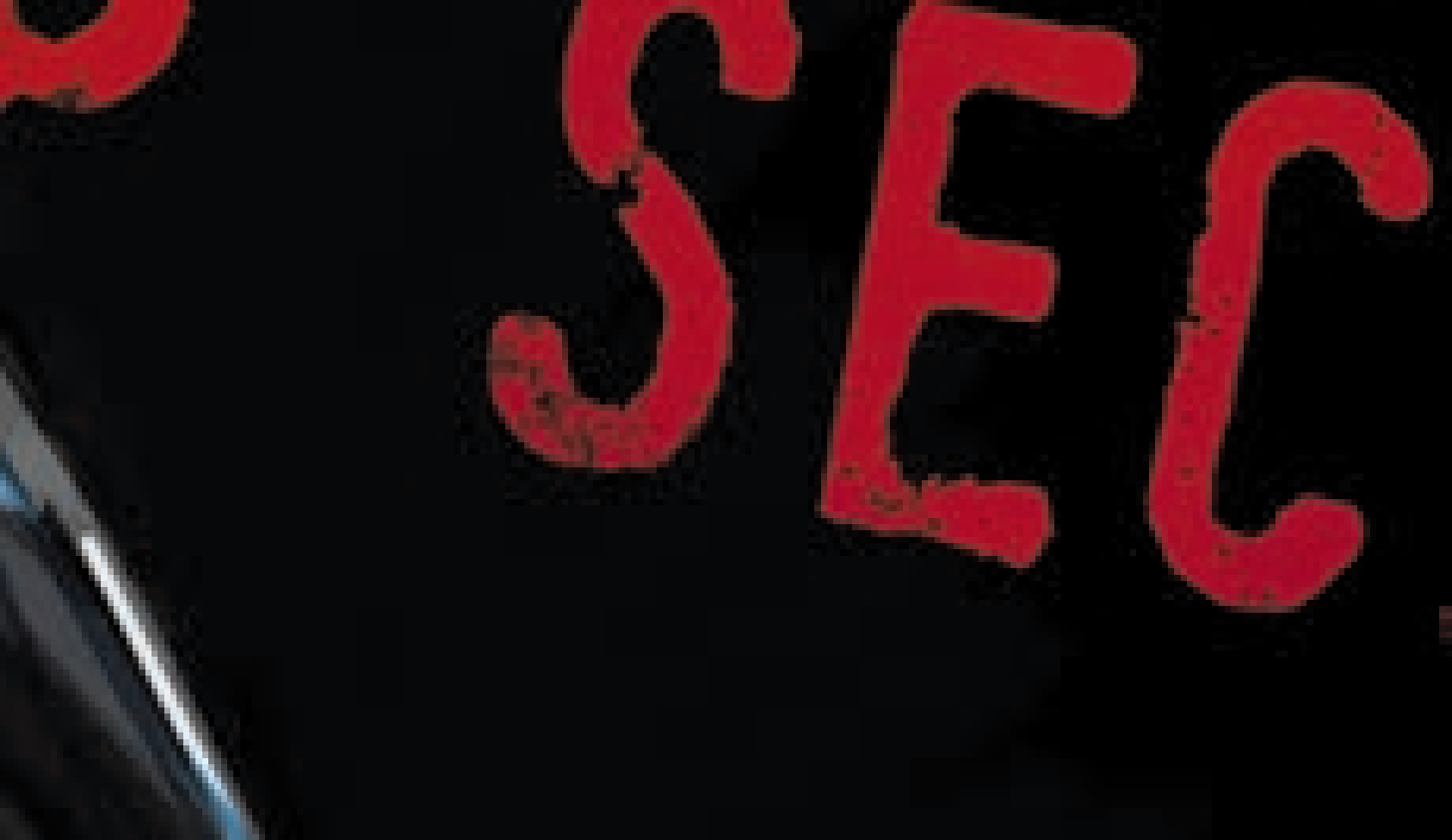
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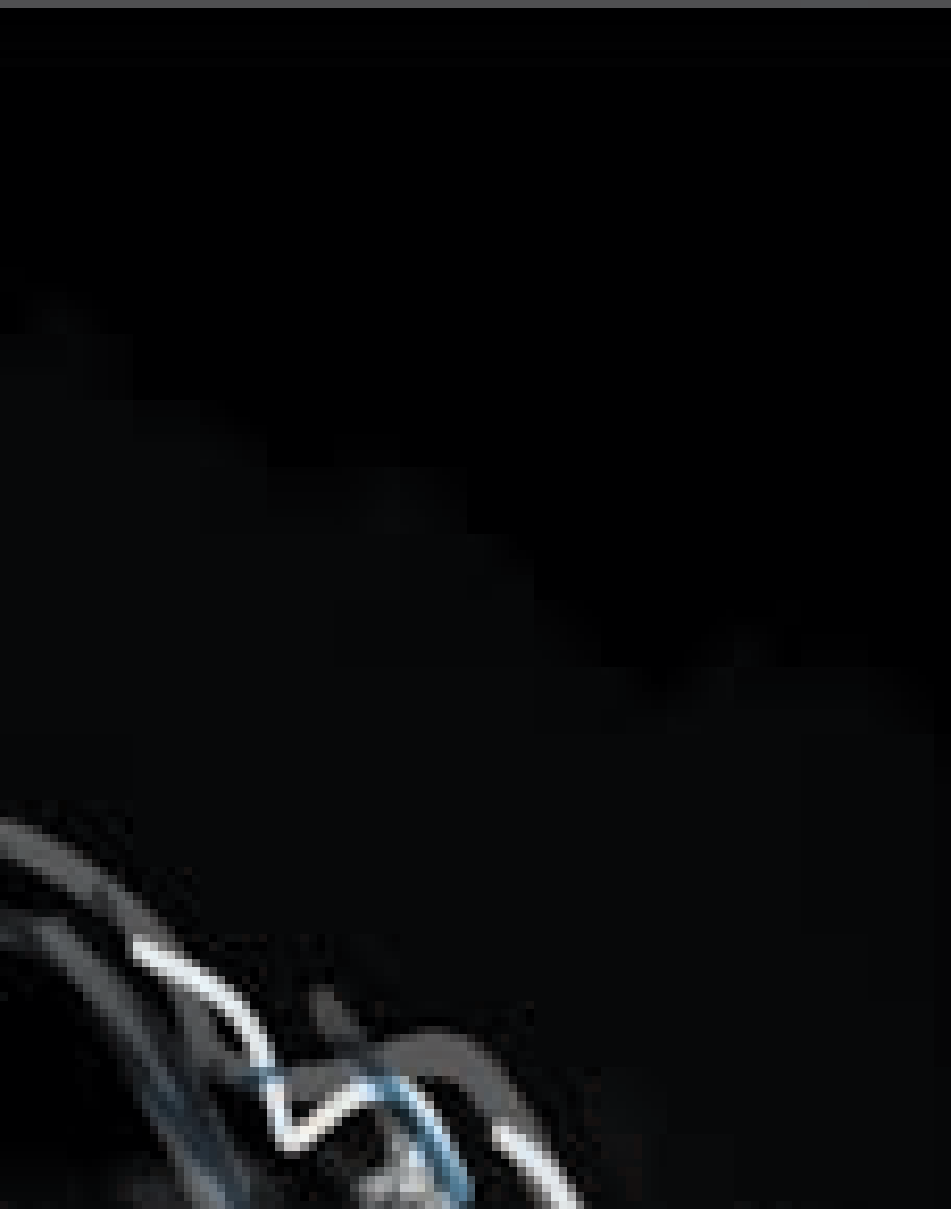

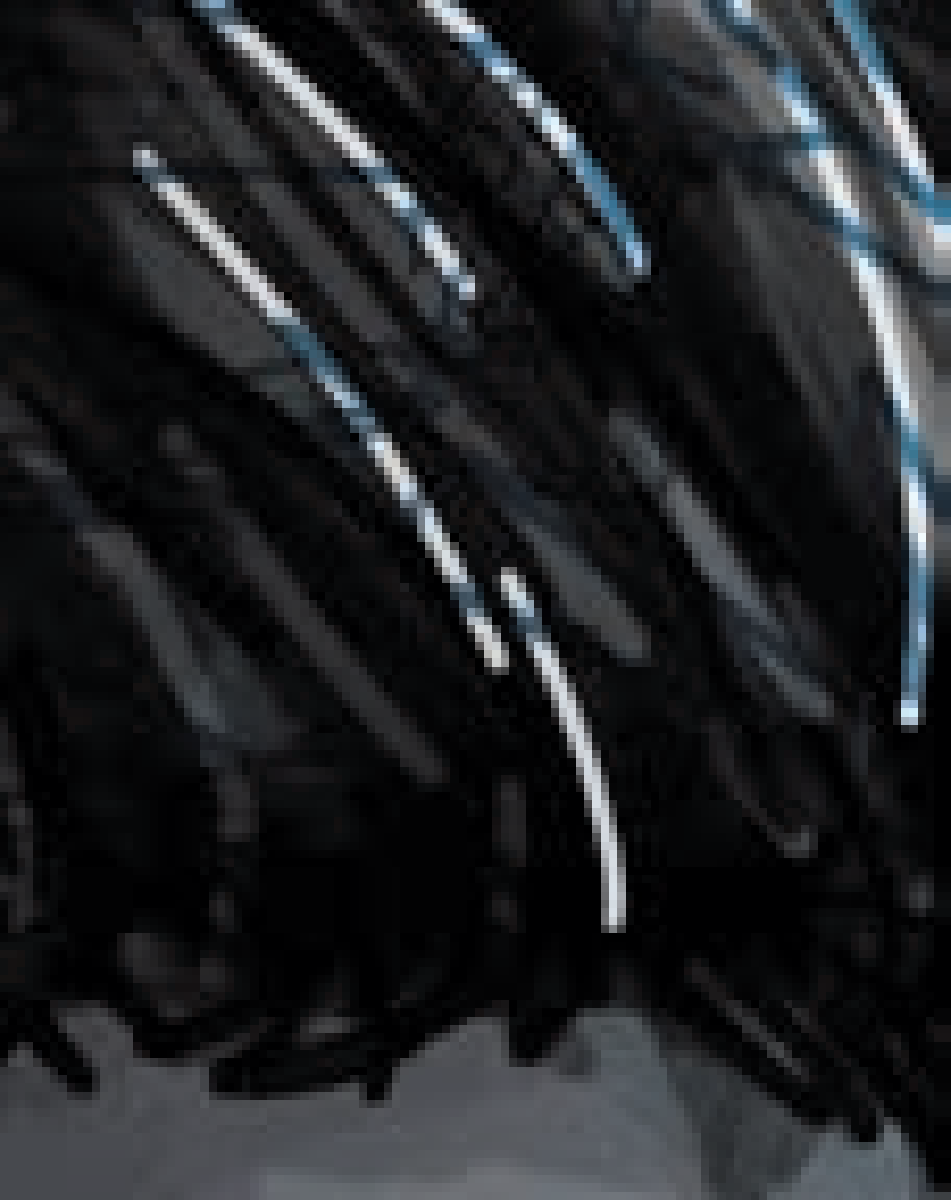

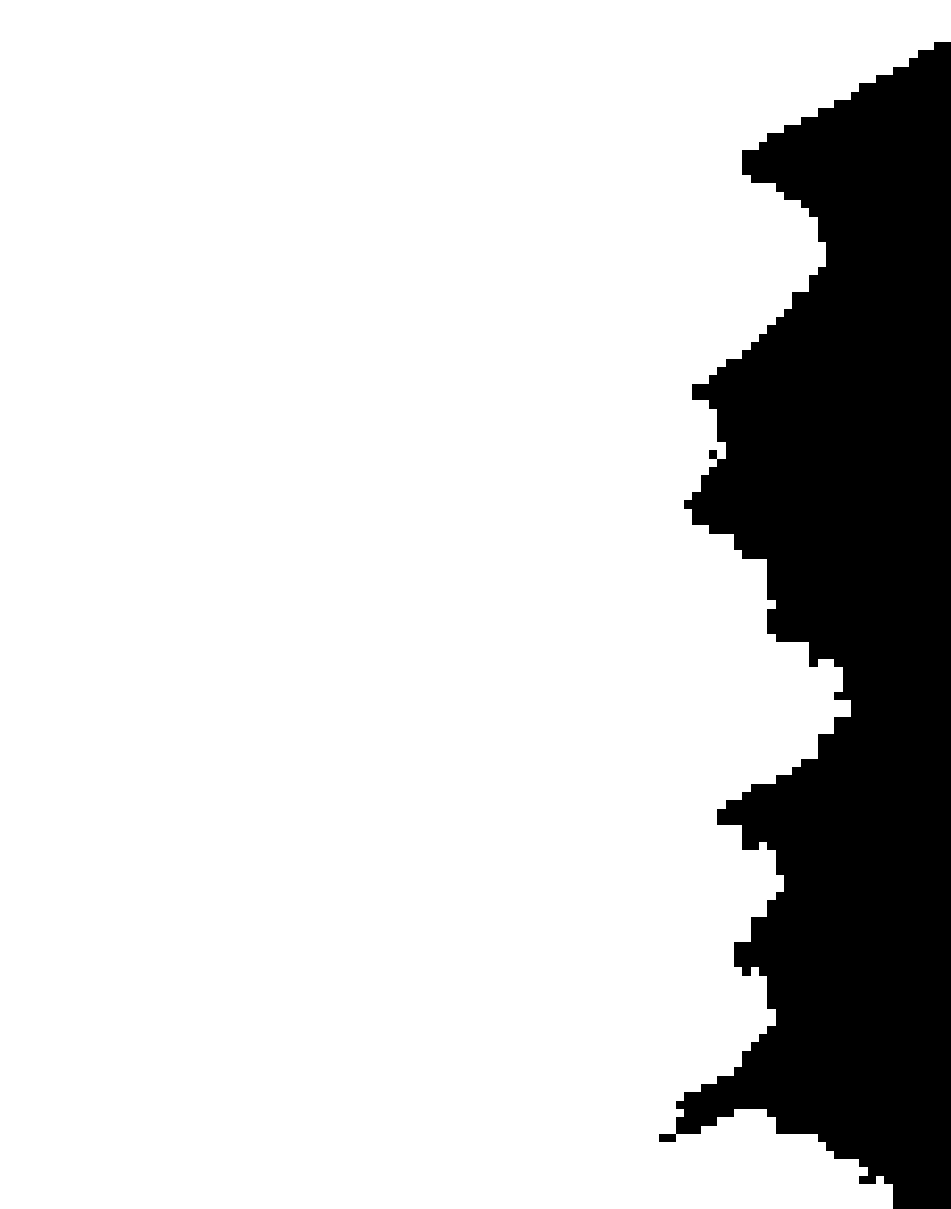

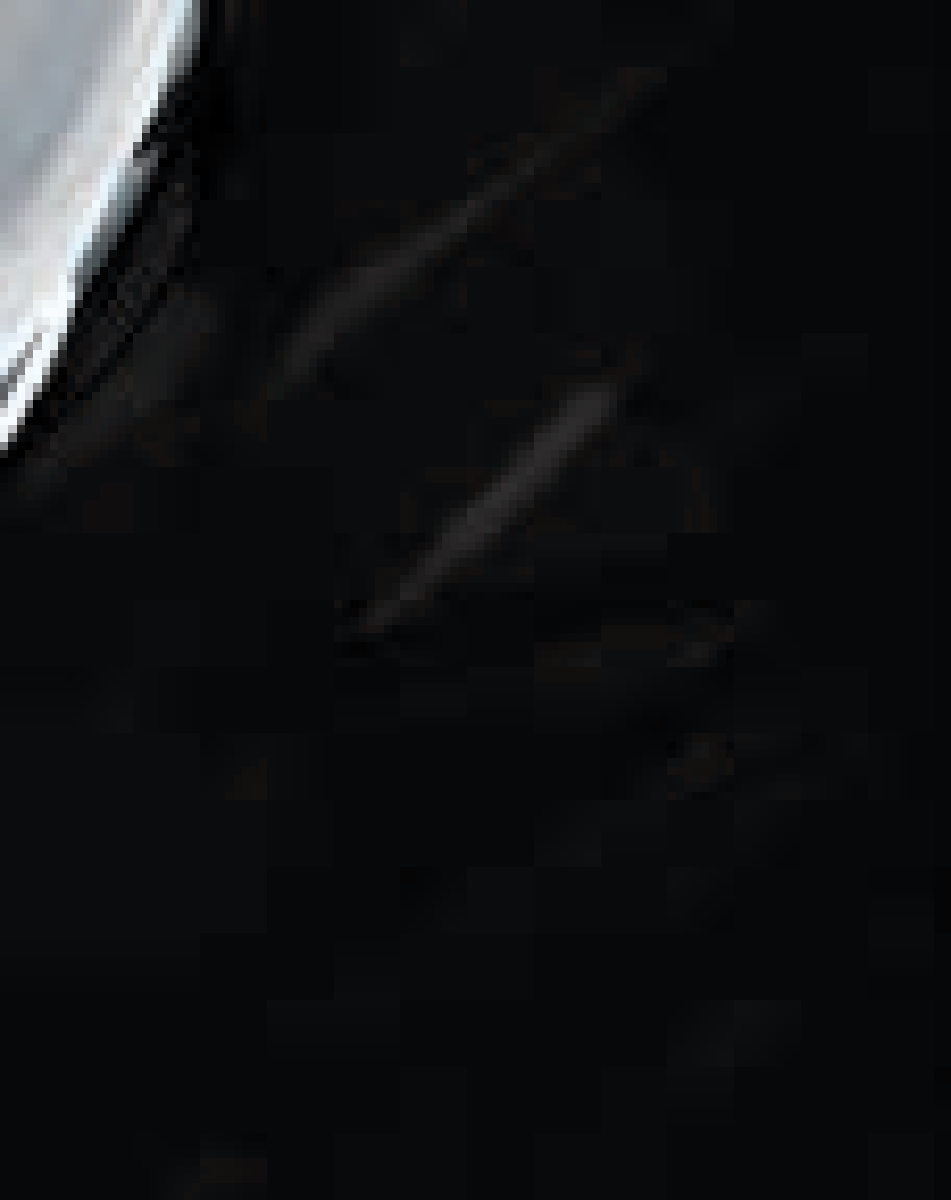

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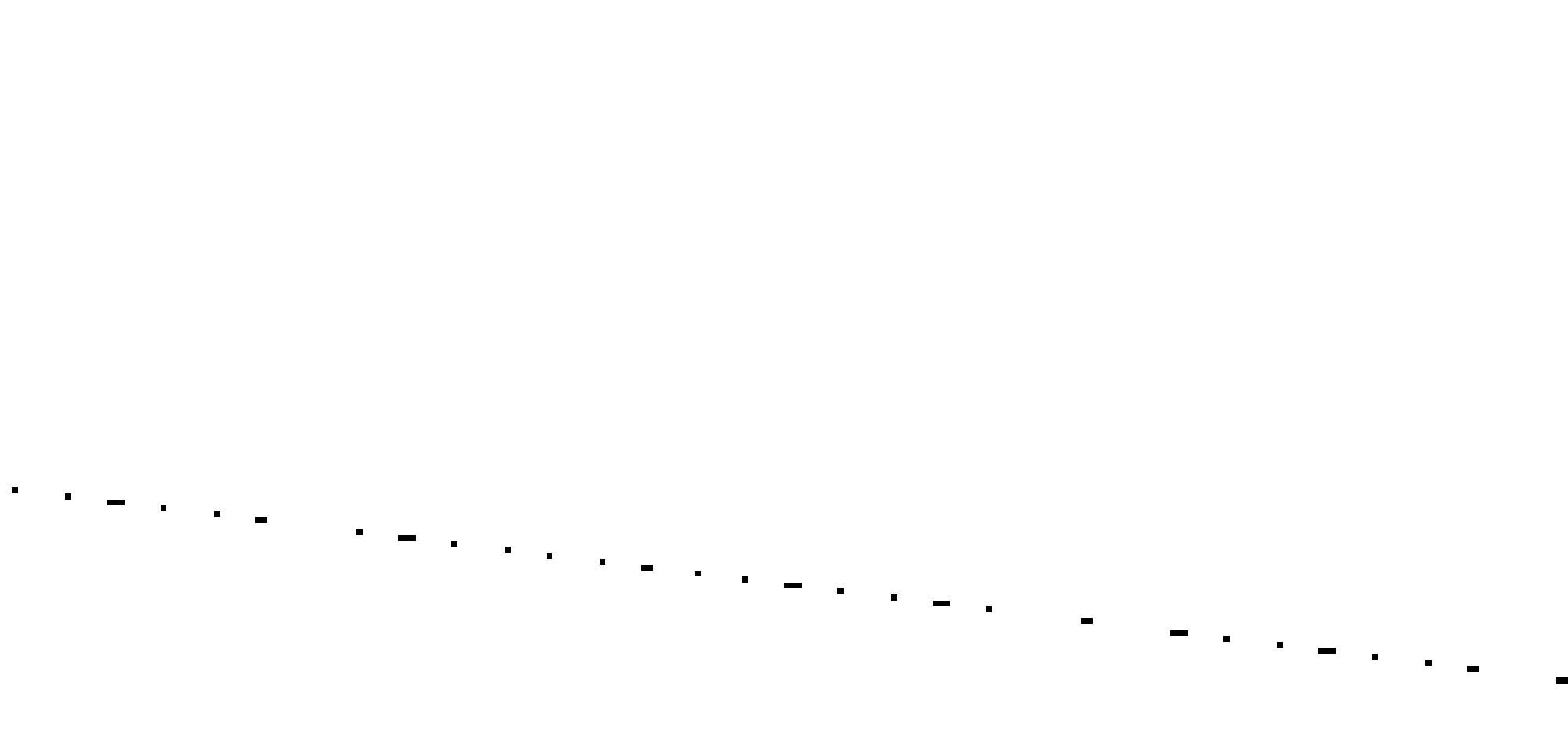

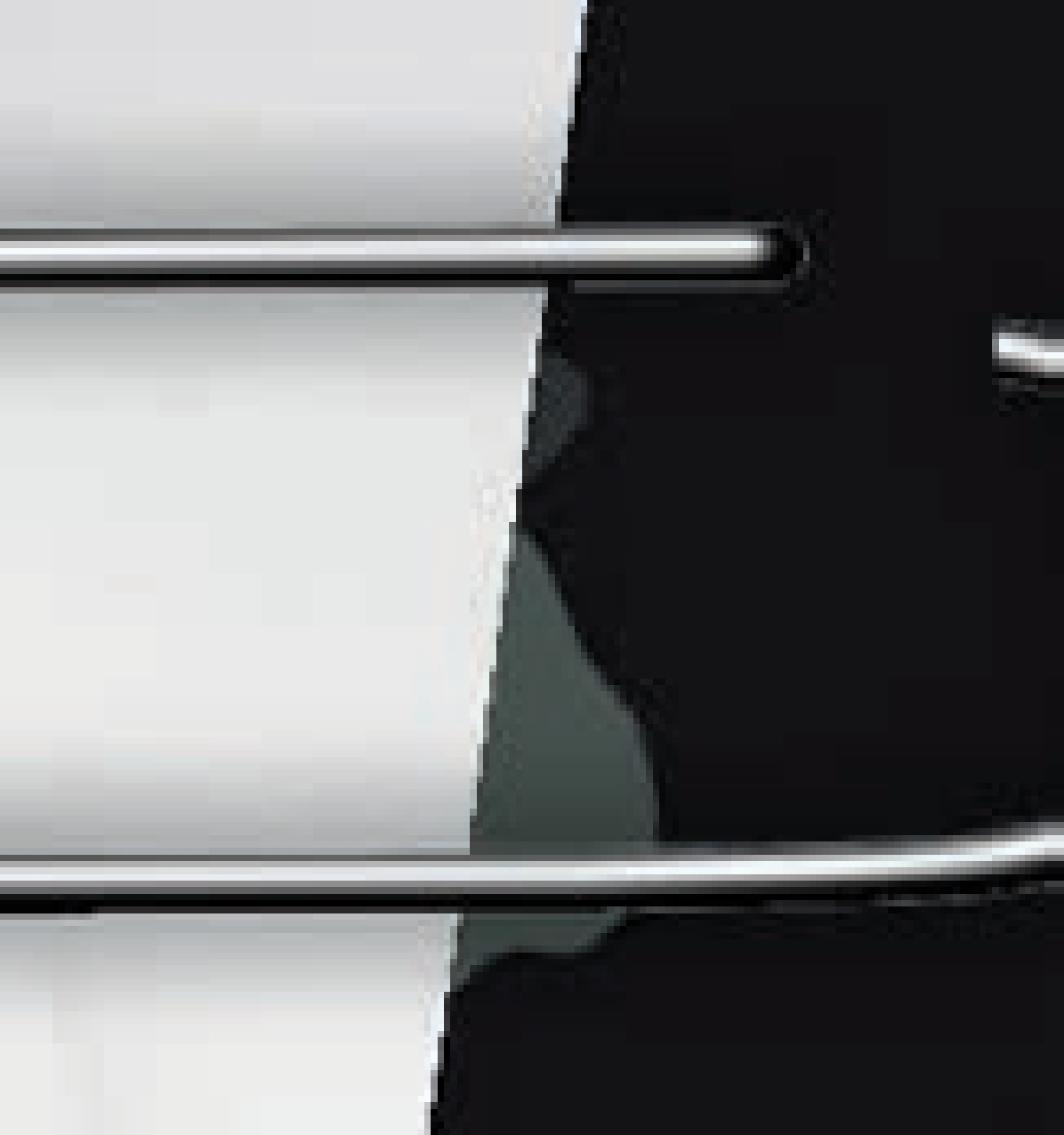

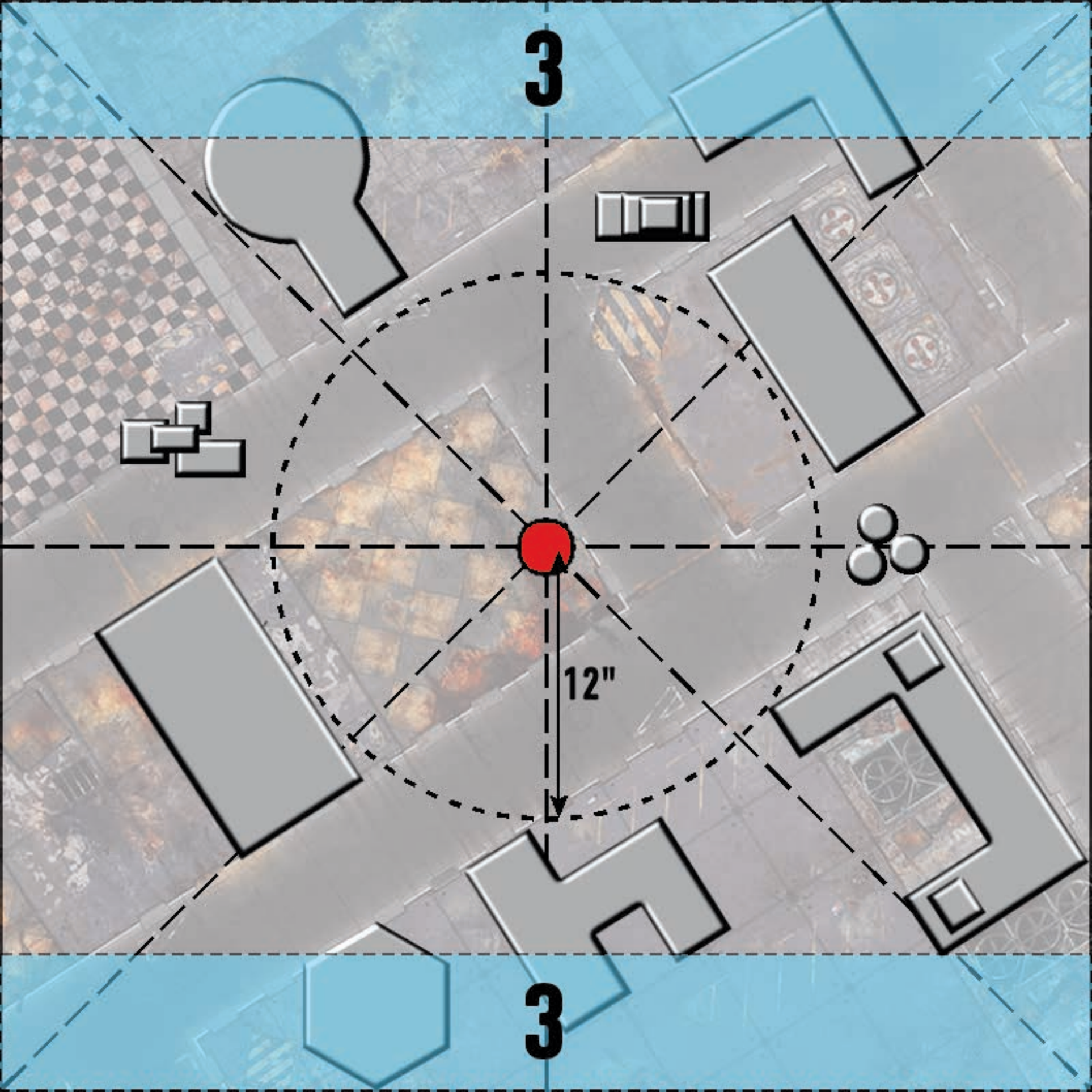
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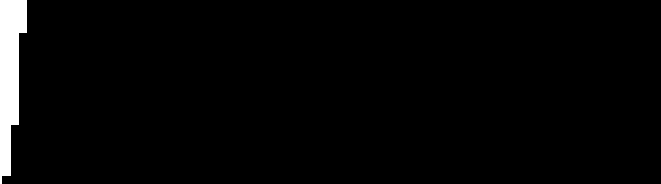

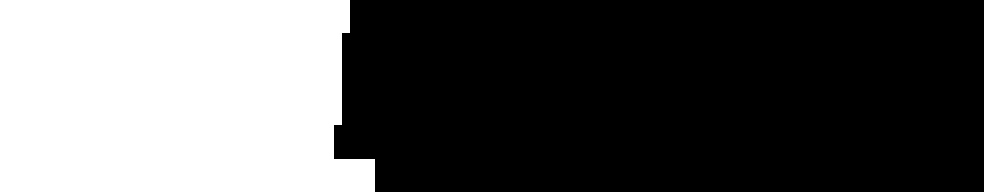

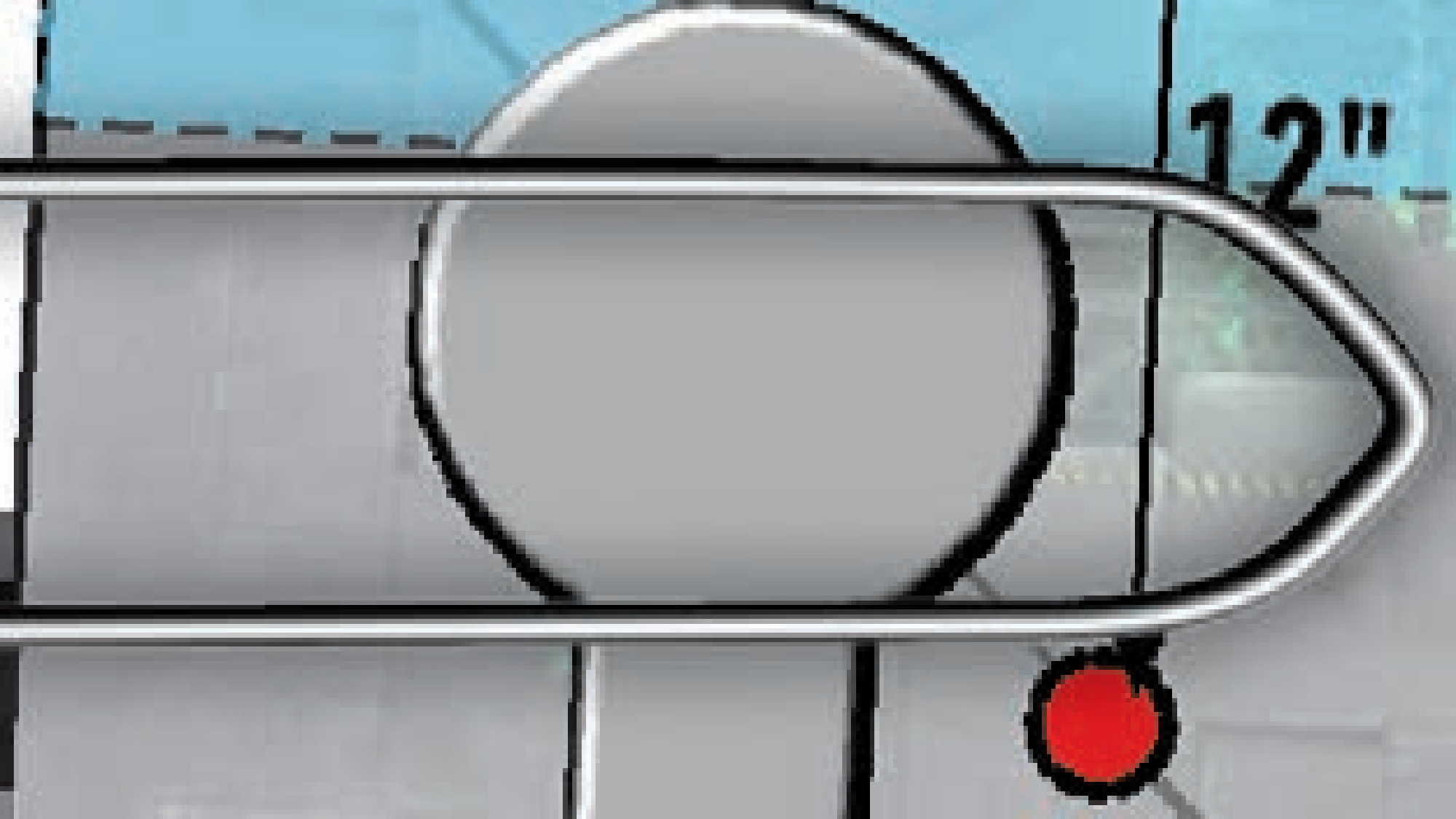
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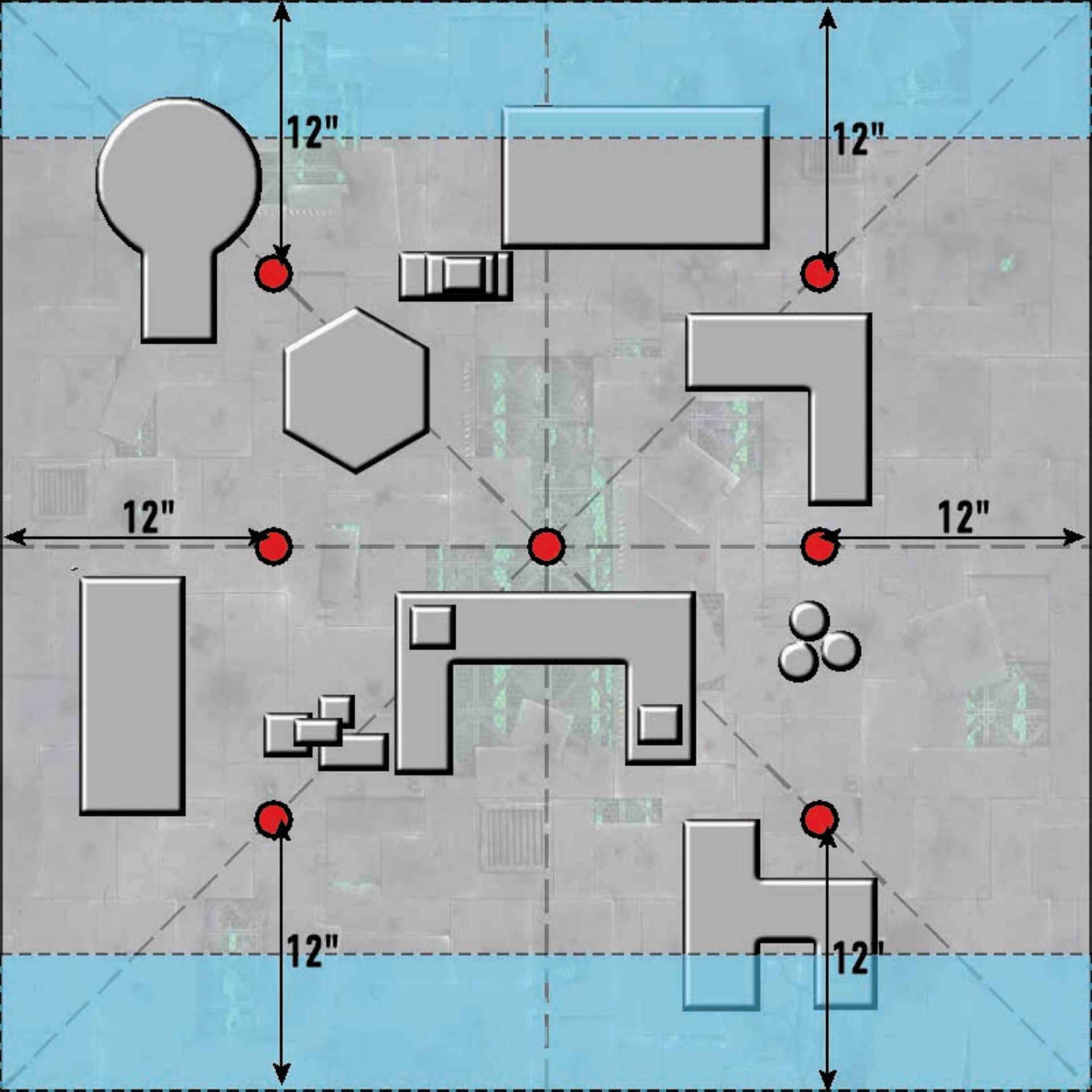
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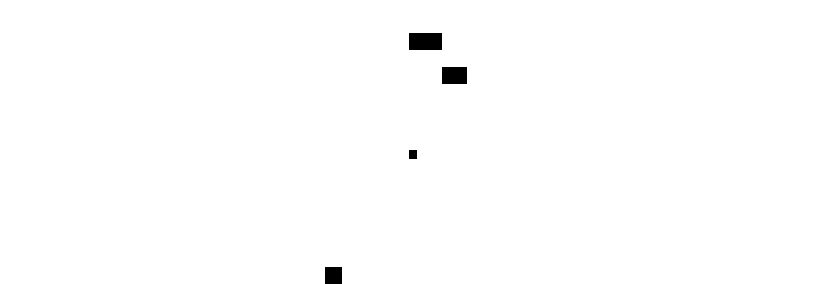

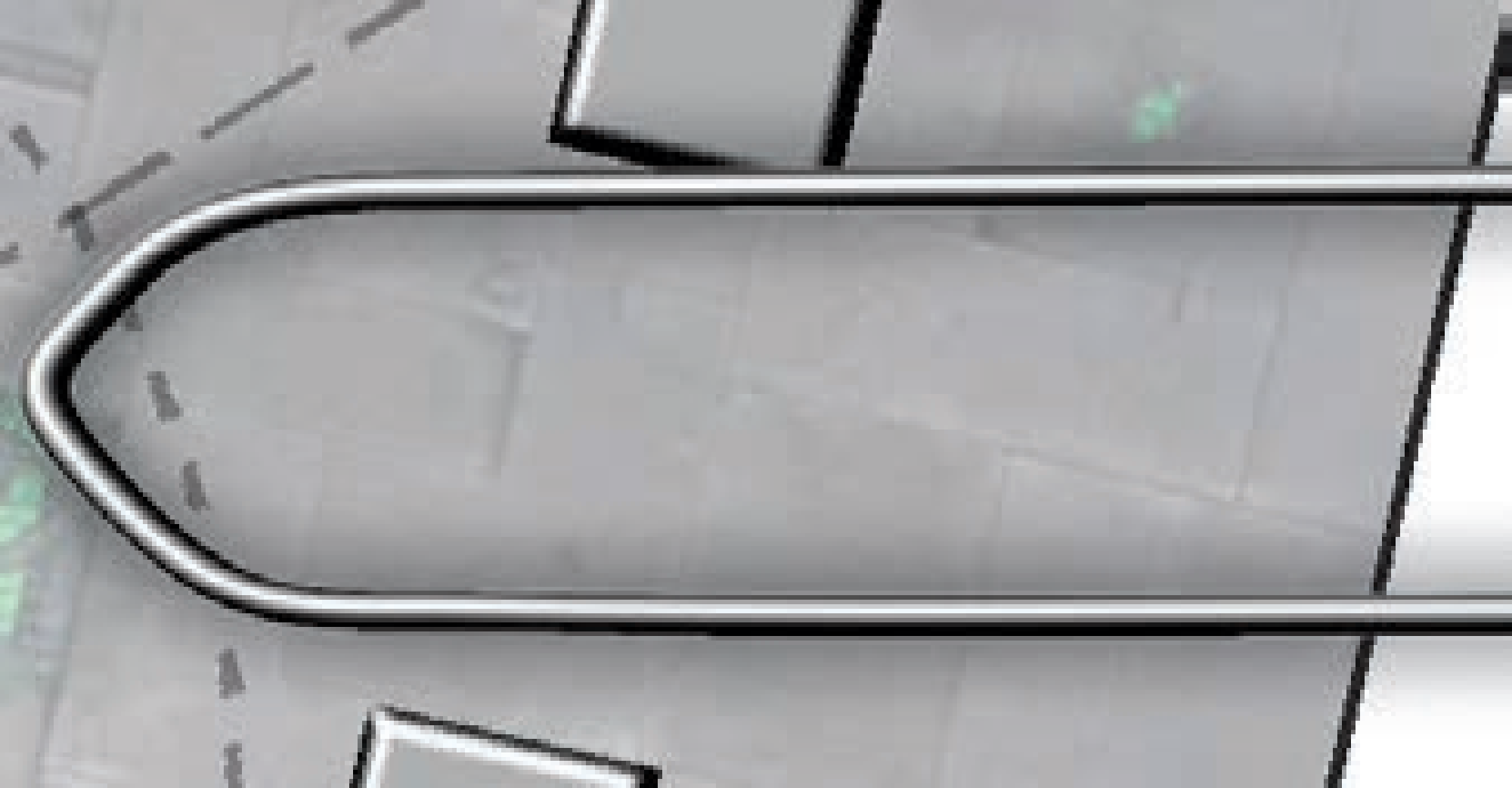

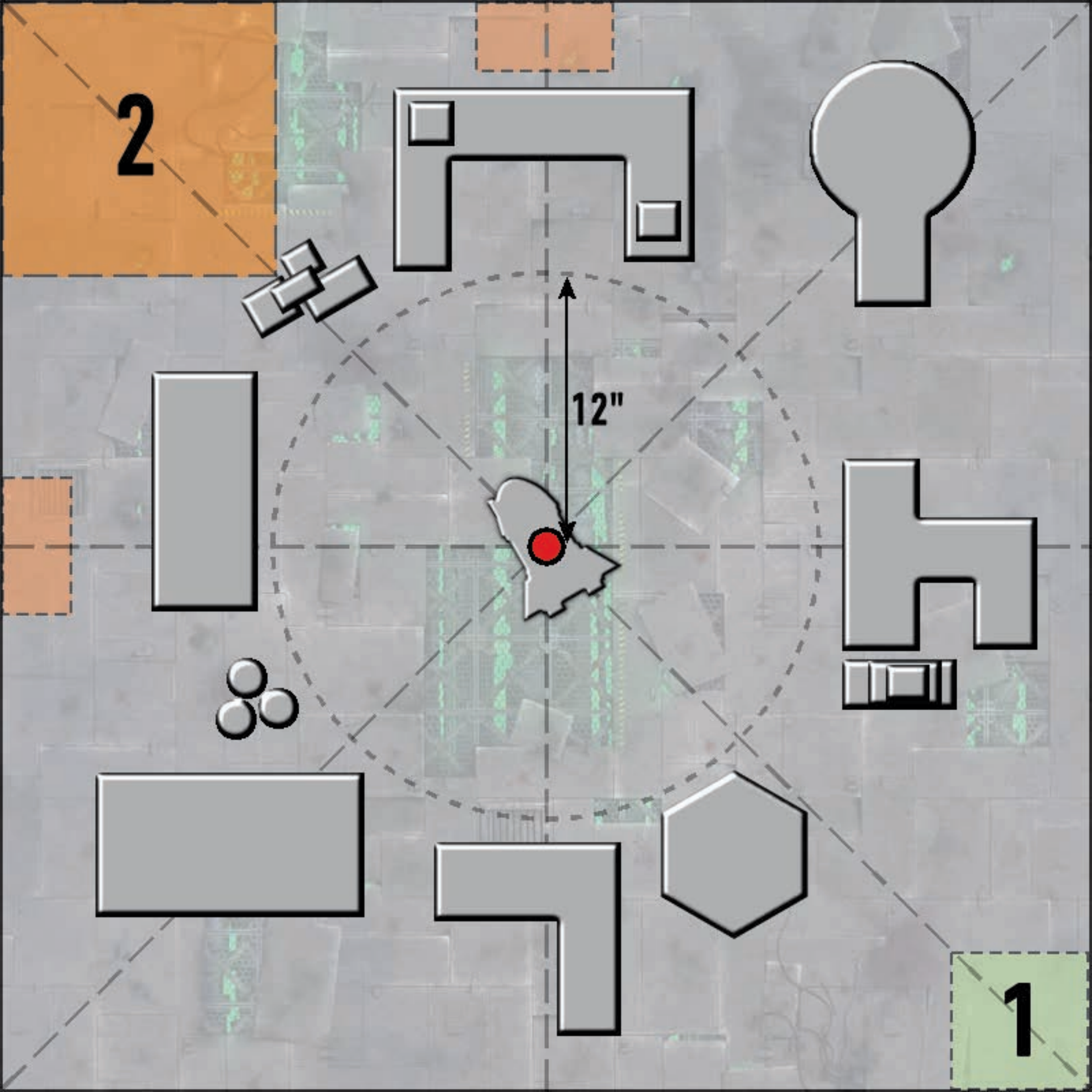
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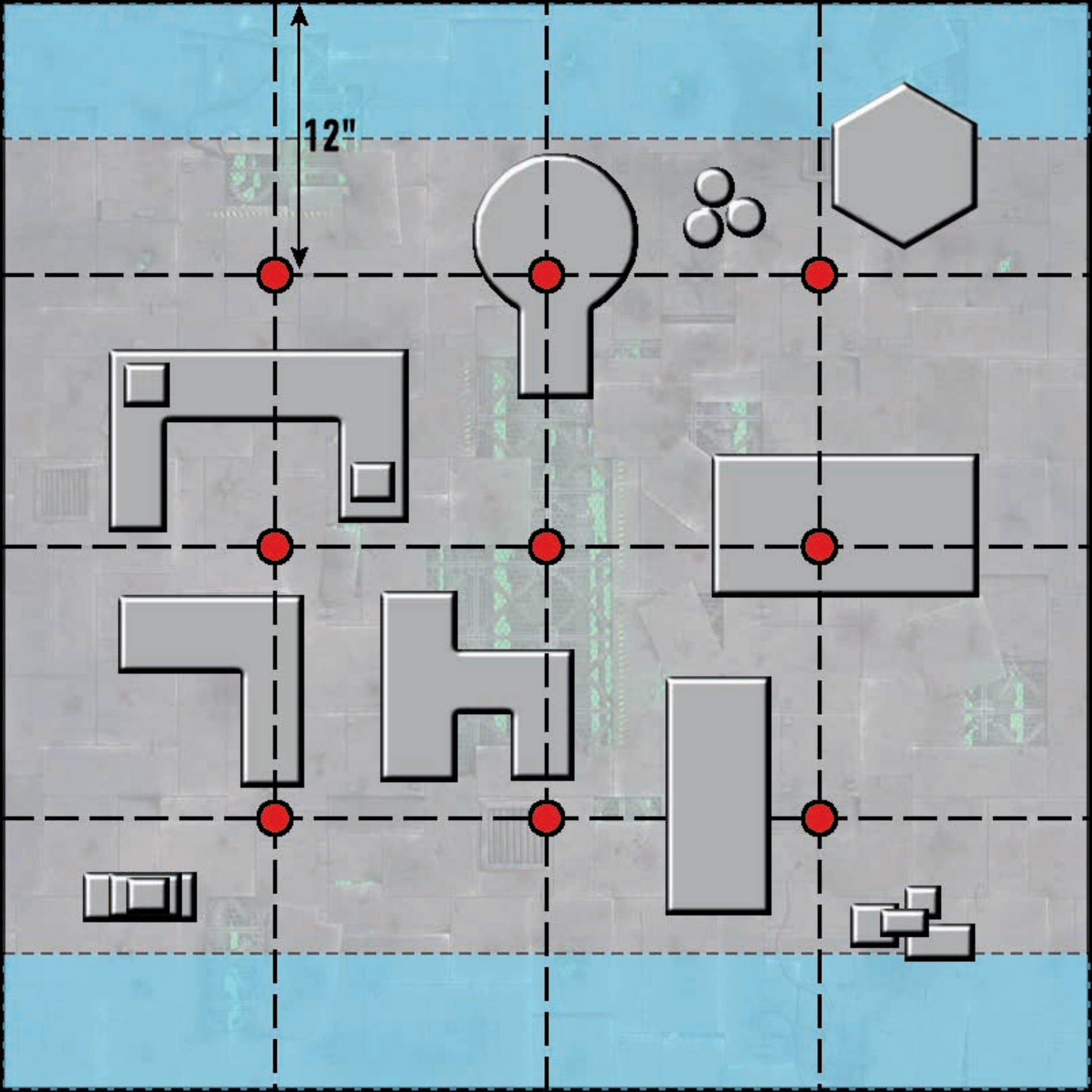
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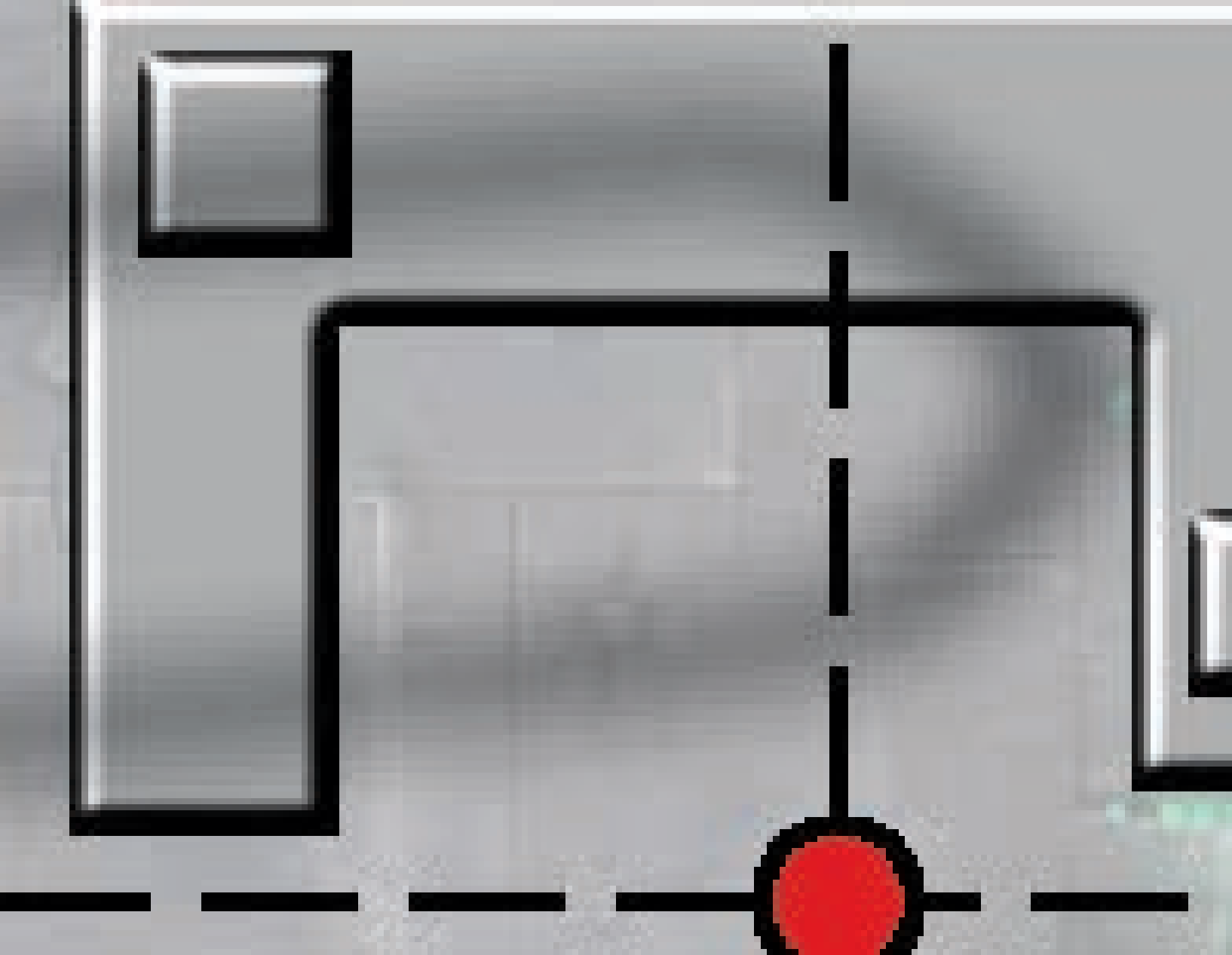

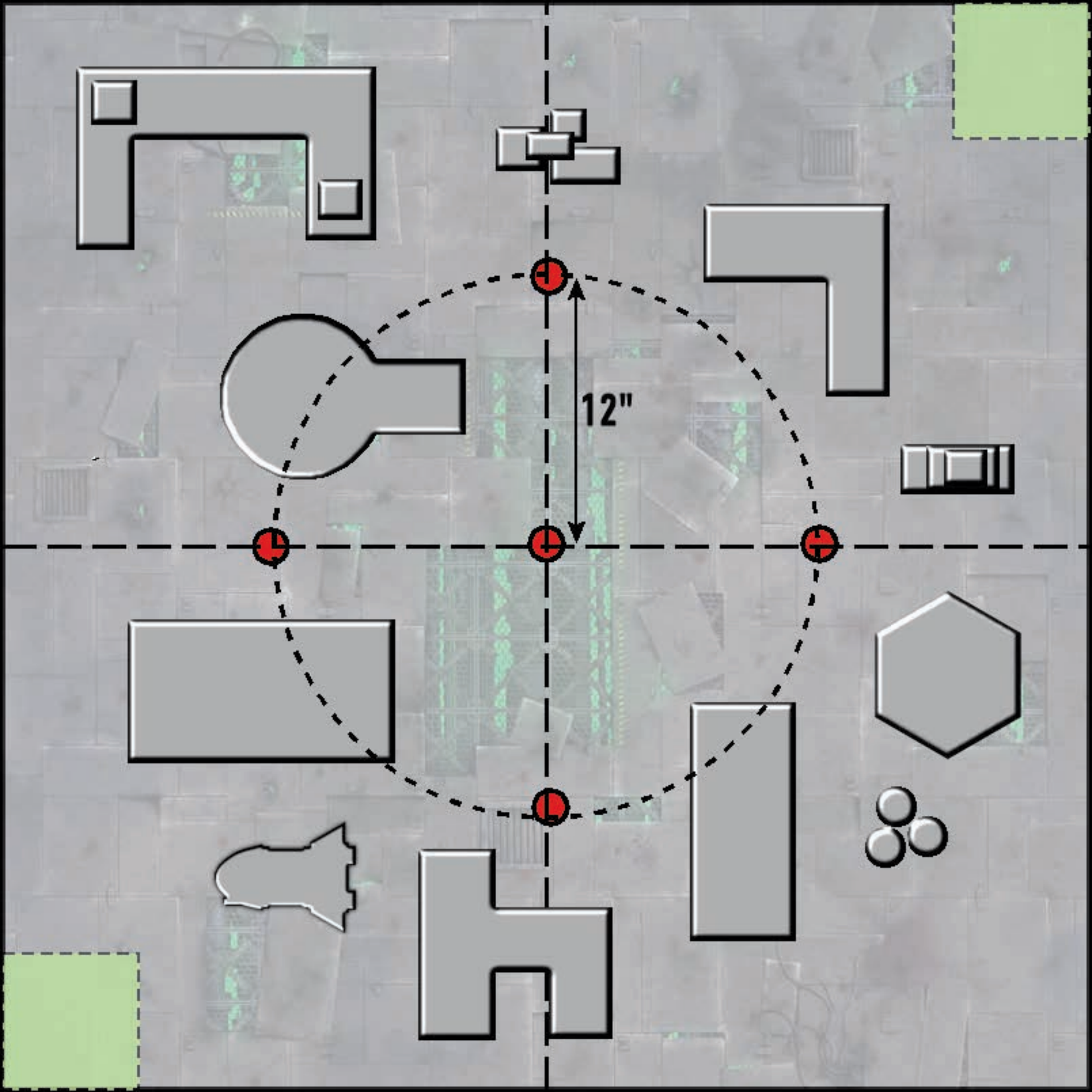
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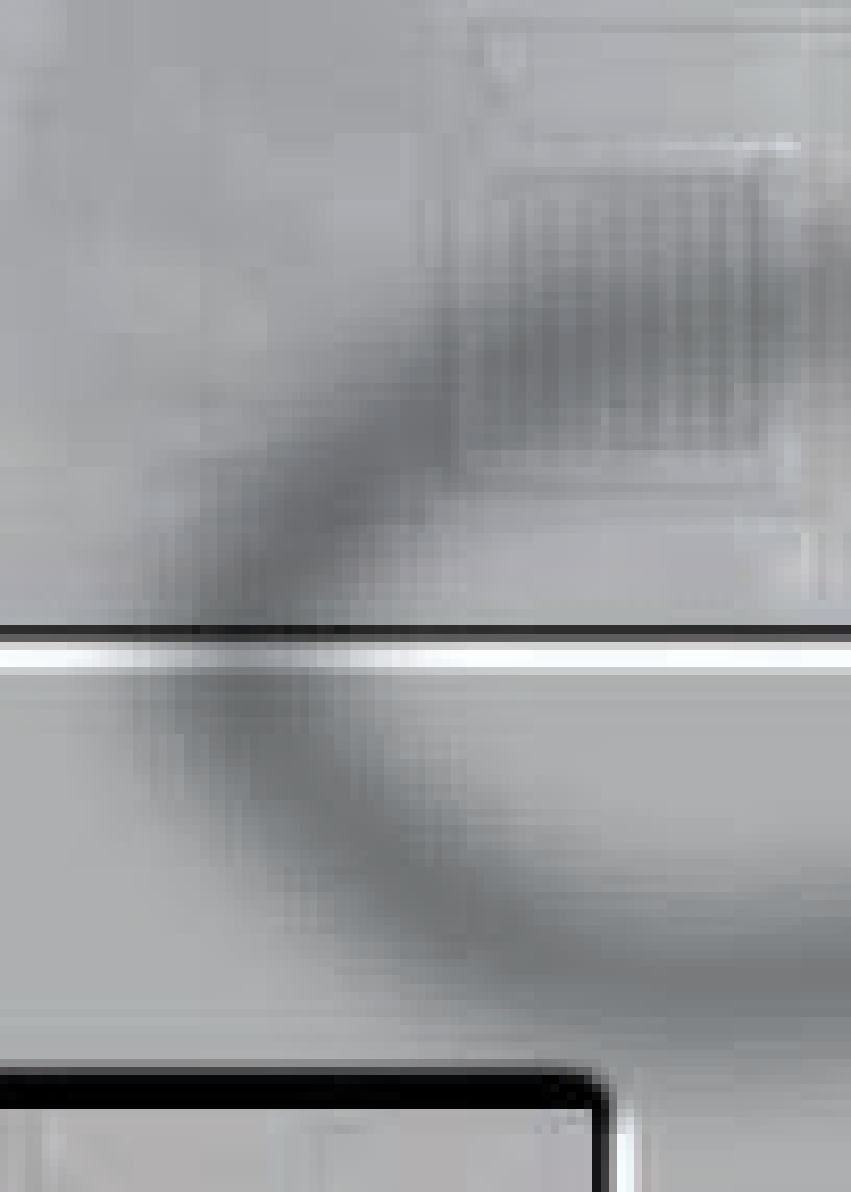

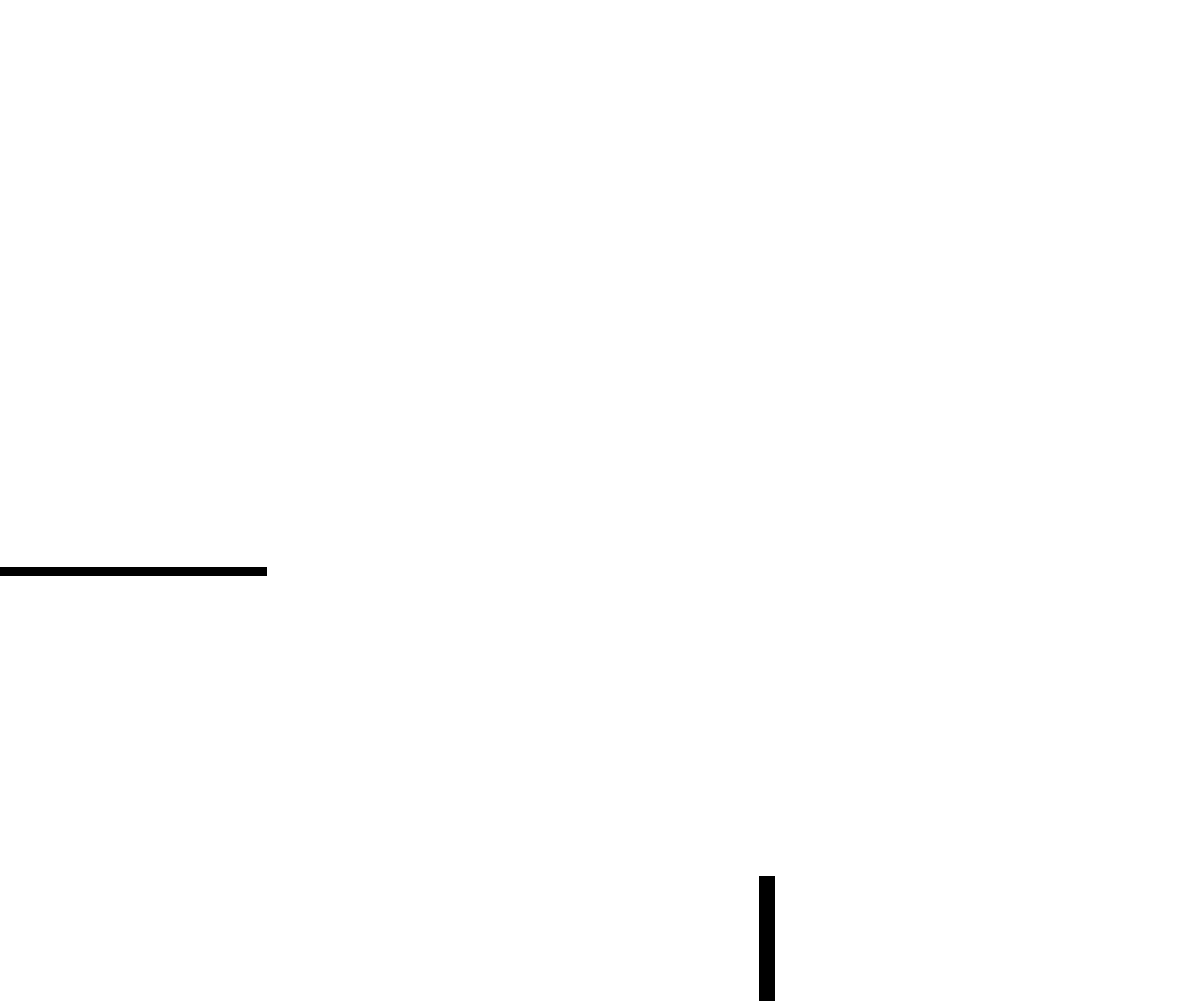

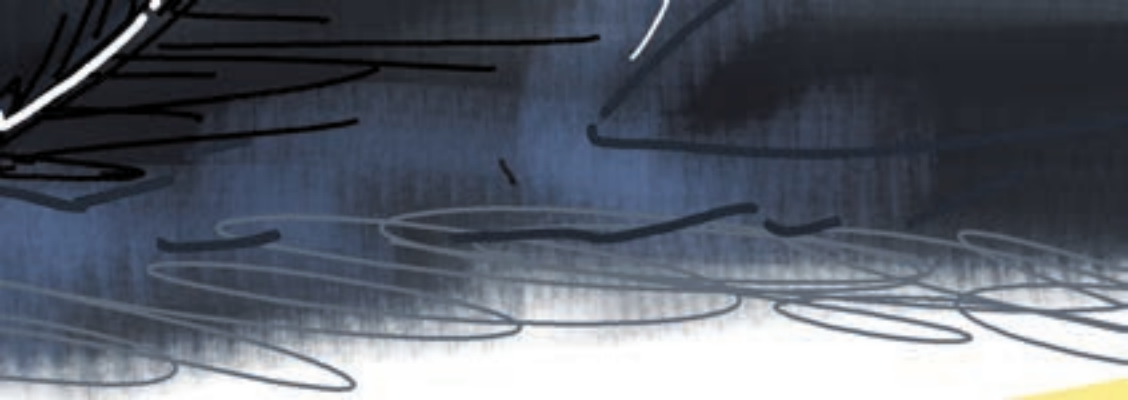

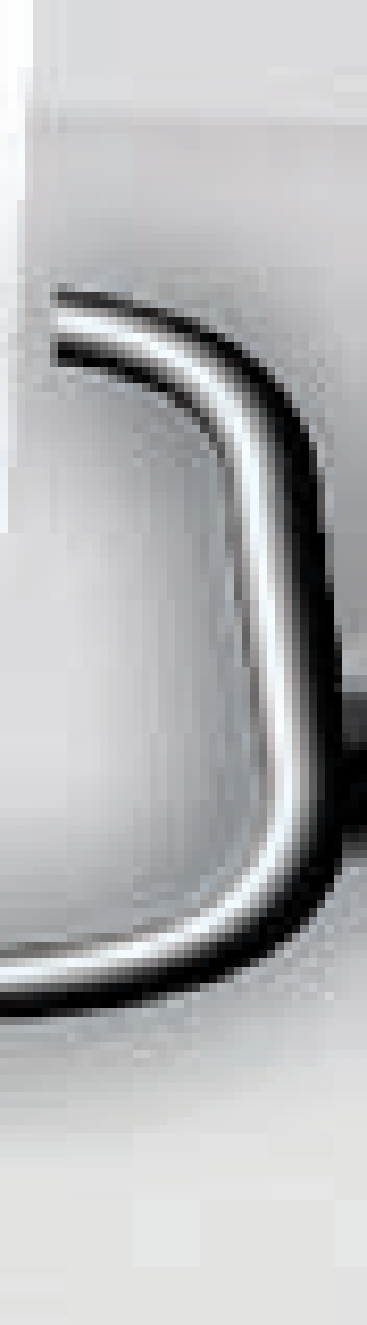

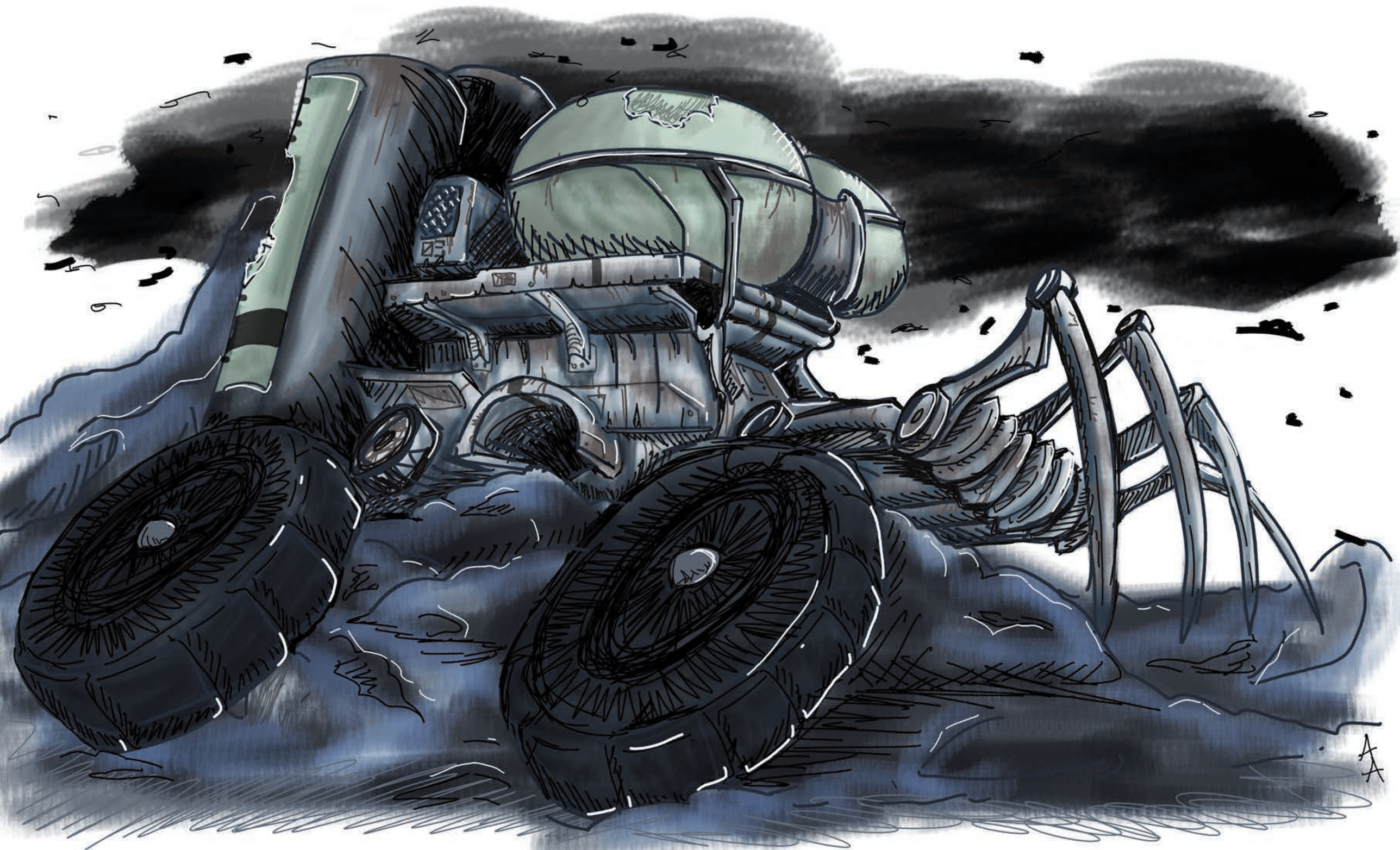

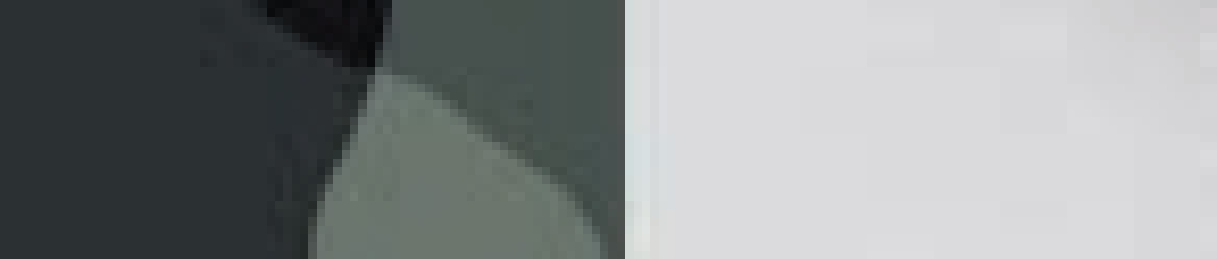

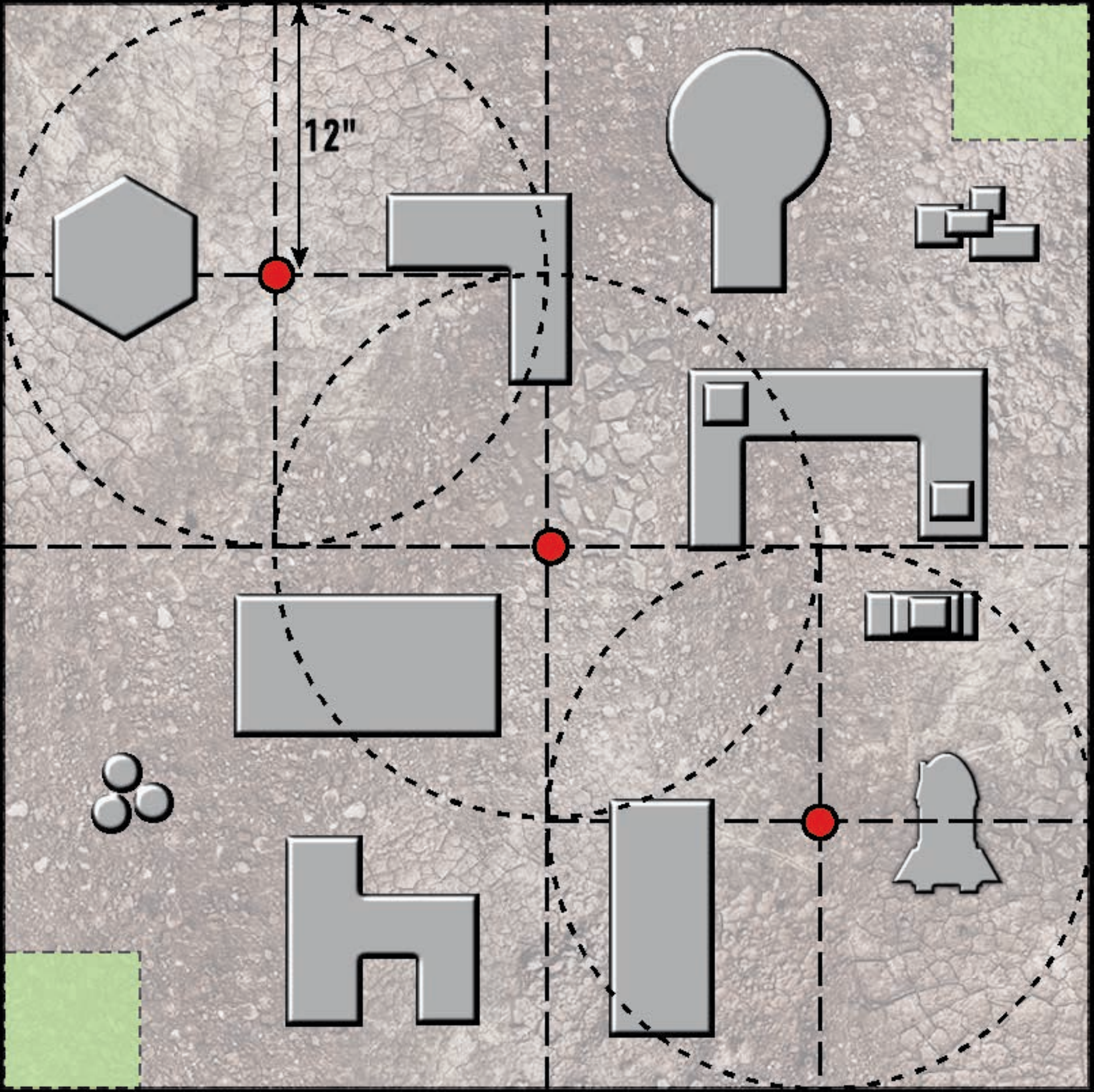
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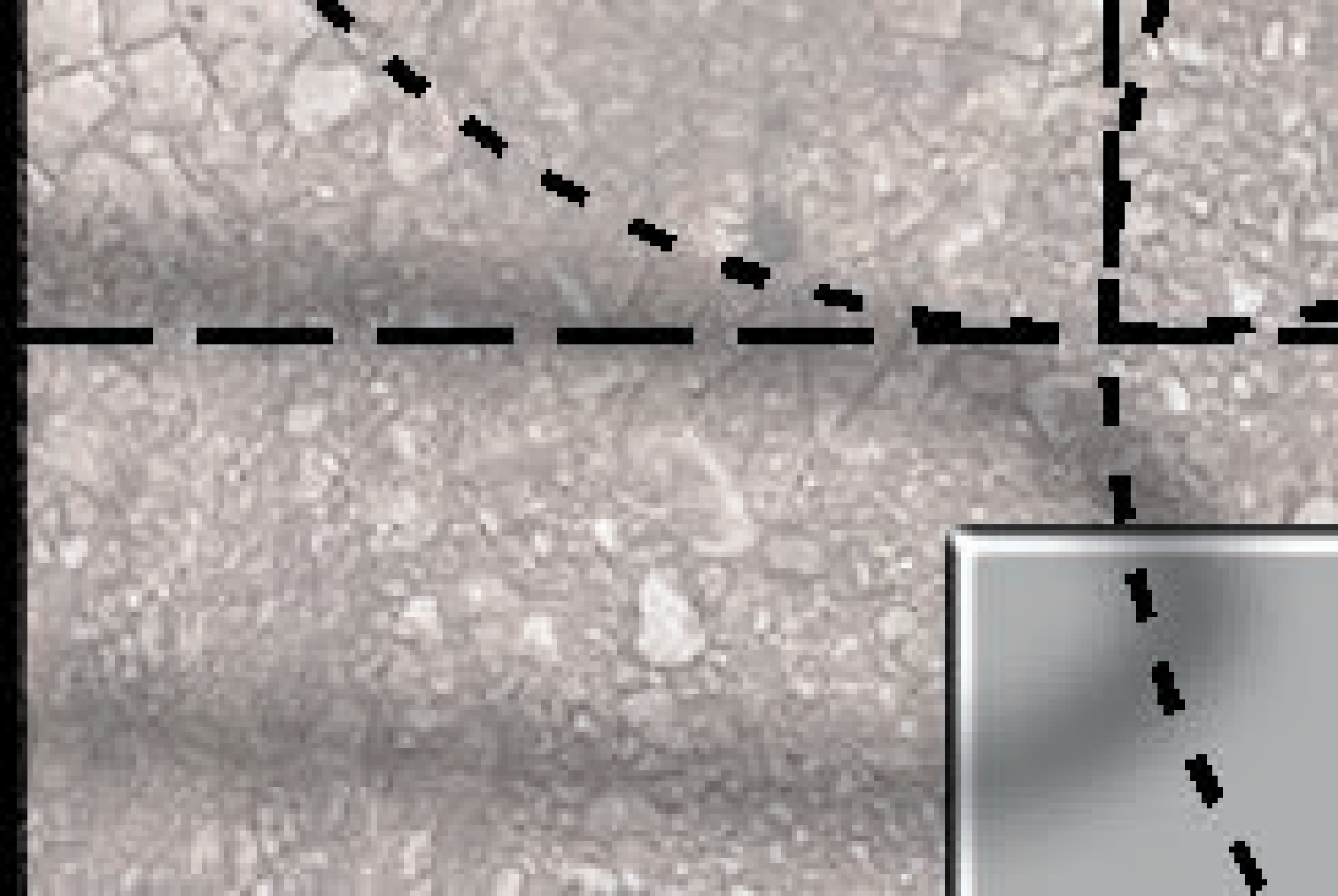

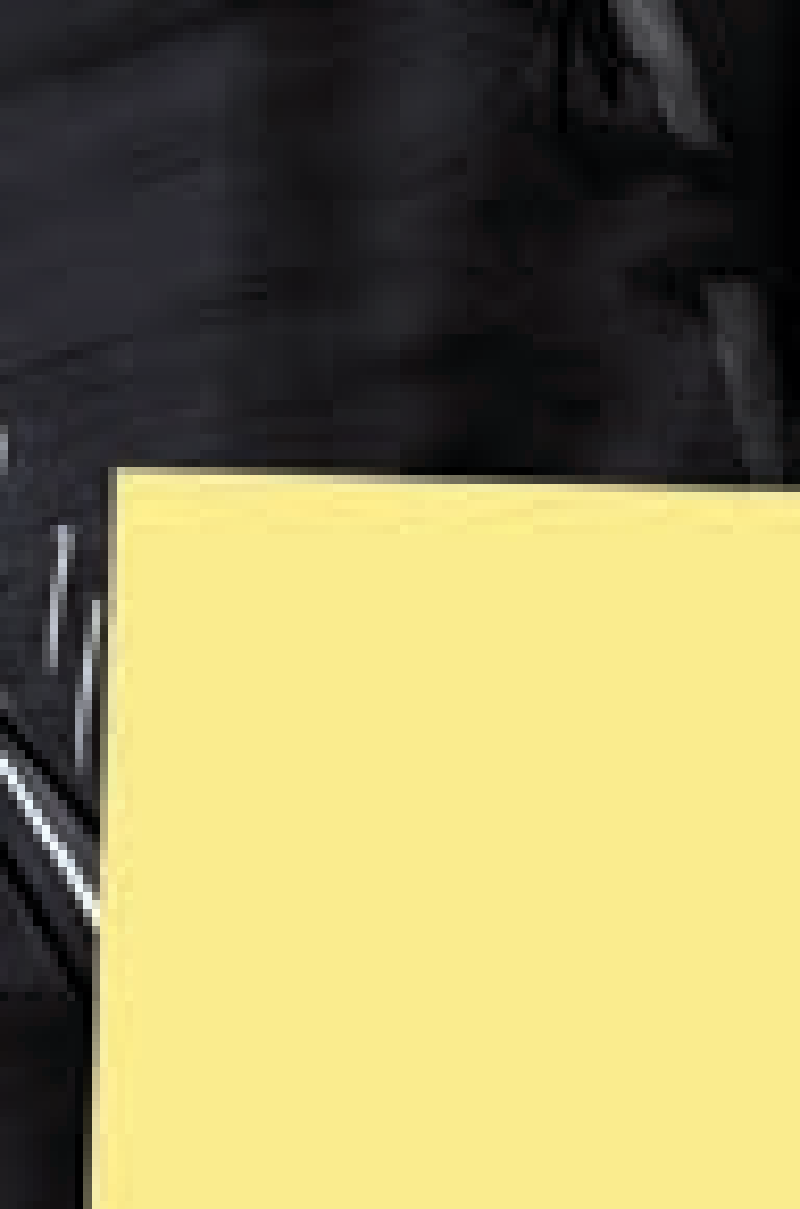

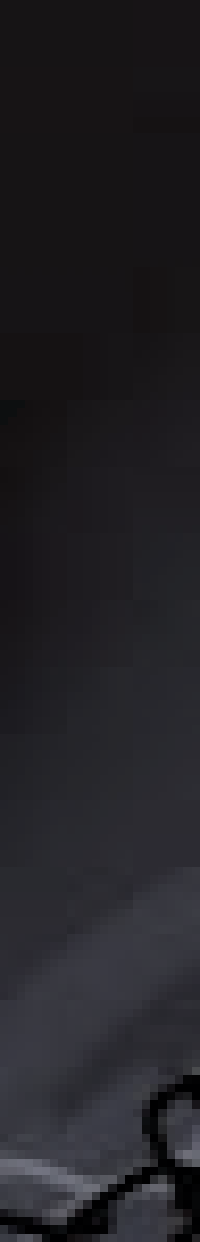

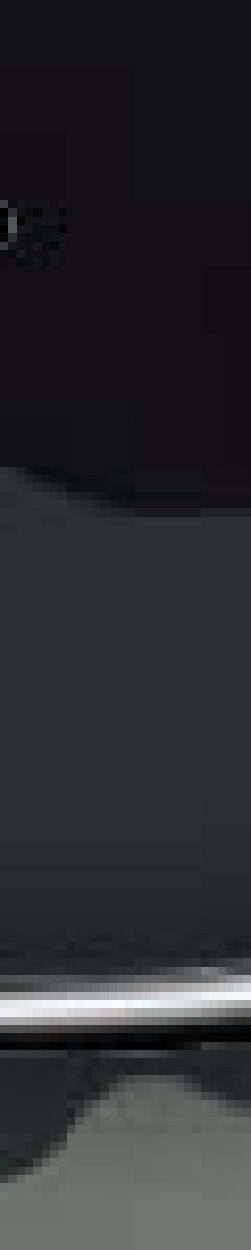

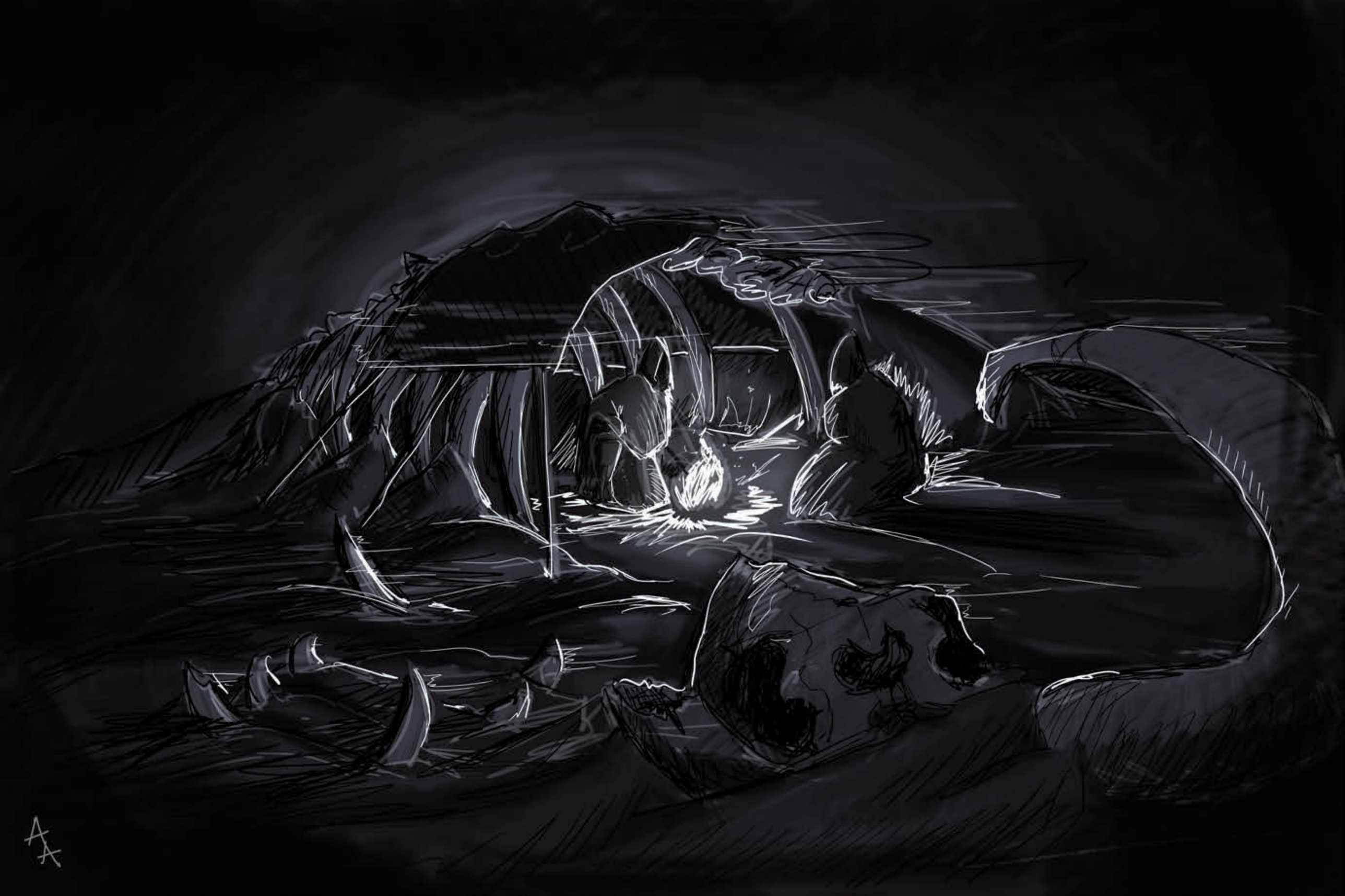

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