

MUTANT CHRONICLES V



MÖDIPHÜS™
ENTERTAINMENT

3RD EDITION
DARK EDEN
CAMPAIGN BOOK

FFFG™

MAP SHOWING SIGNIFICANT ASTROLOGICAL BODIES
AND NAVIGATIONAL GATES







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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

The action in the Dark Eden campaign is oriented around the ultimate goal of the Dark Soul, the opening of the Final Seal. This seal is the gateway to another dimension, one dominated by the Dark Soul. If it is opened the Dark Legion will flood through, overwhelming humanity's defences on Earth and possibly leading to the annihilation of humanity itself.

The location of the Seal is unknown and, during the adventure, the investigators' search for it will unwittingly alert the Dark Soul to its location. This will set in motion a chain of events that will lead to an epic finale on Earth, a battle for the very survival of the human race. The investigators should play a very key part in events as the future of humanity is played out on the fallen planet Earth: The Dark Eden.

In the first part of the campaign, the investigators are recruited into a Cybertronic Special Task Force (STF) and trained for this secret

mission. In the second part, the investigators arrive on Earth and navigate their way through the court of the Tsarina of Whitestar. They will be caught up in a plot to kill her and to destroy Whitestar.

Whether they thwart this or not, they should then travel through the blasted European Wasteland to the near-mythical stronghold of Sion in old-Switzerland where the Seal is said to be hidden. Once in 'Zion' the investigators learn the true location of the Seal and travel to old-Turkey.

Once they discover the Final Seal, the Dark Soul will also become aware of this. It will launch the ultimate attack against the Earth, and send the planet Nero itself against the Dark Eden. The investigators travel to Mars and its satellites to try to thwart this.

Despite the investigators' intentions, a shard of Nero should still end up crashing into the Earth, and the investigators will need to confront the Dark Legion in a heroic last battle as their vile forces converge upon the Final Seal.



Cybertronic: Building a better you - and a better tomorrow!

DARK EDEN PART 01

CONTINUITY

The **Dark Eden** campaign can be played as a stand-alone adventure, or as the third part of an epic campaign that began with **Dark Symmetry** and continued with **Dark Legion**. It will be generally assumed that the players have played their way through those previous two adventures, but the changes required to accommodate brand new investigators are trivial.

If the investigators were involved in the **Dark Legion** campaign it is likely that they have undergone some sort of genetic enhancement, probably through use of the Human Factor that is discovered in that adventure. That will stand them in good stead for this adventure.

At the very start of the adventure, the investigators become part of a special Cybertronic task force. Their exposure to the Human Factor can be used by the GM as a key reason for their recruitment. The sort of augmentation that Cybertronic promotes can be comparable to the genetic enhancements caused by the Human Factor.

If brand new characters are used, they should be created specifically to be desirable to Cybertronic, and the sort of individuals who Cybertronic would recruit for a special task force. Cybertronic will also be interested in mutant characters. So any character with a high percentage of mutant DNA is likely to be of interest to Cybertronic for this adventure (refer to the **Mutants & Heretics** sourcebook for full information concerning mutant characters).

A number of Prophecies have been made, albeit usually unclearly and obscured by the ages, that saviours of mankind will emerge during the most dangerous times, to offer ultimate salvation for humanity. If the investigators have made a name for themselves, then certain people in authority will have reason to believe that these Prophecies might just refer to one or more of them.

Another key reason for recruitment to Cybertronic is simply effectiveness in the face of the Dark Legion. Characters who have worked their way through the other campaigns in this series are bound to have a reputation as effective combatants and deadly enemies of the Dark Legion. Therefore, if brand new characters are being created, the GM should consider making them significantly more powerful than usual starter characters, or he may have to tone down the danger of some of the encounters in this adventure. As a suggested guideline to avoid scaling encounters, freshly generated characters should be given at least 5000 XP to spend prior to play beginning to better prepare them for the trials ahead. Also, consider building suitable backgrounds that cover some of their adventures to date.

Experienced characters who have run through different adventures can still be brought into this campaign easily enough. The chances are that, through their adventures, they will have picked up mutant

FAME AND INFAMY

If your group has played through both the **Dark Symmetry** and **Dark Legion** campaigns, they will have already seen plenty of action that would have drawn the attention of all five megacorporations by the time this campaign begins. Imperial will likely have had access to records from High Hythe and would not only seek to debrief the Investigators, but also decorate them for their brave actions on the asteroid. Capitol would presumably seek to use the characters as media pawns by showering the 'Heroes of Mars' in decorations and party invitations. Providing they parted on graceful terms following events on Venus, Bauhaus would present a more subdued offer to the Investigators, perhaps in the form of honorary citizenship or membership in an Order. Mishima, on the other hand, will possibly be seeking revenge for any one of the number of incidents that occurred on Mercury. Lastly, the Brotherhood will be viewing the characters with extreme suspicion due to their involvement with Human Factor—until their opinions shift following later events, of course. As always, choosing the right team is a delicate balance. Hiding within the Cybertronic safety net may just be the safest bet for the Investigators.

DNA or other enhancements that Cybertronic will be interested in. If they have any sort of reputation with Cybertronic, or even other corporations and organisations, that might be reason enough to join the program.

If none of the investigators have the Human Factor they can still be approached by Cybertronic simply because of their competence and reputation. But, in this case, it will be important that a number of the characters are mutants or undergo at least some Cybertronic enhancement, because many elements of the adventure depend on the investigators being uplifted to a small extent, at the very least.

Even if the characters have been largely unspectacular and have done little to bring themselves to the attention of Cybertronic, then perhaps they can still be part of this mission. Cybertronic could launch a program to recruit personnel from all over the solar system from a variety of backgrounds to join an elite task force group. If so, they might shine during training and trials, or they could simply be assigned to the following mission almost at random.

If the party ends up being a mix of characters that have gone through Dark Symmetry and Dark Legion and brand new characters, then the GM should be careful that there is not too much of a competence disparity between them, and enhance the new characters' abilities accordingly.

INTRODUCTION

CHROME AND RUST

CHAPTER ONE: JOINING THE CHROME REVOLUTION

INTRODUCTION

If the investigators have finished the *Dark Legion* campaign, then it is likely they have helped save humanity by destroying the last of the Necromakina in the deserts of Mars. It is also likely that they managed to permanently utilise the Human Factor found throughout the Necromakina to reverse any corruption within their own bodies, moving themselves closer, genetically, to the Ancients. This is the very process that the Ancients once foresaw back in the mists of history.

Alexander Durand has decided he requires the services of the investigators and has thrown all the weight of his corporation behind this, including tense negotiations with the other corporations and overtures to his surprised brothers to make sure he gets them. So, the investigators will be summoned to a meeting with Cybertronic on Luna. There they will be given the big sales spiel for Cybertronic and asked to join the 'only Task Force in existence that has a real hope of dealing a critical blow to the Dark Soul going forward' at a top-secret training facility on Mars.

The investigators will be asked to undergo Cybertronic bionic transformations, as is usually necessary to join Cybertronic, but this will not be a condition of their joining. The investigators are vital to Cybertronic's plans and so they will be able to call the shots, although of course they might not realise this. In any case, whatever uplifted mutation/modification they do have, will be of interest to the corporation, and potentially another weapon in their arsenal. While the investigators study under Cybertronic, Cybertronic will be studying them just as hard.

RECRUITING THE INVESTIGATORS

Cybertronic has a strange and varied reputation among humanity and, depending on individual experiences, could be viewed in a number of ways by the investigators. The GM needs to recruit the investigators into Cybertronic for the adventure to work, and therefore will need to be careful in how he approaches them.

Fortunately, Cybertronic has assigned Dwane Gascon to be the investigators' liaison: discretion and diplomacy are his middle names. He has a knack for finding the right word at the right time for

TIMING

If the investigators are playing this campaign directly after the Dark Legion campaign, then there are some timing issues. The events of Dark Eden should take place twenty to thirty years after the events of Dark Legion. This should only be an issue if the GM is keeping strictly to the known timelines of the *Mutant Chronicles* universe.

The GM can decide that time passes and simply gloss over the interval. Or he and the players can come up with more detailed accounts of each character's activity during that time. This will help to flesh out their characters a bit more in preparation for this adventure. He can even award some experience and advancements for this imaginary downtime.

Or, the GM could fill some of the time by running other adventures with the same characters. This could be used to introduce the characters to the Cybertronic task force, and help

establish them as top agents before they get sent on their most dangerous mission.

The GM does not need to worry about characters ageing during this time. Characters who used the Human Factor will find themselves barely ageing at all; this is an unexpected side effect of its use. It slows ageing to about a tenth of the normal rate.

If all the investigators have taken Human Factor, then the years between Dark Legion and Dark Eden will be largely irrelevant, and can be dealt with however the GM wishes. If only some of the investigators have used it, then there will be a marked contrast between those who have barely aged since then and those who might be thirty years older. This is good fodder for role-playing, of course.

No doubt Cybertronic will be keen to get to the bottom of these anti-ageing properties as part of their investigation into the investigators' enhanced DNA.

keeping people on side, and showing his point of view in the best light. If he cannot convince the investigators to join the cause, then no one can.

He will arrange to meet the investigators in the sort of place they feel comfortable in, at a time of their choosing, and make a sales pitch for joining his Special Task Force (STF). He will answer their questions directly (and at least seemingly openly) and attempt to deal with any scepticism they have.

Of course, this is going to be an important mission, where the investigators are fighting directly against the Dark Legion for the survival of the human race. Cybertronic is not scheming against its corporate rivals, and so selling the mission should not be that difficult or duplicitous.

If some investigators have the Human Factor, then Cybertronic will be very interested in this and desperate to get their hands on it. They will know better than to force the investigators into taking part in their experiments, so they will play it gently, offering to help the investigators, enhance them, trying to accommodate their demands, and offering to shelter them from the Brotherhood's tender ministrations. They will use this as an opportunity to take samples of the investigators' DNA and Human Factor.

But, the most important reason the investigators are wanted is that they are possible candidates for the role of saviour of humanity mentioned a number of times in ancient texts and Prophecies. Even those who do not believe in the veracity of such things know that they can at least be useful from a propaganda and psychological point of view.

The details of any deal between Cybertronic and the investigators will

TRANSHUMANITY

The various sourcebooks and campaigns that encompass the **Mutant Chronicles** universe provide a number of means for characters to push beyond the boundaries of their genetic makeup; although somewhat linked, these different endowments are dynamically dissimilar. The Genetic Pilgrimage, Human Factor, XLR8, and their connections have been summarised here for clarity:

GENETIC PILGRIMAGE: Refers to the genetic code that has been hidden and entwined within the DNA of the human race. It had been set to trigger once certain environmental and chemical conditions associated with terraforming, a process that had been readily available to the Ancients, became present amongst the ecosystems of the planets that the human race chose to colonise. The Guardians attempted to predict this event as best they could, yet humanity managed to reach for the stars far before this allotted date. Mutation is the forefront of the Genetic Pilgrimage, although it is occurring at a much slower rate due to the fact that the genetic time stamp that was inserted has not yet been reached. The worst fears that the Ancients had predicted are occurring, as the Dark Symmetry and the Legions have once again been unleashed, but the best laid plans of their Guardians have yet to reach full fruition; humanity has been gifted a chance to defeat the Darkness, but it may yet be out of their reach.

HUMAN FACTOR: Introduced during the Dark Legion Campaign, Human Factor is described as a distillation of the very essence and soul of what makes a person human. It is extracted from a subject's body and soul through the horrific ministrations of the Nekromakina: gigantic corpse-cathedrals that were specifically designed and crafted by the Dark Legion to produce the endless tides of Undead Legionnaires that flesh out their ranks. The Nekromakina hail from the time of the war against the Ancients, so any Human Factor that might be present within the depths of one of these vile factories may actually be the extracted essence of an Ancient or a Guardian. Injecting oneself with Human Factor will hyper-stimulate certain aspects of the Genetic Pilgrimage and may allow the individual to develop any latent psychic potential, or boost any psychic abilities that they already possess. It does not necessarily trigger mutation, but does introduce, unlock, or reinforce certain abilities that were available to the Ancients. Introducing Human Factor to someone that is already displaying the Genetic Pilgrimage could have... interesting results.

XLR8: In a similar vein to the Ancients and Guardians, Cybertronic have undertaken their own form of genetic studies in order to free humanity from the fear of the Dark Legion, though they have experienced limited success. Drawn from a chemical compound of Element 13—which is, in itself, a constituent part of the psionic crystals that were farmed by the Ancients—XLR8 is both a powerful viral antibody and a pathogen that serves a dual purpose: it combats the advent of the Dark Symmetry and its influence on a cellular level, whilst shutting down the mechanisms of the human body that seek to reject cybernetic implants. XLR8 is not designed to cause cellular mutation, but will instead seek to alter and enhance certain functions of the human body's auto-immune system. Unlocking the genetic manipulation that occurs as a result of the Genetic Pilgrimage and the Human Factor would be a serious boon to the function of XLR8 that would likely enable Cybertronic to remove its adverse effects, such as the associated loss of empathy experienced through regular use. What this would mean for the sanctity of the human race and its fleshy constraints would be a matter for an entirely different campaign.

be up to the investigators and Gascon to thrash out between them. But Cybertronic are in a win-win situation. Cybertronic will get to recruit very important characters to their task force, and will get to analyse them. At the same time it will get to enhance them, knowing that the investigators will be vital in the coming struggle against the Dark Legion. So, Gascon will be likely to agree to any of the investigators' demands, although he will be careful not to show his hand too blatantly. No one respects a push-over.

Even if they go through Cybertronic conversion the investigators should not be asked to undergo memory wipes as Cybertronic is well aware that the investigators knowledge and experience gained in the lead-up to this campaign could well be vital. So, they will offer Cybertronic enhancements, while allowing them to stay as free-agents, and not necessarily obliged to take orders from Cybertronic. The precise nature of the investigators' relationship with Cybertronic is up for negotiation, as long as Gascon manages to get them onside.



Dwane Gascon, TIFF liaison: Calm. Capable. Cybertronic.

DWANE GASCON

Gascon is a handsome, grey-haired man of about forty years. He is tall and lithe, and might seem frail, but it is obvious by the way he moves that he is stronger than he looks. He has a calm, reassuring manner. He wears a visor which projects a computer-generated version of what his own eyes might look like, if he had any.

Gascon always seems to pick the right words and present the right angle of any argument, and can be extremely convincing. He is unflappable, to an almost annoying degree in a crisis, and is generally impeccably clam whatever the situation.

Gascon's visor looks like a pair of normal, large, sunglasses, with extra lights and features. They would completely obscure his eyes; however, they seem to present their own animated version of what his eyes could look like, slightly larger and more cartoonish than in real life. These 'eyes' can be off-putting and intimidating at first, but after the observer gets used to them, they are strangely reassuring.

They seem to make exactly the right expression of empathy and interest at exactly the right time. And it becomes easy to forget they are some sort of computer generated graphic. The visor looks like it can be removed at will, to expose Gascon's real eyes, but the visor is actually hardwired into his face, and he no longer has natural eyes.

DWANE GASCON (TIFF CRI LIAISON) 🧐

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10 (+2)	12	12	14 (+2)
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
11	13	10	14

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	3	2	2	3	1	2	2	3	2	3	2

WOUNDS:

- ◀ Head 6 ▶ Torso 11
- ◀ Arms 7 ▶ Legs 9
- ◀ Serious 9 ▶ Critical 6
- ◀ Mental 12

SOAK: Subdermal Armour & Ballistic Nylon Clothing: (Head 1, Arms 2, Torso 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **CSA400 Combat Sword (melee):** 3+📈6, 1H, Parry 1
- ◀ **P1000 Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 3+📈7, Burst, 1H, Close Quarters



Unit Oscar attend their first briefing.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Knowledge Based System:** Gascon's eidetic memory has been enhanced by Cybertronic neural medical tech. He can recall most details by succeeding at an Average (D1) Insight test, while smaller details may need require a Challenging (D2) test.
- ◆ **Physically Endowed:** Gascon is also fitted with subdermal armour and Strength Enhancements.
- ◆ **Tech Savvy:** Gascon is a natural with new tech. All tests required to manipulate or understand new tech (including those of the Dark Legion) are reduced by one, to a minimum of one.
- ◆ **Unflappable:** Psycho-chemical conditioning means Gascon can never suffer the Shaken condition.
- ◆ **Unnatural Strength (2)**
- ◆ **Your Insight Serves You Well:** Gascon's visor is one-of-a kind and makes him the ultimate diplomat. It has the ability to read changes in body language, temperature and chemistry. It also reads facial micro-expressions. As well as being able to sense when someone is lying, Gascon finds it easy to put someone at their ease, or read their behaviour. When making social tests—including interrogations—Gascon gains one bonus Momentum.

UNIT OSCAR

Once the investigators are recruited they will be delivered to a purpose built, no expense spared, facility on the outskirts of San Dorado on Mars. The entire complex is given over to the STF and the investigators will only have a small section of it. They should get the impression that the unit houses a good dozen or so Special Task Forces, and that they are only one of the wheels in this particular machine. The investigators' unit in STF will be designated unpropitiously, Unit Oscar, which might make them wonder who gets to be Unit Alpha.

The GM should decide whether the party can do with other characters to bring extra specialisms to the unit. If so, he should make those characters and introduce them as AI-selected recruits. Cybertronic has specially selected the group as the most efficient and cohesive unit possible. This does not mean there will not be clashes of personality and very inefficient activity. It just means even Cybertronic's plans do not survive contact with real people. And, of course, all the investigators have been selected to form part of the same group.

GASCON'S MISSION BRIEFING

So, I expect you're wondering why you've been brought here today. I expect you're thinking, oh no, not again, not another one of those team building sessions, not another one of those group psychology evaluation sessions. I expect you're thinking, I hope I don't have to describe what sort of tree I would be if I were a tree, again.

Oh no, today is the day that you finally find out what all this has been for. I know you've been itching to know. I know that all this training can never beat the real thing, and that without knowing what sort of mission you've been selected for, it's difficult to keep focus and morale. And so, this is it.

The mission you have been selected for is a very important one; you might even say it could be the most important mission ever undertaken by humanity. You could say that it could be the very mission that saves humanity. Of course, it might not be. It's hard to tell, because these things are a bit hit and miss. This could even be a wild goose chase. But you must treat it like it is the most important mission ever, so that on the chance it is, you will be doing things right. Understood?

So, what is the mission? The mission is to locate the Final Seal at the end of the world. A mythological gateway through which the forces of the Dark Soul will pour forth and put an end to humanity. Yes, the Dark Soul does exist, though it is currently locked away in a prison of sorts. Of course, nobody knows where this Final Seal is. But we have various leads, and we have determined that it is time to follow these leads as far as we possibly can.

Your part of the mission will be to travel to Whitestar, on Earth, and liaise with the Tsarina's court, there. We have heard through our agent at the court that they have recently uncovered information that may cast some new light on the location of the Final Seal.

Once you have assessed the information you need to decide whether any potential leads are worth following up. If they are not, you should report back here, or perhaps our agent in the court will contact you, and give you further instruction. Or, you should follow up the leads and search for the Final Seal. You shall be trusted to play things by ear, and act as you see fit subject to your training. But, and let me make this entirely clear, on no account should you attempt to open or break the Seal.

Any questions?

The facilities will be clearly state of the art and any sort of special requirements, within reason, will be catered to. If any of the investigators (or other members of Unit Oscar) need Cybertronic enhancements, this will be dealt with first. The recruits will also undergo a series of tests and examinations. This will ostensibly be about performance and health monitoring, but it will be just as much about Cybertronic analysing the investigators' Human Factor, DNA, and any other potential upgrades they may have acquired.

While they are in the unit, the investigators will be attended by an army of pale blue-clad assistants as if they were mice in an experimental laboratory. They will barely be able to move without one assistant or other taking some sort of reading or offering them an energy drink, etc. This might be novel at first but is bound to become annoying sooner or later. These assistants never offer information or an opinion; they merely go about their work politely and efficiently, but also rather intrusively and coldly.

Over the next few weeks the investigators will be put through increasingly arduous sets of tasks and exercises. These will be constantly measured and analysed by Cybertronic and the investigators will be given much—probably too much—feedback on their performance. It is also quite likely that an element of healthy competition might set in over who can perform these exercises the best.

The investigators will also be debriefed intensively over the course of a number of short, individual interviews. Essentially, they will be asked about every aspect of their previous encounters with the Dark Legion. The GM can play this out, if he likes. But as the players and GM all know exactly what has happened in the campaign previously, there might not be any point. But if the investigators are new characters then this might be an excellent in-character method of coming up with backstory.

The investigators should let the GM know whether there are any elements of their previous activity that they intend to withhold from Cybertronic, however. Although this should prove to be quite difficult as the questioning is intense and repetitive, the questioners assiduous, and the investigators are all interviewed individually. It should not be easy for them to get their story straight.

Gascon will visit the investigators every three or four days or so. He will listen to any complaints they have and do his best to see that these are addressed, as long as they are not against STF doctrine. He will reassure them that everything is progressing well, but if the investigators ask about their mission, he will stall, as he has no intention of giving them this information until the scheduled moment.

HEALTHY COMPETITION

If the GM likes, he can present this mental and physical training in Unit Oscar as a series of contests that the players take part in.

He can invent some simple tasks that the investigators will be tested on, and have each member of Unit Oscar make an appropriate test, then mark down the results. These tests can be repeated occasionally, and the results compared. If an investigator's performance goes down then he should get a talking to by one of the assistants or by Gascon, and told to pull his socks up. At the end of the training period the results can be announced and the best performing investigator (or Unit Oscar NPC) will have the satisfaction of knowing they were the best.

The sort of training and tests Unit Oscar might engage in and which attribute might be associated with that should be easy enough to work out. The GM could also do some more complex tests, where several attributes are tested. For example, they could have to fit the correct shapes into the corresponding holes as quickly as possible while being blasted with obnoxious music, which will include an Acrobatics or Insight test followed by a Willpower test. They could be sent on a long cross-country run while having to memorise a series of symbols that they pass on their route, which would be an Athletics or Resistance test followed by an Observation test.

MISSION BRIEFING

After a number of weeks of training and monitoring, when the investigators are starting to chomp at the bit, the mission briefing will finally be held. The investigators will be led into a meeting room where Gascon will be sat behind a table flanked by two anonymous looking Cybertronic officials. He will formally introduce himself as the mission liaison and ignores his companions.

The GM can then field any questions the investigators have. He should be as open as possible as Cybertronic have very little to hide from the investigators. They will not give away the identity of their agent in the court (Valentin Gorev—see pg. 16), as they trust him to initiate any contact with the investigators when it becomes necessary, and they do not want to risk blowing his cover.

WORKING FOR CYBERTRONIC

For the purposes of this mission, the investigators will be considered part of Cybertronic. This may be just a flag of convenience as far as the investigators are concerned, or they may be in thrall to the corporation and ready to obey their every command. This of course depends on how matters went in the earlier part of this adventure and how negotiations between the parties panned out.

COMMPHONE WAREHOUSE

The investigators' cover in this operation will be acting as a Cybertronic trade delegation. In order not to arouse too many suspicions among potential spies in the Whitestar camp, the investigators will be posing as members of EPD (Execution, Production, and Distribution) on a trade mission to promote their hand-held communication devices. Their organisation is supposedly a commercial spin-off arm of EPD called Commphone Warehouse.

The investigators will be expected to maintain the ruse of trade mission execs any time they are in public or amongst those who might not be entirely trusted. The investigators can take a crash-course on the features of the new Commphone, and learn a few vacuous marketing slogans. They should also agree (or be assigned) fictive roles within the group, such as Chief Executive, Accountant, Chief Scientist, P.A., Technical Assistant, Security Liaison, etc.

RESEARCH RESULTS

CYBERTRONIC COURTING THE BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood detest Cybertronic and will do anything in their power to discredit them, which is common knowledge to even the most ill-informed street urchin. Why, then, have they chosen to place aside nearly two centuries worth of distrust and hostility in order to welcome them into one of their centres of faith?

THE SAVIOUR FIGURE

The Saviour Figure is a common one in many of the ancient records. He (or indeed, she) is often depicted as one of the people, risen through effort, or talent, or simple accident, to a position of leadership. The myths usually depict the ultimate sacrifice and some sort of redemption. Then the character passes beyond this world. Often it is unclear whether his destination is some sort of higher plane, analogous to paradise or heaven, or in fact a lower plane, the obvious analogue being hell.

What is clear is that the transcendental nature of this change of state, this passing, points clearly to some sort of time-space feature, either a wormhole, or a technological device that might create a phenomenon along the lines of a gateway to another dimension.

(Fragments of the Gods—Austin)

ZION

Zion (or Sion, or Zeeon, or Zyon) as the site of the transcendence of the Saviour Figure is a controversial

subject. It is included in a number of the prophecies, but at the same time, Zion as the host to the end times, as the site of Armageddon, as the centre of the whirlwind, is a ubiquitous theme. Surely the site of the redemption of the hero and that of the end of the world needs to be reconciled somehow. Perhaps things are in the balance. Perhaps they are yet to be decided. Perhaps both events occur, or perhaps they are in conflict.

Certainly, Zion is unmistakably the gateway to great evil. It is the door that, once opened, can never be closed and through which the Dark Legion will be allowed into the world. For this reason the site must be discovered and protected. It seems it is humanity's fate to stand by merely as guardians to such a place.

(Fragments of the Gods—Austin)

ZION

The location of Zion is a closely guarded secret. Perhaps no one at all now knows where it is. Most expeditions have concentrated on the traditional holy land, and the name Zion would not seem to be a coincidence. But, for all the scrutiny of that area, not a single sign of its presence has ever been found save for the vague and unscientific innuendo of religion.

(unknown)

THE CONSPIRACY THAT DOES NOT EXIST

Perhaps the rumour of Zion itself, the hunt for its location, and the myth of its existence, is part of the conspiracy that hides its very location. Perhaps the rumour of its existence is the very thing that proves that it does not exist. And non-existence is the perfect hiding place, for something that does, indeed, ultimately exist. Who could ever think of a better hiding place?

Top Seventeen Worst Conspiracies Ever—Fred Boswell



COMMPHONES

ENCUMBRANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY: 3**

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST: 7**

Commpbones are fabricated by one of Cybertronic's smaller subsidiaries. They are 100% reliable according to their marketing, can work underwater, and come in a number of attractive colours. They have a powerful signal, and have been known to work in Zones of Corruption.

They are also bulky, cumbersome, and usually sold by dead-eyed corporate wage-slaves.

RESEARCH

Some of the investigators will be selected to research the myths and legends of Zion. These are likely to be those who have shown the most aptitude in the intelligence oriented tests, and also those who have the most experience of contact with the Dark Soul. Anyone who has interfaced with Ancient technology would also be a good candidate. Alexander Durand is selecting these roles according to his own convoluted and impenetrable logic and so, essentially, whoever the GM thinks best is a decent enough guide.

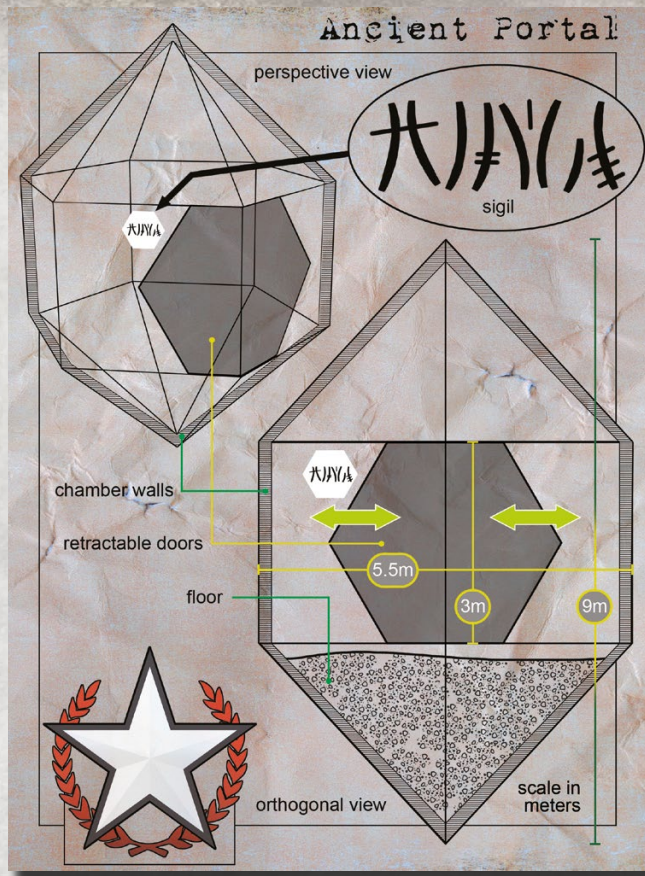
If the GM wishes, everyone in the party can take part in this, but splitting the party into those who have the knowledge and those who might rely on their expertise, could bring an interesting party dynamic.

The relevant investigators will be transported to a secure vault in the heart of the Cathedral of San Dorado and given access to a number of ancient tomes. It should probably strike them as unusual that Cybertronic and the Brotherhood are cooperating on this to such a degree, and make them feel that their mission must therefore be extremely important to transcend some of the bitterest inter-factional rivalry.

The research should not be too gruelling, as all the relevant books are here, the investigators just need to read them, or rather, read the relevant bits. If the GM wishes he can have the investigators each make an **Education** or **Insight** test and receive one piece of information for each success. Or he can simply give the investigators each of the snippets below.

OPENING ANCIENT DOORS

The Ancient doorways the investigators will encounter in this adventure will generally be of similar design and aesthetic. They will be made of a dark, unidentifiable metallic alloy which is almost impervious to damage. They are usually hexagonal in shape, or, if buried or connected to other materials, such as a rock floor or cavern wall, the exposed areas will suggest that the underlying structure is hexagonal.



When opened, two sections of the hexagon will slide open at a previously unidentifiable point, and when closing again, these sections will meet and bond together, leaving no sign that this is where they had once been open.

A smaller hexagonal panel will be present near the door. This will usually be a head height for a vertical doorway. Upon this panel will be a set of six key sigils that reveal the required unlocking/locking sequence.

Reading through one text that begins *The Doors of the Gods* (see textbox) should give the investigators an insight into the elements required to open these doors. The information in that text is far from complete but it should give them a good enough grounding that they could deduce for themselves the required elements of other doors.

The Ancients seemed to have used a system whereby they gesture to one point of the hexagonal panel while making the sound of one syllable. There is no relationship between the point of the hexagon and the syllable, so both elements must be learned separately.

Generally, when a door is found that the investigators have researched (for example the doorways in Zion), then it is merely an **Average (D1) Willpower test** to open, provided they have

THE DOORS OF THE GODS

... and so it appears that there is a system of somatic and sonic components that the ancients used as a means of encoding their locks. These components are described below, together with as close an approximation as I can find to human syllables.

One common system is to use the points of an imaginary (or indeed real) hexagon (or other simple shape) as a guide for the somatic element. The user must gesture to the relevant point on the hexagon while uttering the corresponding syllable.

Of course, if it were that easy then they would be useless as locks (among the Ancients at least—even this system is well beyond what a human could stumble upon or hope to decode without decades of research). The sonic component is never the same (except coincidentally) as the somatic one.

So, while superficially related, the two components are independent of each other. A rough analogy could be made to an alphabetic substitution code where a number, for example, and a letter, could both stand for a different letter. If this number and letter were to be used together, the original letter could be decrypted.

Why would the Ancients use this dual system? It can only be conjecture, but this might be an extra security element. Perhaps two people must be in agreement for the doors to be opened. Perhaps the code can be transmitted in two separate parts, lessening the chance of it being discovered by enemies. Who knows? The important thing is that both elements must be known.

Why have the Ancients effectively decoded their locks by placing the key upon the very door it opens? This must be the equivalent of leaving keys in the lock. This is only conjecture, but it could be that the doors are a kind of test; only those sufficiently familiar with the Ancients and sufficiently intelligent to mimic their sonosomatic codes are to be trusted enough to be allowed entry?

Perhaps one day we will discover the veracity of this?

I have endeavoured below to collect some of the references to them in ancient texts, but here I summarise the possible solutions...

(Somantical Variations in Ancient Parakinesis: A Brief Introduction (p.1683) – Gibson)

understood the source materials. If the door is not referenced in the source materials, then the investigators will need to work it out themselves from the Ancients' key sigils written on the panel. This will require a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test**.

If the GM and players do not want to do this entirely in the abstract, then the roleplaying solution would essentially be to wave your hand around a bit and make funny noises.

If the investigators read the texts available to them regarding what is known about Zion, they will have enough information to help them work out how to unlock the doors in that station easily (an **Average D1 test**) enough. But the doors in other stations will be a more **Challenging D2 test** for them.

CHAPTER 2: THE BLIGHT ON WHITESTAR

THE FINAL SEAL

Now that the investigators are top agents of Cybertronic, they are to be entrusted with a mission that is vital to the war against the Dark Soul. It could even prove to hold the key to the survival of humanity itself.

The known lore of the ancients repeatedly throws up the image of a Final Seal which protects against the ultimate victory of the Dark Soul. It seems this seal was put in place by the Ancients when they won their war against the Dark Soul. Some consider that the Seal is what is keeping the main power of the Dark Soul from the solar system and that to break it will mean the certain destruction of mankind. Some consider that it holds the key to the Dark Soul's defeat, and that it must be broken if humanity is to be saved.

Whatever the truth of the matter, the location of this Final Seal has been long lost to history. There have been any number of theories as to its location, but now, new information has come to light which should make the investigators suspect that it is to be found in the ancient settlement of Sion in the Alpine region of the European Wasteland.

Unfortunately for the investigators who have to travel there, that region is a nightmare of radiation clouds, acid storms, and mutated fauna. For that reason, the investigators will need to liaise with the Tsarina of Whitestar who will be able to aid them in their mission. She is a very powerful person, however, and the investigators will need to be careful how they approach her and how they go about asking for help. The Tsarina has already been informed of their arrival and it looks like she will be willing to help.

As well as helping them out with equipment and manpower, the Tsarina has books in her library which might also help with their research. Whitestar has done its own research on the Final Seal, and it believes that it has information that could lead to its discovery.

The Tsarina is currently in Smolensk, a large stronghold, situated conveniently close to the European Wasteland that the investigators will enter; they will be transported to Smolensk as soon as possible. They should pack whatever gear they think they might need quickly and report to the spaceport.

VALENTIN GOREV

Valentin Gorev is a high ranking official in Whitestar. His official title is Chief Executive of the Imperial Diary, which means that he is one of the top aides of the Tsarina in regard to her day to day duties. He has no official advisor capacity or any real say in the administration and laws of Whitestar. But, his closeness to the royal person and the confidential nature of his duties means that he is actually one of the most influential people in the royal court. And he is a Cybertronic spy.

Gorev is not a spy out of greed or self-interest. He firmly believes in Whitestar's custodianship of Earth and all that entails, but he is just as keen on the transformation of humanity advanced by Cybertronic. Any conflict of interest this inevitably throws up, he deals with as best he can. He does not merely report everything he knows to Cybertronic, but instead considers carefully how such intelligence will affect both factions. Similarly, he uses such knowledge to help Whitestar when that is appropriate. He is not strictly a double agent: Whitestar knows nothing of his duplicity. But he is not merely a puppet of Cybertronic, either.

Gorev has come to the conclusion that the search for Zion is becoming increasingly vital for Whitestar and humanity and so he has recommended to Cybertronic that they send an expedition. He has made sure that the Tsarina is as amenable as possible to this plan.

Gorev is a handsome, middle-aged man with distinguished grey hair and a white goatee. He dresses smartly but unremarkably and has a knack for merging into the background when he needs to. He also has a manner of demanding authority and respect when that is required. His measured tones, calm manner, and easy charm make it easy to see why he has become one of the Tsarina's favourite advisors.

Gorev can be used in this adventure as the GM sees fit. It is likely that he will wish to keep his cards close to his chest, instead of blurting out his allegiances to the first Cybertronic agent who crosses his path. However, he might find it expedient at some stage to reveal this to the investigators.

He will no doubt stay close to the Tsarina whenever he can, and he will make a point of meeting, and probably befriending, the investigators as soon as he can. It is also likely that he will not be able to resist giving them a few bits of advice to steer them in the right direction if he feels they require it. He will certainly not accompany the investigators on their expedition to Zion, however important that

mission becomes, instead realising that he will be of much more use staying as close as possible to Whitestar power.

VALENTIN GOREV ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	9	11
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	11	10	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	3	1	2	1	2	1	5	2	1	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Clothing & Light Civilian Shoulder pads: (Head 0, Arms 2, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Iron Hand Autopistol (Ranged):** Range C, 1+**↑**6, Semi-automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Iron Will:** Gorev has spent a long time dealing with the Tsarina's court and the various mercurial temperaments within. He firmly believes in an "Iron Hand in a velvet glove" approach when needed. As a result, he gains one dice of Momentum in all social conflicts
- ◆ **There's an app for that:** Gorev is fascinated by technology of all kinds, but particularly that of Cybertronic. Anyone demonstrating or exhibiting advanced technology will find any Difficulties on social rolls with Gorev reduced by one (to a minimum of one).
- ◆ **Our man in Whitestar:** Gorev is well-connected at court and throughout Whitestar. On a Daunting (D3) Persuade Test, he may be convinced to help acquire new items or parts. In game terms, all Maintenance costs and Acquisition tests are reduced by one (to a minimum of one) for the duration of a scene. This can only be used once.

OUTSIDERS

In the countryside around Whitestar and in makeshift settlements across the European Wasteland, live any number of normal and mutated humans which are not part of Whitestar. Most are simply trying to get by any way they can in the harshest of conditions. Many band together and create their own strongholds. Often, they aspire to become part of the Whitestar confederation, but live in such remote places or are too small for Whitestar to have assimilated at this time. Many revere the Tsarina, and the Orthodox Church, or at least their reputation.



Valentin Gorev is a one of the powers behind Whitestar.

These people are desperate to survive and have proven their hardiness and resourcefulness time and time again merely by achieving that. If they come across the investigators, they could react in a number of ways. Their safest option would be to simply hide and wait for the investigators to go away. Often, though, they will see this as an opportunity to trade. Trade is vital to their survival and the investigators are likely to be carrying any number of useful items. If used wisely, this is an excellent way to get help from the locals. A few batteries or some rations might mean little to the investigators but could be extremely valuable to indigent locals.

Some of these groups are likely to be wary of and protective against the investigators, but few are likely to be outright belligerent because you do not get to survive very long in such conditions by picking fights with everyone you meet. Many of these tribes are willing to trade with each other, as well as both Whitestar factions and the Sons of Rasputin.

HERETICS

However, a good number of the human survivors have been influenced by the Dark Soul. All sorts of weird and wonderful gangs survive, who take their lead, sometimes subtly, sometimes blatantly, from the Dark Soul and its agents. Many are extremely

unsophisticated and their only means of survival is to prey on others. These will fearlessly come down upon the investigators intent only on murdering them all and taking every last item they own.

Bands of mutated humans also manage to survive in the areas around Whitestar. These are often little more sophisticated than animals. They will attack on sight, savagely and ruthlessly. Even these, however, often display signs of the Dark Soul and possess abilities that are associated with the minions of the Dark Soul. Some who have encountered them wonder whether these unfortunate creatures are actually carrying out some unfathomable plan on behalf of the Dark Soul and its generals.

THE SONS OF RASPUTIN

The most organised faction of Dark Eden, and one that could very well challenge the supremacy of Whitestar, is the Sons of Rasputin. They are centred on the western border of Whitestar, while their territories reach across the European Wastelands.

Although the faction, as a whole, is known as the Sons of Rasputin, there are a number of branches that make up this strange alliance. Essentially, the Sons of Rasputin comprise a number of Military arms that include their own leadership, areas of influence, and lifestyles. It seems that these Obersts and their factions should all really be rivals and they would naturally be at war with each other if it were not for the guiding hand of the First Tsar to oversee them. Even so, they do often clash when minor feuds turn into minor skirmishes and sometimes even protracted rivalries. It has been hard to discern whether the Obersts are a bunch of disparate entities all acting largely on their own, but with a shared enmity of Whitestar, or a united army controlled by a single driving force.

What is clear however is that over the past few years these branches have been cooperating more and their attacks upon Whitestar have become more coordinated and intense. Many in Whitestar believe this is not a coincidence but a carefully planned assault upon the Federation. To what end these attacks are aimed, and why they are occurring now, no one is sure.

THE SEVENTH SON

The Seventh Son is a heretical organisation with close links to the Oberst Xeno-Ys, the Heretic of Ilian nestled at the heart of the Sons of Rasputin. It is inspired by apocalyptic predictions of the end of Dark Eden. It exists, in contrast to the Oberst's bidding, inside the confederation of Whitestar. It is made up mostly of everyday, anonymous citizens watching and waiting, biding their time to do the Cult's bidding when ordered.

Members of the Seventh Son cult meet in secret, reading tracts from its holy book, the heretical volume: *The Seven Prophecies*,

and sharing news of signs of the impending apocalypse. They pride themselves that when the end comes, they will open the Final Seal and pass through into the eternal Darkness from whence they came, ensuring their salvation.

Their membership includes citizens from all over Whitestar but they are more numerous the closer one gets to the European Wasteland. The portents of the breaking of the Final Seal are becoming more numerous and many of the members feel that their moment will come very soon. Even the arrival of the investigators is a sign that the Final Seal will be broken.

The Seventh Son will be behind a series of coordinated uprisings along the western fringe of Whitestar that will occur soon after the investigators arrive there. This includes an uprising in Kyrchnoi, a settlement close to Smolensk, which the investigators will soon be drawn to. This uprising has been orchestrated and is actually a trap for the Tsarina. The investigators presence there will be her best hope for survival.

The organisation has many agents in Smolensk and probably any Whitestar settlement the investigators may find themselves in. So, it can have a subtle but broad influence on the coming events. Essentially, if the GM needs one of the Seventh Son's followers to be present or close by, at any time, then this should be feasible. However, information in the cult usually travels by word of mouth, at the speed of rumour, so as an organisation it is unwieldy and can be slow to react. Having said that, most of the activity in this campaign has already been predicted by the Seven Prophecies, and therefore, the Seventh Son is already ahead of the game.

Seventh Son cultists in Smolensk will become aware of the presence of the investigators as soon as they land in the city. And word will soon spread throughout their members in the city. From there it will naturally travel towards Kyrchnoi, and elsewhere. They may even have known about the investigators' arrival before it happened. It is trivial to rationalise how a cult based on supernatural Prophecies might learn of such things. Following from there, it is possible that wherever the investigators go, the Seventh Son could be expecting them.

The investigators appear in the Seven Prophecies., referred to as the Angels of Wrath. These angels seem to turn up and thwart the Dark Soul on many occasions. Arguably, it is foretold in the book, that the angels will open the Final Seal which could bring about salvation. But on the other hand, the angels also guard the Seal from the Dark Legion, and might thwart the Dark Soul once more. As is the way of prophesy, it is never clear what is actually meant until the event happens. Despite it being implied that the angels bring about, to a certain extent, the will of the Dark Soul, they are considered, unambiguously, to be arch enemies of the Dark Soul, and should be destroyed, or hindered, at every opportunity.

Of course, the 'Angels of Wrath' might not actually refer to the investigators, especially if they fail in their mission, but at the moment, the Seventh Son strongly suspect that the investigators are the Angels of Wrath. When referring to the Seven Prophecies, the GM should flesh out the appearance and modus of the angels so that it might better imply the investigators are indeed the Angels of Wrath.

Members of the Seventh Son are marked with the sign of the seven. This sign varies but is often based on a seven pointed star or a heptagon and marked with the Roman numeral for seven (VII). Sometimes the mark is extremely blatant, for example tattooed or scarified across the forehead or chest, and sometimes it is extremely subtle and hard to detect.

SEVENTH SON CULTIST ▲ OR ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	10	7	7
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	6	8	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE					
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	2	2	1	1

SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	-	1	-	1	-

WOUNDS: 4 (Trooper) or 7 (Elite)

SOAK: Heavy Leather Armour: (Head 2, Arms 2, Torso 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Sabre of the Sons (melee):** 1+↑6, 1H, Piercing 2
- ◆ **Fritz S89 (ranged):** Range C, 1+↑4, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Dark Gifts:** As servants of the Dark Soul and the Apostles, Seventh Son Troopers have been blessed with the following Dark Gifts: Dark Curse and Symmetry Burst. Elite Seventh Son members possess an additional Dark Gift drawn from their Apostle's listings.

SMOLENSK

The investigators will be dropped off at Smolensk by a Cybertronic transport authorized to make a special detour from its scheduled voyage to Kosmograd. The investigators should be expecting to see the Tsarina there, but, unknown to them, she has had to make an unexpected visit to Kyrchnoi, a small, nearby settlement that has had a little local difficulty.

EXCERPT FROM THE SEVEN PROPHECIES

THE BOOK OF ZEEON, 9

... and thereby did they enter Zeeon, and was their way barred to them and did the forces of the Dark Soul congregate and did they worship the darkness and did creatures erupt from the blackness in order to take what was His.

Much blood was shed and were the followers of the Dark Soul laid low and repelled back into the earth and did the Angels of Wrath continue on their way. They did come to a Seal that was bedecked with shadows and darkness and entwined with serpents, and did they not attempt to break that Seal.

But thence were they not before the Seal, and did they see through the machinations of the Dark Soul and was He confounded by them. They did therefore withdraw from that place and go once more into the wilderness where they were beset on all sides by deep shadows in dark places. And thereby did they pass unto the red planet.

Smolensk is an impressive sight from the air. It was once a sprawling, thriving city, but is now entirely ruined. The once high buildings have been abruptly cut off at around the fourth or fifth storey, as if a single blade had sliced through the entire city. The remaining storeys are entirely blackened and charred, devoid of anything of value. The whole place gives an eerie ghost-town impression.

The current city of Smolensk, save for the landing strip and some surface defence towers, is now wholly underground.

ARRIVING AT SMOLENSK

When the investigators land in Smolensk they will be greeted by an official looking reception committee and guided towards some awaiting vehicles. Unfortunately, there have been some crossed wires at the Whitestar end and the investigators will be taken to an electronics fair where they will be expected to demonstrate their wares. About thirty potential buyers from all over Whitestar will be sat in a small lecture hall, waiting for the investigators to impress them with their Commphone sales talk.

Soon enough, however, once the investigators have sweated over this situation long enough, the correct liaison will turn up. He will wave potential buyers away, and they will leave quickly, with little fuss and much respect. This is Igor Yashin, of GUFH Homeland Security (Rodina) who will have half a dozen competent agents with him. He apologises profusely for the mix-up and offers to

take the investigators to their hotel. As the intention here is to avoid combat, the GUEB agents have not been provided with stats. If they are required, the Corporate Security (Elite) profile from pg. 275 of the **Mutant Chronicles** rulebook may be used.

On the way to the hotel Yashin will explain that the Tsarina has had to leave Smolensk rather suddenly on state business in nearby Kyrchnoi. He has arranged for them to stay at a hotel for the night, and he will pick them up again first thing in the morning and take them to the Tsarina.

Yashin will not be too forthcoming on the details of the Tsarina's business in Kyrchnoi but will see no harm in painting a general picture for any curious investigators. A bit of local unrest has occurred. As far as he knows, a faction against the stronghold's current ruling party has made a few attacks against some of the officials and institutions, and, as the Tsarina was close enough, she thought she would arrive in person to help deal with it. That's the sort of ruler she is.

If pressed on the nature of the trouble, Yashin will shrug it off and say, quite truthfully, 'there is always some sort of unrest somewhere.'

The investigators may suspect they are being given the run-around, but the mistake was a genuine one, and Yashin is sincere. He will drop the investigators off at the hotel and pick them up in the morning. He will leave a squad of his men around the place, surreptitiously keeping an eye on them, just to make sure.

Their hotel is decent enough, the best in the stronghold and the investigators should be made comfortable.

IGOR YASHIN

Yashin is an affable fellow. He appears laid back and friendly, although it is hard, given his job, not to suspect he is much more intelligent and watchful than he makes out. He will be friendly to the investigators and as honest as he can be with them, because he genuinely has nothing to hide at this stage.

He has been charged by his bosses to get the investigators to the Tsarina safe and sound, and that is exactly what he will do. He is competent and astute, and can swiftly transform from seemingly laid back to ruthless and professional.



Mutant or Nameless, the outskirts of Smolensk are home to more than just humanity.

IGOR YASHIN

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	9	11
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	11	10	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE					
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	1	2	1	1	1

WOUNDS:

- Head 3
- Arms 4
- Serious 6
- Mental 10

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Clothing & Heavy Military Shoulder pads:

(Head 0, Arms 4, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- Shock Baton (melee):** 1+5, 1H, Dreadful, Stun
- Iron Hand Autopistol (Ranged):** Range C, 1+6, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Check Your Sightlines:** Tactical awareness means Yashin has learned to use the terrain to his advantage. A successful Challenging (D2) Observation test as a Response Action allows him to gain one extra die to use on any subsequent skill roll.
- Tradecraft:** Trained as a spy, Yashin has a talent for spotting deception. He gains one bonus Momentum when making an opposed test in response to a lie or deception. This also applies to tests made to uncover hidden items or concealed information.
- You Started It, I'm Ending It:** As someone well-versed in spotting trouble before it begins, Yashin has learnt to recognize the signs of trouble. A person or group that has gained surprise over Yashin does not benefit from an additional d20 to any subsequent action taken against him.
- GUFb affiliation:** All difficulties regarding social tests with GUFb agents in Rodina are reduced by one so long as Yashin remains with the party. This may extend to other GUFb jurisdictions at the GM's discretion.



A CLOSER LOOK

The Seventh Son has decided to get a closer look at the investigators and to this end has sent one of their followers, Katya Kasova to instigate a chance meeting with one of the investigators. Katya is an attractive woman who will play this up, if necessary. She will be dressed as a member of the hotel staff, or in some other appropriate disguise, and will use her skill and judgement to get into a private conversation with one of the investigators. In order to get to the investigators without Yashin's Rodina agents finding out, the cult will have stabbed to death two agents who were overlooking the hotel's back entrance. The investigators, however, will not be aware of this.

Katya has two aims for her conversation. First, she wishes to glean what she can of the investigators. She wants to find out as much about them and their reasons for being in Smolensk as possible. The prophecy of the end of Dark Eden is vague and it is not clear at all whether the investigators are the supposed saviours of the planet or not. Katya will look for clues that they might be.

Second, she wishes to sow some sort of discontent in the group. She would like to drive a wedge between the investigators and Yashin, as well as make them suspicious of the Tsarina. If the investigators are capable of saving the planet for the Tsarina, then the easiest way to prevent them will be to stop them trusting her before they even meet her. For this, Katya will need to appear as some sort of innocent messenger of a mysterious party—the GM should allude to a third party that is both believable and likely to sew discord—that has the investigators' interests at heart.

She will confide that the investigators are in grave danger and that Yashin is not to be trusted. She can also say that the Tsarina is not all she appears to be, and the investigators should be very wary of her. Katya will then make her excuses and leave. If the investigators try to follow her then she will do her best to evade them, and there will be a number of Seventh Son heretics along her route that can help her with this. Also, the secret service will be wondering why the investigators are leaving the hotel.

If the investigators make a quick getaway from the hotel and attempt to make their own way to Kyrchnoi, the GM can play this by ear. He should bear in mind that Yashin's Rodina has a strong presence in the city and they also control the best means of travelling there.

So, after Katya has met the investigators, the Seventh Son should have a bit more information on them. The investigators could well have their doubts about Yashin. Additionally, Yashin will have two dead bodies on his hands, and could well suspect the investigators of being responsible. This should sow the seeds of distrust between the investigators and the Rodina, which will only help the Sons as the adventure progresses.

KATYA KASOVA ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	8	9	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	9	10	12

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	4	2	2	-

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Slicer (melee):** 1+^T3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 2
- ◆ **Fritz S89 (ranged):** Range C, 1+^T5, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Delightfully Deceitful:** Katya knows how to use her charms to best advantage. She can reroll one die on any Persuade test, but must accept the new result.
- ◆ **Local Knowledge:** Kasova is intimately familiar with the streets of Rodina. She gains two bonus Momentum when making a Stealth test to avoid pursuit, which includes any attempt made to discover her whereabouts.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Dark Gifts:** As a Heretic, Kasova has the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation, Pluck Mind, and Symmetry Burst.

TRAVEL TO KYRCHNOI

The next day, when he meets the investigators, Yashin will be in a foul, and probably very suspicious, mood. The investigators are likely to notice a big change from his more relaxed attitude of the previous evening. Still, he has no evidence that the investigators had anything to do with the deaths of his agents, and so must continue his mission to bring them to the Tsarina. If the investigators have also gone missing, or attempted to, that might be enough evidence for Yashin to decide to take them dead or alive (although alive is always preferable).

Yashin has to get the investigators to Kyrchnoi as quickly as is reasonably possible. To this end, he has commandeered the only train heading from Smolensk to Kyrchnoi today. Unfortunately, it is a clapped-out and filthy ore and scrap metal hauler, the Metallo Lon.

The Metallo Lon is old and slow but it is the investigators' best bet for getting to Kyrchnoi. It has twenty wagons and Yashin has arranged to have the first wagon cleared out and used for the investigators and his men. They have put some pallets and blankets in there to make the journey at least a bit bearable.

The other wagons are covered, to allow movement across the top, and to keep their contents safe. But the first wagon, the ones the investigators will be in, is uncovered. This will make the journey windy and cold, but it will also allow them to look out whenever they like and defend themselves, should the train be attacked.

The route to Kyrchnoi is underground for just over half the way. Thereafter, the relative safety of the subterranean track becomes an exposed, surface route. This part is notoriously dangerous. Anyone paying attention will see that the tracks have been damaged and repaired in a number of locations, and the odd abandoned wagon and other debris occasionally litters the trackside.

There should be at least one member of the Rodina on board the train for every investigator. Some of them, with Igor Yashin, are keeping an eye on the investigators. Some will be up front with the engineer. Some will be on top of a nearby wagon, keeping a look out.

The journey from Smolensk to Kyrchnoi is tedious and seems to take forever. Even though the investigators start the journey not long after first light, the train's engineer does not expect to be in Kyrchnoi until it gets dark.

The Sons of Rasputin are going to take advantage of these circumstances to ambush the train and attempt to kill the investigators. Informed by Katya Kasova, the Seventh Son in Smolensk considers the investigators could well be the prophesied saviours of the Dark Eden. They have, in turn, contacted a band of marauding, petrol-head Sons of Rasputin, and requested they carry out an attack.

OTHER ROUTES TO KYRCHNOI

If the investigators fall out with Yashin, or need to get to Kyrchnoi by some route other than the train track, it will be difficult going. They can follow the underground railway for about half the journey, but this tunnel was only ever designed to accommodate two railway tracks so they will need to be wary of trains using the tunnel. If they go by other vehicles, they will have to be extremely careful that a train does not come. They should be able to stick to one track while the train uses the other. Fortunately, the line is not busy. The latter half of the journey is by surface route. The investigators should beware because the area is being patrolled by the desperate Road Warrior cult of the Sons of Rasputin (see pg. 24).

DARK EDEN PART 02

The investigators might need to make the entire journey by a surface route. This will be subject to all the weird and wonderful conditions of the Dark Eden surface. The GM should be conservative with inflicting too many adverse conditions on the investigators at this stage, as they have a very long way to go in this part of the campaign, and much of it will be across the surface of Dark Eden. It might be enough just to give them a taste of the harsh conditions and have them encounter the Road Warriors cult.

The route is rugged and exposed. Only the toughest all-terrain sort of vehicles should be able to cope with the conditions. Less robust vehicles will need to pick their way through the landscape slowly and carefully. They will have real problems if they try to outrun the Road Warriors.

Any encounter with the Road Warriors should be similar to the train encounter described below, except the road warriors should have a distinct advantage in manoeuvrability and speed. They will be able to track the investigators almost at will, and choose the best moment and terrain in which to strike.

THE ATTACK

At some point along their journey, towards the end of the day, when everyone is tired of sitting in an uncomfortable wagon for hours, the Sons of Rasputin will attack. They will do this just as the Metallo Lon has slowed down to make way for an oncoming train. The Sons are using motorcycles, trikes, quadbikes, and makeshift buggies for their attack. Essentially, they might use anything with an engine and wheels which is capable of travelling cross-country. Vehicle statistics from pg. 202 and 203 of the **Dark Eden** sourcebook or the Sons of Rasputin Road Warrior Vehicle sidebar can be used for these. Some may also be mounted upon Rivetbulls (from pg. 211 of the **Dark Eden** sourcebook).

A couple of bikes will use a rocky outcrop as a ramp to jump onto the rear of the train. They will then bike along the top of the train



The Sons of Rasputin attack the Metallo Lon.

towards the engine, and attack the wagon with the investigators in it. Meanwhile, several other vehicles will begin to travel alongside the train, firing at whatever targets they see.

As the battle progresses, more bikes and trikes will find opportunities to jump across onto the train and join the fight that way. In addition, vehicles will be able to drive alongside the train, for brief stints, close enough for some heretics to jump across to the train, and join the battle on foot. The Sons of Rasputin have a large supply of Molotov cocktails (Range C, 1+**T**4, Burst [Close], Incendiary 1) and small explosives (Range C, 1+**T**4, Burst[Close]), which they will throw at the train at every opportunity. Soon, fires will erupt all over the wagons. Some of these fires will catch on and begin to damage the train.

At a suitable point in the fight and following a **Challenging (D2) Observation test**, one of the investigators spots that there is a burning barricade across the track, some way in the distance. This can be pointed out by an agent if necessary. This barricade is made up of a couple of small vehicles, a few logs, some mattresses, and scrap metal—whatever the Sons could find. The investigators will have to make the decision whether to try to stop before the train hits it.

SONS OF RASPUTIN ROAD WARRIORS

The Road Warriors is a group of the Sons of Rasputin who are highly mobile, a sort of petrol-engined, nomadic, marauding band reminiscent of the ancient Mongols or Hun. The entire group travels by vehicle and has no fixed base. They might settle for a week or two at a time in a makeshift fortress of ringed vehicles, but will soon be off again.

They spend their energy searching for and raiding peripheral Whitestar settlements and trade routes. They send out bike, trike, and quad scouts to look for potential targets. When they are found, the main raiding force will attack, killing everyone they can find and retrieving what weapons and supplies they can get. They are especially interested in getting hold of more fuel for their vehicles.

They employ a vast array of makeshift weapons and bodged together vehicles. The key to their function is mobility; if one of their vehicles fails, they will fix it as soon as they can, but if they deem it not worth repairing they will quickly strip it of everything they can, and go on their way.

About half the force travels in a slower convoy of all-terrain trucks and caravans. These are the support groups, and ancillary workers, cooks, mechanics, and metal workers that support the main fighting force. Even this force is entirely mobile, and covers many thousands of miles every year.

SONS OF RASPUTIN ROAD WARRIOR VEHICLES

QUALITIES	Agile, Exposed, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	80 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	2	
CREW	1 pilot 1 gunner	CARRYING CAPACITY	10 enc	
LOCATIONS		SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	5	10	6	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	2	5	3	2
WEAPON	2	5	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	1+ $\uparrow$ 4			
ARMAMENTS	- Forward-firing Maxim HMG: Range M, 1+$\uparrow$6, Automatic, Spread 1. - Pintle-mounted Maxim HMG: Range M, 1+$\uparrow$6, Automatic, Spread 1.			
NOTES	Maxim HMG has 5 Reloads. Crew have $\uparrow$ 2 Cover soak.			

Stopping immediately before they reach the barrier will prevent damaging the train, but it will give the attacking Sons advantage of speed and manoeuvrability. Going as fast as they can through the barrier will be a good policy, too, and the investigators' caution will be rewarded if they try this. The train will manage to push the burning barricade aside and continue on its way. Slowing down but still ploughing through the barricade could result in severe damage to the train and even a derailment, which will put the investigators at a big disadvantage and leave them with the problem of how best to get to Kyrchnoi, even if they can fight off the Road Warriors.

The investigators will have little choice but to stay on the train and defend their position. There is potential for them jumping across to enemy vehicles and capturing them, and for doing creative things to the train. The most outlandish plans should be rewarded in a spectacular set piece.

Eventually, if they survive, the investigators will have killed or damaged enough of the Sons of Rasputin that the survivors have little choice but to drive off and lick their wounds. The death of three or four Sons per investigator should suffice. Any captured Sons of Rasputin will have little to tell the investigators. As far as they are concerned they are taking part in one of any number of intermittent raids that they perpetrate on the people of Whitestar. They know nothing about any special circumstances or the investigators, except that they were told specifically to concentrate on killing or capturing the foreign looking ones.

Yashin and his men will of course help with the defence of the train, and they will acquit themselves well enough. There will be no chance of stopping the train and pursuing the invaders. Yashin has orders to get the investigators to the Tsarina. As far as he is concerned this was just a typical Sons of Rasputin raid and he will have no reason to think that it was aimed at the investigators. And even if it were, the best place for them to be is in Kyrchnoi.

SON OF RASPUTIN ROAD WARRIOR $\triangle$ OR $\star$

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	10	7	7
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	6	8	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	2	2	1	1	2	-	1	-	1	-

WOUNDS: 4 (Trooper) or 7 (Elite)

SOAK: Heavy Soldat Armour: (Head 2, Arms 3, Torso 3, Legs 2)



ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Sabre of the Sons (melee):** 1+ $\uparrow$ 4, 1H, Piercing 2
- ◆ **Fritz S89 (ranged):** Range C, 1+ $\uparrow$ 4, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters

KYRCHNOI

OVERVIEW

Something is rotten in the stronghold of Kyrchnoi. The investigators go there to meet the Tsarina, however, they find themselves walking into political intrigue and a dangerous trap. The Sons of Rasputin have been working for years to set up this trap for the Tsarina and it is about to be sprung. As fortune has it, the investigators end up in exactly the right place at the right time to save her. Or perhaps it is exactly the wrong place at the wrong time.

THE STRONGHOLD

Kyrchnoi is one of the confederation's smaller strongholds, having a population of only a few thousand. It does however hold an important position near the frontier of Whitestar. Therefore, it lives under the shadow of the Sons of Rasputin. It was only reclaimed about a hundred years ago, and in its early days had

to withstand strong counter attacks from the Sons. These days, however, it seems to have become much safer, and removed from the true frontier, which has shifted some way westwards since then.

The place is a collection of ugly concrete bunkers nestled in the forested hills around the railway. Many of the bunkers are linked by underground access tunnels. It looks like the town was constructed with defence as the highest priority and aesthetics as the lowest. This system of bunkers does give the defenders of the town excellent positions for observation and fields of fire.

At the hub of the network of communication tunnels is the central vault of the settlement, or the town hall, as it is often called. This is a large underground space which is used for meetings and assemblies. It has a number of ante chambers which are used for administration and dwelling space for about half the populace. Most of the other half of the populace lives in the outlying bunkers.

The town also marks the termination of the railway. Any westward travel from here will need to be done by a different means. There is some track going westwards, and this is a mixture of ancient, barely safe track and modern repair attempts, after only a dozen miles or so the track becomes completely unusable, through its age and vandalism by the Sons of Rasputin.

Kyrchnoi's political system is a sort of democratic presidential dictatorship. Every six years a popular show of hands determines the president, who has virtually free rein to run the stronghold.

ALEXEI VILNIEV

Vilniev was voted president of the stronghold two years ago, when the previous president, the popular Dimiti Sturgov, died of old age. Vilniev was an outsider but he rose to power on the back of a couple of heroic raids against the Sons of Rasputin. He plays these down, but the rumour in the stronghold is that his leadership and bravery in routing the Sons' war parties was nothing short of heroic.

Vilniev is a big bear of a man, an archetypal Whitestar warrior. He is tall and muscular and sports an impressive grizzled beard. He certainly looks the part. However, it is not hard to see his reasonableness and indecision might not make the best sort of president in such an exposed settlement.

ALEXEI VILNIEV ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	10	7	7
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	6	8	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	1	2	1	-	-	2	1	-	-

WOUNDS: 7

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Iron Hand Autopistol (Ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**4, Semi-automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Soldier First, Politician Second:** A former warrior, the mantle of politics has been thrust onto Vilniev's shoulders, and he is uncomfortable in his new role. Increase the Repercussion on all tests by two when he is called upon to use his political role.
- ◆ **Local Hero:** His reputation on the battlefield has elevated Vilniev to local celebrity status. He may reroll one d20 when making a Persuade or Command test, but must accept the new result.
- ◆ **Behind Every Ruler:** Although ruler of Kyrchnoi, Vilniev relies heavily on Leonid Marin for advice. If a decision involves the town directly, he must make a Challenging (D2) Willpower test, or else call upon Marin's counsel immediately.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **False Proficiency:** Vilniev has become skilled in covering his actions to avoid looking weak. He may spend Dark Symmetry points to increase any Insight or Observation test made to detect his reliance upon Leonid's advice. Every two Dark Symmetry points spent will increase the difficulty of such a test by one step, to a maximum of four Dark Symmetry points and an increase of two difficulty.

LEONID MARIN

Fortunately for Vilniev, he has Leonid Marin to advise him and keep the stronghold running smoothly. Vilniev secretly fears that he would be lost without Marin's help, and leaves him to the day to day running of the stronghold, taking his advice on all the big decisions. However, both are aware that this arrangement is not the best for morale, and so both are careful to make it seem in public that Vilniev is the one showing leadership and making the decisions.

Marin is behind the rise of the cult of the Seventh Son in Kyrchnoi. He has used his influence to get followers of the cult into positions of responsibility, and to side-line, or dispose of, those most opposed to the cult. He works subtly and effectively, and seems to have an instinct for exploiting a person's weakness.

Marin is a small, thin-lipped weaselly figure. He has lank dark hair and a pencil moustache. He seems to glide silently around, keeping an eye on everything, and has a way of making suggestions sound like threats. He is utterly inscrutable and has dark, dead eyes.

LEONID MARIN ☹

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	8	8	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	11	12	15 (+2)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	1	1	-	3	1	4	4	3	2

WOUNDS:

- ◆ **Head 3**
- ◆ **Arms 3**
- ◆ **Serious 5**
- ◆ **Mental 12**
- ◆ **Torso 7**
- ◆ **Legs 5**
- ◆ **Critical 3**

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Slicer (melee):** 1+**T**3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Personal Dark Symmetry 4**
- ◆ **Supernatural Personality (2)**
- ◆ **Cooperation is Mandatory:** Marin is skilled at manipulating people—or threatening them when need be. He may reroll one d20 when making a Command or Persuade test, but must accept the new result. Additionally, he gains one bonus Momentum on all Social tests.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Minions Everywhere:** For two Dark Symmetry points, Marin can summon ↑ Heretics to his side. If a Dark Symmetry Icon is rolled and this suits the story, even allies of the investigators may reveal themselves to be the Heretics they are. Each investigator must make a Challenging (D2) Willpower test or suffer a mental assault and one Dread if an ally is revealed to be a Heretic.
- ◆ **Dark Gifts:** Marin has been a faithful, yet subtle follower of the Dark Soul. He has access to the following Dark Gifts: Dark Curse, Obfuscation, Stir the Dark Heart, Symmetry Burst, Veil of Enemies.



FATHER VASILIS

Deacon of the Zoglorian Orthodox Church and their prime representative in Kyrchnoi is Father Vasilis. Vasilis is a wrinkled, grey-bearded character, old now, but still retaining a young glint in his eye. He has travelled extensively across the Whitestar territories, and has chosen to settle in Kyrchnoi and see out his days here. He does this because the settlement needs the guiding hand of the Zoglorian Orthodox Church. Vasilis is well-respected in the stronghold, and until recently, very few would have a bad word to say about him.

A few years ago, Vasilis would have been able to spot exactly what is going wrong in Kyrchnoi, and be able to put a stop to it. But now, in his dotage, he does not have the awareness and keen senses to keep abreast of everything, nor the strength of will to put things right.

FATHER VASILIS ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	9	10	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	9	5	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	1	1	1	–	1	–	3	1	1	–

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Interwoven Ceremonial Vestments: (Head 0, Arms 1, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Bonesword (melee):** 1+↑6, 1H, Pious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Not all there:** A once-vital man, Vasilis is a shadow of his former firebrand days as priest and Bone Hussar. His Repercussion range on all tests increases by two when in combat.
- ◆ **One last Futile and Stupid Gesture:** A former Bone Hussar before becoming a priest, he retains some of the skills he learnt and displays the same measure of bravado. If subject to the sounds of combat, he must make a Challenging (D2) Willpower test. On failure, he will attempt to attack the nearest enemy.

DEACON DARYA

Father Vasilis, and nearly everyone else in Kyrchnoi, calls her Deacon Darya, although she is obviously too young to be a real deacon. Darya is an orphan. Her parents were killed by marauding Sons of Rasputin a few years ago. She was carried back to Kyrchnoi by survivors and given to Father Vasilis. Vasilis raised her, and is training her to become the church's representative in Kyrchnoi, for when he is no longer with them. She is still young, however, and has much to learn. Vasilis fears that he will die before she has had a chance to grow into her role and stake a strong claim for this position officially.

Darya is timid and tiny. She looks younger than her thirteen years, but is bright and can engage in theological debate with the best of them. She does not have the imposing personality and forthright nature that would make a genuinely good deacon of a frontier settlement.

Darya is loyal to Vasilis and virtually lost without him. She follows him around the settlement, whenever she is able, carrying whatever paraphernalia he might require. On her own, she has little initiative, but can carry out any mundane orthodox ritual required of her.



Vasilis and Darya: the changing face of the Zoglorian Church.

DEACON DARYA ▲

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH		PHYSIQUE		AGILITY		AWARENESS	
7		7		8		8	
COORDINATION		INTELLIGENCE		MENTAL STRENGTH		PERSONALITY	
8		10		7		8	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-

WOUNDS: 3

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

► **Rusty penknife (melee):** 1+13, 1H, Toxic 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

► **Beloved of Kyrchnoi:** If Darya is killed, all residents of Kyrchnoi suffer one point of Dread.

THE CONSPIRACY

Leonid Marin is the villain of this piece, and he has made it his mission over the past few years to set a trap and murder the Tsarina. Part of his plan was to set up the hapless Vilniev as president of the stronghold. In this way, he has effective control of the settlement while hiding behind Vilniev, an innocent figurehead.

Since Vilniev came to power he has been manipulating the governance of Kyrchnoi and events in the stronghold to create a trap for the Tsarina. Marin has filled Vilniev's head full of misleading intelligence and reports of marauding heretics, and an impending invasion by the Sons of Rasputin, to keep him paranoid and malleable. He has manoeuvred his heretic allies into important posts throughout the settlement and side-lined many who are

opposed to him. The process was careful and painstaking, but now all the elements are in place; the trap for the Tsarina is about to be sprung.

Marin has surreptitiously encouraged the Seventh Son heresy among the people of Kyrchnoi. He has brought powerful Seventh Son heretics into the city, and manipulated many of their opponents to leave, or simply had them killed. He has facilitated the spread of the heresy among the administration and the militia of the stronghold.

The recent uprising was arranged by the Seventh Son. It was no coincidence this minor rebellion occurred while the Tsarina was in nearby Smolensk. Marin knew that the great leader would come in person to the aid of her people. Not only was it a ruse to encourage the Tsarina to come, it was a handy way of killing off some of the potential opponents of the uprising. The guards all killed during the fighting were all those loyal to Vilniev leaving heretics to take their place. The 'rebels' who were killed were actually some of the most loyal citizens, too. The whole event was a sham. Now, with some of Kyrchnoi's most loyal citizens out of the way and the Tsarina in town, the Seventh Son is getting ready to ambush her.

The last piece of Marin's jigsaw is to get rid of Father Vasilis. This is to be done very soon, but the advent of the investigators has encouraged him to change the timing. Now Marin is not sure exactly which course of action to take. It seems those rumoured and identified to be the saviours of Dark Eden have turned up at exactly this moment. Nevertheless, Marin has gone too far with his plan to turn back now.

His plan is flexible, however, and now he has decided that framing one or more of the investigators in the murder of Father Vasilis will be a way to kill two birds with one stone.

THE UPRISING

The uprising had been planned by Marin for a long time. The Tsarina's visit to Smolensk is the perfect opportunity to put it into practice. He reasoned that when she heard about it, she would not be able to resist coming to Kyrchnoi to be seen dealing with it.

The uprising, however, is nothing of the sort. Marin gathered together about forty of the most loyal citizens of Kyrchnoi, and massacred them. There were no survivors. In addition, six stronghold militia who were not members of the Seventh Son were killed, and their deaths put down to the actions of the revolutionaries. This also gave him the opportunity to gain even more control over the militia. Marin put the word out that this was a heretical uprising against the rule of the Tsarina, which his loyal troops bravely put down.

The Tsarina arrived a couple of days later. She is, of course, well protected and surrounded by her entourage and so Marin bides his

time to get a chance to assassinate her. He has concocted another intricate plan to lure her bodyguard away and leave her at the mercy of his Seventh Sons. Marin plans to orchestrate another mock uprising to stretch and manipulate the Tsarina's body guard.

THE TSARINA

The Tsarina arrived in Kyrchnoi a day ahead of the investigators. During that time, she met Vilniev and other important people in the settlement, but Marin will be keeping himself to himself in the background.

Vilniev took the Tsarina to view the settlement (it is her first time here) and especially a tour of the site of the uprising. She gave a rousing and patriotic speech to the assembled members of the stronghold.

Vilniev told the Tsarina of the (imaginary) assembled hordes of the Sons of Rasputin in the vicinity and the precarious state of the settlement. The false intelligence lead the Tsarina to consider a pre-emptive strike against the heretics. This is a godsend to Kyrchnoi and a fine demonstration of her power. For this reason, she is staying in the settlement for several days while she plans her attack. Marin is delighted by this, as it means many of her troops will be away from the stronghold when he springs his trap.

The Tsarina is, of course, staying on her royal train, the Zolotoy Glaz, with all the usual precautions against attack. Marin has concocted a ruse that will lure her from that relative safety to a place where he is confident he will be able to assassinate her.

IGOR YASHIN

Once Yashin delivers the investigators safely to the court of the Tsarina his mission is finished. If he has been getting along well with the investigators, or perhaps if he has not, then the GM might decide to keep him around. He, and some of his Rodina, can be ordered to bodyguard (i.e. keep an eye on) the investigators during their time in Kyrchnoi. Even after they leave and head for the European Wasteland, he can be part of the Whitestar force that accompanies them.

THE INVESTIGATORS ARRIVE

The investigators are likely to arrive late in the day, and they may be desperate to speak to the Tsarina, but all attempts will be rebuffed by her entourage. She has already retired for the evening, but they should be able to make arrangements to meet her the next day. This will not be easy, as people cannot simply turn up and demand to see the Tsarina. The investigators' credentials should be impeccable, and she is expecting their arrival. Even so, the investigators will need to stick as close as they can to the correct protocol and etiquette if they are to see her in good time.



Cybertronic have tried to find the Seal a number of times.

MEETING THE TSARINA

The GM should be prepared to make the investigators work for their time with the Tsarina. She is an extremely important person, and, as the investigators have grown in importance as the campaign has gone on, one of the few people left in the setting who they should really feel inferior to. Everything is still up for negotiation at this stage. Can the investigators get on with her? Is she prepared to help them? Can they form a long-term alliance? Do both parties even trust each other?

Eventually they should be allowed into the throne room of the Zolotoy Glaz and be allowed to explain themselves. This should probably be quite daunting for the investigators, the Tsarina has a presence and a power that intimidates and cows normal men and even the investigators should feel some of this.

If the investigators are impressive enough in return, the Tsarina will agree to their mission and pledge some personnel to help them. She will give them access to the relevant tomes and help kit them out as best she can should they require specialist equipment.

VALENTIN GOREV

Gorev should be around the Tsarina at this point. He will try to make sure that she will eventually meet the investigators, no matter how bad an impression they have made thus far. He will try to introduce himself to the investigators, and have a few encouraging words for them, but almost certainly he will not make his Cybertronic role known to them at this stage. He works closely with Anya Nastrova and so will be able to point the investigators in her direction if they bring up any details of their mission.



RESEARCHING THE FINAL SEAL

Among the Tsarina's retinue is Professor Anya Nastrova. She is the driving force behind the Whitestar end of the search for the Final Seal. At the request of Cybertronic, she brought a few sources of information on the location of the Final Seal which should be useful to the investigators.

Nastrova will use the evidence illustrated below to support her theory that the location of Zion is actually the ancient Swiss city of Sion. She will reveal this to the investigators as some great discovery and hopefully be convincing. This is the great discovery that Cybertronic has been promised by Whitestar and this should be all the prompting the investigators need to begin preparing an expedition to Sion.

It should take the investigators the rest of the day to go through the information with Nastrova and cross reference their various sources. Those who are less academically inclined will not have much to do, and Nastrova is rather short with those who do not show any intellectual curiosity or understanding of history. But there is a conspiracy about to come to fruition, if the investigators are to stop it they will need to become aware of it at some point. Some investigators should be encouraged to tour the rest of the stronghold and have a good look around. If those not involved with the research do not feel inclined to check out the town or look into the recent uprising, then Sacha Nysov (see pg. 33) will come to them.

ZION

The name Zion, Sion, Zygon, Zeeon, or any other number of roughly transliterated synonyms, has long been associated with the location of the Final Seal. It might refer to any of number of places. The name is well known, but its location, and even its function, is a mystery.

In some legends, it is the location of the Seal. In others, it is described as the location of one of the twelve keys to the Seal. In one, it is the location of the lock that keeps the seal closed. There are any number of references and interpretations about what Zion actually is, but nothing about it is known for certain.

It was thought that this Zion might be a reference to the city of Jerusalem, but now, in the light of new evidence, it is thought that the location may actually be Sion in the Alps mountain range. Sion is an ancient city with a fortress on a hill that fits many of the descriptions of the location of the Final Seal. The problem with this is that Sion is in the depths of the irradiated European Wasteland surrounded by mutants and heretics and thought to be almost impossible to reach.

This is a rough translation I knocked up from the scraps you sent me. Not happy with all of it, but it seems to be promising in regard to some of the unknown elements re. previous discussions.

And Zion shall be approached only one way, and they shall come up through the mountains, and upon two sides rising above them shall they be surrounds, and the only way they shall follow the river up into the mountains. And then overshadowed by the mountains on both sides shall they come to a crag overlooking the river, and within that crag shall be a fortress and within that fortress, hidden depths, and beyond those depths another fortress and so shall the secrets be hidden within riddles and the riddles hidden within secrets and thereby shall all the treasures of the world be protected and thereby shall this treasure be hidden from the light of day.

So, I've analysed much of the descriptive evidence of the supposed eye-witness accounts, and have come to the conclusion that Zion lies in the Alpine region of Europe. It's a bit too complex to go into here, but I'm pretty sure that I'm onto something here. The only thing that does not ring true is the mention of the volcano. Perhaps that was artistic licence.

This new evidence has been unearthed by the eminent Whitestar historian Professor Anya Nastrova. She has accompanied the Tsarina and, as agreed between Whitestar and Cybertronic, she is prepared to share her findings with the investigators.

If they consider this to be a reasonable location for the Final Seal (and they should) then, by the terms of their mission, they should feel obliged to travel there and try to determine whether that is the genuine location. Therefore, once Nastrova shows the investigators her new evidence, they will be obliged to follow this mission to the bitter end, despite the obvious danger it presents.

ANYA NASTROVA

Anya Nastrova is the head of history at the Imperial College of Zlogora. She is the foremost authority on the Ancients in Whitestar. Her aged face and fragile, skinny body belie a fierce determination that shines from her bespectacled eyes. She should know a good deal of what little is actually known about the Ancients and the theories and stories surrounding the Final Seal.

If the investigators head off to find the Final Seal, Nastrova will be determined to join them. It will be very difficult to change her mind, and, if refused, she will try everything she can to wheedle her way into the group or to follow them. The problem with her joining the expedition is that she is extremely old, and quite obviously weak and fragile. Her determination will mitigate these weaknesses, but it can only go so far. If Nastrova does accompany the investigators, they will have their work cut out keeping her fit and healthy.

THE WAY TO ZION

So, most accounts suggest that once in the valley of Zion, one must descend through the castle depths to reach the gateway. And that the complex in which it lies is protected by magical seals that lie across the earth, and the magic must be broken, to descend even further. And then at the basest point, the gateway is protected by an army of immortal warriors drawn from the very earth to rise up against any interlopers.

(unknown)

THE KEYS OF ZION

The Keys to Zion or the Keys to the Final Seal are often referred to in the ancient texts. Whether this is a metaphor, or a reference to physical keys is hard to fathom. It seems that these keys are in a group (or even groups) of six. In some sources, they hide the location of the Seal, suggesting they are some sort of metaphorical defence or obfuscation, while in others they physically prevent access to the Seal, suggesting they might be meant more literally.

Six Keys of Wisdom—Spoonie



ANYA NASTROVA

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH		PHYSIQUE	AGILITY
4		5	7
COORDINATION		INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH
8		12	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE							
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	-	1	-	2	1

WOUNDS: 2

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- **Explorer's pick (melee):** 1+3, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Could bore for Whitestar:** A dedicated researcher, Anya can easily find out information which might be of use and deliver it in the form of a long rambling discourse. All tests involving research of the Seal are reduced by one (to a minimum of one) so long as she is involved.
- **Old, not dead:** Despite her advanced age, Anya is tough when needed. She may reroll one dice on all physical pursuits, but must accept the new result.

THE TSARINA'S INTEREST

While the investigators are engaged in their research they should be visited by the Tsarina herself. She should drop by briefly just to let them know how important she considers this work, and how important, ultimately, the investigator's mission could prove to be. The Tsarina will even say that she considers this to be the single most vital quest for the salvation of humanity itself. She can ask the investigators a few pertinent questions to keep them on their toes, and get them to think about some things they might not have considered.

If the investigators and Nastrova propose an expedition to Sion in the European Wasteland and are remotely convincing, then the Tsarina will promise to back them and supply all the resources they require.

This brief encounter should serve to illustrate to the investigators how important their mission is. It should also help to make sense of the Tsarina's later act: At the denouement of this section, it is likely she sacrifices herself in order to buy the investigators time. It should be clear that she does not do this frivolously.

THE PROFANE RITUAL

This is a short sub-plot where the investigators can discover some clues about the Seventh Son, and about the supposed uprising. Alexei Nysov stumbled across some members of the Seventh Son dedicating a sacrifice to the Darkness, a body they would soon feed to the Wood Beast. Alexei did not get much of a look at anything as he was attacked, but managed to escape.

If the investigators were being a bit slow, or they have had fun doing other things, it would be reasonable for the GM to delay Marin's move against the Tsarina. The important thing is to give the investigators time to work out the location of Sion, and time to have a look round Kyrchnoi, without giving them so much time that the game is sluggish and Marin's plan is easy to counter.

SACHA NYSOV

One of the investigators will be approached by Sacha Nysov, a boy of about thirteen. Sacha will try to choose a place that is private and will not attract the attention of locals or the Tsarina's guard, because he does not know who to trust. He has deliberately chosen an outsider to ask for help. He is desperate to get to the bottom of his father's murder.

Sacha's father (Alexei) was a well-respected member of the Kyrchnoi community, an excellent scrounger and hunter. He had already taught Sacha a few tricks of the trade. The Seventh Son chose him to be one of the victims of their charade, identifying him as especially loyal to Whitestar and a tenacious defender of the stronghold, but especially because he stumbled across a profane ritual by the Seventh Son, a few days before.

All Sacha knows is that his father was called away by members of the Kyrchnoi militia on the night in question. By morning he was dead, killed for his part in a heretical uprising against Whitestar and the Tsarina. Sacha will swear that his father was always completely loyal to the confederation and had never had any dealings with anything heretical.

The investigators will not have much to go on. Alexei has already been interred in a mass grave alongside all the other supposed heretics and revolutionaries. The only thing he can tell them that is of any use, is that Alexei returned home from a hunting trip badly beaten up three days before he was killed. He did not want to talk about it much, to Sacha, but did say that President Vilniev was dealing with the matter, so it was all in hand.

If the investigators look through Alexei's things they will find a note he made about the incident. It is a map that leads to the location of the cave, a kilometre or so outside the settlement, and a scribbled

doodle of the heptagon that the heretics were using. He made two of these maps to help Vilniev's investigation. This one he kept, in case anyone else might find it useful, and the second he gave to Vilniev (who gave it to Marin, who threw it away).

It takes a **Challenging (D2) Education** or **Survival test** for the investigators to follow the map, as it was designed for locals who know the area well, but Sacha will have no problem finding the cave from the map, if the investigators rope him in.

SACHA NYSOV ▲

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	7	8	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	7	6	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
-	-	1	-	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	-

WOUNDS: 3

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Slicer (melee):** 1+↑3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 2
- ◆ **Bow (ranged):** Range M, 1+↑4, Munition, 2H, Armour Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **You killed my father. Prepare to die:** If Sacha discovers that Marin (or any other Heretic) killed his father he will attempt to gain revenge at the first opportunity, and may even steal a gun from the investigators to achieve this. This may cause problems for the investigators if they wish to capture a live heretic or interrogate a prisoner.
- ◆ **Huntsman:** Trekking through the local forests and hills is second nature to Sacha, and he will be aware of any oddities in the environment. If Sacha accompanies the group into the forest, the difficulty of all Observation tests is reduced by one (to a minimum of one).

TALKING TO VILNIEV

If the investigators ask Vilniev about this, the President will be taken aback that these outsiders are bothering him with trivial incidents about the day to day running of the stronghold. But, if they are reasonably convincing then Vilniev will reveal that he handed over Nysov's map to Leonid Marin and is sure he would have dealt with the matter correctly.

TALKING TO MARIN

Marin, of course, had no desire to investigate the incident. He simply threw the map away and thought no more about it, except to make sure that Alexei Nysov was chosen to be murdered during the uprising.

If the investigators ask him about it, he will be obstructive to start with. He will demand to know why the investigators think they can barge into the settlement and demand information on what is clearly an internal affair.

If the investigators persist, then Marin will reluctantly submit to their questioning. He will say that he did investigate the incident fully; he sent a few of his men to look. They followed the map and found a small cave, but it was devoid of any features. If asked for the map back, Marin will say the search party threw it away once they realised they were on a wild goose chase.

Marin is planning to separate the investigators from the Tsarina when he attacks her, as well as separating her from most of her bodyguard. Marin, thinking quickly, will realise that this situation can play into his hands. He will no doubt guess that the investigators will look for the cave (if they have not already) and so he will try to time his attack for when they are out of the picture. He will also send a force to ambush the investigators there, to hopefully get rid of them or at least delay them.

If he needs to get the investigators out of the way, later, he can send an anonymous message to them, saying that something interesting is going on in the cave. If he times this right, he feels sure that this will remove the investigators from the scene long enough for him to murder the Tsarina.

THE CAVE

What Alexei Nysov saw was a band of half a dozen Seventh Sons killing a local so they could feed the body to the Wood Beast. They have a heptagon scratched into the floor of the cave, which they cover with the victim's blood, as a dedication to their dark god. They then bring the body deeper into the cave system where the Wood Beast is held.

This is a common enough practice. If wanderers or outsiders cannot be found for the sacrifice, the locals will do; the area is dangerous enough that it is widely understood that people can go missing at any time.

1 CAVE ENTRANCE

When the investigators get to the cave it is likely to be empty and the blood will have long since dried (though it is easy enough to make out). There is a secret door at the back of the cave which will require a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** to spot casually, but easy enough to find if someone is deliberately looking for it with a suitable light source. This will lead to the secret underground system that leads, in turn, to the heart of Kyrchnoi.

2 TUNNEL SYSTEM

This disorienting and sometimes quite narrow network of tunnels is difficult to navigate. It twists and turns and has sharp drop-offs and cliffs. Traversing it without a light source is very hazardous. The heretics will know the area well, however. If Marin has sent his minions to ambush the investigators, this will be the place they decide to do it.

3 ANTECHAMBER

This section houses the mechanisms used to control the lock gates that allow the Wood Beast to be fed relatively safely. The scrap metal doors were a rushed, makeshift solution at the time the beast was originally captured. They have been strengthened and added to over the months, but it still appears to be an unreliable sort of barrier to enclose such a powerful creature.

The holding cavern is large enough that usually the heretics have time to dump the body in the lock section and close the outer doors before the Wood Beast can come running for its meal. Sometimes, if the beast is nearby, it surprises them and tries to break through the inner door while they have the outer door still open. This is a terrifying event as the doors creak under the creature's great strength and it howls wildly to be set free; all witnesses must make a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test** or suffer a Mental Assault and one Dread.

4 STOREROOM

This side cavern is used as a storeroom by the heretics, and occasionally as a makeshift sleeping area. There are a few food supplies and some sleeping mats rolled up in the corner. There are also some tools and some bits of metal for repairing and strengthening the lock gates along with lengths of rope. If the Wood Beast is still in the holding cavern, there will be half a dozen long, sharp prodding sticks in here.

5 LARDER

This is little more than a side nook in the cave system. It has not been used until very recently. Now, a number of locals killed in the fake uprising are hanging up in here, waiting to be fed to the wood beast. Depending on how long they have been left here, they might be starting to stink and some of the cave fauna may have moved in here, for the easy food.

6 PASSAGE

This passage leads to the main area of the Kyrchnoi stronghold. When the time is right, the Wood Beast will be released from the holding cavern and cajoled, pulled, and prodded along here to get it to the appointed place. It is a dangerous job and about a dozen heretics will be involved in the manoeuvre. Several of them will get too close to the beast, and end up seriously injured or even dead.



7 GUARDROOM

This is less of a cavern and more a niche in the side of the antechamber. This is where a permanent guard for the Wood Beast is stationed. Usually there are at least two heretics here at all times, but, as the denouement to Marin's plans approaches, there should be more than that.

In the room are a number of chairs and a table. There is a pack of cards on the table, to help the guards pass the time. There are a few plates and some cutlery and the usual items you might expect to find in a continually used guardroom. If the guards need to sleep (something they will be punished for if discovered) they go to the storeroom.

8 HOLDING CAVERN

The holding cavern is an extensive cave section with a number of shadowy nooks and offshoots. It is used by the Seventh Son to house the Wood Beast. It is large enough that investigators might get some way into the section before the Wood Beast attacks them. The beast is clever enough that it might think to cut them off from their escape route.

The cavern is strewn with the detritus of the creature's meals and victims, and the twisting, extensive nature of the section means that the creature really could strike from almost anywhere, with little notice. The beast is used to its prison and has adapted to it well.

If the creature is already gone from here, when the investigators arrive then they will be able to discover a few clues to the cavern's function. They will also find a few partially eaten bodies. The Seventh Son decided that burying all the victims of their fake uprising would be a waste of flesh, so they took half a dozen of the bodies and gave them to the Wood Beast. This was much more than the usual amount of food the creature gets fed and many of the bodies are only half eaten, or just a bit gnawed. Alexei Nysov's body is among them and, if Sacha Nysov is accompanying the investigators, he will certainly recognise the half eaten body of his father.

THE WOOD BEAST

The Wood Beast is a monstrous, mutated creature discovered by members of the Seventh Son on a routine scouting and hunting trip several months ago. The Seventh Son has been keeping it in a little-known underground section of caves some way from the heart of the settlement. They immediately recognised it as a gift from the Dark Soul specifically to advance their plot against the Tsarina. At the time, they had no idea how it might help them, but, now that the Tsarina is in town, it seems obvious the intention of the Dark Soul is that the Tsarina must be fed to the beast.

The Wood Beast is some sort of mutated bear-like creature. It is about 3 metres to the shoulder when on four legs, so much larger

than a bear, and it can rear up to twice that height. Its fur is mottled green and black making an interesting camouflage-like pattern. It also has four long, sharp tusks, though one of them has long-since snapped off near the root.

Not content with this bit of serendipity, the local heretics have enhanced the beast's fighting capabilities by riveting plate armour onto various sections of its body, and attaching sharp metal pieces to its limbs as extra claws and enhanced its tusks. Needless to say, this sort of treatment has made the creature extremely angry and belligerent.

They have also fed the beast the occasional human to get it used to the taste. Many of those locals who have gone missing over the last few months were in fact fed to the Wood Beast, and several of those killed during the recent supposed uprising have also appeared on the menu.

WOOD BEAST ☹

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
16 (+2)	16 (+2)	16 (+4)	11
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	6	12	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	-	-	-	-

WOUNDS:

- ◀ Head 9
- ◀ Arms 11
- ◀ Serious 13
- ◀ Mental 16
- ◀ Torso 15
- ◀ Legs 13
- ◀ Critical 10

SOAK: Matted hide and armour plating: (All 5)

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Rending Jaws (melee):** 3+**T**8, Armour Piercing 2, Dreadful, Gruesome, Unforgiving 1
- ◀ **Savage Claws (melee):** 3+**T**7, Armour Piercing 1, Knockdown, Reach, Stun, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀ **Fast Healing (2)**
- ◀ **Fear (2)**
- ◀ **Feed Upon Fear**
- ◀ **Grasping**
- ◀ **Inured to Cold**
- ◀ **Inured to Heat**
- ◀ **Inured to Pain**
- ◀ **Monstrous Creature**

- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Slave to Symmetry (1)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Agility (4)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (2)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Blood Frenzy:** Already not in the best of tempers, the Wood Beast may enter a terrible rage upon tasting blood, or any round thereafter. By spending one or more Dark Symmetry points, it gains two additional Momentum on each subsequent successful melee attack. This rage lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent.
- ◆ **Crushing Trample:** For one Dark Symmetry point, the Wood Beast crushes a fallen foe beneath its clawed feet. Once each round, it may immediately make an additional claw attack against any foe within Reach that has suffered a Knockdown due to its Savage Claw attack.
- ◆ **Last Gasp:** If the investigators reduce the Wood Beast's wounds to zero, they are far from safe. For two Dark Symmetry points, when the Investigators least expect it, the Wood Beast rears up and lashes out with one last attack before expiring completely.

THE TIME OF JUDGEMENT

In the lead up to the investigators' second evening in Kyrchnoi, Marin will begin to put all the pieces in place for his move against the Tsarina. He has a number of factors to consider, not least the unexpected presence of the investigators.

The Seventh Son has been busy ingratiating themselves with the Tsarina's bodyguard in order to put them at ease, and make their sudden betrayal surprising. Marin has contacted a band of nomad raiders affiliated with the Sons of Rasputin to attack a section of Kyrchnoi as a diversionary measure. He plans to make fragmented and sporadic attacks by them feel like a massive assault by spreading false intelligence. The idea will be to spread the Tsarina's bodyguard out and have them rushing from one place to another, while the Tsarina is put in a place of safety at Vilniev's gracious insistence.

That place of safety will be the Central Bunker, and the plan is that in all the confusion of battle the Tsarina will not realise just how many of her bodyguard and other allies have found it necessary to leave her side, and how outnumbered she now is by the stronghold's militia.

GETTING RID OF THE INVESTIGATORS

Marin will see how useful the investigators might be to the Tsarina, and so he will make sure they have things to do during the attacks. He will manipulate Vilniev into requesting or demanding that the

investigators help out in some of the more far-flung outposts of the stronghold. If these attacks kill the investigators, all well and good, though they are unlikely to be that powerful. They are just there to occupy the investigator's time while the Tsarina's guard gradually gets whittled down.

The GM should have Marin receive reports of a massive assault on the northern defences, and he should admit that he does not have the forces to cover it. His stronghold militia is supposed to already be in the thick of the fighting, but really, they are waiting to ambush the Tsarina's bodyguard elsewhere. If the investigators volunteer to deal with it then that will suit his plans. When Marin doubts that the investigators could deal with it on their own, the Tsarina can even send some of her bodyguard along to help them.

If the investigators do not volunteer, the Tsarina will feel obliged to send many of her bodyguards to help out, and that will play just as much into Marin's hands. Other reports will come in of a massive assault to the south, and so on.

When the investigators get to the area under attack then they will find only a few shots being fired from a distance, and very few casualties. The GM should do his best to occupy them in a skirmish, but sooner or later, the investigators are likely to realise that all is not what it seems as there are fewer Heretics than Marin claimed; this is certainly not a massive assault.

TURBULENT PRIESTS

As part of the uprising, Marin will have Father Vasilis murdered. Marin is probably much more scared of Vasilis than he needs to be. He fears his powers and the power of the church, but Vasilis' advanced years mean that he would not be able to rally the people and put up the sort of resistance that Marin fears he might.

Nevertheless, this is still probably a wise move for Marin, and it will have the added bonus of distracting the investigators. When Vasilis' body is found, in a bunker close to the Town Hall, a witness will also be found who will claim to have seen one, or several, of the investigators fleeing the scene. This is enough evidence for the investigator(s) in question to be arrested, and the rest of them hampered by the investigation. Even the Tsarina will have little option but to see that justice should run its course.

The witness, Joseph Smithov, will soon disappear. Because Marin fears he might give the game away, he has already been marched out of town and strangled by the Sons.

Deacon Darya witnessed Father Vasilis' death. Vasilis was cornered by three Sons, and stabbed to death. They did not see Darya who has since fled and is in hiding. She knows that she should report the crime but she is extremely fearful and does not know who to trust.

Essentially, if the investigators had not made friends with her, or with Father Vasilis, she will stay in hiding for the foreseeable future. The friendlier the investigators were towards her and the Father, the quicker she will come to their aid by revealing what really happened.

TRAPPING THE TSARINA

Meanwhile, the Tsarina will have moved to the central bunker at the insistence of her host. Marin has made sure that all the ways into the bunker are heavily guarded by his hand-picked heretical followers.

Once he has persuaded another pocket of bodyguard that they are better employed elsewhere, and that the Seventh Son has overwhelming advantage, the Wood Beast will be released into the central bunker. Many militia will open fire from their positions on the gantries overlooking the arena of the bunker, and more will be guarding the exits.

Hopefully for the investigators, they will realise things are not quite right in enough time for them to return to the Tsarina and help her escape. A decent resolution will see them fighting their way into the central bunker in the nick of time, and then having to kill the Wood Beast, then realising they need to fight their way out again. The Tsarina will order them to head for the Zolotoy Glaz which is plainly her best means of escaping.

THE ZOLOTOTY GLAZ

The royal train, as is usual, is standing by ready to go at short notice. If the investigators can reach it with the Tsarina, it will be able to leave the stronghold in a matter of minutes. The layout of the Zolotoy Glaz can be found on pg. 40.



The Tsarina makes her last stand for Humanity. Or does she?

The GM should have as many Sons as possible—both Sons of Rasputin and the embedded Heretics of the Seventh Sons—pursue the investigators in their retreat to the train, and manage to clamber on board the vehicle as it pulls away. If the GM needs to make it more difficult for the investigators, there can also be a pocket of Heretics aboard the train, who managed to sneak on as part of the earlier attacks. In addition, as the train begins to make its way out of Kyrchnoi, it can also be attacked by some of the Road Warriors gang similar to the encounter the investigators had on their way into Kyrchnoi.

The Zolotoy Glaz should soon be inundated with bloodthirsty Sons. The Tsarina's ever-decreasing bodyguard should be suffering even more casualties to the heavy weapons that are being brought to bear. The investigators should be hard pressed and it should be difficult to see how they are all going to survive.

The Tsarina will then make the decision to sacrifice herself for the good of humanity. She will order the investigators into the engine section of the train, together with a handful of her troops and any other people who might be useful on the investigators' journey. Anya Nastrova, if she is able, should find her way into the engine section and there should be a few interesting Whitestar personnel there, too.

Then, the Tsarina will order the front car to be disconnected from the rest of the train. She will, of course, be in the main section. As the engine car accelerates away and the main train begins to grind to a halt, the Tsarina will show herself to her enemies in order to encourage them towards her, and to leave the engine car alone. In this way the Tsarina hopes to buy the investigators time to escape and embark upon their quest to find the Final Seal.

FELLOW TRAVELLERS

A number of the Whitestar personnel involved in the battle can escape with the

investigators. Characters they already know will be good candidates for escapees. Igor Yashin, Anya Nastrova, Sacha Nysov, and Deacon Darya will all be good to have on board. A number of characters to help flesh out the passenger roster are described below. The investigators are heading for a long and arduous journey, having a number of companions along for the ride to interact with and give the benefit of their knowledge can only enhance the adventure. This is also a good time to introduce any new characters to replace those that may have fallen, or representatives of the other corporations and Dark Eden tribes.

It could also help the adventure that the investigators are accompanied on their mission by a spy, sympathetic to the Sons of Rasputin. There are enough of these around in Whitestar, but this might be a good opportunity to get a spy on board with the investigators. One of the survivors of the Seventh Son's attack on the train could well be a potential spy. This spy would have made sure to keep close to the investigators and he will have used the chaos of this battle as a perfect opportunity for him to end up fighting alongside them, and now travelling with them.

The GM does not even need to know at this point which one the spy is. After all, he is not going to be attracting any attention to himself. But, it is worth bearing in mind that, by the end of their quest, one of the investigators' party will attempt to betray them. Getting the traitor ingratiated with them as early as possible will be a good way to keep their cover. The GM can select one of the survivors as the spy at this stage, or he can hedge his bets and keep them all in mind as potential spies. Of course, though it may not be ideal, he can always change his mind provided the character ends up acting in a plausible and consistent manner.



SERGEANT OLEG BOYAR

Boyar is a gruff, no-nonsense soldier, loyal to his regiment and to Whitestar. He leads from the front and will defend his colleagues bravely. However, he is a sergeant in the Rodina, specifically the personal bodyguard of the Tsarina. So how he gets to be escaping with the investigators instead of defending his head of state will be a cause of much soul searching for him.

Once the action dies down and there is no one left to kill, Boyar will become morose and convinced he is responsible for the Tsarina's apparent death. It should be up to the investigators to raise his morale and keep him buoyed. If they manage this, he will be a useful member of the expedition, especially in a firefight. If they do not manage this, he will become a liability, especially if there is vodka handy.

SERGEANT OLEG BOYAR ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	10	7	7
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	6	8	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	1	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	-

WOUNDS: 7

SOAK: Heavy Military Shoulder Pads and Ballistic Nylon

Clothing: (Head 1, Body 2, Arms 4, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Pair of Boneswords (melee):** 1+**T**6, 1H, Pious 2
- ◆ **Iron Hand Autopistol (Ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**4, Semi-automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Tsarina's Chosen:** Boyar is one of the Rodina, and has dedicated his life to protecting her. He gains one bonus d20 to all Close Combat and Ranged Weapons tests and two bonus **T** to all damage rolls when protecting her.
- ◆ **Blood of Vodka:** When the Tsarina is not around for him to watch over, Boyar will be roaring drunk on vodka. He increases the Repercussion of all tests by two at such times.
- ◆ **Death is Freedom, Duty a Burden:** The Tsarina's abduction or apparent death will plunge Boyar into a state of deep gloom to the point that he will attempt suicide by combat. He will attack opponents with a complete lack of regard for his personal safety or those of his fellows. This can be spotted with a Challenging (D2) Psychotherapy test.

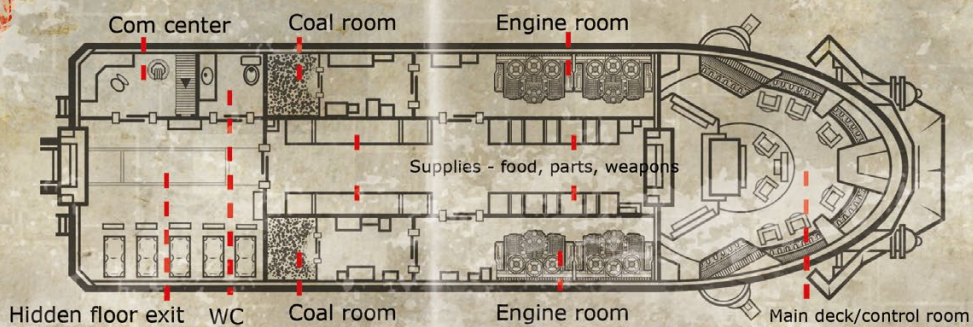
DINA RABINA

Rabina is an experienced member of the reclamation corps, working out of Kyrchnoi. She dresses in a bizarre, but effective, accumulation of scavenged garments and protective materials. She spends a lot of time away from the stronghold, looking for useful scrap and the like and so knows her way around the area. Some say she has spent too long away from civilisation as she seems much more at home in the wilderness than in a stronghold. She also seems to be permanently distracted, uncommunicative, and in a world of her own. She was caught up in the fighting and somehow found herself in the investigators' group and now she is on the train.

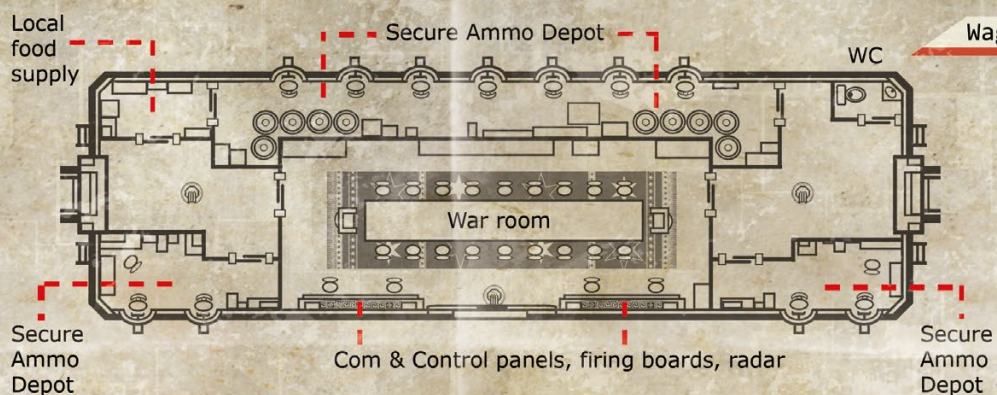


ZOLOTOY GLAZ

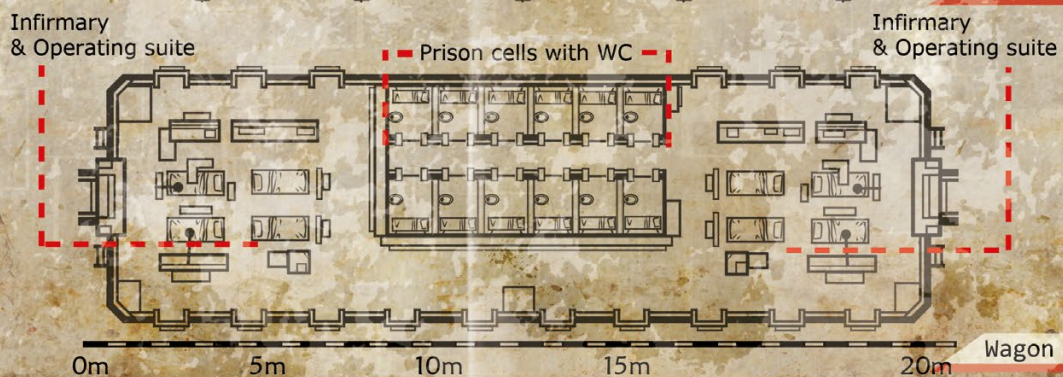
Wagon 1



Wagon 2

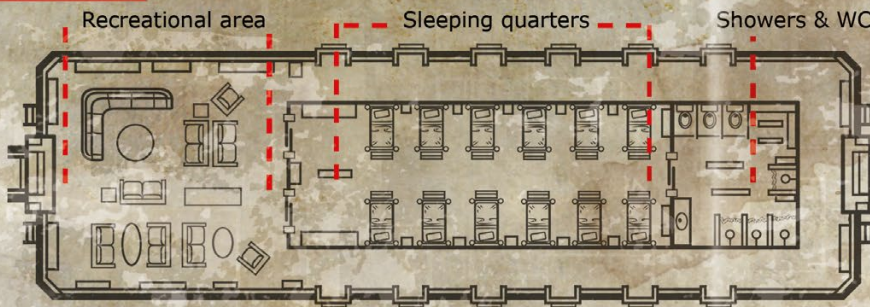


Wagon 3

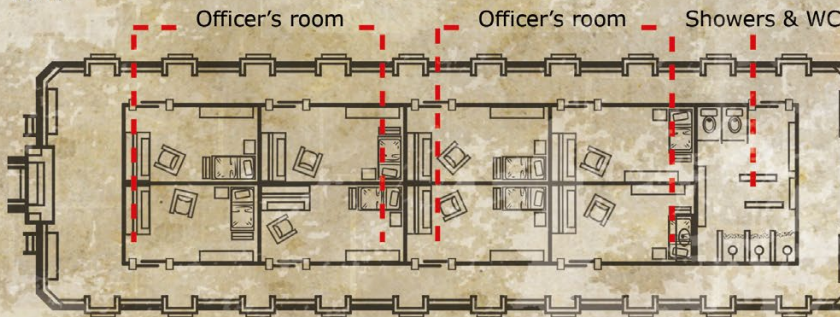
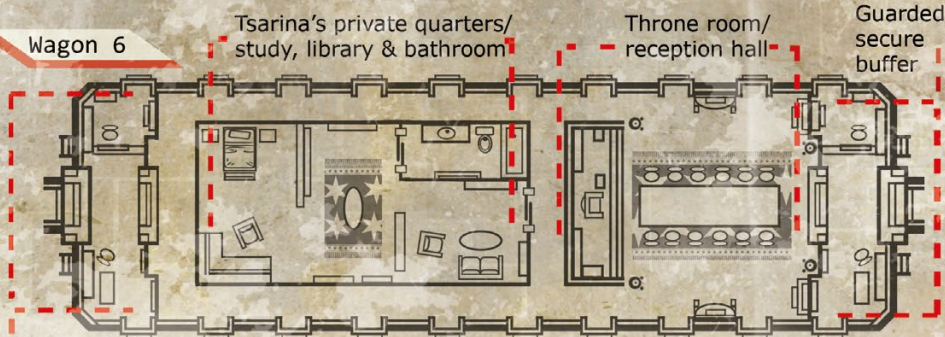


Wagon 4

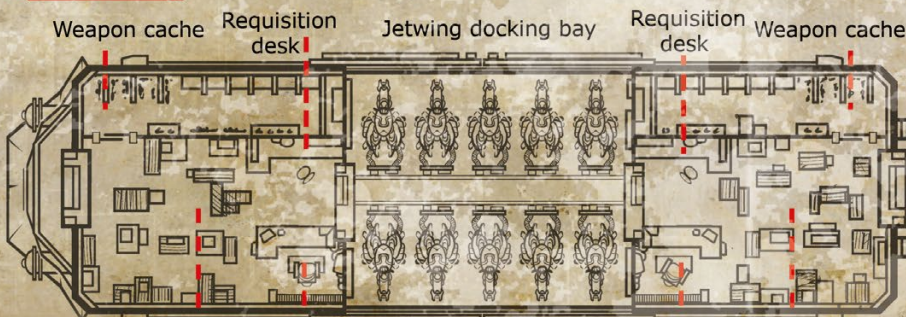
Wagon 5



Wagon 6



Wagon 7



Wagon 8

Key

1- Shooting hatch



2- Manual turrets



3- Radar target coordinator



4- Spotter seat periscope



5- Auto-cannon w/ rocket launcher



6- HMG Gunner



7- Jetwing



8- Periscope



9- Cots



10- Beds



11- Bunk beds



12- Chairs & sofa



13- Toilet, sink & shower



14- Radar & control boards



Despite her flighty and distracted manner, Rabina is quick-witted and will soon realise her best option for survival is to stick with the most effective fighters. She will be useful to them, too, as she is an excellent scout and can jury-rig almost any basic tool from scrap and rubbish. Though no lover of violence and not that useful in a fight, she will be prepared to do what is necessary to keep her and her colleagues alive.

DINA RABINA ▲

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	8	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
6	8	6	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE									
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
-	-	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	1
								3	3

WOUNDS: 4

SOAK: Light Civilian Shoulder Pads and Ballistic Nylon Clothing: (Head 1, Body 1, Arms 2, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Explorer's pick (melee):** 1+⚡4, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 1
- ◆ **Iron Hand Autopistol (Ranged):** Range C, 1+⚡4, Semi-automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Wasteland Survivor:** While Rabina remains with the group, all Survival tests in the wasteland are reduced by one (to a minimum of one).
- ◆ **Duct Tape and Determination:** Rabina is skilled at repairs and can fix most mechanical problems. When making a test to repair an object or jury-rig a device, she can reroll a single d20 but must accept the new result.
- ◆ **Easily Distracted by Shine:** Rabina tends to get distracted. Once every 1d6 rounds, it requires a Challenging (D2) Persuade or Command test to keep her on task.

BORIS IVANOV

Boris Ivanov is one of the engineers on the Zolotoy Glaz. He knows the engine like the back of his hand. He is in the engine room when the investigators get there and manages to survive the attack by the Seventh Son. If the investigators need someone to run the train, then Boris is their man. It takes a lot of manpower to run the train properly, but Ivanov will be able to coordinate the investigators and anyone else handy into making a decent fist of it.

Ivanov could accompany the investigators further into the adventure. He is a practical man, a dab hand with all kinds of engines which could come in handy, and able to jury rig or repair most things. If necessary he will pick up a gun, but would not enjoy a firefight.

BORIS IVANOV ▲

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	8	8	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	8	8	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE									
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	1

WOUNDS: 3

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Giant Metal Wrench (melee):** 2+⚡5, 2H, Dreadful, Knockdown, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Gearhead:** Ivanov has spent his life around engines and machinery and knows them inside-out. All difficulties of mechanical repairs are reduced by one (to a minimum of one) as long as Ivanov remains with the party.

AFTERMATH

Although it is unlikely that the Tsarina will die at the hands of a bunch of Heretics, this can be the case if the GM so desires. If it is intended to run the sub-plot on pg. 192, Rescuing the Tsarina, GMs should instead consider the option that she has been taken prisoner by the Sons of Rasputin; she is a valuable prisoner who could be used as a tool to shape various outcomes. Another option to consider is the possibility of a tainted and corrupt Tsarina—one who borders on rivalling the Apostles in power. Such a figure would likely have powers similar to a Lost One (see the *Mutants & Heretics* sourcebook pg. 10 and would seriously affect the confidence of the Durand brothers. Ultimately, the choice is left to the GM. Whichever fate is chosen for her, read aloud the following in the wake of the Tsarina's sacrifice:

"As the engine plunges onward into the dark, no one speaks. The Tsarina's fall is still too real, too raw, to those of Whitestar. Then someone, somewhere, begins to weep."

IN SEARCH OF ELYSIUM

CHAPTER 3: THE WASTELAND

RAILROADED

The attack on the Tsarina in Kyrchnoi is part of a wider series of attacks by the Sons of Rasputin on Whitestar all across its western frontier. These attacks are generally coordinated to sap Whitestar's resources and hopefully make some inroads. But as the news of the Tsarina's defeat spreads, they gain a strong impetus and more actions will break out. Old attacks are followed up with more vigour and new attacks are quickly planned. Many settlements along Whitestar's western edge will be assaulted, and many will fall. Meanwhile the investigators have little choice but to travel towards that very storm.

Any Whitestar patriots on board the engine section of the Zolotoy Glaz will be devastated at the sacrifice their leader has just made. However, Whitestar are a stoical lot, they will soon resolve to make the best of it and do what needs to be done going forward. They will realise that the Tsarina's sacrifice was for the investigators benefit and this marks them out as her chosen ones.

The investigators should find themselves in charge, now. Boris Ivanov will feel it is his duty to run the train and be in charge of anything directly train-related, but he will take reasonable suggestions from the investigators, and bow to them on anything that goes beyond the running of the train.

The Tsarina's bodyguard has, of course, failed to guard her body, but they will realise that their duty should now be to guard the investigators. Anya Nastrova will

be keen to accompany the investigators to see if they can discover the Final Seal, and she will advise them on any points of history they might need.

The Zolotoy Glaz will be travelling on the route to Smolensk. The investigators can certainly travel on towards Smolensk, but Boris Ivanov will be aware that they can turn off in the outskirts of that settlement and make their way westwards without delaying in Smolensk. If he knows the investigators need to travel westwards as swiftly as possible then, to his mind, the best way to do that will be to turn westwards and take the train as far as Minsk. He knows the way should be fair enough going as far as Minsk, but after that, who knows how far they will be able to travel by train?



If the Zolotoy Glaz does head west, avoiding the centre of Smolensk, it will have to run the gauntlet of a few isolated attacks from Sons of Rasputin involved in the assault upon that city. This should not prove much of a hindrance to the train and the investigators, but it will let them know that something is up in Smolensk and that the Sons of Rasputin are on the march, not just in Kyrchnoi.

DIVERSION TO SMOLENSK

The main thrust of the adventure assumes that the investigators will follow Boris Ivanov's advice and head straight to Minsk. However, it is possible the investigators will want to return to Smolensk and take stock there. The GM can play things by ear and bear in mind the factors below.

THE WHISTLING SWAN

The investigators may have the idea to fly to Sion, and consider that Smolensk is a good place to get hold of an aircraft. Flying around Whitestar is a very uncommon form of transport. This is partly because of the traditional difficulty of keeping aircraft going safely using scavenged parts and makeshift repairs and partly because the atmospheric conditions can become wildly inhospitable at very little notice. However, if the investigators are desperate, they might consider it worth taking the chance.

It is possible that the investigators might seek out an aircraft in a number of places on their travels. For example, they could just as well decide to try to find an aircraft in Minsk. The information below can be used and amended for any location. Needless to say, they will probably only try it once.

The Whistling Swan can be found on the edge of town parked outside a dilapidated hangar. A mechanic will be doing some sort of job on one of the engines, making a racket and hitting things with a large wrench. Despite this, the investigators will be assured that the aircraft could be ready to take off in a matter of minutes.

SVETLANA PETROVA

The pilot, Svetlana Petrova, will be asleep at her desk in a small office by the side of the hangar. Observant investigators might notice a pile of unpaid bills and threatening letters strewn across her desk. Despite this, Petrova will not appear desperate for customers. She has not had a job for many weeks, but she doesn't appear to care whether she will ever get one again. She does drive a hard bargain, however, and will do her best to charge the investigators as much as she can get away with.

Petrova is an ace pilot, and can come with the plane if the investigators do not have the requisite skill, but she will cost double. It does not really matter to Petrova where the investigators are

planning to go, she will agree to any flight plan with an insouciant fatalism, provided she gets well paid.

THE FLIGHT OF THE SWAN

As the aircraft takes off it will soon become apparent that, far from being named after the white colour and graceful flight of its namesake, the Whistling Swan is so full of holes and loose or twisted surfaces that it makes a multitude of peculiar and loud whistling noises as it flies. If someone other than Svetlana is flying the crate then any manoeuvre they make should be at one extra difficulty, at least until they get used to the plane's idiosyncrasies.

It might well be a good idea for the investigators to use an aircraft to get to Sion, and a way of avoiding many of the obvious perils that might lie in their way. On the other hand, atmospheric conditions are notoriously bad, and they get worse the deeper into the European Wasteland one goes. The investigators should have had several warnings from various people as to how dangerous the flight might be. Therefore, it is entirely reasonable, and more fun, that the aircraft crashes a reasonable distance away from Sion, and the adventure continue with a surface journey as described below.

The Whistling Swan could be assailed by a combination radiation cloud and electrical storm. The lightning can glow green as it bursts around the aircraft, and the thunder sounds ominously close. Having to rush to put on radiation suits should hamper the pilot, and the Swan can then be hit by lightning which damages an already ropery control line, sending the aircraft into an uncontrolled descent.

A dog-fight through the skies with some Bloodbaron Triplanes could also leave one too many holes in the Whistling Swan's undercarriage for it to remain flightworthy:

There are a number of old parachutes on board, but nowhere near enough for all the passengers. And if the parachutes are inspected it would be clear to an experienced aviator that they are not in the best state of repair.

As the plane plummets towards the ground the pilot needs to make a **Daunting (D3) Pilot test** in order to retake control and attempt some sort of forced landing. It will also require a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** for the investigators to be able to find some roughly flat patch of ground that they can land on.

If they manage this, the Whistling Swan should come down in a barely controlled landing, its undercarriage crumpling underneath it, and spinning around as it loses a wing; to whistle, or fly, no more. Everyone on board should take a 3+**T**5 Damage from the impact but they are likely to be alive.

SVETLANA PETROVA ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	8	10	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
11	8	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE					
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	-	3	1

SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	1	1	3	1

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: **Leather flight suit and helmet:** (Head 1, Arms 1, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **Monkey wrench (melee):** 1+**T**3, 1H, Knockdown
- ▶ **Bryzgi Sawn-off Shotgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**6, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Knockdown 2, Spread 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **Ace Pilot:** Petrova has been piloting the Whistling Swan so long it has almost become an extension of her body. She gains one bonus Momentum whenever the Swan makes an evasive maneuver.
- ▶ **Grace Under Pressure:** Petrova is cold, calm, and pragmatic. She can reroll one d20 when making a Willpower test, but must accept the result.
- ▶ **Stay on Target:** Petrova and her mechanics have tinkered with the turrets of the Swan and made a few "improvements," one of which is an enhanced targeting solution. Once per round, a single gunner or commander may use Firing Solution (*Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 187) as a Restricted Action.

FIGHTING IN THE STREETS

Confident that the Tsarina will soon be killed or captured, or buoyed by the news that she already has been, the Sons of Rasputin, the Seventh Son, and other aligned cults are seeking to sow discord throughout the western fringes of the confederation. By the time the investigators get back to Smolensk, the uprising there will have already begun.

Heretic forces will be attacking the city from the west. Meanwhile, Seventh Son fifth columnists and any erstwhile loyal confederates they have managed to coerce will be rioting in the streets. This attack is not guaranteed to take Smolensk; it is a large Stronghold with a decent militia. However, they will give it a good go, and the area will be disrupted for some time. It will be difficult for the investigators to get into the city, and out again, unmolested.

BLOOD BARON TRIPLANE

RESTRICTION: 5 **COST: 35**
MAINTENANCE: 4 **RELIABILITY: 4**

A propeller-driven fighter bomber, which gives the Sons of Rasputin air superiority against most of the other tribes when they deploy it. It is no match for even the most basic of Whitestar's aircraft, however.

QUALITIES	Agile, Aircraft, Enclosed			
CRUISING SPEED	250 kph	COMBAT MANEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	10 enc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	3	5	3	1
MOTIVE SYSTEM	1	3	2	1
WEAPON	1	3	2	1
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+ T 3			
ARMAMENTS	• Twin-linked Maxim HMGs: Range M, 2+T6, Automatic, Split Fire, Spread 1 • Bomb Bay: Range L, 3+T6, Munition, Blast (Close), Stun.			
NOTES	Maxim HMG has 3 Reloads. Bomb Bay has 3 Reloads. The Bomb Bay can only attack ground targets.			

WHISTLING SWAN, CONVERTED GIRAUD CONDOR

QUALITIES	Agile, Aircraft, Enclosed, Rugged			
CRUISING SPEED	700 kph	COMBAT MANEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 commander 1 pilot 2 gunners	CARRYING CAPACITY	12 passengers 80 enc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	7	10	8	5
MOTIVE SYSTEM	5	8	6	3
WEAPON	3	4	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+ T 5			
ARMAMENTS	• 2x Turrets with Twin MG-90 HMGs: Range L, 2+T6, Automatic, Spread 3, Vicious 1			
NOTES	MG-90s have 12 Reloads each.			

Because of the prophecies of the Seventh Son, if they are recognised, the investigators will soon become a target for the heretics, and eventually the main focus of their attack. The best the investigators can hope for is to find a way of getting out of the city and past the assailants as soon as possible.

It should be plain to the investigators that Smolensk is no longer the sort of place in which they can stick around too long, or a base where they can reliably get things done. They are likely to decide to set off again on the engine of the Zolotoy Glaz, or seek out an aircraft (see *The Whistling Swan*, pg. 44). If they go for other types of transport, the GM can play it by ear.

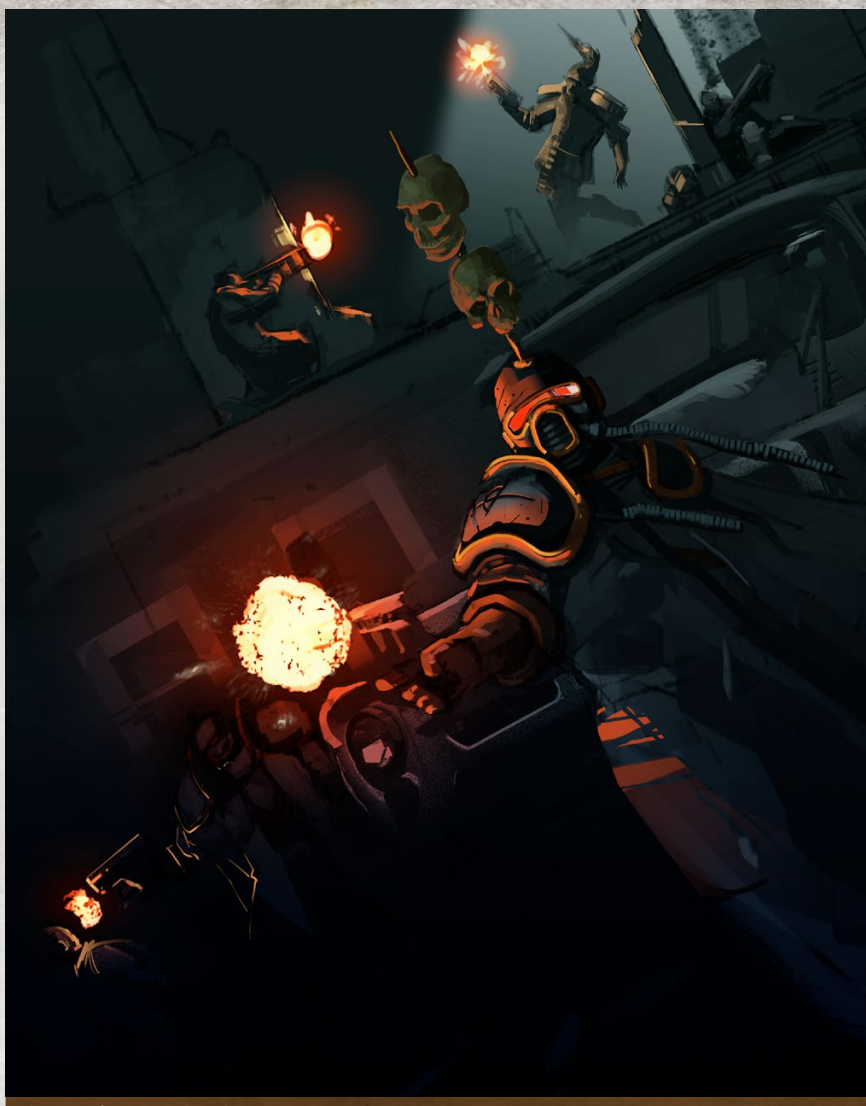
THE ROUTE TO MINSK

It should take about a day to get to Minsk if the investigators stick with the Zolotoy Glaz. The way is a mix of under- and overground track. Before the investigators get to Minsk there will be a few signs of the uprising that is going on all across the frontier. They might see the odd warband of Sons of Rasputin followers who will open fire on the train or make an attempt to board it. They may see signs of distant Strongholds under fire or in flames. And they will have to traverse Bobr.

BOBR

About half way between Smolensk and Minsk is the Stronghold of Bobr. It has been completely overrun by Sons of Rasputin. The entire Stronghold is a ruined, smoking, mess of half-destroyed buildings and raging fires. The heretics have manoeuvred a fuel tanker from a siding onto the main railway line and wrecked some of its wheels. They will also be able to see the Zolotoy Glaz coming and so have a few minutes to prepare for an ambush.

A **Challenging (D2) Observation test** will notice the tanker if anyone is watching out. The GM can have the train driver notice, if he likes, in any case. If they do not notice the tanker, then the Zolotoy Glaz must plough on through it. This should result in



The Sons of Rasputin take Bobr.

a huge explosion and the Zolotoy Glaz's derailment. Passengers aboard the train will suffer 4+**T**8 damage with the Armour Piercing 1, Dreadful, Knockdown, Spread 2, Stun and Vicious 1 qualities to a random location.

If they notice the tanker, then the investigators and the train driver will only have a few moments to start slowing the train down to avoid the collision. When the train comes to a halt just before the tanker, the Sons of Rasputin will open fire from a number of vantage points overlooking the tracks. The Sons are ecstatic at having just taken the Stronghold, and are out for more blood. They will press the attack against the investigators from their advantageous position, and if the battle does eventually look like it's going against them, they should be able to retreat comfortably into the ruined buildings all around.

The investigators have a job on their hands. Starting their journey on foot from here can be done, but it will be difficult, especially as Bobr is no place to kit up for their journey to Sion. If they want to continue by train they will have to think of a way to get the tanker out of their way, while taking incoming fire from the Sons of Rasputin.

There are some freight cranes nearby. They could think about using one of those to shift the tanker, but they would have to fight their way to a crane. They could try to fix the wheels temporarily in some way, allowing them to gently shove the tanker back into the siding. They could just carefully nudge past the tanker using the Zolotoy Glaz to push it out the way, very slowly and carefully, but that plan is fraught with danger. They could just blow the tanker up from a distance and then push whatever tangled wreckage remains out the way, and hope the track remains viable. But as they are investigators, they are likely to come up with some other clever plan to get past this obstacle.

SOLDAT TROOPER

Fast-moving light infantry, these are the most common foot soldiers of the Rasputin Military. Each Soldat squad is led by an Elite Kommandant, who may have been elevated to command due to veteran status, ability, or having an influential parent.

SOLDAT TROOPER ▲ OR KOMMANDANT ☆

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	10	7	7
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	6	8	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE									
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	1	1	1	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 4 (Trooper) or 7 (Elite)

SOAK: Heavy Soldat Armour: (Head 2, Arms 3, Torso 3, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Fritz S89 (melee):** Range C, 1+↑4, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters
- **Machinenkrieger (ranged):** Range M, 1+↑4, Burst, 2H, Armour Piercing 1

MINSK

Minsk is a well-run, impressive Stronghold on the frontier of Whitestar, and beset by many enemies. It seems it would have to be well-run to survive as it has. Now, it faces the greatest danger to its future yet, as it stands as one of the first major bastions of Whitestar power against the impending onslaught of the Sons of Rasputin from their homelands in the west.

It is located in an ash and mud-filled, blasted valley. The terrain shifts with the wind and precipitation, creating alternately mounds of ash

and pools of treacherous, acidic quick mud. And the interminable wind throws up a blinding haze of ashen smog that stings the eyes.

The site is ringed with tall concrete towers that act as a perimeter defence, while most of the Stronghold's other buildings are buried below ground. The central building of the settlement is merely an ugly concrete structure built around the gateway through which the subterranean complex can be accessed.

Minsk is run by committee. Almost every function of the Stronghold is decided by committee and implemented by an executive officer of that committee, answerable entirely to that committee and the relevant oversight committee as well as the Committee for the Regulation of the Oversight Committees (CROC), one of the most powerful of all Minsk's committees.

This might sound like a needlessly bureaucratic and unwieldy system, but it works well. Their precarious position and their history of getting things done in an environment where mere survival is an achievement means that the people of Minsk have no time or inclination to play petty politics for self-advancement. They need to get things done quickly and efficiently, and the hierarchical committee model works perfectly for them when everyone is well-intentioned.

The chair of the Central Committee is Chairwoman Marya Bozena. If the headless and anonymous bureaucratic institutions of Minsk could be said to have a face, then it is hers. Her role, as a figurehead, is largely ceremonial, but she is in a position to get things done. Once the central Committee approves a course of action, it will be delegated to one or more of the subservient committees to implement and, of course, the Committee for Implementation and Expedition will keep an eye out to make sure this is done in a timely manner.

Minsk has been attacked as part of the Sons of Rasputin coordinated uprising against Whitestar, but it has held out extremely ably, and as smaller Strongholds have fought on in confusion and desperation, or been utterly conquered by the Sons, Minsk has held its own relatively comfortably. Many refugees from nearby Strongholds and across the area are attempting to make their way to the safe haven of Minsk.

ARRIVING AT MINSK

As they approach Minsk, the railway line disappears underground for the last ten kilometres or so of the journey. The train will be completely enclosed and the investigators will not be able to see what is going on in Minsk itself. The Stronghold is under attack from the Sons of Rasputin, too. But the larger Stronghold has been much more successful at repulsing the invaders. They have managed to keep them at bay and have only lost a few minor areas on the outskirts of the city. The militia believe that unless a much larger attack comes from elsewhere they have made the city safe, for now.

As they approach the last couple of kilometres, the investigators will see brightly lit militia at the side of the track frantically gesticulating for the train to slow down and halt. The reason for this is that the Stronghold militia themselves have collapsed the railway tunnel as it was serving as an effective way past the Stronghold's defences for the Sons of Rasputin. There is absolutely no chance of the tunnel opening again within the month, even if the Stronghold's Committee for Public Works and Structural Integration passed an urgent resolution in that regard.

Once they arrive, they will be greeted politely enough, but all the occupants of the train will be immediately surrounded by distrusting local militia and escorted to a makeshift prison. They will have all their weapons and equipment confiscated and told to wait until they are dealt with by the People's Council of Justice and Welfare. The Whitestar citizens on board will resign themselves to this, as it feels to them like sensible precautions from the Minsk militia. If the investigators try to fight their way out of this, it could get very messy and they would be doing the Sons of Rasputin a big favour. Instead they should probably take this opportunity for some well-earned rest.

DOING PORRIDGE

The location of their incarceration is an underground bunker, close to the railway track, that is currently being used to store oats. The investigators will be supplied with water and so, if they can get hold of or improvise some rudimentary cooking facilities, they will be able to eat as much porridge as they desire.

In the morning, the investigators will be interviewed one at a time by a cross-committee of the Committee for Public Safety (Prisoners Release Board) and the Committee for Repatriation, Rehabilitation, and Redemption. Unless they make a real mess of the interviews, it will become apparent to the committee that, far from being a threat to the people of Minsk, the investigators could be a help to all Whitestar and they should be aided in whatever way the Stronghold can manage.

If the investigators do well, they will be allocated a Liaison Officer for Cross Committee Cooperation and System Integration, Yuri Poliakov. If not, they will be left to navigate Minsk's labyrinthine bureaucratic structures on their own.

YURI POLIAKOV

Poliakov may be a mindless drone in the interminable bureaucratic machine of Minsk, but he is diligent and he could be the investigators' best bet to navigate the Stronghold's myriad committees. Poliakov may not know much about anything else, but he knows a lot about Minsk law and procedure. He is small and timid except when he finds a point of law worth mentioning or discovers a previously unknown section of legal minutiae, then he will become animated.

YURI POLIAKOV LIAISON OFFICER FOR CROSS COMMITTEE COOPERATION AND SYSTEM INTEGRATION ★

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	7	7	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	10	8	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	-	3	1

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

◆ **Slicer (melee):** 1+[↑]3, 1H, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Sign Here Please:** Poliakov has been a bureaucrat for a long time and knows how to source things in the proper fashion; albeit with a mountain of paperwork. All Lifestyle tests made to source a single item or service are reduced by one (to a minimum of one) should Poliakov's assistance be sought.
- ◆ **Bureaucratic Vengeance:** Those officials or Investigators who find themselves on the wrong side of Poliakov will quickly find that life gets difficult without the correct permit. Whilst in Minsk, the difficulty of Lifestyle tests are increased by one for characters that have fallen afoul of Poliakov's ire. Additionally, any items with a Restriction Rating of 5 that lack the proper permit may be seized.

MARYA BOZENA

Bozena is the chair of the central committee of Minsk, and therefore its nominal leader. She is conscious of her role as the figurehead of the Stronghold and so has been showing her face wherever possible during the Sons of Rasputin attacks in order to reassure her people. The chances are that she will either bump into the investigators at some point, or that she will hear about them and make a point of meeting them.

She is obviously an impressive woman, but down to earth. It is clear she has no sort of aura or presence like the Tsarina has, but is just a common citizen trying to get things done. If the meeting goes well, Bozena will do what she can to help them. News of this approval will spread throughout the Stronghold and greatly aid the investigators in their interactions with any loyal citizens. If the

investigators have not been assigned Yuri Poliakov as liaison officer, that will happen now.

If the investigators are clearly missing equipment or personnel for their quest, that can be assigned to them directly, by Bozena, but they will still have to visit the various committees to hunt down and collect it.

If Bozena is suspicious of the investigators, and they do not acquit themselves well in her presence, then they will have a tough time of it in Minsk. If they require anything of the people of Minsk, they will have to jump through hoops and navigate the convoluted committee system as best they can. This will not be easy, and it will seem like the committees are putting up petty barriers to their progress at every opportunity.

MARYA BOZENA, CHAIR OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF MINSK ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	8	7	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	10	10	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE									
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	3	1	1	1	2	1	5	1
								2	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Combat Knife (melee):** X+↑3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1
- ◆ **Iron Hand Autopistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+↑5, Semi-automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Set in her ways:** Stubborn and used to getting her own way, Bozena may reroll one d20 when making a Willpower test, but must accept the new result.
- ◆ **Natural Leader:** Bozena is an impressive woman who has the power to sway crowds. She gains one bonus Momentum on all Command and Persuade tests.



PREPARING FOR THE JOURNEY

The investigators should be aware that they have a very difficult journey ahead of them if they are to get to Sion. They will have to decide whether they wish to take transport or go on foot; what sort of equipment they will need; what sort of personnel to bring with them. And they will have to do all this via the committee system of Minsk.



Flying any kind of craft to Minsk may be problematic.

KAMAZ, LONG RANGE TRANSPORT VARIANT

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST:** 12
MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY:** 2

QUALITIES	Exposed, Rugged, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	80 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	4 passengers 100 enc	
LOCATIONS		SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	3	6	4	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	2	5	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+ [†] 4			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have 2 [†] Cover Soak			

KAMAZ, HEAVY FREIGHT TRANSPORT VARIANT

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST:** 15
MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY:** 3

QUALITIES	Exposed, Rugged, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	70 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	1	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	200 enc	
LOCATIONS		SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	4	6	4	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	3	5	3	3
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+ [†] 4			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have 2 [†] Cover Soak			

KAMAZ, SCOUT VARIANT

RESTRICTION: 3 **COST:** 10
MAINTENANCE: 3 **RELIABILITY:** 2

QUALITIES	Exposed, Rugged, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	90 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	3	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	1 passenger 100 enc	
LOCATIONS		SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	3	6	4	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	2	5	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+ [†] 4			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have 2 [†] Cover Soak			

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TRANSPORT

There is no chance of taking the train any further. The western end of the Minsk railway has been demolished thoroughly. Using aircraft is problematic and has been discussed earlier in this adventure.

THE KAMAZ MULE

Using all-terrain vehicles may be an option. The investigators will be able to get hold of some in Minsk if they have the approval of Chairwoman Bozena.

Of course, they will still need to get the approval of the Works and Regulations Committee for Traffic Control and a permit from the Transportation Secretariat (Permissions and Licensing) Subcommittee and a requisition form from the Transport Pool Requisitions and Allocation Committee.

The Kamaz Mule is the vehicle of choice in Minsk. It is a six-wheeled all-terrain vehicle that comes in a number of configurations, including long range personal transport, heavy freight transport, short-bed scout, and heavy weapons platform. The investigators might be able to get ahold of any of the various configurations for their journey.

The Kamaz Mule is a no frills, very rudimentary machine. It is not altogether reliable, but it is popular in Whitestar because of the simplicity of its design and components and the relative ease with which it can be repaired and spares acquired or jury rigged.

OLIGANTS

Oligants are massive mutated creatures that roam the steppes of southern and eastern Whitestar territory. The Stronghold of Minsk acquired a few, many years ago, and now has a very successful breeding program.

Oligants appear much as the Ancient Earth creatures, elephants, except they are twice as big. They are covered in wiry fur protecting them from the worst of the wasteland storms and atmospheric conditions. They eat almost anything, and are able to protect themselves, with their sharp tusks from all but the most dangerous steppes predator.

Oligants are used in Minsk as beasts of burden and for their prodigious muscle power. Those that make use of them swear by their natural reliability. But, they are apt to turn on their users and many people have died at the sharp end of a bad tempered Oligant's tusk, or simply crushed under its weight.

They can be obstinate beasts and difficult to cajole. The mahouts of Minsk are expert Oligant keepers and trainers and sometimes the only ones who can get the animals

moving in the right direction. If the investigators wish to travel by Oligant, they should take at least one mahout with them, but they will be better off with one mahout per beast.

Travel by Oligant is going to be much slower than by Kamaz Mule, but generally more reliable. They will not be bogged down so much by difficult terrain. The beasts do eat prodigiously, however, and get in a bad temper if they are not getting enough food, so the investigators will need to be wary of that.

Oligants are ridden by means of a rudimentary frame strapped across the animal's back, and up to a dozen people can be carried this way. A tent-like structure is often constructed upon the frame to protect the riders from the elements. Goods can also be strapped to these frames, or hung from them, along the sides of the animal. In this way, an Oligant can rival a decent sized truck in what it is able to carry.

Oligants are actually remarkably quiet and dainty beasts for all their massive size, and so they will be much better at keeping a low profile and not attracting unwelcome attention. And, as a last resort, in the hands of a skilful mahout, they can be coerced into being used as a weapon.

If the investigators wish to use Oligants, the bureaucratic trail is even more convoluted than getting ahold of trucks, involving the Steering Committee on Transport Solutions, the Goods and Services (Livestock) Subcommittee, and the Action Group for Animal Welfare.

OLIGANT ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
14	14	9	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	2	6	4

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	—	2	1	2	1	1	1	—	—	—	—

WOUNDS: 9

SOAK: Matted hide: (Head 6, Torso 7, Arms 5, Legs 5)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **Tusks and trunk (melee):** 3+[↑]5, 1H, Knockdown, Spread, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ▶ **Monstrous Creature**

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KAMAZ, HEAVY WEAPONS PLATFORM VARIANT

RESTRICTION: 4

COST: 15

MAINTENANCE: 4

RELIABILITY: 2

QUALITIES	Exposed, Rugged, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	80 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 pilot 1 gunner	CARRYING CAPACITY	2 passengers 50 enc	
LOCATIONS		SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	3	6	4	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	2	5	3	2
WEAPON	4	6	4	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+ [↑] 4			
ARMAMENTS	• Pintle-mounted Nova Vesna Heavy Machine Gun (ranged): Range M, 2+[↑]6, Automatic, Spread 1, Vicious 1 - or • Pushkin Rocket Launcher (ranged): Range L, 2+[↑]5, Munition, Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 1			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have 2 [↑] Cover Soak. Nova Vesna and Kulkov Rail Gun have six Reloads.			

NATURAL RESISTANCE

Oligants and most other beasts that survive the wilds of Dark Eden have gained some degree of immunity to the toxins that permeate the atmosphere and possess the Dark Eden Genealogy trait that appears in the **Dark Eden** source book. The trait is repeated here for clarity:

DARK EDEN GENEALOGY

These creatures have survived, and even flourished, under the harsh conditions of Dark Eden. They reduce the difficulty by four on Resistance tests taken to avoid the effects of the toxic environments, gases, radiation, and other chemical hazards that pervade Earth's atmosphere, which may eliminate the need for a test. Additionally, they may substitute a Survival test for a Treatment test when attempting to recover Wounds.

◆ **Mount:** A ridden animal is considered to be part of a squad led by its rider. However, due to the animal's limited capabilities, it can only assist on tests made by the rider for movement, awareness, or when making a melee attack. The rider may attack using the mount's melee attacks.

◆ **Big and Bad-Tempered:** Mostly kept by spiked goads that are used to prod them in the correct direction, Oligants react badly to fire or intense pain. If they suffer more than two points of damage from fire, or three from any other source, the rider must make a Daunting (D3) Animal Handling test to keep the animal under control and hang on. If failed, the Oligant will move as fast as possible away from the pain stimuli, trampling anyone and anything in its path with its Battering Charge.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

◆ **Battering Charge:** When rolling for damage for a close combat attack after making the Movement Restricted Action, the Oligant may spend one or more Dark Symmetry points to generate one Dark Symmetry Icon per point spent. These are in addition to those rolled on the damage dice.

MULES

The investigators could decide to take real mules. These are not like present-day mules, but a mutated horse-like creature bred as pack animals. They are larger than the present-day mule but proportionally much more stupid and stubborn. They can carry prodigious weights and are used across Whitestar to pull or carry heavy goods around but they are famous for their obstinacy. They also move slowly and, unlike modern horses, have a single gait, plodding.

If the investigators wish to use mules, they will have a steady, somewhat reliable means of carrying all their equipment, but they will be very one-paced and journeys by mule can be tediously slow. They will certainly not be able to outrun any enemy if they wish to keep hold of their baggage.

One bonus for the investigators if they do go by mule: sooner or later they are likely to lose a few or will need to dump these slow, annoying creatures. If they do, they should know that the creatures' flesh is, if a bit tough, actually quite pleasant to eat, especially when stewed for a long time.

Of course, the investigators might just decide to travel on foot. This will of course be the slowest, but most reliable and quietest option.

MULE ▲

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	9	9	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
3	4	6	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	-	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	-	-	-

WOUNDS: 4

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

◆ **Kick (melee):** 1+↑4, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

◆ **Dark Eden Genealogy**

◆ **Mount:** A ridden animal is considered to be part of a squad led by its rider. However, due to the animal's limited capabilities, it can only assist on tests made by the rider for movement, awareness, or when making a melee attack. The rider may attack using the mount's melee attacks.

◆ **Ornery:** Mules have the nasty habit of behaving badly. They consistently annoy their riders by wandering off, treading on their rider's feet, eating items, and occasionally kicking their owner if they can get away with it. The rider must make Challenging (D2) Willpower test every day to stop the animal doing its own thing. GMs are encouraged to come up with some creative behavior for the mules in this respect, including inventive ways to spend Dark Symmetry points to further this annoyance.

PERSONNEL

The investigators could well recruit some new characters from Minsk to help with their journey. If they need local guides and drivers, they will be available—through the correct committees. They might also be able to recruit more unofficially from the refugees that are currently converging on the Stronghold, fleeing from the Sons of Rasputin. The GM should feel free to have available whatever sort of characters the investigators might feel they need.

Any agents of Whitestar who have accompanied the investigators so far, to keep an eye on them on behalf of the Tsarina, will be keen to stay with them. Keeping characters with the investigators over the course of the adventure is good for continuity in any case. If Anya Nastrova is still with the investigators she will, of course, be keen to stick with them as they get closer to Sion.

Other characters may have different motives. It is quite clear that the investigators have a very dangerous journey ahead and so the GM should come up with good reasons for any of their other companions to wish to continue with them. This could be gratefulness for saving their lives, a camaraderie grown out of the danger they have recently faced together, a genuine interest in the coming adventure, or simply having nowhere else to go.

PIOTR ZIGIN

As Whitestar has an interest in the investigators' mission, Chairwoman Bozena will feel obliged to appoint an agent of the Minsk Foreign Affairs Committee, Piotr Zigin, to accompany them and report back to her, or the Tsarina, if possible, eventually. Zigin, in fact, is a competent soldier who keeps his head in a crisis and so the investigators are likely to find his presence much more of a help than a hindrance as the adventure progresses.

While a pleasant enough person, like most Minskans, Zigin is a stickler for the correct process and for following regulations. For the first few days of his accompanying the investigators it should be clear that he is having trouble adjusting to their more informal way of life.

POTR ZIGIN ☹

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	11	9	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	8	7	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1

WOUNDS:

- ◀▶ Head 4
- ◀▶ Arms 5
- ◀▶ Serious 7
- ◀▶ Mental 7
- ◀▶ Torso 8
- ◀▶ Legs 6
- ◀▶ Critical 5

SOAK: Hard hat, Ballistic nylon clothing and Heavy Military Shoulder pads: (Head 1, Arms 3, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◀▶ **Ironhand Autopistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**5, Semi-automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters
- ◀▶ **"Any", Nova Vesna HMG (ranged):** Range M, 2+**T**7, Automatic, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀▶ **Glorified Babysitter:** Zigin doesn't react well to unexpected events/situations outside of his training or experience. As such, the Repercussion Range on all noncombat related activities is increased by one.
- ◀▶ **Military Minded:** As a seasoned soldier of Whitestar, Zigin can reroll a single die on Close Combat or Ranged Combat but must accept the new result.

- ◀▶ **Say hello to my little friend!** Zigin has been carrying his Nova Vesna HMG long enough to name it Anya. When using Anya in combat without a Brace action, Zigin only increases the difficulty and Repercussion range by one, for using an Unwieldy weapon Unbraced.

BARTEK

Bartek has found his way to Minsk with other refugees, looking for supplies so he can go back out into the Wasteland. He was helping defend another Stronghold that got overrun. Bartek lives wild, in the Wasteland, a fact that makes him a figure of awe, and some distrust, among Whitestar citizens.

His family was massacred by Sons of Rasputin when he was quite young, but he managed to drag himself to a Stronghold, through all the dangers of the Wasteland. Now, he lives in the wasteland, managing to survive where almost no one else can, hunting and killing whatever Sons of Rasputin he can find. He is a legendary and much feared character.

If the investigators need a bit of help with survival and navigation in the Wasteland, someone might recommend Bartek to them. If they try to recruit him, he will be reluctant at first, as he generally prefers to work alone. But, if the investigators manage to convince him that this is the best way to strike back at the Sons of Rasputin, he will be keen to go along.

Bartek is a wild man and a law unto himself. He has no sense of humour and little time for small talk. He will not tolerate laxity or incompetence among the investigators, especially in the face of the enemy, and is just as likely to leave them to their own devices with no notice as he is to stick with them to the end of their quest.

BARTEK ☹

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	8	7	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	7	10	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	-	1	-

WOUNDS:

- ◀▶ Head 3
- ◀▶ Arms 4
- ◀▶ Serious 6
- ◀▶ Mental 10
- ◀▶ Torso 7
- ◀▶ Legs 5
- ◀▶ Critical 3

SOAK: "Leather" jerkin and bracers—actually cured and tanned Sons of Rasputin skins: (Head 0, Arms 1, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Hunting Knife (melee):** 2+**T**4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 2
- ◆ **Okhotnik 778 Sniper Rifle (ranged):** Range L, 2+**T**7, Semi-Automatic, 2H, Unforgiving 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Feed upon Fear**
- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Patient Hunter:** Bartek may reroll a single dice when making a Stealth test, but must accept the new result.
- ◆ **Hatred of the Sons:** As stone-cold killer of the Sons of Rasputin, Bartek inspires Fear 1 in all Sons of Rasputin.
- ◆ **Wasteland Survivor:** Bartek has roamed much of Whitestar, and has knowledge of much of the dangers. All Survival tests made with Bartek are reduced by one (which can remove the need for a test entirely).

KITTING UP

This is the investigators' last chance to get all the required equipment together before they enter the Wasteland. Things may have moved so fast since their arrival on Earth that this is their first chance, to do so. Therefore, it could be very important that they get a chance while in Minsk to stock up. Fortunately for them Minsk is the sort of well-run Stronghold that has a lot of equipment available, and of a decent quality.

However, unless they can find some sources on the black market, they will have to go through Minsk's bureaucratic procedures for equipment requisition. They will have to fill in numerous forms and present them to the various committees. They will then be directed to other sub committees and are likely to have to wait until these convene. If they do navigate this system, they will be able to get good equipment at a very good price. If they prefer to go through the black-market route, the equipment will generally be of poorer quality and at a higher price. Of particular interest should be survival



Bartek settles some scores, and gains a new coat...

kits, hazard detection equipment, respiratory equipment, rations, climbing equipment, and protective clothing.

THE EUROPEAN WASTELAND

The investigators should make their way towards Sion as best they can. They know roughly how to get there, but know next to nothing about the route. Therefore, the GM is free to put whatever obstacles he likes in their way. As well as those mentioned below they are likely to run into the Sons of Rasputin, Templars, and other encounters from the *Dark Eden* Setting book or *Whitestar* sourcebook.

A number of locations, encounters, and hazards are found below. The GM can use as many as he likes, but should reward decisive and intelligent play, and perhaps punish the opposite. If the investigators have suffered from some difficult encounters, they can come across a more helpful one. The GM should use these to test the investigators and make things difficult for them, but not to give them no chance of reaching Sion.

The Wasteland will become more dangerous, inhospitable, and bizarre the further west the investigators travel; they are departing Whitestar territory, crossing the Sons of Rasputin heartlands, and entering the Templar domain, after all. Therefore, they are more likely to meet humans and humanoids during the earlier parts of their journey. They are especially likely to meet those loyal to Whitestar earlier on, but it would be a fortunate encounter indeed for them to meet an unaligned outpost closer to Sion, when they might really need the respite.

The investigators' journey will continue long after they reach Sion, though they do not know this, yet. And so, the GM can save some of these encounters for later in the adventure.

THE SEVENTH SON FOLLOWERS

The Seventh Son prophecy goes that the investigators, the chosen ones, will lead the Seventh Son to the Darkness. Therefore, it makes sense that the Sons will attempt to follow the investigators. Word is bound to get around of where exactly the investigators are, unless they are being incredibly careful, and so a band of the Seventh Son have been despatched to follow them, as far, and as long, as it takes.

This band is made up of some of the best hunters and trackers from the Heretics seeded across the various Sons of Rasputin tribes, and some of their best warriors, too. They will follow the investigators tenaciously, recording their every move meticulously as if it were some sort of sign from the Darkness.

The investigators could well catch sight of this group occasionally, and this might be worrying for them. The Followers are experts

RADIATION PILLS (3 DOSES)

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 5**
ENCUMBRANCE: 1 **RELIABILITY: 3**

An increased reliance on nuclear technology prior to the Exodus led to further advancements in radiation treatment beyond the standard anti-radiation treatments of the 21st century. These pills work to protect all of the body's organs from radiation exposure, although they cannot be used to reverse any damage that has already been suffered prior to taking them. Radiation pills count as effective treatment against radiation poisoning and reduce the difficulty of the Resistance test at the radiation poisoning's next Interval by one, to a minimum of one.

NBC SUIT

RESTRICTION: 2 **COST: 3**
ENCUMBRANCE: 2 **RELIABILITY: 3**

A dangerous place on the best of days, Dark Eden is full of deadly radiation, toxic chemicals, and poisonous plant life. The NBC suit offers some measure of protection from all of these. Fitting loosely over normal clothing, it is a full-body, one-piece coverall that provides radiation shielding, air filtration, and in-built chemical analysis kit.

An NBC suit reduces the difficulty by two on Resistance tests taken to avoid the effects of toxic environments, gases, radiation, and other chemical hazards. Any damage inflicted to the wearer tears the suit, removing the benefits.

in this environment and they should be well-prepared for the journey. They are also instructed merely to follow and record, and not to engage the investigators. They should be able to avoid the investigators for some time, even if they are spotted occasionally (this encounter works best if the Followers are spotted at least once).

The point of this encounter is to make sure the investigators realise they are being followed, and to make them concerned about this. When the investigators attempt to put a stop to this pursuit, the Followers are likely to be competent enough to avoid the investigators, at least the first few times it happens. The longer the Followers can keep this up, the better it will be for them, and the more worrying for the investigators. But, the investigators should know, if they allow the Followers to tail them all the way to the Final Seal, that would be a catastrophic error on their part.

Of course, behind the scenes, the Seventh Son Followers are actually performing a service for the investigators. They will divert or distract as many Sons of Rasputin patrols as they are able to and will ensure that the investigator's route through Templar territory in Western Europe is kept relatively clear of any vicious surprises. This is an opportunity for some great foreshadowing, with the investigators stumbling upon a number of enemy patrols that have been recently dispatched.

When the investigators do finally catch up with this band and sort them out, they can find the log that the Followers have been writing—which includes their actions in protecting them. The investigators might be surprised to see their every move, virtually every act, recorded in a pretentious and florid prose as if it were some sort of holy tract.

SEVENTH SON FOLLOWER TRACKER OR FIGHTER

ATTRIBUTES							
STRENGTH		PHYSIQUE		AGILITY		AWARENESS	
10		10		8		7	
COORDINATION		INTELLIGENCE		MENTAL STRENGTH		PERSONALITY	
8		8		8		5	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	—	1	—

WOUNDS: 4 (Trooper) or 7 (Elite)

SOAK: Heavy Soldat Armour: (Head 2, Arms 3, Torso 3, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Fritz S89 (melee):** Range C, 1+4, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters
- ◆ **Machinenkrieger (ranged):** Range M, 1+4, Burst, 2H, Armour Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Wasteland Survivor:** The Seventh Son followers automatically get one free bonus dice on all Skill test regarding Observation, Stealth, or Survival while in the Wasteland.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Dark Gifts:** These heretics have been blessed with the following Dark Gifts: Obfuscation (Tracker only), Dark Curse, Sense Weaves of Power, and Symmetry Burst. Fighter followers also have Black Fire and Distorted Armour.



THE HEADHUNTERS

The Headhunters are a nomad band of scouts that are nominally part of the Sons of Rasputin, but are more a law unto themselves. They have taken advantage of the chaos caused by the uprising to pillage the remnants of Strongholds and hunt down any fleeing refugees. The Headhunter group is likely to assume the investigators' group is a band of hapless refugees and attack with little forethought or strategy.

The Headhunters are exactly as their name implies. They fetishize the skulls of those they have slain in battle. All of them are adorned with the skulls of their victims. The leader, clearly, is the one with the most skulls, and the number of skulls on each heretic would make a rough guide to their skill in battle.

In battle, the Headhunters paint themselves with green warpaint (from a large stock of Emerald Idyll non-drip gloss paint they once scavenged from an old builders' merchant) and, when they attack, they make a horrifying wailing battle cry. The Headhunters do not use any technological weapons, instead employing large, intimidating blades of rusty metal.

HEADHUNTER OR

ATTRIBUTES							
STRENGTH		PHYSIQUE		AGILITY		AWARENESS	
10		11		10		10	
COORDINATION		INTELLIGENCE		MENTAL STRENGTH		PERSONALITY	
10		8		8		7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	1	—

WOUNDS: 4 (Trooper) or 7 (Elite)

SOAK: Light scout armour: (Arms 1, Torso 2, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Rusty Falchion (melee):** 1+6, 2H, Parry 1, Toxic 1, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Fear (1)**

FOREST WALKERS

The Forest Walkers are a mutated, sentient, hive-minded, tree-like life form. They do not look too much like trees, but then, in the Wasteland, most trees do not look much like traditional trees. All

sorts of strange flora have grown up in the harsh conditions, so the Forest Walkers are unlikely to stand out as particularly unusual.

As well as gaining sustenance in the traditional way that plants do, Forest Walkers are also capable of feeding on animal life forms. They are able to move at a crawl in a way that is barely discernible to the inattentive, but can cover a surprising distance. They move unceasingly, so will never be found in the same place twice.

If animals unwittingly travel through their territory, they will close in on them, almost imperceptibly shifting around, luring them down dead-end pathways, and closing in behind them. Then they assault their victims using weight of numbers. They attack with their spiny, sharp branches and use their tough bark protection as a defence. The main weakness of Forest Walkers is their susceptibility to fire. They will burn readily in dry conditions.

FOREST WALKERS ▲ OR ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
12 (+3)	14	3	4
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
4	3	4	4

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

WOUNDS: 8 (Trooper) or 11 (Elite)

SOAK: Gnarled Bark: (All 4)

ATTACKS:

- **Thorned vines (melee):** 3+♣5, 1H, Reach, Spread 1, Stun, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Braindead**
- **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- **Grasping**
- **Inured to Cold**
- **Inured to Disease**
- **Inured to Pain**
- **Inured to Poison**
- **Night Vision**
- **Supernatural Strength (3)**
- **Burn free:** Attacks with the Incendiary quality inflict two additional ♣ damage to the highly-flammable Forest Walkers.
- **Forest for the Trees:** Forest Walkers often hunt together and are often mistaken for small copses of trees. It requires a



Forest Walkers: They're all around us! In the trees!

Challenging (D2) Survival or Daunting (D3) Observation test to notice that there's something subtly wrong—the trees are moving but there's no wind, etc. — before it is too late. If the test is failed, the Forest Walkers may ambush their victims.

- **Safety in Numbers:** It is extremely rare to encounter a single Forest Walker, and those that are found alone have either been separated or are bigger, older, and stronger (an Elite Forest Walker).

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Constriction:** Once a Forest Walker has grabbed a target, it further constricts the creature by wrapping it in root-like vines and tendrils. At the cost of two Dark Symmetry points and a Standard Action, the Forest Walker inflicts the Thorned Vines attack as normal and increases the difficulty of tests to escape being grabbed by one step. The difficulty increase is cumulative.
- **They Mostly Come at Night:** Forest Walkers move around at night and often close in on campsites. They can surround their sleeping victim(s) in order to block paths and evade sentries for the cost a Dark Symmetry point.

SCRUBBERS

The Scrubbers are a band of mutated humans who live among the low bushes and grasslands of the European Wasteland. To survive the harsh climate, they live in underground burrows which they dig themselves with the help of their unnaturally large, clawed hands.

Scrubbers are smaller mutants, generally only one and a half metres tall. They have longer arms than normal, ending in vicious claws, and can move deceptively quickly on all fours.

They have excellent sight and hearing, with large, disc-like, pale eyes, and large, cup-like ears. Altogether they make a strange, and almost pitiable, sight.

Scrubbers are not obviously belligerent, and will often seek to trade with anyone they meet, especially if they fear they are outnumbered or out-gunned. They might be satisfied with a decent trade but having scrutinised their erstwhile trade-partners for signs of weakness, given half a chance they will be inclined to betray them and attempt to ambush them later. Sometimes they just cannot resist it.

They look pathetic, and could almost be said to play on this to disarm their opponents. But they should not be underestimated as they are spiteful and ruthless when having the upper hand. They are not able to speak in a way that humans might recognise, but are apt communicators using an array of gestures, whines, and grunts.

Scrubbers are excellent scavengers and thieves, and despite their backwards existence have a natural aptitude for technology. Their burrows are treasure troves of technological artefacts. This makes them excellent trade partners, but will also make them dangerous opponents when they inevitably turn on the investigators, as they make great use of their technology in battle.

SCRUBBER ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	10	12 (+2)	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	8	10	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	–	1	–	3	1	4	1	1	–	4	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Scrap armour: (Head 0, Arms 1, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **Claws (melee):** 1+♣5, 1H, Gruesome, Vicious 1
- ▶ **Scrap rifle (ranged):** Range M, 1+♣4, Burst, 2H, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ▶ **Night Vision**
- ▶ **Supernatural Agility (2)**
- ▶ **Spiteful Succor:** Although happy to trade in most cases, the Scrubber may choose to attempt an opposed Insight or Willpower test when encountering an individual for the first time. If successful, the Scrubber will view the opponent as weak and will attempt to quietly slip away. The hapless victim may therefore remain unaware of the Scrubbers until they attempt to rob them (or worse) later.
- ▶ **Techno-trove:** Scrubbers conceal technology taken from their victims in their lairs. Finding a Scrubber lair requires a Daunting (D3) Survival or Dire (D4) Observation test, with any bonuses for tracking. Inside a single lair, there will be ♣3 items of Restriction 3 equipment or less. Every Dark Symmetry Icon generated means there will be an item of Restriction 4 or better.

FISHMEN

Fishmen are mutated humans who have evolved to survive in their wetland environment. If the investigators are crossing any body of water, preferably a shallow, marshy area with lots of flora for cover, they might encounter fishmen. Fishmen hunt in shoals, attempting to circle and then net their catch. They fight with makeshift trident-like weapons and long nets which they have scavenged from old fishing vessels.

The fishmen have adapted to their conditions; while they do not have gills, they are able to hold their breath for many minutes, which enable them to outmanoeuvre their prey unseen beneath the water. They have also developed webs between their toes and fingers and under their arms, which allow them to swim extremely fast. They have excellent eyes that can see in the dark or in the murky waters that they make their home. Their eyes have grown big and bulging, giving them a somewhat fish-like appearance.

The fishmen go about almost naked, but often decorate their bodies with net-like garments and pieces of rope and other nautically themed adornments. They make their homes in foundered wrecks and upturned boats, where they store all the potentially useful items they have found. This sort of cache could be invaluable to desperate investigators getting low on food or supplies.

Some fishmen, have mutated into larger whale-like creatures that live in deeper waters, called whalemén. These creatures are capable of swallowing a human whole. They submerge for many minutes, while waiting for their prey to enter the water, then they swim up and grab their limbs in the toothy mouths.

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FISHMAN

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	9	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	6	6	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE					
COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	2	3	2
3	2	3	2	1	1
–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 4

SOAK: Scaled skin: (Head 2, Arms 2, Torso 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **Trident (melee):** 1+4, 1H, Armour Piercing 2, reach, Unbalanced
- ▶ **Heavy Harpoon [Net] (ranged):** Range M, 1+3, Munition, 2H, Entangling, Nonlethal
- ▶ **Entangling:** A target hit by this weapon is unable to move or take action except to attempt an Acrobatics or Athletics test to escape, with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ▶ **Night Vision**
- ▶ **Aquatic Affinity:** Fishmen are at home amongst the slime and sludge of the waterways and oceans. When attempting a test in relation to swimming, they have Athletics Expertise 2 and Athletics Focus 1, and do not suffer penalties for difficult terrain whilst underwater. Additionally, they gain one bonus Momentum on Stealth tests whilst submerged. Finally, they do not drown.



WHALEMAN

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	8	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	7	7	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE					
COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	2	3	2
3	2	3	2	1	1
–	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS:

- ▶ Head 9
- ▶ Arms 11
- ▶ Serious 13
- ▶ Mental 7
- ▶ Torso 14
- ▶ Legs 12
- ▶ Critical 9

SOAK: Tough Hide: (all 2)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **Toothy jaws (melee):** 5+6, Armour Piercing 1, Dreadful, Gruesome, Stun, Unforgiving 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **Fear (2)**
- ▶ **Feed upon Fear**
- ▶ **Monstrous Creature**
- ▶ **Night Vision**
- ▶ **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- ▶ **Supernatural Strength (2)**
- ▶ **Aquatic Affinity:** Whalemen are at home amongst the slime and sludge of the waterways and oceans. When attempting a test in relation to swimming, they have Athletics Expertise 2 and Athletics Focus 1, and does not suffer penalties for difficult terrain whilst underwater. Additionally, it gains one bonus Momentum on Stealth tests whilst submerged. Finally, they do not drown.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ▶ **Feeding Frenzy:** Whalemen may enter a terrible rage upon tasting first blood, or any round thereafter, by spending one or more Dark Symmetry points. They gain two additional Momentum on each subsequent successful melee attack. This rage lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent.

WOLFRYN

Wolfryn are some sort of mutated dog or wolf. They look a lot like shaggy, black Newfoundlands, but are much bigger and have glowing red eyes. They hunt in large packs and communicate with ghostly howls and screeches, over many miles. A pack can have as many as fifty of the beasts in it.

Once they have the scent of their prey they are extremely tenacious and will pursue it over hundreds of kilometres, waiting for an opportunity to attack. They are excellent at pursuing and harassing, but are natural cowards and will only go in for the kill once their prey looks defeated or exhausted, and when they have a massive advantage in numbers.

As it happens, the scent of Oligant is particularly pleasing to Wolfryn, and so if the investigators are travelling by Oligant, they will be

dogged by Wolfryn for almost every step of their journey, unless they wipe out the entire pack.

WOLFRYN ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
12 (+1)	10	11	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	7	8	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	–	–

WOUNDS: 8

SOAK: Matted Fur: (Head 1, Arms 2, Torso 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Slavering jaws (melee):** 2+**T**5, 1H, Grasping, Gruesome, Vicious 2



Wolfryn search for easier prey after being scared off.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ◆ **Fear (1)**
- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (1)**
- ◆ **Berserk:** When making a close combat attack, a Wolfryn may choose to add one, two, or three bonus Momentum to its Close Combat test. If it does so, however, then all close combat attacks against that Wolfryn gain the same amount of bonus Momentum until the start of the Wolfryn's next turn.
- ◆ **Craven and cowardly:** Wolfryn are easily intimidated. Unless they outnumber their opponents by a ratio of two or more, they must attempt a Challenging (D2) Willpower test to initiate any combat. They will defend if attacked however.
- ◆ **Cacophonous Howl:** Ten or more Wolfryn may raise a vocal din that targets any non-Wolfryn within Medium range. Those creatures must immediately attempt a Challenging (D2) Willpower test or suffer a Mental Assault and two Dread.
- ◆ **Tracker:** A Wolfryn can track by smell. Once a Wolfryn has scented a creature, it can reduce the difficulty of tests to track the creature by scent by one, to a minimum of one.

ACID STORM

All rain in the Wasteland is acidic, but sometimes, when the atmospheric conditions are exactly wrong, for short periods, and almost without warning, the rain can become so acidic that it can burn the skin and eat through clothing.

If the rain cannot be avoided then the best protection is wearing acid protection suits, designed for just this purpose. These are rare, however, and the other solution is just to wear very heavy clothing of many layers, or with metal plates. These, however, will wear out soon enough, and shoddy clothing can have painful leaks.

The acid rain is also liable to damage equipment. Special care should be taken to protect delicate and high tech equipment from the rain, otherwise the investigators might suddenly find that a vital bit of equipment is suddenly not working, just when they need it the most.

Even acid rain protection suits and NBC suits are ultimately ineffective against intense acid rainstorms. An Investigator caught in the acid rain without such a suit is subjected to 2+**T**3 damage with the Toxic 3 quality each round. Acid rain protection suits and NBC suits provide Heavy Cover against this damage, while other forms of protection may provide Light Cover at the GMs discretion. Investigators should seek cover as soon as possible, with each test requiring at least five rounds of searching to find suitable cover. Each point of Momentum from the test may be used to reduce this time by one round. Rock formations require an **Average (D1) Survival test** to find and provide Light Cover, whilst a canyon will provide Heavy Cover following a successful **Challenging (D2) Survival test**.

Deep caves or a secure building require a **Daunting (D3) Survival test**, but provide complete protection from an acid rainstorm, although for the cost of two Dark Symmetry points, the acid rainwater begins to pool up and possibly flood. Furthermore, a single item will be damaged and will need repaired for every Dark Symmetry Icon generated.

RADIATION CLOUD

Radiation clouds hug the ground and move where the wind takes them. They can be part of a smog or other industrial pollutant, or be on their own and virtually undetectable without the right equipment. In strong winds the clouds will dissipate, but in still weather they can collect and become extremely dangerous.

The best way to deal with the radiation is to avoid it completely, or wear radiation suits. Some medicines will mitigate against the effects but these are not entirely reliable.

The investigators should probably be kitted out with radiation meters. That way, they can be warned of the danger before they are too exposed. They will then have to make a decision about the best way to avoid the cloud.

If they have no way of detecting it, or no clue to its presence, then they will simply walk into it, and be poisoned, without even being aware of it, until they get radiation sickness, which is an uninteresting way to go.

Without a Radiation Meter, it requires a **Dire (D4) Observation test** to spot the signs of a possible radiation cloud or hotspot. They can cover several zones—see pg. 113 of the **Mutant Chronicles** rulebook for more details on Radiation and Radiation Sickness.

ELECTRICAL STORM

Electrical storms are common enough all over Dark Eden. However, occasionally, in the Wasteland, strange meteorological



Travel to Sion may lead to being at the mercy of the Templars

conditions create very intense, concentrated electrical storms. These storms converge rapidly on conductive material and send an almost constant stream of lightning bolts to the earth.

If that target happens to be a living creature, it is almost certain to die. But if the target is some form of higher technology, then it will burn out. Other targets will get extremely hot, and even melt.

These extended bolts can come in waves of dozens at a time. The investigators will need to find good cover or risk being killed or having much of their equipment destroyed. The lightning bolts will be attracted to the biggest, most conductive items, so those carrying large metal objects are likely to be in the most danger.

GMs may spend two Dark Symmetry points at any time to blast a character with lightning, which strikes for 2+**T**4 damage with the Armour Piercing 2 and Vile qualities and may also affect their electronic equipment (which requires further Dark Symmetry points). This blast counts as a ranged attack that may be dodged as a Response Action at a difficulty of **Challenging (D2)**.

CYCLONE

The coasts of Europe are regularly whipped by these prodigious wind storms. With gales of up to 300 kilometres per hour, the storms scour the coast and destroy everything in their path. Usually as the storm heads inland it dissipates quickly, but occasionally they will keep going until they have devastated a vast stretch of inland terrain.

It will be hard for the investigators to identify a dangerous cyclone (as opposed to a conventional storm) except the winds will keep increasing until it is difficult to stay on one's feet. To survive the height of the storm, it is imperative that the investigators find some sort of solid shelter.

A cyclone can whip up any sort of loose material and fling it through the air, creating hazardous debris. It will be able to overturn vehicles, and even carry them off. If the investigators are not able to find decent shelter, they will need to lash themselves to something immovable and hope for the best.

It takes a **Dire (D4) Athletics test** for an individual to stay on their feet in a cyclone—a Repercussion, or three Dark Symmetry points can be used to sweep a character away. Every round someone is exposed to the full force of a cyclone they suffer **T**4 damage with the Dreadful, Knockdown, and Vicious 2 qualities. Characters who are swept away may find themselves ejected from the cyclone at a great height following 1d20 rounds of being trapped within its embrace. A canyon will provide Light Cover, whilst deep caves and secure buildings provide complete protection from a cyclone.

NEWHOPE

This Stronghold can be found by the investigators in the depths of the European Wasteland, a long way from the relative safety of Whitestar. By rights, the place should not even exist, surrounded as it is by miles of inhospitable territory and covetous enemies.

Newhope is almost entirely underground; the only clue to its existence is a series of hillside bunkers surrounding a fortified gateway. It is hard to see how the Stronghold has managed to survive for so long cut off from Whitestar with no network of allies, no one to trade with, and entirely independent.

The truth is that Newhope is just very well run and well led. Its people are resourceful and brave, and they work together well because they know that, without these qualities, the place would not survive for long. Not only this, but Newhope has also been declared as neutral ground by the tribes that war around it; a place to trade, hold clandestine meetings, and generally drown one's sorrows away from the brutality of tribal existence.

Another factor, one that means it is able to replenish its population, is that the Stronghold will take mutants from the Wasteland and treat them like any other comrade in arms—including those who have been ostracised from the tribes. This means that a good proportion (getting on for nearly half, these days) of the population is mutated in some way, and many of them drastically so. The people of the Stronghold do not differentiate between mutants and non-mutants, and so a number of mutants have risen to positions of responsibility and power in the Stronghold's hierarchy. Anti-mutant prejudice is not tolerated, and so even the investigators will be asked to leave or apologise if they insult or disparage the mutants of Newhope.

FINDING NEWHOPE

It is possible that the investigators might stumble across the gateway to the Stronghold on their journey, though it is more likely that they encounter a party from the Stronghold and learn of its presence from them.

A fortunate encounter could occur when the investigators have been left vulnerable by another encounter. The party from Newhope could turn up in the nick of time to help the investigators out. Once they determine that the group needs their help and are of no threat, they could bring them back to the Stronghold to help them recover.

Learning that the investigators have travelled from the east, the people of Newhope will be anxious for stories and news of Whitestar. Contact with people of Whitestar is few and far between for Newhope, so their knowledge of the confederation is sketchy, at best, and sometimes comically inaccurate.

They view Whitestar almost as some sort of mythical Utopia that must eventually mean their ultimate salvation. The might even consider that the investigators have been sent to them, by the Tsarina, in order to lead them to the Promised Land: membership of Whitestar.

They regard the Tsarina as some godlike being who lives in a cloud, bestowing her favour like some ancient deity. Similarly, they think that anyone from Whitestar must be some sort of mythic hero on an epic quest. This could well be true, of course, in regard to the investigators, but, the people of Newhope could be disappointed were they to see the investigators, or any of their fellow travellers, behave in a less than honourable way.

NEWHOPE GOVERNMENT

It is difficult to work out exactly how Newhope is run just from observing the place in action. If they ask, the investigators will be told that 'things just get done,' or, 'this is just how things are.' And, the truth is, things just do seem to get done. Everyone knows their place, and they do their best to serve the community. Everyone has a job to do, and people are free to change their jobs based on their own experiences and the feedback from others.

As this is literally a matter of life and death, that seems to be enough impetus to ensure that jobs are done to the best of everyone's ability and that they are the right jobs for the circumstances. There is no formal system at all. When things break down or there are disagreements, these are solved by discussions. These are not always amicable or polite, and often a free and frank exchange of views ensues, but this rarely leads to acrimony or feuds, as that, of course, would be counter to the smooth running of the Stronghold.

NEWHOPE ASSETS

Newhope will be the perfect place to hole up for a number of days, or even weeks, should the investigators require it. They will be treated like honoured guests as long as they respect the traditions of the Stronghold and do not undermine the high, almost impossibly high, opinion the people have of Whitestar.

One advantage with being the only civilisation for many miles in the middle of a decimated Europe is that there is little competition for scavenging. This means that, should the investigators be desperate for some repairs, or a specific bit of technology, there is a good chance they have it, or something like it, at Newhope.

When it does come time for the investigators to leave again, provided they have not offended the people of Newhope or overstayed their welcome, they will have the pick of the assets of the Stronghold. Although the place is more than desperate for whatever food and equipment they can lay their hands on, they will open up

their vaults to the investigators and offer them the pick of all their relatively meagre possessions.

As keen fans of Whitestar, there will also be a number of volunteers to accompany the investigators on their quest, especially as they might hope to one day return with the investigators to Whitestar. Many of these will also have useful skills that the investigators can take advantage of. They should probably not let on to some of these volunteers about Whitestar's intolerance of mutants.

There are any number of volunteers, with a variety of potentially useful skills, a couple of which are detailed below.



DAVE THE MONKEY

Dave the Monkey is a mutant from the European wasteland whose parents found their way to Newhope when he was still a baby. Dave's mother was particularly hairy, and his father had remarkably long limbs, but it was still a surprise to both of them just how much of both these traits Dave inherited.

Dave has extremely long limbs for his short body and is covered copiously in a thick dark hair. This has earned him the nickname, Dave the Monkey. Funnily enough, in a place like Newhope, the sobriquet Monkey is not considered to be insulting at all, and so Dave does not even think twice about his name.

These mutations have proved very useful in day to day life in the Wasteland. The fur affords a certain amount of protection from the wild elements, and his long limbs mean that he can jump and climb about in the low trees and shrubs that still cover some of the Wasteland. Dave also has an uncanny sense of balance and movement when climbing in the canopy.

All these advantages mean that Dave is uniquely equipped to explore the Wasteland. He often goes out on his own (his colleagues merely slow him down) to explore. He also has a decent sense of direction and has got to know much of the area around Newhope, and even further afield, quite well. Because of this, he has also managed to scavenge more than the average Newhoper, and has earned a reputation as the monkey-like-man to go to when a bit of specific scavenging is required.

Dave also has an undaunted sense of adventure and a naïve longing to see Whitestar. This should make him one of the top candidates if the investigators should require a scout to help them find their way to Sion.

DAVE THE MONKEY ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	8	10	11
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	9	9	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	3	2	4	2	3	1	3	1	1	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Ironhand Autopistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+T5, Semi-automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters
- ◀ **Okhotnik 778 Sniper Rifle (ranged):** Range L, 2+T7, Semi-Automatic, 2H, Unforgiving 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀ **Master Survivor:** Dave may reroll one d20 when making a Survival test, but must accept the new result.
- ◀ **Gifted Scrounger:** Dave is quite skilled at sourcing hard to find objects. All Lifestyle tests taken by him are reduced by one (to a minimum of one.)

HILDE

Hilde is a wily old hunter and scavenger. She is quiet and understated, but exudes an air of calm competence. She is one of the older members of the Stronghold (though not much more than fifty) and the one to go to when you need advice about surviving outside the Stronghold.

Hilde wears an old, tattered biohazard survival suit that has been patched up and modified countless times. She also carries a top of range sniper rifle—a Bauhaus PSG-99 Sniper Rifle—which she scavenged many years ago (though she does not like to talk about exactly how she acquired it). She looks every inch the part of the grizzled Wasteland survivor.

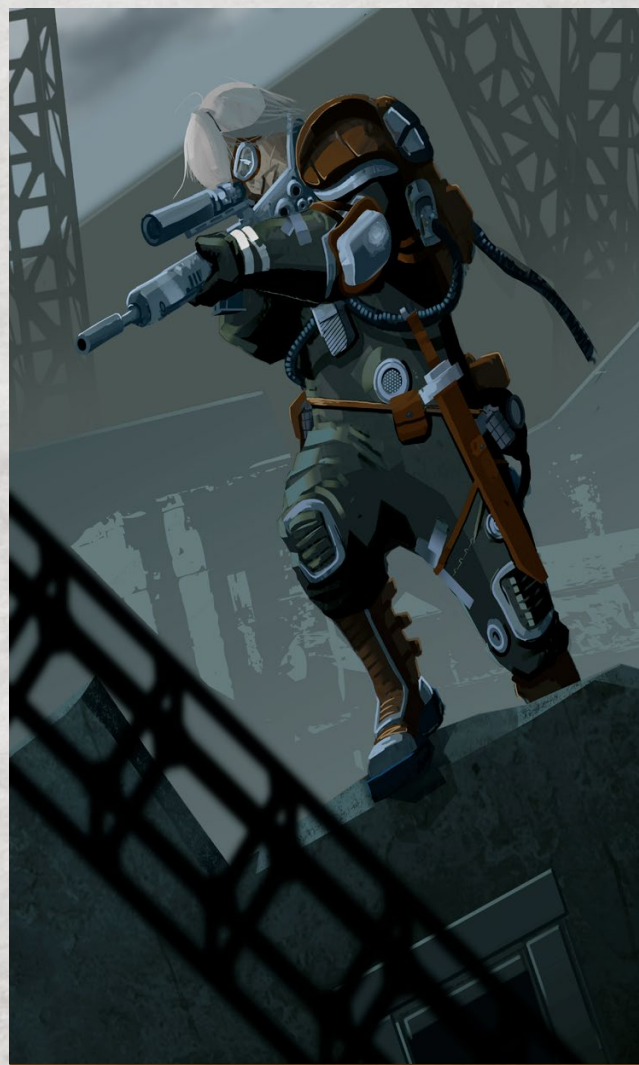
No one knows the area around the Stronghold better than Hilde. Though Dave the Monkey might rely on his natural instincts and sense of direction, Hilde has a prodigious knowledge of the area and an impeccable memory. Her study of the area and navigation through it is a science in its own right. She has also acquired much knowledge, and many rumours, of the lands far from Newhope from those she has met on her travels.

Now, however, she is ageing and not as fast or agile as she was, and without the zest for exploration and scavenging, she spends more time than she feels she ought within the safe confines of Newhope. Perhaps she might consider that one final journey on an important mission for humanity might be the best way to end her great travels.

Hilde has an old, large, scarified, green, blemish on the side of her face, about twenty centimetres long and ten wide. She does not like to talk about how she got it.

HILDE ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	9	8	11
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	10	9	9



Hilde may be old but there is nothing wrong with her eyesight.

DARK EDEN PART 02

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Patchwork leathers: (Head 0, Arms 1, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Combat Knife (melee):** 1+T4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1
- ◆ **PSG-99 Sniper Rifle (ranged):** Range L, 2+T6, Burst, 2H, Ammo (Spread 1), Unforgiving 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Good Gear:** Hilde has the best equipment she can buy or scrounge. The Reliability Rating on any of her equipment is one better than listed.
- ◆ **Wasteland Warrior:** Hilde is familiar with the varied terrain of the Wasteland. She may reroll one d20 on all Observation, Stealth, and Survival tests, but must accept the new result.

TWISTS

It might strike the investigators as odd that they have hacked their way through hundreds of kilometres of the most inhospitable terrain imaginable and defeated nameless terrible foes to find such an oasis of civilisation and order as Newhope. They might be on their guard and never entirely trusting of the locals. They could expect something bad to happen at any moment or hunt for the sinister secret at the heart of the suspiciously friendly Stronghold. The GM may wish to let the investigators do just that, and perhaps they will leave the place still nagged by the uncanny feeling that it was all too good to be true.

Or, perhaps it really is too good to be true. The GM is free to have some more nefarious plot behind the existence of Newhope. Perhaps the entire Stronghold survives by cannibalism. Perhaps they hunt down Whitestar expeditions and the Sons of Rasputin, and whoever else they can find in the Wasteland and eat them. Perhaps they have a larder full of frozen and fresh produce locked away somewhere in the depths of their Stronghold, and they are just itching for a good opportunity to add the investigators to the menu.

Or, the Stronghold could actually be run by the Sons of Rasputin. They could have foreseen the arrival of the investigators through the manifold prophecies and predictions written about them. The entire Stronghold could be a ruse crafted to ensure that the investigators do not suspect a thing when they come to the sacrificial pits in the temple at the heart of the Stronghold. As the prophecies foretell, the investigators must come willingly to their place of sacrifice and thereby will the Dark Eden be saved for the Dark Soul.

Or perhaps the people of Newhope live and work so well together because they are all connected as a single consciousness. There is a huge, mutated brain at the heart of the Stronghold, which has taken control of all the people of the Stronghold through its force of will. It uses this control to get the people to feed it the life-giving blood of any whom they encounter. Perhaps if the investigators are there long enough, the brain will manage to take control of their minds, too. Or, perhaps the brain will just order them killed so it can consume their blood.

Of course, the GM can create different Strongholds for any and all of these ideas, and have the investigators encounter them on their travels.

SANCTUARY

THE TRIBE OF THE PYRAMID

As the investigators approach Sion they will need to travel up the Rhone valley into the foothills of the Alp mountains. They will need to pass by the pyramidal structure of the Stronghold of Sanctuary. Making their home around the pyramid are the Eaters of the Pyramid; an offshoot of the Templars that are considered wild beyond redemption by even their brethren, which is no small statement to make.

Recognisably human, the tribe comprises a group of Templars who have given up all vestiges of civilisation. By pursuing an enforced separation from the other Templar families, they have become little more than a hopeless rabble combing the area for whatever sustenance they can find. They attack non-Templars on sight, and eat their victims flesh raw, with little heed given to long-term survival or the sensible preservation of their food.

The tribe has a rough hierarchical structure of rule by the strongest. Challenges up the hierarchy usually end in fatality, so these are quite rare. The tribe is inherently reclusive, although they will attack *en masse* anyone they see as easy meat. But, after a few fatalities—the indication that their victims can fight back—the tribe will flee to their cave dwellings in the mountainside.

The tribe is led by Grum, a mutant whose mutation is contrary to most Templars. He is extremely fat. This size, of course, ensures that he stands out among his fellow feral nutcases and gives him enough advantage in challenges that he has been able to hold onto his position as chief for years.

In addition to ritual Templar markings, the Eaters of the Pyramid all have the pyramid symbol, actually a simple equilateral triangle in black, upon their body in some way. Most simply have it scarified into their forehead or chest. Some are a little bit more creative and artistic, wearing triangular black hats, or having the symbol painted on their makeshift clothes. They also fly red flags with the black pyramid symbol.

Having had a rough time of it trying to enter the pyramid of Sanctuary many years ago, the tribe has developed their entire culture to deify the pyramid. They see it as the house of god, and the source of their sustenance and survival. Therefore, they make sacrifices to it, and defend it from interlopers.

Their sacrifices are found all over the area, especially around the pyramid and lining the track along the Rhone valley that leads to it. Whatever beings the tribe has managed to hunt down, and deemed worthy, are strung up on diagonal crucifixes and left to rot in the harsh elements. They have also painted the pyramid a shocking red and adorned it, and anything else nearby, with the pyramid symbol.

If the investigators approach Sanctuary, looking like they might try to enter it, the tribe will feel obliged to defend the place. This defence will actually be spirited and forthright, and many of the tribe will fight to the death. The pyramid is sacred to them, and the be-all of their sad existence.

GRUM ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10 (+1)	12 (+1)	7	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	8	10	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	–

WOUNDS: 9

SOAK: Patchwork leather, metal breastplate, and scrap armour: (Arms 1, Torso 2)

ATTACKS:

◆ **Cleaver (melee):** 2+↑5, 1H, Gruesome, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Fast Healing (1)**
- ◆ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (1)**
- ◆ **Templar Physiology:** Templars have become almost completely adapted to the toxins and poisons that permeate Dark Eden through a genetic twist that also boosts their senses and allows them to filter out the scents of the chemicals permeating the environment. Templars reduce the difficulty of all Resistance tests made to avoid the effects of the toxic environment, gases, radiation, and other chemical hazards that pervade

Earth's atmosphere by four, which may eliminate the need for a test. Additionally, Templars generate one additional point of Momentum on successful Observation tests and Survival tests made to track and follow a target.

◆ **Vicious Bully:** When making a Close Combat attack, Grum may reroll up to two ↑, but must accept the new results.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

◆ **Tribal Guard:** By spending a Dark Symmetry point and using a Standard Action, Grum can summon 1-6 Eaters of the Pyramid to assist him. The Eaters appear during the subsequent round.

EATERS OF THE PYRAMID MEMBER ▲

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	8	8	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	6	6	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 3

SOAK: Patchwork leather and scrap armour: (Arms 1, Torso 1)

ATTACKS:

◆ **Machete (melee):** 1+↑4, 1H, Vicious 1

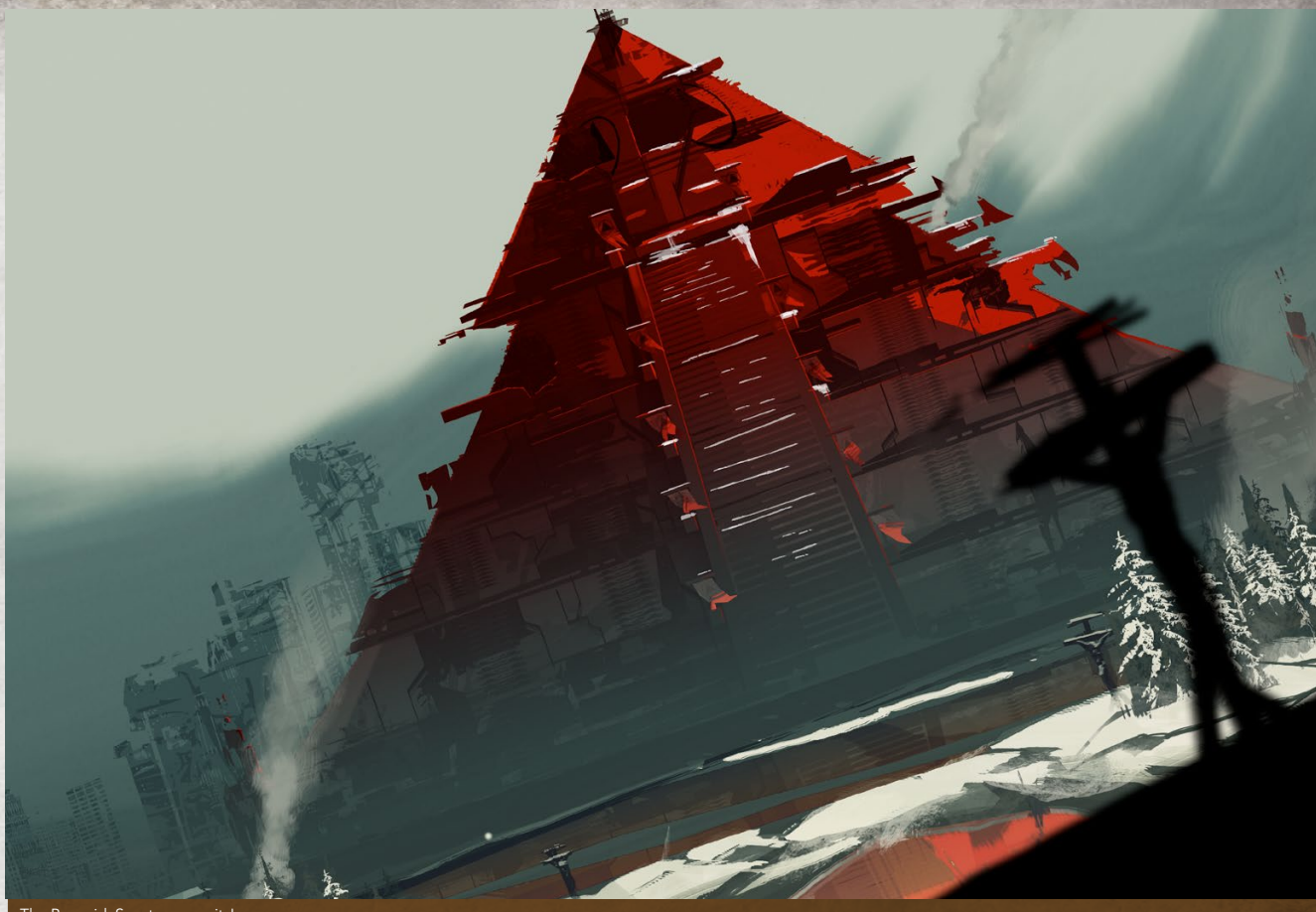
SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Cowardly:** The Eaters are easily scared off by a show of force. The Repercussion of Willpower tests is increased by one
- ◆ **Sneaky Ambush:** Tribe members can reroll one d20 on Stealth tests, but must accept the result.
- ◆ **Templar Physiology:** Refer to Grum for this ability.

THE PYRAMID

Sanctuary is a settlement that lies in the Rhone valley on the way to Sion. It sits on the banks of the trickle of water that used to be the mighty Rhone. The above ground section of Sanctuary is an imposing concrete pyramid, painted haphazardly in a blood-red colour, punctuated by the Templar and pyramid symbols painted in black. It is surrounded by rough, red flags with the black pyramid symbol flying from makeshift flagpoles and the crucified rotting corpses of many sacrifices.

On the approach to the pyramid, along the valley, and also dotted around the pyramid itself, are a number of diagonal crucifixes. Each



The Pyramid: Sanctuary awaits!

crucifix is adorned by the remains of human, mutant, or other lifeforms in various states of decay. These have been left by the Tribe of the Pyramid in honour of whatever sort of deity they think might live there. The whole place should give an eerie and foreboding impression, as of some sort of mysterious temple in a wind-blasted valley, adorned with primitive painting and surrounded by rotting sacrifices.

The pyramid itself allows access to a door through an alcove about five metres deep. The floor of the alcove is littered by a number of old skeletal remains. The door is a normal security lock, requiring an electronic ID and it is in surprisingly good order. There is no way of finding an appropriate ID but the lock can be picked by a **Challenging (D2) Thievery test**. If this test is failed, the picker will be blasted by a sharp electric shock that ignores armour and inflicts 1+⚡2 damage with the Stun quality to the arm being used.

SANCTUARY LIVES

Sanctuary has been a closed community for hundreds of years. It has been sealed off from the outside world all that time, and its people have barely noticed the world go to ruin around them. Civilisation continues as it has always done.

Its beautiful people live a life of comfort and relative luxury, having all their needs supplied by the computer controlled environment. The complex synthesises its own food and so the people here are all well-fed. They dress smartly, in the latest fashions from a thousand years ago, and inoffensive musak is pumped into every corner of the complex. The people are assigned mundane and often pointless tasks as 'work' for which they are paid a virtual salary, with which they purchase their choice of the plentiful available goods and entertainments.

The complex's population is kept to optimum numbers by the computer's careful planning and the use of laboratory reproduction systems, and if necessary, the occasional euthanasia of the most senior citizens.

It seems that the people have everything they need for a full and happy life except, over the years, the intellectual activity of the society has utterly stagnated. Having no real reason to change things or to engage in any sort of creative enterprise, the people have lost all instinct to challenge and enquire. In their own way, they lead as unsatisfying and as bland an existence as the Tribe of the Pyramid that lives in the surrounding countryside.

The people of Sanctuary will greet the investigators calmly with no hint that they might be surprised by them blundering into their home in the middle of a firefight. This should be disconcerting in itself for the investigators, but the people of the complex will continue to refrain from any sort of curiosity about them at all. They will however be concerned for the investigators' welfare, offering them food and drink, somewhere to rest, or any other home comfort the investigators might wish for.

If the investigators have questions for the people, they will answer honestly and to the best of their ability, but it should soon become apparent that they care very little for, and have given even less thought to, the day to day running of the complex, let alone the bigger questions of existence and free will. So, most of the answers the investigators receive will be along the lines of 'I don't really know, it just sort of happens,' and 'is it strange? I hadn't really thought about it.'

SANCTUARY GOVERNMENT

The government of Sanctuary is ostensibly performed by its people, however, there is virtually nothing to do. The whole place runs smoothly enough, automatically, and has done for a thousand years. Therefore, the role of the human element of the government is merely to assign unnecessary, and largely pointless, tasks among the populace. This really is 'paper pushing' for the sake of it. In any case, the people of sanctuary have little sense of hierarchy and status and therefore members of the government are not considered to be any more special than any of the other citizens. If the investigators get hold of the highest ranking official in the entire complex, he will be of no more use to them than anyone else.

ALPHA SEVEN THREE

If the GM desires, he can introduce citizen Alpha Seven Three to the investigators. She will probably be the first person they run into in the complex. Alpha Seven Three is immensely attractive but infuriatingly incurious.

But, exposure to the investigators does fire a spark within her, which puts her above the rest of the citizens of Sanctuary. With a bit of tutoring from the investigators it might be possible for her to become more like them. She could start to learn new things and even ask questions and investigate ideas.

Perhaps Alpha Seven Three will want to accompany the investigators when they leave Sanctuary. She might show some curiosity about the outside and ask them to take her with them. If she does go, she can gradually grow into a whole person, while constantly being bemused and surprised as to the nature of the world, and asking a series of ridiculously naïve questions.

ALPHA SEVEN THREE ▲

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	7	7	7
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	8	7	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
–	–	1	–	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	–

WOUNDS: 3

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

◆ **Slicer (melee):** 1+↑3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

◆ **Beautifully Dense:** Without the systems of Sanctuary to fall back on, Alpha Seven Three is somewhat useless to the Investigators, but her lack of understanding can be somewhat endearing. In situations where she would be called upon to make a Technical test, she may instead use her Social skill by asking someone to explain the process to her.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

◆ **What is a "Kiss"?** Alpha Seven Three is used to a soft life and the pleasures of Sanctuary. By having her fixate on a single Investigator (or NPC), the GM may spend between one and three Dark Symmetry points to request a Willpower test from the target, with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent. On failure, the target will attempt to make Alpha Seven Three's life as easy as possible for the remainder of the scene—opening doors for her, shielding her from harm etc. The target may act freely on success.

LEAVING SANCTUARY

When the investigators have had enough of Sanctuary, they will be able to leave easily enough. And they will be able to take what provisions they like. There are no weapons available in the complex, and nothing that could really contribute to their expedition, except plenty of food.

However, the people of sanctuary will react with utter bewilderment should they share these plans with them. Outside is as utterly an incomprehensible concept as there can be. Of course, they will have no inclination to find out about it, or visit it, or see what it is like. They will simply not be able to understand or relate to the investigators' plans.

Also, when they do leave, the Eaters of the Pyramid will soon spot them and word will pass through the tribe that the investigators have emerged. The whole tribe will converge on the investigators, yet keep their distance. They might appear threatening, but actually they will be in awe. They will even throw a few sacrifices at the investigators to show them their respect. They will use whatever bodies they have handy at the time.

As they have emerged from the pyramid, the investigators will now be as gods to the Eaters of the Pyramid. They can do whatever they like with this new power. But the chances are, given the nature of the tribe, this will not be a particularly useful thing.

TWIST

Perhaps the infinite resources of Sanctuary are not supplied by the magical-like computer system, but by an ugly, subterranean servitor race. These beasts supply the people of Sanctuary with everything they need, just so that every week or so, they can emerge and kidnap a number of them and drag them below ground to feast upon them.

CHAPTER FOUR: SION

OVERVIEW

Sion has been a settlement for thousands of years going all the way back to Earth's ancient historical era. The original settlement however was made by the near-mythical Ancients who constructed one of their planetary defence systems on the site. This system has long since been buried under the settlements of countless generations and numerous civilisations.

The original defence system was designed by the ancients to protect the earth from what they saw as the inevitable second coming of the Dark Soul. The Sion system was one part of a network that focused on, and was positioned around, a gateway to a universe beyond our own: The Final Seal.

The investigators are likely to be visiting Sion under the impression that it is the location of the Final Seal. This is due to the re-telling and corruption of myths through the ages. Sion is an important point in the Earth's defences, but it is not the most important. Fortunately for the investigators, there should be enough information available inside Sion for them to work out the true location of the Final Seal.



Over the years, this defensive system has degenerated and Sion is no longer functioning. It is badly damaged and there is no power supply at the moment. If the investigators can repair the power supply they should be able to work out many of the functions of the Sion station, and bring some of them back on line.

Sion Station survives several levels below the ground and the investigators will need to work their way through the levels and then discover the secret way into the ancient section. They should already have some clues as to how to get into it from the prophecies and history they learned earlier on in this adventure. If they have managed to keep Professor Anya Nastrova alive by this time, she should prove very useful to have around, too.

SURFACE LEVEL

Sion, at the rise of the Dark Symmetry, was a sizeable city, but has been virtually levelled into the dust now. The ruins of the city occupy a narrow valley in the Alps mountain range. The valley, because of its natural shelter, has its own microclimate. The surface level of Sion has been razed and stripped by catastrophic warfare and the ensuing ecological nightmare, but there are a number of low-level structures still standing which offer shelter for a variety of life forms, and cover for predators.

Because of the population of Musties below ground in Sion, the area is home to a number of top predators who prey on the Musties, and also on each other.

The levels below the citadel were entirely hidden from humanity for thousands of years. It is only since the rise of the Dark Symmetry and a number of related Earth disasters that the cellars of the citadel gave way to the hidden levels beneath, exposing a way to access the defence complex constructed by the Ancients.

LORK

Lork is a gigantic humanoid mutation. He is about 4 metres tall, blue skinned, and covered in patches of long white fur. He is actually a juvenile who has strayed from his family. He has made his home in the Rocky citadel of Sion. The Mustie inhabitants of Sion tolerate him as he is an effective guard against intruders. They have a secret way in and out of the citadel that Lork does not know about and that he is much too big for, anyway. They leave food out for him to encourage him to hang around the area because he is such a useful guard.

If they are to get into the citadel, the investigators are likely to come across Lork and fight him. He might not be too tough an opponent on his own, but he could be a decent foreshadow of a much tougher battle. The GM should remember to have an encounter with the rest of his rather large family, once the investigators leave Sion. His family will all be bigger and tougher than Lork is.

LORK ★

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	7	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	5	5	4

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	2	1	-

WOUNDS: 12

SOAK: Matted hide: (Head 1, Arms 2, Torso 2, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Huge Club (melee):** 4+**↑**8, 2H, Dreadful, Knockdown, Stun, Vicious 1
- ◆ **Hurled Rock (ranged):** Range M, 2+**↑**6, Munition, Unwieldy, Burst (Close)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ◆ **Fear (1)**
- ◆ **Grasping**
- ◆ **Inured to Cold**
- ◆ **Inured to Pain**
- ◆ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (2)**
- ◆ **Durr... Pretty!** Lork is not the sharpest tool in the shed, and speaks some basic "pinkie". If the Investigators manage to somehow conceal themselves, Lork will forget about them and wander off to look for a Mustie to smush. With a Dire (D4) Persuade test, they just might actually convince him that they are figments of his imagination, or to hold a live grenade, etc. An Epic success on the test might actually convince him to come with them when they leave—which may not be a good idea.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Lork Smash!** By spending one Dark Symmetry point, Lork smashes his club into the ground. Anyone within Reach must make a Daunting (D2) Athletics test or suffer the Staggered condition.
- ◆ **Puny Investigators!** Should Lork successfully use his Grasping ability on a victim, he may spend two Dark Symmetry points to then either throw them or use them as a melee weapon. This makeshift "weapon" uses the Hurlled Rock profile above



if thrown, or inflicts 3+**T**5 damage with the Dreadful and Stun qualities if used as a melee weapon. The victim also suffers any damage that is inflicted to the target.

At the heart of the old settlement, near the base of the valley, can still be seen the location of the original, ancient citadel of Sion. It is a lone crag rising from the flat valley floor, that would have once been surrounded by the river Rhone, which is now just a trickle. Its rock is still littered with the signs of ruined Strongholds through thousands of years and many eras. Now very little remains of any of the fortifications.

If the investigators climb up to the top of the crag within the old citadel, it should require a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** to locate the ancient steps that lead down into the heart of the complex. These steps soon become too narrow for Lork to climb down.

LEVEL 1: MUSTIES

The first level below ground was cut into the rock many years ago, and was used as storage and living quarters for the old citadel. Much of the workings are medieval, tight, and narrow. They are also extremely old and fragile. There have been rock falls in a number of places, making areas difficult to traverse or squeeze by, and there is a good chance that violent action could cause another one.

This level is inhabited by a tribe of mutant humanoids, who have vaguely weasel-like features. They call themselves the Musties. These creatures are about 120 centimetres tall. They can work on their hind legs, but they prefer, when trying to go fast or running for long periods, to walk on all-fours.

They have hair all over their bodies, big ears to help their hearing, and prominent front teeth, which they use to bite their prey. They are skinny and sleek and seem to be able to contort their bodies to get through the narrowest gaps, and to keep themselves unseen in the most meagre of cover.

The Musties make their home in Sion's first level. It is the best cover for many kilometres. They fought their way in to capture it from other mutants and will not relinquish it without a fight. They consider that their tribe will inevitably fail should they lose control of their base.

There is a secret way into the level from the surface, a difficult, narrow fissure about 10 metres long. It would require a **Daunting (D3) Observation Test** to spot, and even if the investigators do notice it, it would be almost impossible for them to navigate unless they were below average size and stripped off all their equipment. Even then it would be **Challenging (D2) Acrobatics** or **Athletics test** to avoid getting stuck. The Musties realise their entrance is the key to their safety and so are very careful about being observed when using it. They could be forced to reveal the location of the fissure, however, if the investigators are very convincing.

Sometimes, when they need to get in and out quickly, the Musties use the main entrance, guarded by Lork. This is sometimes a necessary evil, and the Musties all make a rush for it and hope for the best. Lork is not usually quick enough to grab more than one of the Musties in any case, so each individual will fancy their chances, if they do not use this method too much.

Musties are almost never surprised, because of their keen senses, and because they usually go around in packs, and ensure that a good number of the pack is doing nothing but playing lookout at any time. In a fight, they will seek to drastically outnumber their foes, and then attack them all in one go, using their long, sharp incisors to rip and tear at their victim's flesh. If they sense victory they will press on with their attack, whatever the cost. However, if they feel they will be defeated, they are quick to turn tail and regroup.

MUSTIES ▲

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
5	5	12	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
12	4	6	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	-	2	1	2	1	1	-	-	-

WOUNDS: 2

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Bite (melee):** 1+**T**3, 1H, Vicious 1
- ◆ **Thrown Rock (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**3, Munition, 1H, Stun

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Scuttling Climb:** A Mustie can climb freely on any surface—including sheer walls and ceilings—and contort itself through tight spaces without regard for the normal structure of a human body

LEVEL 2: SNAKES

Exposed by a rockfall, a way down to the second level has been opened. This level lay undiscovered for thousands of years, until relatively recently. It is little more than a few rough caverns littered with fallen rocks and dust, but it contains the doorway to one of the Ancients' Planetary Defence Stations.

Driven further underground by the invasion of the Musties is a family of snake-like mutations. These snakes have lost their place in the complex to the invading Musties and must now skulk in the lower level. They are hungry and desperate, surviving on the meagre pickings available down here. The way to the upper level is well guarded by Musties at all times, and so the snakes have little chance of getting to the surface. Occasionally they will manage to catch a mustie and drag it down here, when the entire family can feast. This will keep them going for several days.

If the investigators encroach down here, the snakes will slip into the cracks in the rock and be almost impossible to detect until they strike. They will wait for victims who drift off on their own, or other unsuspecting targets, and then drop onto them from above, and attempt to constrict them.

CONSTRUCTOR SNAKE ▲

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13 (+2)	11 (+1)	10	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
2	5	6	2

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE									
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	3	2	2	1	—	2	2	—	—

WOUNDS: 7

SOAK: Scaly Hide: (Head 1, Body 2)

ATTACKS:

► **Bite (melee):** 3+⚡6, Toxic 3, Vile

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fear (1)**
- **Grasping**
- **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- **Supernatural Strength (1)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Constriction:** Once a snake has grabbed a target, it further constricts the creature by tightening its coils. At the cost of two Dark Symmetry points and a Standard Action, the snake inflicts 3+⚡5 damage with the Spread 1, Stun, and Vicious 1 qualities and increases the difficulty of tests to escape being grabbed by one step. The difficulty increase is cumulative.

THE TRAPDOOR

It requires a **Challenging (D2) Observation test** to spot the Ancient doorway that leads to the lower levels. There have been many cave-ins and the way is littered with rubble. The door in the floor is obvious, however, if anyone is carrying out a systematic search of the level, especially if they are looking for this very thing.

The trapdoor is a high-tech metal installation that has been locked using typical Ancient technology. This particular device is not mentioned in any of the sources that the investigators have had access to but it contains legible sigils so it will require a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test** to open. This could be the investigators' first encounter with this type of technology, so it could appear almost as magic to them. To reflect this the GM could consider making it a **Daunting (D3) Willpower test**.

Before they can make much sense of the door, the investigators will need to clear it of rubble. This will be painstaking, and if they do not have some effective digging equipment, could take up to two hundred man-hours to complete. The debris is due to a rock fall, so the investigators should consider that they need to be careful when moving the material, for fear they might cause another one.

Once exposed the area will look like a large metal plate set into the floor, dead level. The plate is etched with a hexagon, similar to the illustration that the investigators should already be familiar with. It is impossible to tell what metal the floor is made from, and it will be almost impossible to break through it, or even merely damage it, by use of brute force.

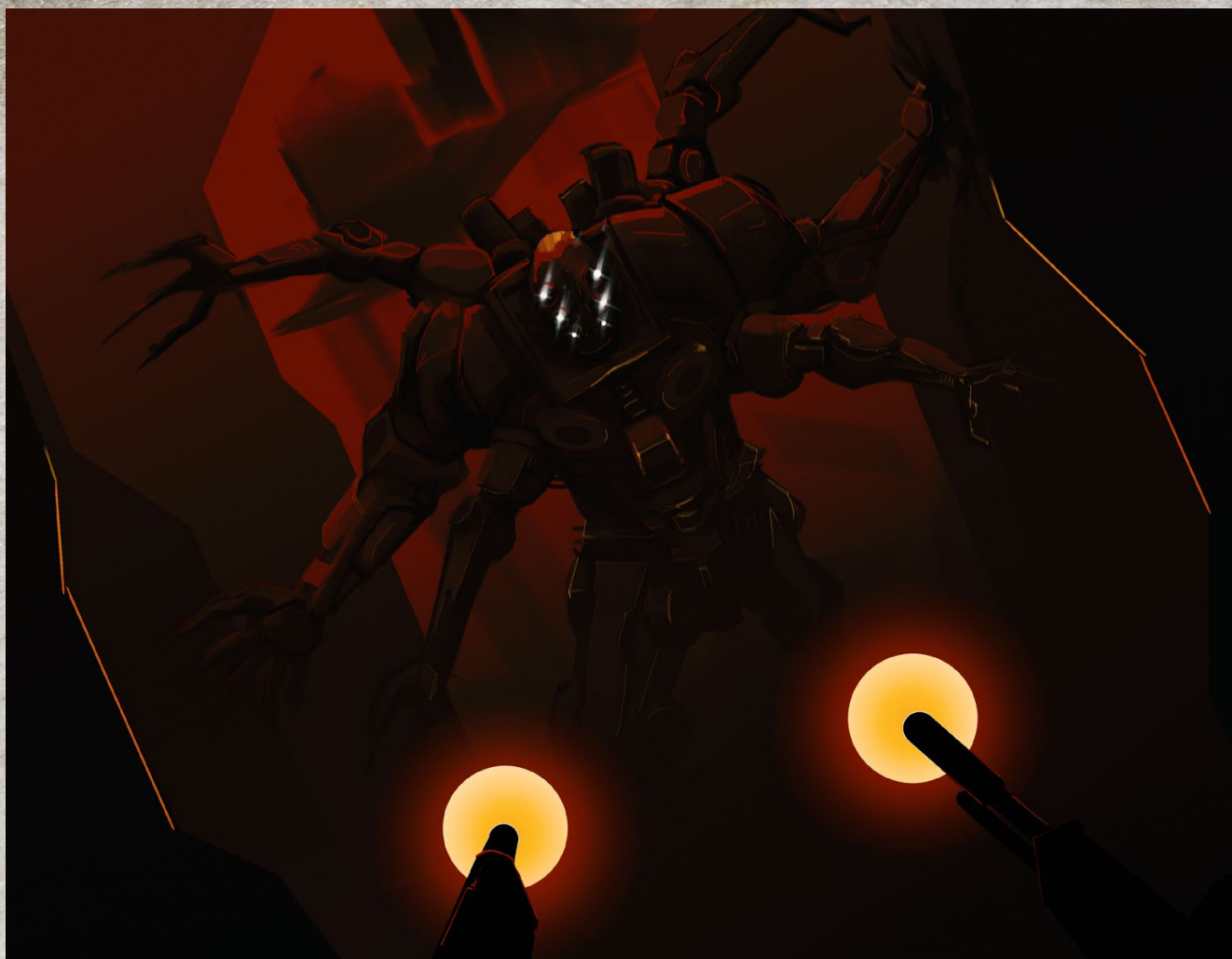
If the trap door is opened, the remaining part of the plate will slide open, revealing a helical staircase that leads down to the next level. If the opening fails, then whoever was carrying it out will receive an electric shock 1+⚡3 damage with the Stun quality to the arm being used.

If the investigators cannot work out the correct sequence to open the plate, then really their adventure should end here. Fortunately for them, failure only results in an electric shock, which, while damaging and painful, will not be fatal (at least at first). This should give the investigators several goes at it.

If the investigators cannot open the door, and Professor Nastrova is with them, she can eventually remember seeing similar diagrams during her studies, and will be able to open the trapdoor for them and the adventure can continue.

LEVEL 3

The third level of the complex was designed by the Ancients to remain hidden from humanity for many thousands of years until this very moment. Just in case the unworthy made it through, the Ancients left a system of robots to defend it. Of course, the long-



Sion's Ancient defences are still very much functional.

prophesied worthy humans who make it through will have no trouble getting past these defences. Getting past them, will actually be more evidence of their worth.

Although this level is out of power and its systems are down, the robots have been designed with autonomous control and their own power supply. The area is in complete darkness, apart from what lighting the investigators bring with them; the robotic defenders have sensors that enable them to see in the dark (and in any other spectrum they might be required to).

SECURITY ROBOT ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	ABILITY	AWARENESS
12 (+1)	12 (+2)	10	12
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	10	12	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
4	2	3	1	1	1	4	2	-	-	1	-

WOUNDS: 11

SOAK: Armour plating: (All 3)

ATTACKS:

- **Weaponised limb blades (melee):** 3+**T**8, 1H, Armour Piercing 3, Gruesome, Vicious 2
- **Passive Mode (Assault Rifle):** Range M, 1+**T**8, Burst, 1H, Armour Piercing 1
- **Termination Mode (Sniper Rifle):** Range L, 2+**T**7, Burst, 2H, Unforgiving 2
- **Pest Control (Flamethrower):** Range C; 1+**T**9, Munition, 1H, Incendiary 3, Torrent

DARK EDEN PART 02

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Fear (2)**
- ◆ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (1)**
- ◆ **Unliving**
- ◆ **Scuttling Climb:** A Security Robot can climb freely on any surface—sheer walls and ceilings included—and is able to reconfigure and alter its form to move through tight spaces easily.
- ◆ **Internal Armoury:** The Security robots can form a number of weapons for a variety of purposes, or Modes. It takes a Response Action to shift to a different Mode. These modes consist of: Passive Mode, Termination Mode, and Pest Control mode and affects the types of weapon the robot may use.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Whirling Blades:** One to three Dark Symmetry points can be spent to allow the robot to make one additional attack per point spent. One Dark Symmetry point can be spent to allow the robot to attack any creature within Close range, rather than only those within Reach.

1) ROBOT STORAGE

Here is an area where two back-up Security Robots are stored. If the investigators have made it this far, then it is very likely that they would have disabled a number of the robots, so the two that are usually stored here will have already been activated to help with the defence.

If the investigators have somehow found a clever way around the defence systems then the two robots will be in here, awaiting activation and instruction.

2) ROBOT CREATION SECTION

This section contains two box-like frames, about two metres cubed. The frames are covered in a complex array of wires and electronic systems. Most of the components look a bit like lasers, or syringes, all pointing towards the centre of the frame.

These are where the Security Robots are created. There are eight robots active at any moment, and two in storage. If any are destroyed, then these systems fire up and begin to create replacements. The robots are essentially 'printed' by this equipment, using the 'ink' in the nearby vat.

The system, like the robots, has independent power supply and autonomous control, and so will continue printing regardless of the state of the rest of the complex. It takes about an hour to print a complete Security Robot.

DIAGNOSTIC & REPAIR

The damaged component is a 20 centimetre squarish box with an elliptical bulge in the top. It is plain grey, like most of the external components of the cylindrical power generator and requires a **Dire (D4) Sciences test** to recognise as some sort of power regulator. If it is removed by a deft twist and a push to one side—which may need an **Acrobatics** or **Athletics test** to avoid further damage—the inside of the box can be examined. It contains several colourful pieces of plastic-looking geometrical shapes. A large blue component which looks like half an icosahedron has clearly exploded and there is a coating of soot on the inside of the box.

The icosahedron will need to be replaced, and the box cleaned. Even then, the component will not function. The explosion has also damaged a small, centimetre long, purple cylinder inside the box. It has a microscopic crack, which is very difficult to detect and requires a **Dire (D4) Observation test**. The investigators are likely to need to go through every component in the box (there are ten of them) and examine them carefully or work out a way to test them, in order to get the box in working order (the **Daunting (D4) Mechanics test**). Or, simply replacing every component in the box will do the trick. The components are most easily described as simple geometric shapes of various colours.

3) VAT

This is a low pool about 5 metres across (and about a meter deep) that is full of a bubbling and roiling melange of iridescent fluids. The liquids seem to move and shimmer about the pool as if of their own free will. In fact, this is the vat of raw material that the robot printers draw upon in order to create the robots. Many of the substances are highly toxic to humans and even immersing oneself in the liquid will inflict 1+**T4** damage with the Toxic 2 quality to any exposed flesh.

If a heavily damaged robot manages to return to this point it will throw itself in this vat in order to replenish the pool with its constituent elements. The liquid will gradually work on the robot, rendering it down to liquid in a few hours. The liquid, of course, could be used as a weapon against the robots. If enough of it gets onto a robot, it will quickly eat away at it, disabling vital systems in a matter of minutes.

4) CONTROL ROOM SECURITY DOOR

This security door guards the way to the planetary defence system controls. It is made of the same mysterious metal that the trap door to this level was made of and it is etched with a similar pattern. Like the trap door, the correct pattern needs to be traced before the door

while uttering the relevant tones in order to activate this section of wall. Like the trap door, if the pattern is not known, it will be a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test** to open. If the pattern is known, it requires only an **Average (D1) Willpower test** to trace out and intone correctly.

When this is done, the section of wall beside the hexagonal panel will slide away to allow access to the control section. There is a similar hexagon on the other side of the gateway. If the same pattern is traced upon that one then the wall section will open and close in a similar manner and can be used to isolate this section from the rest of the complex, and the security robots.

5) THE CONTROL ROOM

This is a long, featureless blank wall. There are three chairs upon hexagonal daises positioned to face the wall. The wall, when powered up, is the nerve centre of the entire complex. The defence system is run entirely from here. When powered up the area between the chairs and the wall becomes a three dimensional, virtual reality, walk through, control system manipulated by the merest gesture.

The problem for the investigators is that the defences are not powered, and they need a significant amount of power to function. The power generators are positioned in a different part of the

complex, and if the investigators are to go there, they will need to run the gauntlet of the security robots once more.

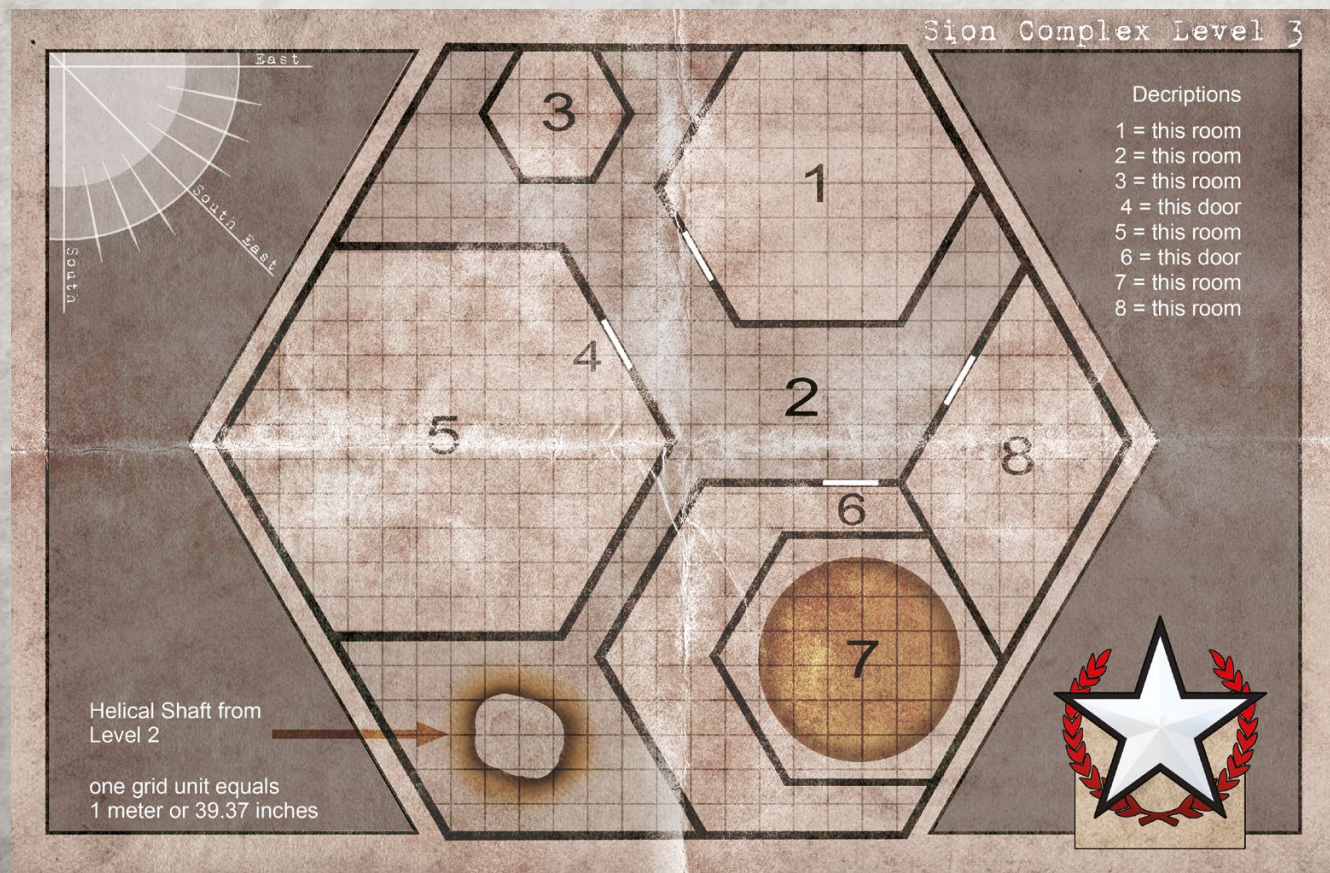
6) POWER GENERATOR SECURITY DOOR

The power systems lie behind a similar door to the defence controls. However, the key to unlocking the door is slightly different. The relevant piece of the source is unknown to the investigators and does not appear in any records they have and so it will be a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test** to open.

7) THE POWER GENERATOR

The power generator is located in a tall hexagonal shaft. The long cylindrical system goes down for what might be a hundred metres into darkness. It is unlike anything the investigators have ever seen before. Some functionality can be discerned but deciphering a lot of the alien technology will be guesswork.

The power generator itself has a clearway of several metres all around it, for some unknown reason (possibly for cooling, or to avoid seismic shifts and/or geostatic interference). The section level with the complex can be accessed via a hexagonal gantry that goes all around this part of the cylinder, and the investigators will be able to inspect all around the device. However, the power generator has no apparent controls or readouts because the power is down.





Actually, there is a fault about 50 metres below. A small component has blown up and the fail-safes have kicked in, bringing the entire power system down and shutting down the Planetary Defence System. The investigators will have no idea about this unless they conduct a painstaking study of the entire cylinder. If they do manage to get to the damaged component, it should be quite obvious that that is the bit that has gone wrong, but it will be far from obvious what that bit actually is and how it might be repaired.

The GM can decide to do this repair in the abstract by requesting a **Dire D4 Science test** to diagnose the system and a **Daunting D3 Mechanics test** to perform the necessary repair. But if he wishes to describe what is apparent to the investigators, the components can be described—even though most of their functions will remain mysterious—by using the descriptions in the Diagnostic & Repair Sidebar.

8) STORAGE AREA

The storage area lies behind a less impressive door, but it still needs to be unlocked using the gestures that unlock the other ones. The area is stacked with replacements for the various systems of Sion

Station. It will take a few hours of dedicated searching to find the required parts. There is a logic to how everything is stored, but this will be difficult to deduce. Perhaps an investigator making a **Daunting (D3) Science test** will be able to make a decent stab at finding a component quickly.

A lot of the components stored here might come in useful for a resourceful investigator with an instinctive appreciation of the Ancients' technology, but it should be very difficult for them to jury rig such a device without much study, and trial by error.

THE PLANETARY DEFENCE SYSTEM

Once the power is switched on again the control room will begin to hum with power and brighten. Light will emanate strangely from the erstwhile dark wall panels. Three dimensional displays will flicker into life in mid-air, detailing the entire Planetary Defence Network. This will not be too much use to the investigators until they are able to interact with it, and look for specific information. Before then it is all just pretty lights.

Any investigator with significant amounts of Ancient DNA, or Human Factor, or even XLR8 in their systems, or any investigators who have interacted psychically with Ancient technology before, will be able to attempt to create a psychic link with the system. This can be achieved on a **Daunting (D3) Willpower test**. Any subsequent attempts after a successful linking can then be achieved on a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test**.

Once linked it should be relatively simple to navigate the information contained within the system and even display it in the three-dimensional virtual display that fills the control room for the benefit of any onlookers. The system contains almost all imaginable information connected with the Planetary Defence System.

INFORMATION

The first thing the system user will probably discover is that this is not part of a gate, or other technological transport. The legends that pointed to that are wrong. There is nothing in the system that could be considered to be the Final Seal. So, in that regard, the investigators' journey here looks to have been a waste of time. Fortunately, though, that is not actually the case and there is much useful information to be gleaned.

The complex is part of a network of six planetary defence systems that guard the Earth and especially the Final Seal. The systems possess almost unimaginable power but they must all be working in concert to function. They are positioned equidistantly around the Final Seal in a perfect hexagon. The systems would seem to produce some sort of protective shield around the Earth that is centred on the Final Seal. This seems to be all about protecting the Final Seal rather than the rest of the planet, which it partially covers.

In addition, there is another ring of six equidistant stations centred around the Final Seal that seems to be an obfuscating device. It is unclear from this point of view (because it is an obfuscating device) exactly how this second system functions, but there is enough information available to get these sites' precise locations.

The planetary defence system is down because (as well as Sion station being without power) the fourth station in the array (Station 4 — Sion is Station 6) is also unresponsive and not part of the network at this time. It is impossible to see what is wrong with that station from Sion. But all the other stations are working perfectly as far as the system user will know, and whatever is wrong must be wrong at Station 4. It is simple for the system user to leave the system in a state of readiness, so that as soon as Station 4 is up and running, the whole system should become functional.

The system user will be able to come up with a high-resolution map of the energy systems involved with the defence network and the physical locations of the components. That should make it clear

exactly where the Final Seal is located and exactly where all the defence systems (including Station 4) are located.

The Defence System is centred on an area that, for much of humanity's history, was called Cappadocia. Although the location of the Final Seal is now clear to the investigators, its nature should still be a complete mystery. The Seal is not part of the defence network, it is merely defended by and lies at the centre of the network. In the virtual reality model the investigator will perceive it through, it is like an unknowable void at the heart of the system.

The system will also reveal to any investigator interacting with it, the presence of a more offensive system based on Mars. In a similar way to the six points of Earth's defence system forming a sort of shield, the metaphorical virtual environment around Mars seems to describe a spear or some similar sort of thrusting or projectile weapon pointing from the centre of the solar system towards an unknown enemy far beyond the asteroid belt.

This information should be useful to the investigators' allies and to progress later on in this adventure. If the investigators do not share it with their allies, and especially Cybertronic, they can always pick it up by other means. Perhaps, now that Sion Station is up and running again, that information becomes available to Cybertronic scanning devices. Or any Cybertronic allies currently with the investigators will be sure to pass it along.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Although they run independently of the station, with a bit of clever manipulation, it will be possible for the investigators to shut down the Security Robots, either temporarily, while they make their escape, or permanently. This will require a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test**.

It will also be possible for the investigators to shut down the entire Sion Station if they wish. This will require a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test** and it can be left in a state where they can bring all the systems back on line, after a similar test.

If the investigators wish to destroy the station utterly, this will require a **Dire (D4) Willpower test**. The system is robust, with many fail-safes, so rigging the system to overload and explode will take very clever manipulation. It is more likely the investigators will think they have succeeded at this, but when they have retired to a safe distance, one of the fail-safes will kick in, and the system will remain functioning, or simply shut down. If they fail such an attempt drastically (such as by generating a Repercussion), the station could overload much too quickly for the investigators to escape to a safe distance, and they will get caught in the blast.

LEAVING SION

When they leave the station, the investigators are likely to be heading towards the centre of the Defence System in Cappadocia, which we will call Station Zero, although it is never named or indicated in Sion Station's data. Its presence is implied as more of an absence than anything explicitly described. This journey should involve more of the same for the investigators except they will be heading generally south east instead of south west.

If anything, the route should be more dangerous, more wild, more susceptible to the ravages of the Dark Eden as they move even further into the irradiated, storm-swept wilderness. The terrain they cross will be more rugged and unforgiving. Most of the route is mountainous and using vehicles will be even more difficult than before. Animals should be able to cope with the conditions just as well as they have already coped with them.

THE LORK FAMILY

The first thing the investigators can encounter is Lork's family, if they killed him getting into the Sion Station. They should still have the scent of Lork's death on them, and that will incense the creature's family. The family are similar to Lork, but he was just a juvenile. They are all bigger and stronger than him, and will be keen for revenge.

As the investigators will need to head up the valley on their way east, this will be a perfect place for an ambush. The Lork

family will shower the investigators with rocks from above before closing in on them, and trying to surround them in the base of the valley. If the investigators decide to retreat, they can, but going back the way they came will mean a long detour, and revisiting many of the dangers they have already passed further down the valley.

LORK FAMILY MEMBER ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
15 (+3)	15 (+3)	9	11
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	7	7	5

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
4	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	1	-	-	-

WOUNDS: 15

SOAK: Matted hide: (Head 2, Arms 3, Torso 3, Legs 3)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Huge Club (melee):** 5+**T**9, 2H, Dreadful, Knockdown, Stun, Vicious 1
- ◆ **Hurled Rock (ranged):** Range M, 3+**T**6, Munition, Unwieldy, Burst (Close)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Fear (2)**
- ◆ **Grasping**
- ◆ **Inured to Cold**
- ◆ **Inured to Pain**
- ◆ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (3)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (3)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Lork Smash!** By spending one Dark Symmetry point, the Lork family member smashes his club into the ground. Anyone within Reach must make a Challenging (D2) Athletics test or suffer the Staggered condition.
- ◆ **Puny Investigators!** Should a Lork successfully use its Grasping ability on a victim, it may spend two Dark Symmetry points to then either throw them or use them as a melee weapon. This makeshift "weapon" uses the Hurled Rock profile above if thrown, or inflicts 3+**T**5 damage with the Dreadful and Stun qualities if used as a melee weapon. The victim also suffers any damage that is inflicted to the target.

PREPARING FOR THE STORM

CHAPTER FIVE: TURKEY

As the investigators travel south, especially as they travel through present day Turkey, the landscape should become increasingly arid. Water will become a scarce and valuable resource, and the investigators should make sure that they are carrying enough water and have access to water supplies to replenish their stock. Trying to locate a decent source of water in the arid landscape should require a **Challenging (D2) Survival test**, though further purifying might be required.

THE JOURNEY

Having interrogated the system defence computer and interacted with its three-dimensional virtual interface, and if they bothered to take notes, the investigators should have an excellent idea of the route to Station Zero and the knowledge to decide the best and quickest options. However, the system is many thousands of years out of date, and so small changes over time and the tumultuous recent changes will not be recorded. This means that any sort of

new terrain feature or other hazard could come as a surprise to the investigators. The journey should be arduous and the GM can bring in some of the encounters described earlier in this adventure if he did not already use them on the journey to Sion, or he can add in some of the ones below.

NOMAD HERETICS

The rocky, windswept mountains of Turkey are inhabited by a desperate nomad people that have fragmented from the wandering Crescentian nation. Unfortunately, many of them have also been infiltrated by followers of the Seventh Son. While these Heretics do not consider themselves to be Sons of Rasputin, their outlook and methods are similar. They save their belligerence and hatred for the city of Anchor, instead of Whitestar.

These Nomads can be found all over Turkey and the desert beyond, but of course, the nature of the terrain means that their populations are low. They live mostly by attacking salvage hunters and traders making their way to and from Anchor.



Welcome to Anchor, gateway to Crescential

Those who ply the trade route in the north between Whitestar and Anchor know the danger from the Nomads well and go to some lengths to protect themselves. Therefore, the Nomads usually prey on those who stray further from the beaten track, and salvagers who must search deep into the uncharted desert. Only occasionally, under a leader with enough charisma and forcefulness, will the nomads band together and attack the larger, better protected caravans.

If approached carefully, Nomads can act as guides. This is a job they excel at, but they charge a high price, and anyone willing to risk hiring the Nomads should need to come up with a good reason why the Nomads do not simply leave them dead in the middle of the desert and take all their equipment.

NOMADS

Some of the Nomads of the desert, usually those who retain close ties to Crescentia, despise the Dark Soul and those that follow it. They squeeze out what existences they can, often trading with salvage hunters and occasionally visiting settlements like Anchor.

There are none better at surviving in the almost uninhabitable desert. They are expert trackers and hunters. They also make impeccable navigators using the stars to navigate through the often featureless landscape at night.

They are loyal only to themselves, but if they make a deal, they generally keep it. If they agree to help the investigators, they will make excellent guides. They are also likely to know the locations of a number of watering holes and even ancient, secret cisterns below the desert.

Of course, as their existence is so harsh, equipment, food, and water is extremely valuable to them, and so they will drive a hard bargain in any financial arrangement with the investigators. One problem the investigators may have, on first encountering nomads or viewing them from a distance, is trying to decide whether they are heretics, or not. There is little to differentiate the two from a distance.

NOMADS ★

ATTRIBUTES											
STRENGTH			PHYSIQUE			AGILITY			AWARENESS		
9			8			8			9		
COORDINATION			INTELLIGENCE			MENTAL STRENGTH			PERSONALITY		
8			9			7			7		

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Scavenged Armour Pieces: (Arms 1, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Scrap Rifle (ranged):** Range M, 1+**T**4, 2H, Munition, Unbalanced
- ◆ **Knife (melee):** 1+**T**4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Storm Warnings:** The Nomads have a profound knowledge of Dark Eden survival, and can easily read the danger signs. They need never test to discern their location or direction of travel whilst in the wastes. Additionally, they reduce the difficulty of any test made to perceive the surface environmental dangers—such as rockfalls or sandstorms—by one, to a minimum of one.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Dark Gifts (Nomad Heretics only):** Nomad Heretics know the following Dark Gifts: Dark Curse, Obfuscation, and Sense Weaves of Power

MUTANT VULTURES

The mutant Vultures of Turkey are much larger and fiercer than those of today. Their wingspan is around five metres and their beak and talons are sharp killing instruments. They can be seen in the sky, in good weather, circling anything that looks like a potential meal. While they are content to scavenge whatever creatures find an unfortunate end in the desert, they are also capable of inflicting death themselves.

When forced by hunger, or when finding a suitably weak victim, a gang of vultures will swoop from out of the sun almost unseen and set upon their victim. They will rend him with their talons and attack with their sharp beaks. Floating high above the desert they see everything and are quick to pick a victim out as soon as he strays even a little way from his fellows.

Because they are often scavengers and can follow potential victims for days, the sight of gliding vultures can be used by skilled desert hunters to help them track potential prey, or to follow enemies from a safe distance.

MUTANT VULTURE ★

ATTRIBUTES											
STRENGTH			PHYSIQUE			AGILITY			AWARENESS		
12			12			12			11		
COORDINATION			INTELLIGENCE			MENTAL STRENGTH			PERSONALITY		
5			3			5			2		

PREPARING FOR THE STORM

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	1	3	2	2	2	1	-	-	-

WOUNDS: 8

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Bite (melee):** 2+ $\uparrow$ 7, Gruesome, Toxic 1, Vicious 2
- ◆ **Talons (melee):** 1+ $\uparrow$ 5, 1H, Armour Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Flight:** Vultures are winged creatures, able to soar and glide through the air as easily as humans walk. A Vulture can move freely through the air, and can move as though there were additional zones directly above the battlefield. If a test is required concerning movement whilst airborne, then Acrobatics is used as a default.
- ◆ **Fly out of the Sun:** Vultures have learned to conceal themselves using the Sun's glare. They have Stealth Expertise 3 and Stealth Focus 1 for the purposes of concealing themselves only.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Swooping Dive:** A Vulture that makes a successful attack with its claws may grab the target by spending one or more Dark Symmetry points, exactly as if it had the Grasping special ability. Once it has a target grabbed and succeeds at an attack, the Vulture receives bonus Momentum equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent. This bonus Momentum may only be used for the Called Shot Momentum spend as the vulture seeks to attack the target's head. The vulture will also attempt to become airborne, which may result in falling damage for any creature that breaks free of its grasp.

ANCHOR

Anchor is a large settlement in the heart of what used to be Turkey, near the location of the old capital of Ankara. It is the centre of trade and civilisation for many kilometres around. It is the only significant outpost of civilisation in the central Turkey area. They say that, beyond Anchor, desert and destruction go on almost forever.

The whole of Turkey is extremely arid, these days, and so water is extremely valuable. The deserts are full of amazing technology and artefacts, they say, but if you do not have water, you do not have



Nomads and other dangers present themselves in the arid wastelands

DARK EDEN PART 03

a hope of getting it. In fact, water is the official currency of Anchor and the common currency of the desert. Anchor has vast cisterns of water which makes the place extremely rich, as the authorities can charge virtually whatever they wish for it.

The people of Anchor have heard of Whitestar, of course, but they do not trust the northerners. They do not see what they would have to gain by joining the confederation, but they do see that they might have a lot to lose. Still, there is significant travel and trade between the two states. Anchor is known for its trade in technology and its ancient goods and fuels salvaged from the desert; while the food that it gets in return from Whitestar is vital to its survival. Caravans regularly set off from Anchor, for Whitestar, crossing what remains of the Black Sea.

THE SULTAN SELIM

The settlement is ruled by Sultan Selim who has a reputation as an aloof, ruthless leader. The laws of Anchor are strict and many. Still, most of its inhabitants consider the rule of law to be vital to the future of the state as an oasis of order and civilisation in a desert of lawlessness and chaos.

Some say Selim is the richest man on the planet, though, of course, the wealth and resources of a single settlement can only pale when compared to the solar system spanning empires of the corporations. Perhaps that is why the corporations are not welcome in Anchor.

In fact, Selim, and many of his predecessors, and many of the people of Anchor, do not trust the corporations, or many outsiders at all for that matter. They blame them for the state of the planet and for the woes that have befallen humanity, and see the struggle of Anchor, alone, as key to their personal salvation.

Politically, the settlement mainly runs on buying office and patronage. Many salvagers and traders have grown wealthy enough to buy administrative posts, which in turn helps to make them more money. But still, these people must always be seen to be, if not actually be, on the right side of the law. Many a corrupt official, who was not corrupt enough, has been known to lose his position, and often his head.

Sultan Selim and his cronies win favours and backing by doling out these offices. Often, they need to churn through these positions—getting rid of the odd administrator—in order to make positions available for them to give out again. Needless to say, being a member of the ruling class of Anchor is a precarious business and only the very careful and clever, or the very brazen, seem to survive for long at the top.



DESERT MASK

RESTRICTION: 1 **COST: 3**
ENCUMBRANCE: 1 **RELIABILITY: 4**

Like most other tribes, the Crescentians have developed masks that filter out airborne toxins, but have additionally adapted them for the desert. The mask filters out dust and sand and works to cool the wearer's temperature via tiny moisture traps. Whilst wearing a desert mask, the character reduces the difficulty of all Resistance tests by one for tests associated with temperatures above 35 degrees Celsius, to a minimum of one. Additionally, the character may survive for forty-eight hours plus his Physique before suffering the effects of thirst. They are otherwise identical to a Respirator (see *Mutant Chronicles* Rulebook, p. 255).

DESERT ROBES

These dark, voluminous robes are designed to reduce the impact of the desert heat during the day, and insulate the wearer against the chill of the night. Whilst wearing desert robes, the character reduces the difficulty of all Resistance tests by one for tests associated with temperatures above 35 degrees Celsius, to a minimum of one. The benefits of a desert mask and robe will stack with each other.

DESERT ROBES

FACTION	SOAK			
	HEAD	TORSO	ARMS	LEGS
Crescentia	0	1	1	1
ENCUMBRANCE	RELIABILITY	RESTRICTION	COST	
5	4	1	2	

FIRST SIGHTING

The first view the investigators will have of Anchor is a number of large, white domes with the odd rounded tower thrusting from the rocky desert. It looks like an impressive place, and its size should surprise the investigators, even if they knew the place existed. They should not be expecting such large and sophisticated structures in the middle of such inhospitable terrain.

As they get closer, they will see that the place is well maintained and clearly a thriving community. The guard posts are manned but the investigators will not have any trouble getting through unless they look like barbarian marauders or mutated murderers.

PREPARING FOR THE STORM

THE TRADERS

As they approach Anchor the investigators will come across a small Crescentian caravan of desert salvagers and traders, approaching Anchor with heavily burdened camels. The traders will be wary of the investigators, but not hostile. This might seem unusual to the investigators who have spent weeks in harsh environments where everybody has been their enemy. But, the laws and customs of Anchor mean that there is enough goodwill and tolerance between all those who visit the settlement for this civilised attitude. The last thing the traders are expecting is that the investigators will attack and rob them this close to the city, even if they do look a bit strange.

The traders wear long flowing robes which help to protect them from the desert heat and the more inhospitable elements. They also carry the trademark Crescentian desert masks to counteract the poison clouds and sand storms that are not uncommon in the area.

They carry their wares by mutant camel (just like a camel but bigger). They are carrying a cargo of oil, which they transport in a number of makeshift panniers strapped to the sides of their beasts. They have a very reliable source for oil, a long-ago ditched tanker spaceship. It lies about a hundred kilometres away, deep within the desert, where it is circled by their wandering village. A trade caravan is sent there once every couple of weeks, where they load up with as much oil as they can carry and bring it back to the city to sale. They will, of

course, not give the investigators any clue where this oil is to be found, even if they get on well.

If the investigators are pleasant to the traders, they will be happy to fill them in with any information they might need about Anchor and its people. They will recommend a decent place to stay and reliable traders to get in touch with if the investigators need some specific equipment. If the investigators decide they need a trustworthy guide to get them through the last part of their journey to the Final Seal then, if the price is right, one of the salvagers, Feray Makmud, will be prepared to do the job.

FERAY MAKMUD

Feray is an experienced and seasoned traveller across the inhospitable deserts of old Turkey. She has been scouring the desert looking for tradeable salvage for over twenty years. Good fortune has led her village to a good supply of oil to trade, but previously she has lived hand to mouth and struggled in the harshest conditions.

If the investigators can offer her a lucrative enough deal, she will help them out with the last leg of their journey. She will know exactly what hazards to look out for, and how to avoid them, in the desert terrain. She will be a loyal companion and can be used to offer an insight into the intricacies of the nomadic Crescentians. To her, a deal done is a promise made, and she will keep that promise to the bitter end.



Feray Makmud: Survival is a lucrative business.

FERAY MAKMUD ☠

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	9	8	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	9	9	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	2	2	1

WOUNDS:

- ◀ Head 3
- ◀ Arms 4
- ◀ Serious 6
- ◀ Mental 9
- ◀ Torso 7
- ◀ Legs 5
- ◀ Critical 3

SOAK: Scavenged Armour Pieces: (Arms 1, Torso 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Spirit Caster (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**6, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Vicious 1
- ◀ **Knife (melee):** 1+**T**3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Barter and Banter:** Although usually stoic, Feray becomes animated when among friends or bargaining. She may reroll one d20 when making a Lifestyle check, but must accept the new result. Additionally, she may attempt an Average D1 Persuade test prior to making a Lifestyle test for goods or service, with each point of Momentum from the Persuade test providing one additional d20 for the Lifestyle test.
- ◆ **Desert Warrior:** Feray has survived many of the rigours of the desert. She may reroll any dice that did not generate a success when making a Resistance test, or one d20 when making a Survival test, but must accept the new results. Additionally, when called upon to make a Resistance test to resist the effects of a poison, toxin, alcohol, or other drug, she may reduce the difficulty of the test by one step, which may eliminate the need for a test.
- ◆ **Sleeps with one eye open:** Makmud sleeps very lightly and has excellent night vision. All Observation tests made by her at night are reduced by one difficulty, to a minimum of one.
- ◆ **Storm Warnings:** Feray has a profound knowledge of Dark Eden survival, and can easily read the danger signs. She need never test to discern their location or direction of travel whilst in the wastes. Additionally, she reduces the difficulty of any test made to perceive the surface environmental dangers—such as rockfalls or sandstorms—by one, to a minimum of one.

THE BAZAAR

The central dome of the settlement of Anchor is entirely given over to one huge trading space. The Bazaar is a great market full of almost every good imaginable. There are people here from all corners of the globe and all ethnicities. Almost anything from throughout the solar system could find its way here. On the one hand, the bazaar trades salvage that has been found in the desert and any sort of useful item that the many desert-salvagers have managed to unearth. This could be anything from a handgun to a part for the highest-tech space ship, an ancient blade to a state of the art water filter.

Then, coming the other way, mostly from Whitestar territory, are brand new high-tech goods from off-planet, together with the food Anchor trades so readily for. Anchor is the hub of this two-way trade, and virtually the only site with a thousand kilometres which is civilised enough for any sophisticated exchanges to take place.

All trades, whether they include water or not, are quantified in litres of water. Therefore, water is the common currency of the settlement, and water is what tax is paid in. All exchanges are quantified in litres of water and one tenth of every exchange goes to the Sultan's cisterns. Tax (or rather water) collectors are a constant, hovering presences at the bazaar, flanked by the well-armed, black-clad guards keeping them, or rather the Sultan's water, safe.

THE SONS OF RASPUTIN AGAIN

All sorts of people come to trade with and live in Anchor. Many of them have travelled widely and have contact with the people of Whitestar, including her enemies. So, it should be no surprise to learn that the Sons of Rasputin have a presence in Anchor, including among them a good number familiar with the doctrines of the Seventh Son.

When the investigators turn up, looking like travellers from the north, looking like they might be on a quest, asking about things that most locals are already familiar with, then it will become apparent to them that the investigators could well be the Angels of Wrath mentioned in the Seventh Son prophesies.

Different groups may hear of the investigators and come to these conclusions independent of each other, which means that several group can all act in different ways towards them. One belligerent group with little imagination will simply wish to attack and kill the investigators. One group, with some power within the city will attempt to hamper them, and get the law to do the killing for them. A third group will attempt to ingratiate themselves with the investigators and perhaps inveigle a place on their expedition.

BIG ALI'S GANG

Big Ali's gang are a bunch of cut throats and part time traders. They are set up as legitimate traders, and actually go through the rigmarole of legitimate trading in order to cover their more nefarious tracks. In fact, they are quite good at the trading and are quite capable of making a decent living out of it entirely honestly. But they are a bad lot, and that is how they will always be.

They make their ill-gotten money by waylaying tech-hunters in the desert, as they make their way back towards Anchor. They kill them and take their stuff, and when they get back to Anchor, they pretend that they salvaged the goods themselves from the desert. They are gaining a reputation as the sort of gang able to sniff out decent tech.

They do their murdering and thieving in the name of Rasputin, and take advantage of the tribe's network of fences and underworld operators in Anchor. When they learn of the investigators, Big Ali will send a small gang of assassins after them in order to kill them in the city. It does not really matter where to Ali, as long as it is not too close to home and the deed does not get linked with his name. This should be a more opportunistic and not very well planned attack in public. Essentially the investigators will simply be attacked in the street for no apparent reason.

If this first attack fails, Big Ali will regroup and consider a better plan. This second attack will have about twice as many people involved as the first, and should involve a more considered ambush. The GM should play this by ear depending on what the investigators

PREPARING FOR THE STORM

get up to, but this will involve the rest of Big Ali's gang (except Big Ali himself) and will be his last-ditch attempt to rid the world of the investigators to the greater glory of the Sons of Rasputin.

TYPICAL BIG ALI'S GANGER ▲

ATTRIBUTES							
STRENGTH		PHYSIQUE		AGILITY		AWARENESS	
8		7		8		8	
COORDINATION		INTELLIGENCE		MENTAL STRENGTH		PERSONALITY	
7		7		6		7	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	1	1	–	1	–	1	–	1	–

WOUNDS: 3

SOAK: Scavenged Armour Pieces: (Arms 1, Torso 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Machinekrieger Assault Rifle (ranged):** Range M, 1+↑4, Burst, 2H, Armour Piercing 1
- ◀ **Knife (melee):** 1+↑3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

ASIL CAN

Asil Can is a high-ranking administrator in Anchor. He is in charge of water supply and food storage for a quarter of the city. This, because food and water are so scarce in the area, is a very important job.

Can worked his way up from a simple food trader to his now lofty position by being more corrupt and more ruthless than the next man. He has few friends, but any number of acquaintances who rely on his patronage or simply do what he tells them out of fear.

Can is a secret cultist that has been touched by the blind power of the Dark Soul and sacrifices kidnapped children to the dark powers. He believes this is what keeps him in power. Loyal to such forces, as soon as Can discovers the investigators are in Anchor, and who they might be, he will attempt to get them arrested and soon after executed on trumped up, or maybe even genuine, charges.

Can's favourite trick, which shows little imagination, but usually works, is to bump off an acquaintance of his target in a conspicuously gruesome manner, and then blame those he is targeting. They will then be thrown in jail and, after the wheels of Anchor justice have turned, they will be publicly beheaded.

The GM should pick on one of the investigators' retinue to murder, so he can blame one or more of the investigators for the deed. If possible

he should choose a guide, or someone like that, and this will encourage the investigators to search for a new guide. This, coincidentally, will give Hanif Kadri a chance to ingratiate himself with the investigators.

Can can call upon Anchor's militia to do his bidding. These are black-clad guards who act as the police and the army of the settlement. They will obey Can's instructions to the letter, and are famous for their heavy-handed and needlessly cruel interpretation of their orders.

Anchor prison is not a pleasant place, but is merely a waiting room. The locals do not really believe in incarceration as a punishment. The prison is for people waiting for their case to be heard. They are occasionally found to be innocent, especially if they have an important patron, but, more usually a corporal punishment is handed down. This will range from lashing, for the more petty crimes, up to dismemberment and beheading for the most serious.

ASIL CAN ☠

ATTRIBUTES							
STRENGTH		PHYSIQUE		AGILITY		AWARENESS	
8		9		8		11	
COORDINATION		INTELLIGENCE		MENTAL STRENGTH		PERSONALITY	
9		10		11		13	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	4	2	2	1

WOUNDS

- ◀ **Head 3**
- ◀ **Arms 4**
- ◀ **Serious 6**
- ◀ **Mental 11**
- ◀ **Torso 7**
- ◀ **Legs 5**
- ◀ **Critical 3**

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Robes: (All 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Spirit Caster (ranged):** Range C, 1+↑6, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Vicious 1
- ◀ **Dark Blade (melee):** 1+↑4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Unforgiving 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀ **Feed Upon Fear**
- ◀ **Personal Dark Symmetry (4)**
- ◀ **Tattooed Treachery:** Although not allied to any one Dark Apostle, Can has undertaken several horrific rituals, resulting in two of his tattoos becoming infused with Dark Symmetry. Can has been granted the Dark Blade and Weave of Protection Dark Inks (*Dark Soul* Sourcebook pg 196, see sidebar next page).

DARK EDEN PART 03

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Dark Gifts:** Can has been rewarded for his devotion to the Dark Soul with the following Dark Gifts: Corrupt Device, Obfuscation, Symmetry Burst, Distil Horror, and Stir the Dark Heart.

TYPICAL ANCHOR PRISON GUARD ▲ OR ☆

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	8	8	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	7	7	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE					
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	1	-	1	-

WOUNDS: 3 (Trooper) or 6 (Elite)

SOAK: Heavy Civilian Shoulder Pads: (Arms 2)

ATTACKS:

- **Holy Infuriator (ranged):** Range M, 1+↑5, Unbalanced
 ► **Knife (melee):** 1+↑4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

HANIF KADRI

Hanif Kadri is both a Heretic and fanatical religious nut. He is into strange mysticism and gothic darkness in whatever forms he can find it. This has inevitably led him to become an avid follower of the Dark Soul, or Lord of Blackness as he calls it. He knows his mythology and will recognise the investigators as the Angels of Wrath as soon as he sees them.

Kadri is patient and clever and will approach the investigators carefully. He knows enough about the desert to try to pass as a potential guide, if they need one. He knows enough about the laws of Anchor to pose as some sort of lawyer, if they need one of those. He knows enough about the city to act as guide there, too. Simply put, he will see what the investigators require and do his best to fit the bill.

Being a charming enough fellow, Kadri will attempt to ingratiate himself with the investigators and earn their trust enough that they take him with them on their travels. He should also be bright enough not to give himself away too easily.

He will not wish to hamper the investigators. He firmly believes that they are the key to mankind's dark salvation, and so he will wish to help them with their mission, believing it will end badly for humanity, while the investigators unwittingly do the Dark Soul's bidding.

DARK BLADE

The ink penetrates the skin of one of the forearms, and forms an organic-looking, wicked black blade. The blade is as hard as diamond, and can be used as a devastating weapon. It can be semi-retracted so it does not hinder the Heretic from grabbing on to objects when necessary. It takes a Free Action to use this power and manifest this blade. The blade is considered to be a melee weapon with the following profile: 1+↑4 damage, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Unforgiving 2

TEMPORARY STIGMATA: This power's temporary Stigmata remains for 3d6+10 minutes.

PERMANENT STIGMATA: The blade becomes visible under the skin of the forearm, and the hard material can be seen poking against the skin, stretching it. The area becomes red and inflamed.

WEAVE OF PROTECTION

The tattoos expand and form a tight black pattern all over the body. This mesh protrudes a couple of millimetres from the skin, and is cool to the touch. As it even covers the face, it makes the Heretic look unnatural and frightening. It grants protection against physical attacks. This ability may be used as a Restricted Action, and grants the character an additional two armour Soak on all locations for as long as the temporary Stigmata last.

TEMPORARY STIGMATA: This power's temporary Stigmata remains for 2d6+2 minutes. As a Restricted Action, the Heretic may extend the duration of this ability (and thus the temporary stigmata) by 1d6+1 minutes

PERMANENT STIGMATA: The skin of the Heretic becomes darkened, coarse, and slightly striated. His appearance is unsettling, but not necessarily to a point that it is obviously unnatural.



PREPARING FOR THE STORM

Kadri will bide his time, and play the role of the perfect guide until the right moment. This is likely to be once the Final Seal is found. Then, Kadri will slip away from the investigators and return to Anchor or merely disappear into the desert. He will then be able to contact members of the Seventh Son. This is one way in which the location of the Final Seal can reach the Dark Soul.

HANIF KADRI ☠

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	10	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	11	10	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	2	1	3	2	2	1	3	3	2	1



Hanif Kadri: A man of many talents. Your best friend in Anchor, if you have... coin.

WOUNDS:

- ◀ Head 3
- ◀ Arms 4
- ◀ Serious 6
- ◀ Mental 10
- ◀ Torso 8
- ◀ Legs 6
- ◀ Critical 4

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Routs 12 Shotgun (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**2, Burst, Blazing 3, Knockdown, Spread 2
- ◀ **Blazing:** Weapons with the Blazing quality deal an additional X **T** damage to targets within Close range, where X is the rating of this trait.
- ◀ **Creatorblade:** 1+**T**4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀ **At Your Service:** As a jack-of-all-trade, Hanif can tailor himself to suit a number of requirements that the characters might have. He can reroll one d20 when making a Lifestyle test, but must accept the new result. Additionally, so long as he generates at least one success when making an Education test, he may immediately roll one additional d20 and add the result to the test (ignore any Repercussion). Further, he may make an Average (D1) Education test as a Restricted Action when interacting with an opponent, with success allowing him to recognise an element of common ground for discussion; Momentum from this test may immediately be added to a Persuade or Command test taken as a Standard Action.
- ◀ **Personal Dark Symmetry (2)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◀ **Dark Gifts:** Kadri has the following Dark Gifts: Dark Curse, Snare the Unwilling Mind, and Stir the Dark Heart.
- ◀ **Hard to Read:** Hanif is a master of obfuscating his intentions and allegiance. He may spend one or more Dark Symmetry points when subjected to an opposed Insight test or social test of any kind, to a maximum of three Dark Symmetry points. Each Dark Symmetry point spent will grant him two bonus d20 to use for the opposed test.

TAY SELMAN

Selman is a larger than life figure, fulfilling many of the avuncular, jolly, salesman clichés of the Anchor bazaar. He seems to know and get on with everyone in Anchor. However, there is more to the friendly fellow than meets the eye. Selman is a dedicated agent of Whitestar. He works tirelessly to bring intelligence about Anchor back to Whitestar and to exert the confederations influence in Anchor. He does this because he believes in Whitestar and believes that in the long run Anchor will be all the stronger for closer ties with, and eventually joining, Whitestar.

Selman regularly travels to Whitestar to trade, and has a number of agents who go to and from there even more regularly and keep him abreast of events there. Once Selman becomes aware of the investigators, he will realise who they are and will do what he can to help them. He will not reveal his Whitestar allegiance publicly, but if he feels he can trust the investigators, he will share that information with them.

If any of the investigators end up in trouble with the Anchor legal system, Selman will be able to pull a few strings and get them some advantages. He will have a word with the right people and he will be able to arrange someone to represent their interests, without which they will be quite lost.

Selman will be able to advise the investigators about Asil Can, but he does not have the power or reach to compete with him in regards to the strings they can pull and the help they can call upon in Anchor. The best way to deal with Can will be to keep as low a profile as possible and to try to get out of the settlement as quickly as possible.

His stall in the Bazaar contains all sorts of technological goods that have either been found in the desert, or have been brought in from Whitestar. He specialises in desert survival equipment and the sort of things that desert salvagers will find useful. So, if Selman does manage to help the investigators get going again, he will also be able to kit them out with all manner of equipment and supplies that he has in stock.

TAY SELMAN ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	10	9	12
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	11	10	12

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE									
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	1	–	1	1	2	1	4	2

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Clothing, Heavy Civilian Shoulder Pads: (Arms 2, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **Zhukov 4 Tunnel Clearer (ranged):** Range C, 2+6, 2H, Knockdown, Spread 2
- ▶ **Explorer's Pic (melee):** 1+3, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **A Deal's a Deal!** Selman enjoys the bargaining as much as he loves trading. He will happily drop the price for anyone who engages in an opposed Persuade test to haggle with him—even if he wins. If he loses, he will additionally reduce the cost of the item by one Asset, to a minimum of one
- ▶ **Friend to Whitestar:** Selman has spent so much time as a spy he knows most of Anchor's population. If Selman becomes involved in any negotiations on any character's part, the character benefits from one additional Momentum for the relevant social test.
- ▶ **I Know Someone Who Knows Someone:** Given time, Selman can source virtually anything through his contacts. He can reroll one d20 when making a Lifestyle test, but must accept the new result. Additionally, he reduces the difficulty of sourcing a contact by one when seeking assistance from other individuals, which may eliminate the need for a test. Finally, he may reduce the Restriction Rating of any item or service that he is seeking to obtain by two, to a minimum of one, although the item is considered to be illegally obtained should he be successful.

JUSTICE MEHMET

If any of the investigators do get incarcerated, they will come under the auspices of Justice Mehmet. He will be in charge of them until any trial, and they will be at his mercy.

Mehmet is famously corrupt and this will offer opportunities for the investigators to get their men released. But Mehmet did not become famously corrupt and a Justice of Anchor by selling himself cheaply. He knows how to play the game and he usually makes sure his bribes are big ones.

Mehmet has his ear to the ground and so it should soon become apparent to him that the investigators are not run of the mill travellers. He should realise that they will present an excellent opportunity for profit.

A bidding war could well occur as Asil Can offers Mehmet bribes to keep the investigators incarcerated, while the investigators and their ally, Selman, are offering bribes to get them released. Really, the investigators will not be able to compete with Asil Can and will have to admit defeat unless they can think outside the box, come up with better leverage against Mehmet, and find other ways to force his hand.

JUSTICE MEHMET ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
6	6	8	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	12	10	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	2	1	1	1	3	-	4	2	1	1

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

◆ **Rapier cane (melee):** 1+**↑**4, 1H, Duelling, Hidden 3, Parry 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Justice has a Price:** Mehmet may be swayed by large sums of money. He must make a Challenging (D2) Willpower test to refuse any substantial bribe. He may potentially get offended if the bribe is too small.
- ◆ **Law of the Land:** Mehmet knows how to play upon the intricacies of the local legal system and has connections throughout the city. He has Education Expertise 3 and Education Focus 3 for any skill test involving the laws of the city. Additionally, he can reroll one d20 when making a Lifestyle test, but must accept the new result. Further, so long as he generates at least one success when making an Education test, he may immediately roll one additional d20 and add the result to the test (ignore any Repercussion). Finally, he reduces the difficulty of sourcing a contact by one when seeking assistance from other individuals, which may eliminate the need for a test.
- ◆ **Will to Power:** Mehmet is not easily intimidated, and has a strong sense of self. He may reroll one d20 on any Willpower test, but must accept the new result.

LEAVING ANCHOR

If the investigators can make it out of Anchor, they will be on the last leg of their journey. They will only have three hundred kilometres or so to cover before they reach Station Zero. However, interested parties in Anchor are likely to be in a position to follow them.

Big Ali might be able to raise a war party that will pursue the investigators into the desert. They will tail them for a while, thinking that the further into the desert these strangers go, the weaker they will become and the more susceptible to an attack.

Asil Can could muster the Prison Guard and local mercenaries and get together a substantial force in order to track the investigators down. For this, though, he would need a certain amount of official sanction, and so whether he does this or not will depend on the manner in which the investigators left Anchor. If they left in freedom, having been exonerated of their supposed crimes, then Asil Can's hands will be tied. If they fled like thieves and they are wanted for heinous crimes in Anchor, then Can will be able to raise a much larger force.

In any case, there are heretic tribes out in the desert that will work for Can or Ali, bolster their forces and act as excellent guides. Depending on the weather, tracks in the desert can be apparent to skilled trackers for many weeks, so a competent pursuit is unlikely to be noticed by the investigators.

STATION ZERO

Station Zero is the hub of the Planetary Defence Network which was created by the Ancients in order to guard a strategically vital portal. The portal is a gateway to another dimension that the Dark Soul is desperate to open so that its minions might pour through and subjugate humanity. If it can be located and opened, the Dark Legion can invade the solar system in unimaginable numbers. Earth will be lost, and the rest of the solar system and humanity itself is also bound to fall.

It might be said that leaving well alone could be the best policy for the investigators and humanity. But equally, the Dark Legion are likely to find the Final Seal sooner or later, and so the best thing could well be for humanity to find it first and destroy it. The investigators are under orders to find it first, but emphatically, not to open it.

Unfortunately for the investigators, destroying it will not be as straight forward as all that (not that the investigators could possibly be expecting this to be a straight forward mission) and finding the Final Seal will also run the risk of alerting the Dark Soul to its location, exactly what the investigators will want to avoid most of all.

The first sign of Station Zero will be a huge, smoking, bulbous, mountain created by relatively recent volcanic activity. There has always been a volcano in the area, and the investigators should have information on it, but the recent (by geological standards) activity during the fall of humanity has changed the landscape drastically.

The volcano has erupted several times and then lay dormant for a good while. Then over time pressure has built up beneath the mountain to push it further up from the surrounding terrain, and now it really does look like it might be a boil about to burst. To add to the effect, several cracks have opened up upon its surface and it is billowing dense black smoke, which can be seen for miles around.

THE VENTS

The vents that have been rent across the surface of the mountain by the pressure of the gasses beneath are the only way down into the heart of the mountain, which is where the investigators need to head. Some of the vents are continuously billowing hot gasses that rush up and scorch the flesh of anything that tries to descend.

But some of the vents, especially those along the edges of the mountain, are much easier to use. Only a light smoke billows forth and the vents can be used. Occasionally the pressure building up below is released suddenly, sending a stream of boiling, acrid air throughout the system of vents. Anyone using any of the vents at that time would need to be well protected indeed or suffer serious damage. Any character wearing protection that is equivalent to a vacuum suit will suffer no ill effects if caught in the vented gas. Any character wearing less environmental protection than this must make a **Challenging (D2) Athletics** or **Observation test** to avoid the full effects of the blast. On success, they receive 1+**T**5 damage with the Incendiary 1, Knockdown and Spread 1 qualities. On failure, they are struck by the full force of the blast and receive 2+**T**8 damage with the Incendiary 2, Knockdown, Spread 2, and Torrent qualities.

If the investigators follow the network of passageways that have been rent through the top layers of the volcano, they can eventually reach the smooth, igneous channels below. They can only do this by following their noses through the less dense smoke and more pleasant air. If they were to follow the smokier channels, they would eventually find the magma at the heart of the volcano and burn to death, although they would probably die of suffocation long before that.

LAVA CAVERNS

Most of the caverns of this network below the vents are surprisingly cool and refreshing. While the sulphurous and smoky air from the volcano rises, it drags fresh air through myriad tiny fissures from outside into the volcano. This means this section of the volcano is blown by a pleasant, cooling breeze.

The caverns were melted and moulded by the lava flow of long past eruptions. The caverns are carved in an intricate network of strange tubular tunnels and rounded caves. Sometimes they drift downwards gradually, and sometimes fall in almost sheer drops. The investigators should beware when the ground suddenly falls away as the extremely smooth cavern walls will give them little to grip. Unless they are carrying good climbing equipment and know what they are doing with it, this part of the journey could prove very treacherous indeed.

BAT MUTANTS

Some of these caverns are inhabited by strange bat-like mutants. These bats find the caverns a safe haven to sleep during the day. They fly off, through the vents, at night to look for creatures to feed upon. If they meet anything in their caverns during this crepuscular migration, they will attack and attempt to feed on the intruders.



The Bat Mutants swoop out of the darkness to attack.

The bats are about fifty centimetres long but have a wingspan of more than a metre. They attack by latching onto a victim with their claws and then using their sharp teeth to open a wound, through which they can lap up the victim's blood. They are not just blood feeders, however, and will attack a victim to kill it, in order to get the much more satisfying meal of their prey's entire body.

BAT MUTANTS ▲

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
6	6	11	11
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	6	6	2

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	2	1	2	2	3	2	1	–	1	–

WOUNDS: 3

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

◀ **Needle-like teeth (melee):** 1+**↑**3, 1H, Gruesome, Toxic 1, Vile

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀ **Grasping**
- ◀ **Night Vision**
- ◀ **Flight:** Bat Mutants are winged creatures, able to soar and glide through the air as easily as humans walk. A Bat Mutant can move freely through the air, and can move as though there were additional zones directly above the battlefield. If a test is required concerning movement whilst airborne, then Acrobatics is used as a default.
- ◀ **Infected wounds:** When making a bite attack, if one or more Dark Symmetry symbols are rolled, the creature wounded by the Bat Mutant must attempt a Resistance test, with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry symbols rolled, or suffer Infected Wounds (pg. 312 of the *Mutant Chronicles* core rulebook).

GHOST SPIDERS

Feeding on the mutant bat guano and any other morsels they might inadvertently drop in the caves, are these white spiders. Down in the caves where they never see the light of day they have mutated and evolved into giant, albino creatures.

They are amazingly sensitive to movement in the cave system and combine their various senses well. They will be aware of any creature within fifty metres. They are also excellent at blocking out and

focusing through the confusing, echoing mass of sounds in the caves. Each one grows to about two metres across and is quite capable of eating a human size victim in one sitting.

The spiders are excellently adapted to their surroundings and can crawl vertically and even upside down across the smooth rocks with an assured grip.

GHOST SPIDER ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
12	12	14 (+1)	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
14	8	8	2

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	1	1	4	1	3	–	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 8

SOAK: 2 (Incorporeal)

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Bite (melee):** 1+**↑**5, Armour Piercing 1, Toxic 2
- ◀ **Webline (ranged):** Range C, **↑**1, 2H, Entangling, Nonlethal, Reach, Spread 2
 - ◀ **Entangling:** A target hit by this weapon is unable to move or take action except to attempt an Acrobatics or Athletics test to escape, with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀ **Fear (2)**
- ◀ **Incorporeal**
- ◀ **Night Vision**
- ◀ **Supernatural Agility (1)**
- ◀ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ◀ **Scuttling Climb:** The creature can climb freely on any surface—sheer walls and ceilings—and contort itself through tight spaces without regard for the normal structure of a human body.
- ◀ **Web-shrouded Lair:** Stumbling into a Ghost Spider lair can be likened to signing your own death warrant. Ghost Spider lairs are considered hazardous terrain. An Acrobatics or Athletics test must be made for any movement action greater than Adjust Stance, with a difficulty of Challenging (D2) for a Movement Restricted Action or Daunting (D3) for a Sprint Standard Action. Success allows the character to perform the action normally, while failure indicates that they have become trapped by strands of web. An entangled character is unable to move or take action except

to attempt an Acrobatics or Athletics test to escape, with a difficulty equal to the original difficulty of the movement action that had been attempted.

MAGMA CAVERNS

After dropping through the Lava Caverns for a couple of hundred metres, the investigators will reach the base of the cavern network. The air will become acrid again, and the atmosphere will be stultifying hot, requiring unprotected characters to succeed at a Resistance test to avoid the effects of severe heat exposure (see Hostile Environments—Cold and Heat on pg. 105 of the **Mutant Chronicles** rulebook). It should be very difficult to breathe down here without the aid of breathing apparatus, with characters that are lacking this device suffering the effects of oxygen deprivation once in every ten minutes of exposure (see Drowning & Suffocating, pg. 129 of the **Mutant Chronicles** core rulebook). The caverns become huge, and almost join into one single large chamber. Its floor bubbles up with magma. The cavern base is an archipelago of dark, semi solid islands surrounded by bubbling magma which sporadically bursts forth showering its surroundings with molten rock. Clouds of poisonous gasses collect and dissipate blown by the scorching air currents.

It is very clear that anyone travelling here will need to be extremely careful where they tread. A lot of thought will need to be put into planning any routes taken; the GM may periodically allow the characters to take a **Daunting (D3) Education or Observation test**, with success reducing the Insight or Survival test required to move through the magma fields by one as they are able to select the safest route through the cavern. Two points of Momentum from the test may be used to reduce the difficulty of the Insight or Survival test by a further one, to a minimum of **Challenging (D2)**. The characters must trust to their luck on failure and face the full difficulty of the Insight or Survival test when manoeuvring between the islands. A dark island of relatively cool



rock can suddenly disappear beneath the magma sea or become inundated by the incessant lapping of lava waves and the bursting of pockets of gas rising through the magma.

For virtually every move the investigators make they will need to pass a **Dire (D4) Insight or Survival test**. On success, they find themselves on solid ground and avoid the bursts of magma. On failure, they landed on a scolding piece of rock or are struck by a blast of magma during the movement and suffer 3+**T**8 damage with the Incendiary 3, Dreadful, Spread 2, Torrent and Vicious 2 qualities. A Repercussion when hopping between islands may also result in similar damage, although a **Challenging (D2) Acrobatics or Observation test** may

be taken to avoid the resultant damage. At any time, the GM may spend three Dark Symmetry points to gout some magma at the investigators, which will also require an Acrobatics or Observation test to avoid. Two failed tests in a row will see them in serious peril and entirely surrounded by the magma.

THE SPHERE

Near the centre of the largest magma cavern about twenty metres above the orange molten sea is a grey featureless sphere. The perfect shape seems to be suspended in mid-air. In fact, a good section of it is embedded in the roof of the cavern. But if that roof were not there, then the sphere would still be because it is fixed in that exact spot, through technology far more advanced than humanity's.

The sphere is about thirty metres across and will not move. It is up to the investigators how they reach it, but, needless to say, it is very difficult to get to and once they are there it will be difficult to stay there. They will certainly not be able to attach any significant piece of equipment to the extremely smooth and incredibly damage resistant surface. The cavern roof, of course, is less impervious to climbing equipment, although GMs may still plague the investigators with loose connections or faulty equipment via Repercussions and Dark Symmetry points.

At one point upon the sphere's 'equator' is the, by now, familiar hexagonal portal device. This is etched delicately into the surface of the sphere and almost impossible to see from the ground level of the cavern in the flickering orange light. It is easy enough to spot on a closer inspection of the sphere's surface, however.

Anyone with sufficient mutant DNA making the, by now, familiar gesture of welcome near the hexagonal entrance symbol, will cause the panel to slide open and access to the sphere will be granted.

This sphere was placed here by the Ancients as part of the protection around the Final Seal. It is nothing to do with, or physically linked to, the seal in any way. It is simply a means of enclosing it, hiding it, and also of allowing access to it.

Inside, when it is occupied, the sphere glows with a soft, grey, ambient lighting. The inside of the sphere is almost devoid of detail. This can be quite disorienting. A dead straight, two-metre-wide walkway runs from the entrance panel to the centre of the sphere. The walkway itself is only a few centimetres deep and is entirely unsupported. It looks like an impossible construction, but it is safe to walk upon. At the centre of the sphere is the Final Seal.

THE FINAL SEAL

The Final Seal itself appears as nothing but a void. It seems to be an elliptical area of space about three metres high suspended in

the middle of the sphere. It comprises nothing but utter blackness, seeming to suck in the very light from its surroundings. The edge of the ellipse shimmers slightly as it touches its surroundings but does not seem to interact with it in any physical way.

There is a force field surrounding the Seal, created by the Ancients, which should prevent anyone from touching it. This force field is a ten-metre diameter sphere centred on the Seal. However, if not all the stations of the Planetary Defence System are functioning (and Station 4 is unlikely to be at this stage), then this force field will be flawed and it will be possible simply to walk towards the Seal. Whoever does so will feel the force of the field as they break its bounds, but this is not enough to prevent them going through. Anyone able to sense this force energy with any nuance, or someone who has already interfaced with the Planetary Defence System should have an inkling as to why the force field is not working properly.

Breaking the Seal is beyond the Investigators and the Guardians; it took the supreme sacrifice of the Ancients to establish after all. The combined powers of the Apostles and Dark Symmetry can, however, tear through from this side. If the Planetary Defence Network is still offline, entering the void is a one-way trip to the Dark Soul's prison.

STATION INTERFACE

If anyone triggers the force field (by going within ten metres of the Seal), the station interface will fire up. There are other ways to get this working, too. Anyone who has already interfaced with Ancient technology (like the Sion Station) can try to boot it up if they are within the sphere on a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test**.

If the investigators have got Sion Station and Station 4 working, the information to be gleaned from this interface will be a lot more complete and easier to understand. If neither of those stations are working then it might be very difficult to understand much at all, and some of the information described below will be slightly different. The most likely situation is that Sion Station is already working and Station 4 is still offline. In which case, anyone interfacing with the sphere's monitoring system should be able to glean the following information on a **Challenging (D2) Willpower test**.

There should be six equidistant stations making up the Planetary Defence Network that is designed to protect the seal and the area around the seal from Dark Soul incursion.

This system is obviously incomplete because of Station 4 allowing Dark Legion craft heading for the Seal should be able to land in its immediate vicinity. This will make defending the place much more difficult.

There is a system of six equidistant psychic crystals also defending the Seal. This should mean that the Seal is completely invisible to the Dark Soul and any of its minions. This would explain why the Seal

has remained hidden through the millennia. The interface can reveal the exact location of these psychic crystals.

This network on the Earth is clearly a defensive element. There is another element to the system based on Mars which is just as clearly an offensive element. It would seem to have been created, by the same people who created the defensive network, as a massive offensive weapon of some kind. Although its function is not entirely clear, its exact location is apparent.

This whole system seems to have been created to defend the Seal, but, due to the malfunction of Station 4, it should be possible for anyone to break the Seal at this time.

LEAVING CAPPADOCIA

It is up to the investigators where they wish to go now. If they leave the sphere with the Seal still intact it would seem that their mission has been a success. They are likely to consider travelling to Station 4 to repair it, in order to make the system complete once more. Or they might consider returning to Mars in order to report what they have found so far, and to investigate the Ancient element on Mars that are referenced here. However, events should take an unexpected turn which is likely to change their plans.

THE SPY

The Dark Soul now finds out about the location of the Final Seal. It is important that this, or something similar, happens as the Dark Soul's discovery of the Final Seal is what sets into motion the events of the finale of this adventure.

There should be a spy in the investigators' ranks and that spy will learn of the Final Seal as the investigators discover it. The GM should have had a number of opportunities to place those sympathetic to the Dark Soul among their ranks. If there is not a spy among them, then the GM can always retrospectively decide that another of their colleagues was a spy. Or slightly different solutions are discussed in the 'No Spy' section below.

Hanif Kadri from Anchor is an obvious choice to be the spy, but almost any of the characters who have joined the investigators since they arrived on Earth could potentially double-cross them. The spy should come up with a suitably dramatic exit, but not one so dramatic that the investigators will have a chance to stop him. The spy's escape from the investigators should be a *fait accompli*, and the investigators should be left a decent clue as to what has happened.

Perhaps they come across one of their colleagues bleeding to death, who will be able to tell them about the spy's escape. He discovered the spy in suspicious circumstances, and when confronting him about it, the spy suddenly stabbed him. Now, he is nowhere to be found.

Perhaps one of the investigators is the spy. Perhaps one has been a secret heretic for a while, or considered becoming one. This would be the perfect opportunity to find favour with the Dark Soul, by betraying all his colleagues and turning coat at this late stage of the campaign. Perhaps the GM could try to persuade one of the investigators to take this role.

If the spy needs to escape into the desert, he will be picked up by Nomads sympathetic to the Dark Soul and taken to the Sons of Rasputin, or, if this occurs in Whitestar, the spy can find the Sons of Rasputin or a cell of the Seventh Sons directly, and they will get word to the Dark Soul.

Whatever happens, the Dark Soul is suddenly aware of the location of the Final Seal and will begin to put into motion plans that will mean the end of humanity itself.

NO SPY

If the GM is unable to get a spy into the investigators' camp, it is easy enough to rationalise the Dark Soul's discovery of the Final Seal. In fact, the GM may prefer to do it this way, in any case. The very act of breaching the force field that surrounds the Seal could have been enough to reveal its location. Some GMs may prefer the irony of the investigators' expedition being the cause of the Dark Soul's discovery of the Seal.

Because Station 4 is out of commission, this could have caused power issues for the neighbouring obscuring psychic crystals. These factors could mean that the crystals were not sufficient to hide the disturbance when the investigators breached the protective force field. In that way, the Dark Soul can home in on the Final Seal and the events of the rest of this adventure can already be put in motion.

If the GM does it this way, then the investigators should also become aware that this has happened. When they interface with the sphere's monitors they should notice that the protective circle has been compromised and that it is not functioning correctly. They will also be able to spot that the planet Nero has already begun to move strangely, onto a collision course with the Earth.

TAKING STOCK

The investigators should now realise that the Dark Soul is aware of the location of the Final Seal and probably that the Dark Legion will be heading towards Earth sooner or later. Their options are open at this stage but the next part of the campaign takes place on Mars where the investigators' recent experiences and general expertise will be invaluable.

The investigators may be looking for a way of returning to Mars because their mission is over, and they would naturally return there

to be debriefed. They might decide to go to Anchor to join the trade route that leads into Whitestar, where transport for Mars will be easy enough to find. This will all take time, and the investigators should realise they need to do things as quickly as possible to gain Humanity as much time as possible against the Dark Soul. The GM should reward quick thinking and action at this stage with more time later in the campaign when timing starts to become extremely critical. If this is the case, then the GM can progress to Chapter 7.

Chapter Six: Station 4 deals with the investigation and repair of the malfunctioning Station 4 of the defence network. The investigators may wish to ensure that the defence network is fully functioning before returning to Mars and should not necessarily be discouraged from doing so; they will need to ensure its repair at some point during the later stages of the campaign anyway. The following paragraphs deal with Whitestar's response to the Seal's discovery. The GM may also insert an opportunity here for transport to be provided to Station 4 so that it may be dealt with early.

As soon as Whitestar learns of the location of the Final Seal, they will also act. They could learn this through a number of channels. They may have agents already placed with the investigators, such as Tay Selman or Anya Nastrova, and they have other agents with their ears to the ground, all over the place.

What the investigators may not realise with the Tsarina was (probably) captured by the Sons of Rasputin, Whitestar is currently leaderless. They may wish to find her and free her as soon as possible, but as soon as they are in contact with civilisation again, they will be ordered back to Mars immediately by their direct superior at CRI, Dwane Gascon. If they contact Valentin Gorev, he will also order them back to Mars.

Whitestar, together with their allies in the Cartel, will fly an expeditionary force down to the Seal and reconnoitre the area. If the investigators are still there and have maintained good relations with Whitestar, then Whitestar can arrange to fly them back to Zlogora or wherever they want to go. Soon Whitestar and the Cartel will begin to construct significant defences around the area to defend against what they believe is an inevitable attack by the Dark Legion. If the investigators tarry too long on Dark Eden and ignore their orders, news should reach them of Nero racing across the solar system, which should help to place a real sense of urgency on their requested return.

So sooner or later (preferably sooner) the investigators should find themselves back on Mars ready to face the next events of the campaign, with Chapter Six already dealt with or to be returned to a later date.

CHAPTER SIX: STATION 4

If they wish, the investigators will be able to locate and visit every Planetary Defence Station in the array. There is absolutely no need to

do this, however. Station 6, Sion, has been dealt with. Station 4 will need to be investigated in order to get the defensive shield working. However, at this stage in proceedings, there is no imperative to get this done. As far as the investigators should be concerned, once they get Station 4 up and running and they know the location of the Final Seal, they should be heading that way.

Depending on events in the later stages of the adventure, the investigators are likely to decide that they need to hurry up and get the defensive shield working. If so, they will need to travel to Station 4 to get this done.

The GM may decide to make more of this situation. It is possible to have more than one of the stations unresponsive, and therefore the investigators will need to sort out all of them. The GM will of course have to detail those particular stations based on their location and what they already know about the other stations. But all the stations are of the same basic design.

If the investigators are in a huge race against time to get things done later in the adventure, they may decide to delegate this task to other Cybertronic agents. This might be a fair decision in the circumstances, and the GM should probably give it every chance of succeeding, provided the investigators support the mission with all necessary intelligence.

Station 4 is located in eastern Africa in present day Ethiopia. The climate there has gone even more haywire than in Europe. Strange, mutated jungle-like flora grows uncontrollably all around the site, and is home to all kinds of deadly creatures. If the investigators have to get to Station 4, then it is likely they are coming from space, in which case they can bypass the tedious and extremely dangerous ground travel. Detailed below is only the station itself and a selection of encounters that can be used in the immediate vicinity.

If the investigators decide to launch a land expedition, similar to their journey to Sion, that will be a massive undertaking with any number of encounters and interesting locations, which is beyond the scope of this campaign.

SABRE-TOOTHED TREE LIONS

These predatory cats are not as large as real lions, but they are still powerful and deadly. They live in the jungles of Africa and have adapted to their environment by becoming longer and lithier than a traditional big cat. They are excellent climbers and the jungle canopy is an excellent place for them to hide and hunt.

They are able to move, almost silently, through the jungle canopy, and can jump from tree to tree, going great distances without ever touching the ground. They climb by using their excellent balance,

and their extremely sharp claws. They generally hunt smaller prey, but if a large target, like an investigator, were to stray into the jungle, Tree Lions will jump at the chance of a big meal.

They fall from the canopy directly onto their victim, trying to get a fatal blow with their first sabre-toothed attack. If they miss with that, they are quite capable of wounding severely with their long, sharp claws.

If they are given a hard time, Tree Lions will flee into the jungle to regroup, but will keep their prey in mind, and can follow them from a safe distance for a long time. If they need to, they can even summon fellow pride members to the fight by means of their loud roar.

SABRE-TOOTHED TREE LION ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
12 (+1)	11 (+1)	11 (+1)	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	4	6	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE									
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	1	1	1	3	1	—	—

WOUNDS: 9

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Bite (melee):** 3+**T**7, Armour Piercing 1, Unforgiving 1, Vicious 1
- ◆ **Slashing claws (melee):** 2+**T**6, Gruesome, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Grasping**
- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Supernatural Agility (1)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (1)**
- ◆ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ◆ **Death from Above:** Lions are experts in ambushing their prey from the trees. When attempting to remain unseen or unnoticed amongst the jungle canopy, they gain two bonus d20 to their Stealth tests. Additionally, they reduce the difficulty of the test when making an Acrobatics or Athletics test by one, which may eliminate the need for a test. Further, they never suffer a penalty for climbing without sufficient equipment when traversing the canopy. Finally, if a lion has managed to surprise its target, it may take a Restricted Action to gain the effects of the Exploit Weakness action, instead of a Standard Action, which is in addition to the bonus d20 gained for surprise.
- ◆ **Quadruped:** Lions have four legs and lack arms. Replace the Arm hit locations with two additional Leg locations.

DARK SYMMETRY SPENDS

- ◆ **Howl for the Pride:** By spending a Dark Symmetry point and using a Standard Action, a Sabre-toothed Tree Lion can unleash a howl that summons 1d6 other lions to assist. The lions will appear from the trees within 1d6 rounds.



Nomads and other dangers present themselves in the arid wastelands

PREPARING FOR THE STORM

RIVER CROSSING

The investigators come across a raging torrent that they will need to cross if they are to get to Station 4. It must be the rainy season somewhere, because the river surges through the jungle in full flow. Anything that falls into the water is swept away at great speed, and it would be impossible to swim across it unaided.

In addition, the waters of the river are so contaminated by whatever lies upstream that they are poisonous to drink and dangerous to touch. Anyone immersed in the water for more than a minute or so will suffer 1+**T**2 damage that ignores Armour Soak and possesses the Toxic 2 each round unless they have environment suits or similar heavy duty protection. If anyone should go under without wearing breathing apparatus, they should make a **Challenging (D2) Resistance test** or be forced to imbibe a mouthful of the foul water. In this case, the GM may spend two Dark Symmetry points to affect the character with the following poison:

VECTOR: Ingestion

VIRULENCE: 3

INCUBATION PERIOD: Minutes

SYMPTOMS: Patient suffers 2+**T**5 damage with the Spread 1, Toxic 2, and Vile qualities to the torso location. Patient is Dazed for the duration of the Interval. Patient suffers one Dread for each Repercussion generated on any test due to muscles spasms and intense migraine.

INTERVAL: Minutes, Acute (2). The toxic water will require a cocktail of treatments consisting of antivenom and antibiotics.

The investigators will need to rig up some sort of system for getting them across the water. There is plenty of wood around and the odd vine, but other than that they will have to use equipment they brought with them. This should be a decent test of the investigators' resourcefulness and ingenuity.

And to make matters worse they can be harassed by small, annoying, monkey-like mutants that live in the trees. Whenever a smallish item is left unguarded, one of the monkeys will emerge from the canopy and swipe it and then make an almost uncatchable retreat into the jungle.

MONKEY MUTANTS

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
5	5	11	7
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
11	3	6	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
-	-	1	-	3	2	1	1	-	-	-	-

WOUNDS: 2

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Thrown Rock (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**3, Munition, 1H, Stun
- ◆ **Bite (melee):** 1+**T**3, Toxic 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ◆ **Little Thieves:** The Monkey Mutants have Thievery Expertise 2 and Thievery Focus 2, but may only use that skill to steal small items that are left unguarded.
- ◆ **Slippery Customers:** The Monkey Mutants are extremely fast, agile, and hard to grab hold of or target. They gain one bonus d20 to any Acrobatics or Athletics test and may reroll one d20 when making any such test, but must accept the new result. Additionally, both melee and ranged attacks made against Mutant Monkeys are one step more difficult than normal. Finally, Mutant Monkeys may take two Dodge Response Actions in each round, with the first Dodge being free and the second requiring the expenditure of one Dark Symmetry point.

ANTS

The investigators come across a colony of mutant giant ants. They may be giant ants, but they are not huge. They are about three centimetres long. Though they are strong enough to give a thumb a nasty little pinch. Like conventional ants, the strength of this colony is in their numbers and the organisation of their hive mind. The ants will act as one giant entity and are given stats as such.

The first clue to their presence will be the giant ant hill in the jungle. It is over ten metres tall and the investigators may think it looks man-made. They will need to make a **Challenging (D2) Education** or **Survival test** to realise who or what made it and by then it might be too late.

A few scouts will come across the investigators and take a few nips of their flesh in order to work out whether they are edible or not. Fleishy creatures are actually delicious to ants, and so, if notice gets back to the ant hill, in a few minutes, hundreds and thousands of the creatures will converge upon the investigators from every angle.

The investigators will not be able to prevent some of the ants getting to them and biting them. The bite of a single ant is not much of a problem but the bite of hundreds is poisonous and may lead to

paralysis. Anyone affected by the Paralytic Poison of the ants will be helpless to prevent himself being lifted by the colony whilst being continually bitten, before being dragged away to the ant hill to become ant food.

The investigators will soon be inundated with the tiny giant creatures and will have to come up with some way of combating them. Smoke and fire would be a good way to get rid of the ants as they will avoid such things. If the investigators are creative with certain chemicals they might be carrying, they could create an improvised insect repellent that could do the job. Finding some water and immersing themselves in it will also prove effective. The investigators will need to find some sort of creative solution because brute force has no chance against the elusive swarm.

ANT SWARM ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
5 (+1)	5 (+1)	6	6
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	3	3	6

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	3	1	3	1	2	1	—	—	—	—

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- **Painful pincers (melee):** 1+13, 1H, Armour Piercing 2, Dreadful, Stun, Toxic 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fast Healing (2)**
- **Night Vision**
- **Supernatural Physique (1)**
- **Supernatural Strength (1)**
- **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- **Susceptible to Fire:** Double the damage dealt to an ant swarm from attacks with the Incendiary quality.
- **Swarming Horde:** The statistics provided represent a typical swarm of six hundred or so ants. Increase the Supernatural Physique and Supernatural Strength ratings of the swarm by one for every one hundred ants present in the swarm beyond this number, to a maximum rating of five in both and one thousand ants. Also, increase the swarm's Wound total respectively. The swarm will seek to envelop a single opponent within Close Range; roll two d20 to attack, plus

one d20 for each additional one hundred ants in the swarm, to a maximum of six d20 at one thousand ants. An ant swarm rolls two d20 for all other tests, reflective of its Elite status and swarm mentality. Melee attacks, ranged attacks, and effects that attack a single target (such as some spells) deal only their fixed value in damage (ignore the +1 in the damage rating), plus one point for each dice of relevant bonus damage the character possesses, as swatting handfuls of ants will have little overall effect to the swarm. A swarm is immune to the Called Shot, Devastating Blow, Disarm, and Knockout Combat Momentum options. The Secondary Target Combat Momentum option inflicts half the attack's adjusted damage to the swarm's Wound total for a second time. The Bonus Damage option is unaffected. Torrent weapons however, or a similar effect that targets an area, deal their full normal damage to a swarm. Reduce the swarm's Supernatural Strength, Supernatural Physique, and d20 attack pool by one for every three points of damage dealt to it, but do not adjust the Wound total because of this—only automatic successes and damage rating are affected. An ant swarm may not take Response Actions.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- **Paralytic Poison:** Any time a creature is affected by the Toxic quality of the swarm's bite, the GM may spend two Dark Symmetry points. The creature then also becomes paralyzed until the Toxic quality has been purged (which requires three successful Resistance tests as normal).

THE STATION

EARTHQUAKE

The reason Station 4 has failed is because of a massive earthquake. Several hundred years ago, an earth movement ripped right across the station, tearing it in two and leaving a yawning chasm between the two sections. It looks like an impossible task to repair it, but a resourceful group might be able to jury rig the systems so that the planetary defence network can run for long enough to protect the Earth from a specific threat.

ACCESS

The Station cleaved in twain during an earthquake and is accessible from the chasm that divides the two parts. The entire eastern section of the station has fallen away from the rest and now sits at an angle of about thirty degrees. This has caused a pool of water to form at its extreme eastern edge. It is practically invisible from any distance, and buried tens of meters below the surface, so almost impossible to stumble upon. The investigators, however, should have the station's exact location from their interrogation of the Sion Station's computer system.

PREPARING FOR THE STORM

To get inside the station the investigators will need to scale the chasm and then enter the station from there. Unfortunately, the station is now home to a troop of mutated gibbon-like primates. The gibbons rule the immediate vicinity, and can get in and out of the station at will through their deft navigation of the surrounding jungle. The investigators are likely to need to pick their way carefully through the trees, or make their painstaking way down using climbing equipment. In defence of their territory, the gibbons will be able to pick them off and choose their targets at will, and then nimbly make their escape.

More information on the general Station layout is detailed in Part Four: Sion above. Below are the differences peculiar to Station 4.

MUTANT GIBBON ▲ OR ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	9	10 (+1)	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	3	8	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 3 (Trooper) or 6 (Elite)

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Thrown Rock (ranged):** Range C, 1+T3, Munition, 1H, Stun
- ◆ **Clubbing Blow (melee):** 1+T4, Knockdown

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Supernatural Agility (1)**
- ◆ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ◆ **Tree Ghosts:** Gibbons thrive amongst the jungle foliage. They reduce all climbing, jumping, and difficult terrain tests by one whilst using the trees for movement, which may eliminate the need for a test. Additionally, they never suffer any penalty for climbing without suitable equipment within the tree cover. Further, when calculating damage from a fall, they may reduce the distance fallen by up to three metres.

1 CHASM

The top 20 metres or so of the chasm, where the sunlight can still reach, is lined with the same sort of tree-like growths that make up the surrounding jungle. These trees look precarious, but most will hold the weight of a man quite comfortably, except for the thinnest branches.

The lower depths of the chasm are overgrown with a thin silk-like plant which makes it impossible to see the bottom. It is actually about 50 metres deep, and has a 5-metre-deep stream of water running through it. Despite it looking quite dense, the silk-like material is not strong enough to stop a fall. Anyone falling into it will drop to the bottom of the chasm and take full damage from that. However, they will have a 50% chance of hitting the water, instead of jagged rocks.

In addition, the stream is home to half a dozen gigantic crocodile-like mutations. These crocodiles are about 5 metres long and, as if being a giant crocodile were not frightening enough, they have evolved giant sabre teeth, and huge crushing jaws.

MUTANT CROCODILES ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11 (+2)	11	9	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	4	8	4

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS: 9

SOAK: Scaly Hide: (All 3)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Crunching Jaws (melee):** 3+T5, Armour Piercing 1, Dreadful, Gruesome, Toxic 1, Vicious 1.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Grasping**
- ◆ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (2)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Tail Lash:** By spending two Dark Symmetry points, a Mutant Crocodile can also make a Tail Lash attack that inflicts 2+T4 damage with the Knockdown and Stun qualities.

2 OPEN STATION AREA

Most of the station has been exposed by the earthquake (the Control Room is the exception). The gibbons have free range over this area. They are very territorial and will fight tooth and nail, for every square metre of ground. They are expert climbers and take advantage of every nook and ledge to hide and move around the



station. They should also be more comfortable than the investigators traversing the rakish angle of the eastern section.

3 ROBOT SECTION

The Robot sections are exposed and wrecked. The robot creation section will never work again and the resource vat is empty. Who knows what has happened to the security robots in the hundreds of years since the quake, but they are not in the station (unless the GM wishes to use them in an encounter, here, too).

4 POWER SECTION

The power generator section is off limits to regular gibbons. This is the domain of the Alpha Gibbon and his harem. The security door to the power generator is still in place but has been badly damaged, and so it is possible to squeeze through. The gibbons can do this with ease, of course. The 50-metre shaft of the power system cylinder has been invaded by local flora and is a paradise for gibbons.

There is also a way from here into the chasm and the bottom of the power shaft is flooded, from the chasm stream. Fortunately for the investigators, it will not take them long in here to realise that the entire power generation system is a write-off and that they will have no hope of getting it to work ever again.

5 CONTROL ROOM

The control room is undamaged and will work perfectly well if it gets power. If the investigators have sorted out any other damaged stations, which probably means only Sion Station, then as soon as this control room gets power the station will become part of a functioning Planetary Defence System, as the Ancients planned it.

Because of the lack of power, however, the investigators main problem will be getting inside the room. None of the other techniques the investigators will have learned for opening doors and interacting with Ancient technology will work without power. The emergency power systems that the stations usually have has, in this case, been drained off by damage from the earthquake.

The investigators are likely to have to use brute force. A well-placed, large explosion will do the trick. The doors are usually quite resistant to that sort of thing, but because of a lack of back-up power, and significant internal damage already caused by the earthquake, that sort of force can work in this case.

6 STORAGE AREA

This area was not breached by the earthquake and much of the stored equipment is undamaged. However, the force of the quake has thrown the contents of the room all over the place. If the



Station 4 comes back online.

investigators worked out the rationale behind the storage in Sion Station, that will not help them a bit, now.

Similar to the control room, this door will need to be opened in some way, probably involving brute force. Over the years, a pond of water has formed, half submerging the door, to add further difficulty to any attempt to open it.

REPAIRING STATION 4

Looking at the utter mess that is Station 4, the wreckage and damage from hundreds of years exposed to the elements, it is difficult to imagine it might be possible to get the place up and running again. But, if the Planetary Defence Shield is to be activated, that must happen. Fortunately, the Control Room and all the vital instruments and systems are undamaged.

The storage area has not been breached and all the replacement parts are intact, although the force of the earthquake has scattered them all over the storage area. In addition, a pool of water has built up in the eastern section over the years and the door to the storage area is half submerged. So, if the door is opened, this water will immediately drain into the storage area.

The power system is absolutely unsalvageable, however. This means that the investigators will need to find a way to get a massive power supply linked to the virtually unfathomable systems of the station for as long as is required.

If an investigator has linked with these systems before, say in Sion Station, then he might have an idea of the power input systems' location. Of course, the station interface is done symbolically and metaphorically, so relating this to physical systems might be difficult. Certainly, an investigator could go to a working station and interrogate the system for the power inputs, which would be a relatively simple matter. But the investigators probably do not have enough time to do this, and do not have the benefit of hindsight. Anyone who has interacted with the system before would require a **Challenging (D2) Insight test** to remember the location of physical power system input devices.

Once these are discovered, assuming the investigators have suitable power generators to hand—for example a spaceship or large aircraft—they will need to link them safely with the station. This will require an extended number of **Daunting (D3) Mechanics tests** and the investigators capable of finding some spare power linkage coupling sockets from the storage area.

Even if they do manage to rig this up, these potential incompatibilities and the jury-rigging means that the system is likely to fail sooner or later. So any protracted use will be prone to failure. Momentum gathered from any tests made to jury-rig the station can be used to increase the stability of the system. If the investigators simply set this all up and disappear into the sunset, there is a high chance that something will go wrong before they need the system to actually be working.

In truth, if the investigators time things perfectly, and have someone on hand at Station 4 to turn the power on at the right time, then they might only need to keep the Station going for a matter of minutes for the Planetary Defence System to do its job.

FROM EARTH TO MARS

CHAPTER 7: ANCIENT WEAPONS AND GRIM RELIGIONS

SECTION SUMMARY

By this point in the adventure the Investigators should have discovered the following information and made the following contacts.

- ◆ The ultimate goal of the Dark Soul, the Great Seal, has been located in central Turkey.
- ◆ It is imperative to protect this site from the Dark Legion, as heretical agents will have learned of the Investigators' discovery. If the Dark Legion capture the area around the seal, they will be able to amplify their Military might significantly and become impossible to withstand in another war.
- ◆ Stations set around the seal on the surface of planet Earth produce a signal which also corresponds to signals transmitted from a location on the surface of Mars, and from each of the Martian moons.
- ◆ Heretical activity is on the increase on Earth and elsewhere.
- ◆ Dwane Gascon has recruited the Investigators to Unit Oscar, a group of specialists associated with the Cybertronic Corporation. It is they who have given the Investigators a mission to Earth.
- ◆ Whilst on Earth the Investigators will have made many contacts with Whitestar, and will have gained a reputation for getting things done. They will also have made the acquaintance of Valentin Gorev.
- ◆ The Investigators may have recently completed repairs to Station 4, part of the Planetary Defence Network that prevents the Dark Legion from being able to teleport citadels to the area near the Seal.

Their success during this mission will have made them heroes in the eyes of many worthies in Whitestar and Cybertronic, and word of the Investigators' skills and abilities will spread throughout the solar system to all who have a vested interest in waging the fight against the Dark Legion. Having won themselves the high regard of their superiors the Investigators are asked to travel to Mars where they are to be given the honour of meeting Cardinal Alexander Durand XVIII himself.



On Mars you can fight the Dark Legion in style and comfort.

On Mars, they meet with the Cardinal (or, at least, one of his many clones) and Unit Oscar are trained and equipped to become one of the Cartel's crack Doomtrooper squads. However, not everyone who knows about the Investigators is impressed by them. Heretics also come to learn about the acts they have performed, and seek variously to manipulate or assassinate them.

Clearly things on Mars are becoming untenable. Dark Legion forces and apocalyptic cults are causing chaos all over the planet. The Investigators will play a part in the destruction of one of these cults and, in doing so, further convince Durand of their usefulness.

A DEBRIEFING

This encounter occurs shortly after the Investigators have completed the mission they undertook to discover the location of the Great Seal, which also unearthed the means to prevent the Dark Legion from teleporting citadels to the area around the Great Seal.

Who exactly debriefs the Investigators is left up to the GM to decide based on how the Investigators have dealt with NPCs to this point. If they have a particularly good relationship with a high ranking Whitestar officer or official, that person would make a good candidate. If she has been rescued and remains on friendly terms with the Investigators, then the Tsarina would be ideal. If, for whatever reasons, no one suitable is available, or if the Investigators have alienated themselves from Whitestar, then Valentin Gorev will make contact and agree to meet with them at a suitable location. Any read aloud sections in the following encounter assume Gorev is the Investigators' host, so this information should be adjusted if the Investigators are with someone else.

Once they have recovered and pursued whatever immediate leads they wish to in the wake of the last section, the interested parties (Gorev or whoever they are) will get in touch. Read the following to the Investigators:

A tall woman, strikingly dressed in a suit of oxblood leather that speaks to the most angular and uptight designs of both Military dress and the uniforms of chauffeurs, strides up to you, her heels rapping on the concrete floor with each step. She stops in front of you at stiff attention and brings her hand to the peak of her cap.

"You are the celebrated members of Unit Oscar? Yes? Good evening." Her tones are clipped and Teutonic. "I am here to offer you congratulations on another successful mission. You off-worlders have been making quite a name for yourselves." She gives you a slightly lopsided smile. "Save some of the glory for the Whitestar boys once in a while, why don't you?"

However the Investigators respond she cuts them off and continues:

"My name is Natalya, if you would please follow me. I am to take you to see Valentin who is to debrief you on your recent excursions. This way please."

Natalya ushers you into a waiting luxury car, spacious and comfortable. The journey is short, as she soon draws up outside a large bunker. After a brief exchange with the security men stationed at the front door she leads you inside to a large air-conditioned room. She gestures to the leather sofas, large drinks cabinet, and tray of cigars that rests on the central coffee table. "Please make yourselves at home. Valentin will be with you shortly. In the meantime, let us know if there's anything else we can do for you."

The Investigators are treated to whatever pampering and food they could possibly desire. Friendly and attractive servants will wait on them and any entertainment or distraction they could feasibly ask for, and that Whitestar could obtain, is provided, with few questions asked.

Once the Investigators have relaxed a little, Valentin joins them. He is smiling and genuine in his appreciation for their work.

"Congratulations on the completion of such a mission, and commiserations. Were we to live in more civilised times you would no doubt be lauded as the boldest of adventurers and discoverers of the most radical archaeological finds known to history. Unfortunately, due to the extreme importance of these sites in our struggles, we must deny you, for now, the fame and fortune that would no doubt result from properly publicising your work."

"Rest assured that as soon as the current crisis is over and we no longer have to treat this information as classified, you will receive the credit you deserve."

"I'd like to run through the details of your mission with you. I hope to get your thoughts on a few things that are still bothering us."

The following interview is to the benefit of both Cybertronic and Whitestar, as Valentin has an interest with both groups and shortly goes on to inform them of all the pertinent details the Investigators provide him with. It is also to the benefit of the GM, as it will check that the Investigators have understood pertinent details about the adventure so far, and are ready to take the next steps (indeed, if the Investigators are already motivated to go to Mars it may be advisable to cut this down to a few bare essentials).

Valentin will ask the following questions, and, if appropriate, several follow-on questions:

You have uncovered information regarding the sites of several stations around the Seal. Can you tell me about what you found there? Are there any considerations we should take into account regarding possible Dark Legion actions involving these stations? Do they afford us any opportunities?

We are mustering forces to secure each of the locations. Do you have any thoughts on the likely behaviour of the Dark Legion in response? We are told you are experienced in confronting these beasts, so how are they best fought?

Apparently some kind of signal was being transmitted from the stations. What was the nature of this signal? Do you know anything more about it?

We understand there is a Martian link involved in the operation. Can you provide us with some information on that?

The Martian link is important in order to progress the adventure to the next stage, so if the investigators don't divulge any information about it Valentin will prod them with the following.

Apparently, there are two aspects to the system you have discovered here. The stations on earth project a field over the seal using this hexagonal arrangement you have uncovered. Yet we detect another set of transmissions along similar frequencies emanating from Mars. These signals are not as strong as those on Earth, and are irregular in their intensity. Are you sure there is nothing regarding your own investigations that might shed further light on these transmissions?

Once Valentin is satisfied that the Investigators have told him the pertinent details of their mission he relaxes. He tells the Investigators to wait a short while whilst he speaks to a friend and begs their patience, suggesting that should they want anything whilst he is away they need only ask the serving staff. After fifteen minutes or so he returns and says:

I have been in touch with a man from Mars named Gascon. He is happy to hear of your success here on Earth. Thanks to the goodwill generated by your efforts here, a renewed sense of trust and cooperation has been fostered between Whitestar

HEROES OF LEGEND

This may well depend on what sort of campaign the GM has been running at this point, but it is, of course, entirely possible that the Investigators are now some of the most potent, famed, and resourceful champions of humanity in the solar system.

This has a few effects throughout this section of the campaign. Firstly, the Investigators will be given a lot more freedom to make decisions, requisition equipment, and advise key NPCs, rather than merely taking orders from them. Some players and GMs may want more direction as to how to manage this extra responsibility. Whilst various ideas are discussed, it will be impossible to allow the players all the freedom due to such powerful characters whilst also detailing every possible scenario. It is very important for the GM to read ahead and consider what options they want to allow for their players.

The Investigators may not realise it, as most people will try to compensate and rationalise their existence to their faces, but pretty much everyone they meet by this stage will be in awe of them, and may well be terrified or even hateful in their feelings towards them. If they have played previous parts of the campaign they will be many centuries old, have acquired the powers of ancient aliens, and have defeated many important enemies and creatures of the Dark Soul.

For the most part, corporate bigwigs and the pious members of the Brotherhood have come to regard the Investigators as prophesised heroes come to liberate humanity. They will do all they can to help the Investigators, but regard them as somewhat more than human. Even important figures such as Cardinals, Bauhaus nobles, and Capitol celebrity businesses will be somewhat anxious and distant in their dealings with the Investigators. A few will be adoring, and this may cause problems with obsession, stalking, and the need to collect mementos, photographs, and autographs.

A few others will be envious of the Investigators, or regard them as abominations, seeking to undermine or even kill them.

In the ranks of the Heretic Cults throughout the solar system the problem is the other way around. Most heretics share the belief that the Investigators present the greatest of threats to their plans, and wish to see them exterminated with extreme prejudice.

However, a few are hugely impressed with the Investigators. They have heard rumour that the Investigators have transcended mutation, and acquired powers to rival those of Nephrites and even the Dark Apostles.

Attitudes such as these will colour the behaviour of many of the NPCs the Investigators meet during their adventures, but the GM should keep in mind that everyone they meet, from store keepers and servants, to cardinals and anarchist cult leaders, will have very strong feelings about the very existence of the Investigators.

and your friends on Mars. This has not gone unappreciated. Gascon says you are to be honoured on your return, that none other than Cardinal Durand XVIII wishes to praise your efforts and bless your future endeavours. I have been asked to arrange transport for you to leave immediately. Please come with me.

Valentin will lead the Investigators to a waiting armoured vehicle which transports them to the nearest airstrip. From there they set off to Mars.

JOURNEY TO MARS

The spacecraft requisitioned to take the Investigators to Mars is a small and fast vessel. The journey from Earth to Mars is straightforward and quick, if slightly cramped.

Whilst there isn't much to do on board the vessel, Cybertronic (who own the craft and supply the crew) has ensured that there are high quality medical facilities on board, so if the Investigators have suffered any injuries in the previous encounters they will receive the best possible treatment.

MEETING CARDINAL DURAND

Read the following to the Investigators:

From the space port near San Dorado a swish limousine whisks you up and deposits you in front of the steps of the San Dorado Cathedral. Dwane Gascon waits there for you, dressed in a fine navy-blue business suit offset by a gunmetal grey tie.

You are led into the great chamber of the San Dorado cathedral. The vast hall is almost empty, and the echoing of your footsteps reverberates in the space like gunfire. The great masses of people who usually inhabit the great halls, straining to hear the words of sermons and proclamations, are absent. Instead there is a small group of people gathered around the lectern at the far end of the hall.

Prominent among them is the current head of the Brotherhood, Cardinal Durand XVII. He is dressed in his robes of office, a voluminous sweeping gown of white satin, edged with details in cloth-of-gold and rubies, with two large gold-plated and bejewelled shoulder guards. He is an elderly man, though still apparently hale and hearty.

About him stand an honour guard, members of the Fury. They dress in lavish suits of armour, styled in the Martian pattern but bearing gaudy heraldic devices in the primary colours. There are eleven of them, two groups of five flank the Cardinal whilst the last, conspicuous due to the fact that he wears no helmet, stands to his right hand. They all bear Deathlockdrum assault cannons.

As you approach, the Cardinal leans forward on the lectern and addresses you in softly-spoken words, barely louder than a whisper yet oddly audible even in this great and echoing space.

"I understand we have much to thank you for. Legends and prophecies told us of the location of the Great Seal, yet it was almost too much to hope that such a thing actually really existed, let alone that it would be found in my lifetime."

"I understand you are pursuing some leads on Mars that may prove to link in with your discoveries on Earth. I have been discussing matters with Dwane and we are willing to set aside some of our own ... differences ... in order to help fund any expeditions that might need to be pursued in order to make the most of your findings."

"What are your immediate plans?"

The Cardinal will listen to the Investigators and offer encouraging words when appropriate. When they run out of things to say to him he continues:

"I will be coordinating the spiritual defence of humanity in these trying times, but I wish you all the best and pass you into the hands of my friend and erstwhile bodyguard, Paul Gell." He indicates the man to his right. "He will ensure you receive all the support you need."

"As further thanks for your sterling efforts, it has been decided to promote Unit Oscar to the ranks of the Doomtroopers. The resources and support of the Brotherhood, the Cartel, and the Cybertronic Corporation are yours should you need them. Just let Paul and Dwane know if you have any problems. We have arranged some accommodation for you. I suggest you rest from your journey and then consult with Paul and Dwane as to your next moves."

The Cardinal then performs some quick prayers and genuflections before bidding you farewell.

From the San Dorado Cathedral, the Limousine will take the Investigators to the luxury suites of a high class San Dorado hotel.

CARDINAL DURAND XVIII

The Cardinal is a genuinely good-hearted individual, thoughtful yet somewhat wearied through his contemplations of the sufferings visited upon humanity. He has deep misgivings about the Investigators and their Cybertronic allies, yet he possesses enough reserves of optimism to hold the hope that the Investigators could yet fulfil some sort of messianic role in the current time of conflict and chaos.

The Cardinal will not have many face to face dealings with the Investigators, his own security is always foremost in his thoughts and he regards the Investigators as something of a risk. Nevertheless, he is willing to commit significant resources to their adventures and, should they think to ask him for anything, he will endeavour to arrange it for them. Most of the time he will be happy to work through his contacts, Dwane Gascon and Paul Gell.

PAUL GELL

Paul Gell is a tall and powerfully built man in his late twenties. He has movie star good looks, chiselled features, bright blue eyes and a fall of thick, brown hair that he keeps slicked back with gel.

Paul is, not entirely willingly, a member of two organisations with highly different goals. As a member of the Fury his appointed duty is to protect the Cardinal and defy the Dark Legion.



Flanked by the Fury, the Cardinal has questions for the Investigators.

However, Gell has been compromised. Agents involved in a heretical organisation named the Black Guard have been blackmailing him, threatening to reveal knowledge of an embarrassing yet rather harmless habit of Gell's involving pieces of fruit and furniture and clothing of an unusual design. In order to prevent publication of the details of his private affairs, Gell has been lured into performing minor criminal acts for the Black Guard, and is now an effective agent for them despite his firmly held opposition to everything they stand for.

The Black Guard are careful as to how they employ Gell. They do not inform him of their heretical tendencies, as they fear that doing so could lead to his corruption and subsequent detection. As far as he is concerned they are just a clandestine group with criminal tendencies.

His role within the group is to act as an informant. Once a week he visits a bar in downtown San Dorado and meets a member of the Black Guard, telling them all he knows about recent developments within the Brotherhood.

Gell will feed the Black Guard information about the intentions and actions of the Investigators.

In the early stages of their acquaintance, this will be subtly done, so, whilst the reason the Black Guard are able to target the Investigators so effectively in The Ambush section is because they have Gell helping them, there will be no way to make any connections. Later on, Gell will become more desperate in his attempts to cause chaos, leading to an eventual three-way confrontation between the Investigators, Gell's fellows in the Fury, and the Black Guard.

JOINING THE DOOMTROOPERS

Unit Oscar is now a part of the Doomtroopers. The Investigators will be issued with an impressive set of dress uniforms, together with insignia, business cards, badges and other identifying markers.

However, little else changes. They are not formally introduced to anyone else within the ranks of the Doomtroopers, unless they ask for such introductions (in which case excuses are given—the Doomtroopers are far too busy confronting the Dark Legion and heretics throughout the solar system—the Investigators will of course get to meet their brothers and sisters in arms once the current crisis is abated).

What they do benefit from is access to the armoury that the Cartel has set aside for the exclusive use of units such as those the Investigators belong to. All they need to do in order to get hold of a particular weapon, suit of armour or piece of kit is ask Dwane and wait for it to arrive. Provided the Cartel could conceivably get hold of the requested item it will be made available to the Investigators.

If the Investigators become too profligate with such requests, the supply of items will dry up until they account for what they have

SECRETS OF THE CURIA

The information that follows within this sidebar extends the timeline presented within the **Mutant Chronicles** rulebook and relates to information that is revealed within the Brotherhood, Cybertronic, and **Mutants & Heretics** sourcebooks. For GMs that do not possess these, it should be understood that the three founders of the Brotherhood—Alexander, Nathaniel, and Peter Durand—have been very active across the centuries. Members of a race called the Guardians, who themselves were genetic constructs of the Ancients, the brothers already enjoyed greatly extended lifespans. Alexander took this one step further in the centuries following Nathaniel's death and transcended to become the AI at the heart of Cybertronic, whilst Peter researched cloning technology and eventually succeeded in resurrecting Nathaniel. The two brothers have maintained control of the Brotherhood ever since thanks to the very same cloning technology.

The sudden and unexpected death of Nathaniel Durand's clone in 1270 YC during his reign as Cardinal Durand XVII led to the ascension of Cardinal Dominic as his successor. This was largely due to the fact that Peter Durand had been unable to manoeuvre himself into position as his brother's successor before his untimely death. Neither brother had prepared for Nathaniel's death, nor would they have opted for such an authoritarian as the de facto leader of the Brotherhood. Peter forsook any opportunity to edge towards becoming the next Cardinal in favour of raising his brother's next clone, so that they might both better prepare for the certainty.

Dominic's fervour in cleansing humanity of the taint of Darkness and mutation was a two-edged blade. The Brotherhood were so focussed on rooting out Heresy and mutation from the millions of souls around them that they seemingly became blind to the stealthy slithering of the tendrils of Darkness that had once again begun infesting the echoing hallways of long-dead Citadels. His sermons also served to further the supposed link between mutation and Heresy, which deepened the wedge between non-mutants and their unwitting saviours. The successes of the Second Directorate, however, and the propaganda that trailed in their wake, drew the disenchanted masses back to towards the unwavering Light like moths to a flame.

Nathaniel was perfectly placed to once again claim dominion of the Brotherhood following Dominic's recent demise due to old age, but the damage had already been done to humanity's perception of mutants during the intervening years. Dominic's ascension had shaken the brothers to their core and reinforced a clear message, one that they had almost forgotten but should have paid careful heed to: though they might currently be the most powerful beings opposed to the Darkness, and though they might possess centuries of knowledge and power between them, some things are still shrouded to even them.

The Mystics of the First Directorate will have certainly attempted to divine the past, present, and future intentions of the investigators. The possible influence of the Ancients via Human Factor, however, and the investigators' interaction with Cybertronic, does not mean that they have necessarily been successful. Durand, therefore, has good reason to remain aloof from the investigators following this meeting.

done with the items that were already provided to them. Their privileges in regard to free gear will soon disappear if the weaponry is put to any irresponsible or criminal use.

MAKING PROGRESS

The Investigators may wish to make progress with analysing the source of the signal from Mars and its moons. They will be provided with any computers or other analytical tools they might need in order to carry out such work. Refer to the next section, Missions to the Moons of Mars on pg. 114 for details of what they might discover.

It would certainly be fitting for the Investigators to quickly discover that Nero is beginning to move towards Earth at this point. However, details such as the exact position of the source of the signals should be kept inconclusive until matters in San Dorado are completed.

THE AMBUSH

This short encounter takes place as the Investigators are travelling around San Dorado. A group of anarchists who have pledged their allegiance to the Dark Legion attempt to assassinate the Investigators by blowing up their vehicle and launching an attack on any survivors of the blast.

When, exactly, this encounter takes place is left up to the GM. It would be better if it occurred outside the frame of the general plot, such as when the Investigators decide to enter San Dorado in order to get some supplies or undertake some form of research.

If the Investigators simply wait for something to happen, they can be given advance notice of something that will become important later in the campaign. Butler Ewing (see Stealth on pg. 132) is working on a combination of mysticism and technology in order to create a

metallic alloy that is invisible to many of the creatures associated with the Dark Legion's armies.

The Investigators may well have some pertinent experience here, as it is the application of essences recovered from Nekromakina that have helped in the creation of the alloy. Gascon will approach the Investigators if they need some impetus and give the following speech:

We have some interesting news, and given your expertise we were hoping you'd check it out. A talented Cybertronic engineer has been making great strides in applying essences rescued from Dark Legion facilities to create a new form of protection. He says that metal objects infused with his invention are virtually undetectable to the technology and many of the creatures used by the Dark Legion. His laboratory is part of the Klebbel Institute to the west of town.

He has arranged for a test of his invention to take place this afternoon, and has extended an invitation to you. We'd be very interested in hearing more about his progress and, of course, should we foster a good relationship with him, we may be able to requisition some of this material for our own use in the future.

A green Ranger Limousine waits outside for the Investigators. A chauffeur dressed in the colours of the Cartel waits by the open driver door.



GERALDINE FRIPP

Geraldine has been employed by the Cartel to run bigwigs and Military top brass around San Dorado for the last five years. She is a professional and conscientious individual who is devoted to her work. She is in her early forties, but looks almost twenty years younger. She has a short and slender build, elfin facial features, and a neat blonde bob haircut.

Geraldine will be curt and formal with the Investigators. She is not particularly intimidated by them, as she is used to the proximity of VIPs, but her professional mannerisms prevent her from being warm or affectionate to her clients, whoever they may be.

She is physically brave, and if she survives the events of the ambush she will do all she can to defend herself and the Investigators. She carries a small but powerful handgun in the glovebox of her limousine.

GERALDINE FRIPP, CHAUFFEUR ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	8	9	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	8	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE							
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	-	2	1	3	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Chauffeur's Uniform: (All 1)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **Sherman .74 M13 'Bolter' Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+↑4, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Close Quarters
- ▶ **Unarmed Strike (melee):** 1+↑2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **Expert Driver:** Geraldine is an extremely skilled driver, and, while she seldom gets to use her full skills, she's an accomplished driver under fire and has taken a number of advanced driving courses, including pursuits. Geraldine has Pilot Expertise +4 and Pilot Focus 3. Further, she may re-roll one d20 when making an Insight, Observation, or Pilot test, but must accept the new result. Finally, she reduces the difficulty of any Pilot test made to drive a ground vehicle through difficult terrain by one, to a minimum of one.
- ▶ **Keep Your Hands in the Car at all Times:** Because of her experience in dangerous situations, Geraldine is skilled at using the streets and obstacles as cover. While she is driving, passengers gain ↑1 Cover Soak (in addition to any Cover Soak provided by the vehicle).

THE BLACK GUARD

The Black Guard are a group of revolutionaries and anarchists who have become increasingly active within San Dorado in recent months. Since they learned of the arrival of the Investigators on Mars via some sympathetic contacts in the lower echelons of the Brotherhood, they have dedicated their efforts to killing them.

The night before this encounter they were given access to a vehicle used by the Investigators. They have placed a transponder and a small, but powerful, explosive device underneath the vehicle. They plan to use the bomb to launch a deadly ambush on the Investigators the next time they journey through San Dorado.

RANGER LIMOUSINE

QUALITIES	Exposed, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	195 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	1	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	6 passengers 30 enc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	4	7	4	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	2	4	2	1
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+↑5			
NOTES	Passengers and crew have ↑4 Cover Soak if Geraldine Fripp is driving, or have ↑3 Cover Soak otherwise.			



The Black Guard's ambush causes a firefight.

The Black Guard are well equipped for anarchists, and fairly disciplined and organised. They typically operate in squads of four to eight members; each squad member wears Capitol-made Hardback Armour that they have painted black and daubed with crude symbols associated with heresy and anarchism in bright red. All squad members carry a .74 M13 'Bolter' as well as an anti-armour grenade and an anti-personnel grenade. Each squad has access to one Improved M89 and one Flamer.

BLACK GUARD HERETIC ★

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	10	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	8	9	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	–	2	1
2	–	1	2	1	1
1	2	1	1	1	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Hardback Armour: (Head 2, Torso 2, Arms 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **Sherman .74 M13 'Bolter' Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+↑4, Semi-Automatic, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Close Quarters
- ▶ **Anti-Armour Grenade (ranged):** Range: C, 2+↑4, Munition, 1H, Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 1
- ▶ **Anti-Personnel Grenade (ranged):** Range: Range C, 2+↑4, Munition, 1H, Blast (Close)
- ▶ **Dagger (melee):** 1+↑4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

Or replace the Sherman Bolter with one of the following:

- ▶ **Improved M89 Machine Gun (ranged):** Range: Range L, 2+↑7, Automatic, Spread 1 Unwieldy 2
- ▶ **Light Flamer (ranged):** Range: Range C, 1+↑4, Munition, Incendiary 2, Torrent

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **Covert Militia:** All members of the Black Guard receive regular training with weaponry. They may reroll up to two ↑ when making a Ranged Weapon attack, but must accept the new result. Further, they reduce the penalty for firing at a range other than a weapon's optimal range by one, to a minimum of zero.
- ▶ **Faceless Few:** Members of the Black Guard can be anybody from any walk of life, but practice remaining hidden. They may reroll one d20 when making a Persuade or Willpower test, or any

dice that did not generate a success when making a Resistance test, but must accept the new results. Further, when telling a lie to keep their Heretical nature and activities hidden, each Dark Symmetry point spent to purchase additional d20s provides two d20, instead of one.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

► **Dark Gifts:** The Black Guard are eager devotees of the Dark Soul. They have the following Dark Gifts: Dark Curse, Obfuscation, and Symmetry Burst.

BEFORE THE JOURNEY BEGINS

The investigators may wish to check under the car for any unusual devices. Both the bomb and transponder are discrete devices, camouflaged to look like parts of the vehicle. In order to spot the bomb an Investigator must pass a **Daunting (D3) Mechanics** or **Dire (D4) Observation** test in order to spot the device. If this test is passed and the search for another device is announced it will require a further **Daunting (D3) Observation** test to find the transponder.

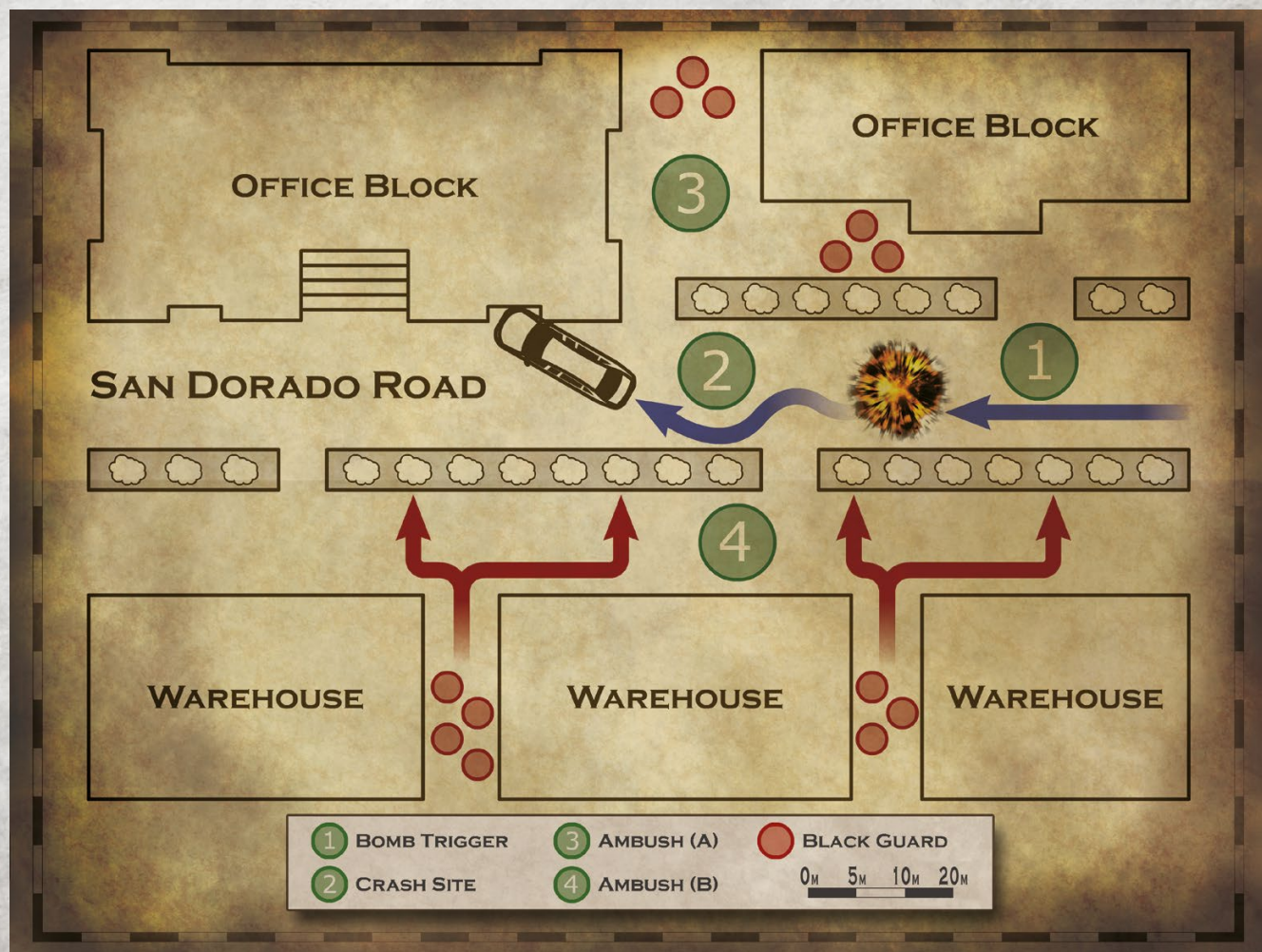
If located the transponder is simple enough to remove.

The bomb may also be removed simply enough, though if it not disarmed before removal it will explode. An Investigator can safely disarm it by passing a second **Daunting (D3) Mechanics** test. If this test is failed, the bomb explodes with the same effect as an anti-armour grenade, plus an additional **↑3** damage.

LAYOUT OF THE AMBUSH SITE

The ambush takes place along a San Dorado road as it runs between some office blocks (to the north of the road) and some warehouses (to the south). The road here is flanked by stone troughs in which shrubbery is planted. This is a fairly good place to spring an ambush, as attackers can crouch behind the shrubbery to benefit from cover, or use the corners of office blocks and warehouses to hide behind.

When targeting an enemy positioned behind one of the stone shrubbery troughs with a weapon or hostile Mystic Art, add 1 degree to the difficulty of any tests made.



When targeting an enemy positioned behind the corner of a building with a weapon or hostile Mystic Art, add 2 degrees to the difficulty of any tests made.

POINT 1

If the bomb is in place, the Black Guard trigger it at this point. It goes off, wrecking the Limousine and potentially killing, or seriously injuring, the driver. Each passenger will be hit as if hit by an anti-armour grenade.

If the bomb, but only the bomb, has been removed, the Black Guard will have lain another explosive device on the road, which they will trigger as the car drives over it. This will affect the vehicle as if it was an anti-armour grenade. Once damage has been worked out, the chauffeur will be able to bring the car to a controlled stop at point 2.

If the bomb and transponder have been found and removed, the Black Guard will just have to try to gun the car to a stop. As the car approaches point 1, the cultists to the north of the road will run onto the road and try to shoot the car.

POINT 2

If the bomb under the car went off the, car will veer from the road and crash at high speed into the side of the office block. Investigators inside the car will have one round between the blast and the crash to make appropriate reactions, but, if the car crashes with them inside, they take damage as if hit by an anti-personnel grenade.

If the car was hit by an explosive device left on the road, the chauffeur will be able to bring it to a rough, but controlled, stop at this position. Whilst the Investigators will be badly shaken, there is no further damage incurred by the smash.

POINT 3

A squad consisting of six members of the Black Guard are waiting to the north of the road, taking advantage of the cover afforded by the side of the office block (the squad member with the flamer is there) and the stone shrubbery trough (the squad member with the Improved M89 is there). If the limousine crashes or comes to a controlled stop they will keep to their positions, only abandoning their cover if they think the Investigators are trying to escape them.

If the Limousine is not crippled by an explosion, the Black Guard here will try to bring it down with their weaponry. They will expose themselves as they do so, losing all the benefits of their cover in their desperation to stop the Investigators.

POINT 4

A squad consisting of seven members of the Black Guard are hidden down two unlit alleyways between the warehouses to the south of the road. There are four to the left (the squad member with the flamer is there) and three to the right (the squad member with the

Improved M89 is there). They are well hidden and, before they make their moves, an Investigator will only notice them if they actively look and pass a **Daunting (D3) Observation Test**.

The squad will wait until the Investigators are focussed on their comrades to the north. They will then take up positions by the stone troughs to the south of the road to benefit from cover as they pour fire and grenades on to the Investigators.

If the Investigators have removed both the bomb and transponder from the limousine, this squad will be confused and unprepared for their appearance. They will respond to the shooting carried out by the other squad by wandering out of the alleyways and appraising the scene for a turn before working out what is going on and taking appropriate action.

Once either of the Black Guard squads is reduced to two active members or less they will attempt to flee the scene.

AT THE KLEBBEL INSTITUTE

If the Investigators make it to the Klebbel Institute they will be met by Butler Ewing, a friendly but nervous chemical engineer. Read the following to the Investigators:

Ewing is clearly excited, with a broad grin stretched across his face. Sweat beads on his tall forehead and occasionally he rubs his eyes to clear them. He is brimming with enthusiasm for his project and shows you a wall plastered with many theoretical diagrams and tables stacked high with plastic models of molecular structure. "But this probably does excite you; much like it does me!" He squeaks. He leads you into a large hangar where he says he has the first of two practical demonstrations set up. There is a cage of twisted and blackened metal in the centre of the room.

"We rescued this cockpit from the wreck of some enemy aircraft," Ewing claims. "It's mostly just junk, but the radar still works!" At this point he bursts into nervous laughter. "Or, at least, they'll think it still works! Ahahaha! That's what we want them to think! Hah ha!" Ewing shows you that the radar system is functional, and how to read it. He then has his assistant drive a few cars through the hangar, and shows you how they are detected by the system. They show up on the radar as clear orange blobs. Finally, a small pod, about the size of a large dog, coated in a layer of flat and dark metal is driven through the hangar. It does not show up on the radar display.

Investigators may point out that the pod is much smaller than the other vehicles. Ewing will admit that this is a confounding variable, but that the material is very expensive to produce, and they have yet to manufacture enough to cover a car.

If the Investigators source another small pod-like vehicle, or if they cover the existing pod in a layer of alternative material, they find that it shows up on the radar, but only as a small faint blob.

A second demonstration involves a captured Undead Legionnaire. Read the following to the Investigators:

Ewing leads you to another laboratory. This one is a long room, decorated in clinical white tiling. Set up in a restraining device at one end of the room is a captive Legionnaire, a rotting corpse dressed in old fatigues. Its hands and feet are manacled to the wall, but it is still able to move a little from left to right, and it jerks and judders against the restraints.

"OK" says Ewing, "this may take some time to demonstrate, as the creature does occasionally jerk, but I hope to show you that it does employ a degree of defensive reflex when objects it can see are thrown towards it.

Ewing's lab assistants queue up and throw a steady stream of tennis balls towards the captive. It sometimes seems to jerk away from these objects, though it isn't particularly clear if these jerks are flinches made in reaction to the objects, or just part of the creature's general palsied and irregular movements.

When a ball of the material is produced, it is also thrown a number of times at the creature. Most of the time when this ball is thrown at it the creature seems not to flinch, even when the ball is pitched straight towards it with some force. Very occasionally the Legionnaire does seem to jerk away, though again these apparent reactions could just be part of the creature's generally erratic movements.

"See!" Ewing claims in triumph. There is a statistical correlation between the movements and the apparent need to defend itself from the ball, and this correlation is markedly less apparent when the ball is made of the substance. He then looks suddenly sheepish. "This correlation is not exactly statistically significant, but we believe we're really making progress here."

Ewing will then offer the Investigators refreshments and generally try to butter them up ("the Brotherhood have been most generous, but we always need more funding"). He will answer questions if the Investigators put any to him, but will soon make excuses and get back to his research.

QUESTIONING THE CHAUFFEUR

Provided the Chauffeur survives the encounter the Investigators may wish to query her. Geraldine regularly checks her vehicle for suspect devices, and whilst she is shocked and ashamed that something has clearly slipped her notice, she is also confident that she has abided by every sensible precaution someone in her role ought to make.

If she is asked to run through the previous couple of days in order to account for anything suspicious, she says that her itinerary has been busy, but that nothing out of the ordinary has happened.

Investigators who announce that they are keeping a close eye on Geraldine to see if she might be lying or uncomfortable should take a **Dire (D4) Observation test**. If this is passed, they will notice that she cannot quite meet their eye when she suggests nothing out of the ordinary occurred.

If they press her and pass a **Daunting (D3) Persuade test**, she will say that the day before the ambush she was summoned to the San Dorado Cathedral and spent some time waiting in the lobby before being told that she wasn't required to take a passenger. She thought little of this because some of her clients often have to change plans at the last minute and she was compensated generously for the inconvenience. If Geraldine is asked who she spoke to at the cathedral she will say she forgets the lady's name, but that it was a dark-skinned woman with curly red hair who usually oversees reception duties there.

If the Investigators follow this lead they will find themselves talking to Helen Ogbomo, a tall woman with ebony skin and a towering beehive of tight red curls. Helen is a diligent worker for the Brotherhood and would never consider something as heinous as a booby-trapped limousine. However, the Investigators strike her as odd and otherworldly, and so she will become intensely nervous and tight-lipped if they come to question her, which may well strike them as the behaviour of a guilty woman.

If she is dealt with carefully, she will reveal that a member of the Fury wanted a limousine, but then could not be found when Geraldine arrived. The man was wearing his armour when they spoke, so Helen cannot be sure of his identity. All she recalls is that he was tall and had a deep voice, a description that could apply to many members of the Fury. Eventually she found him, meditating in a cloister, but he had changed his mind about the need for a limousine and asked her to apologise to the chauffeur for wasting her time.

FURTHER HONOURS

Shortly after their run in with the Black Guard, the Investigators will be summoned once again to the Cathedral. They are ushered once more into the great chamber where Cardinal Durand XVIII and his eleven bodyguards await them.

"I am pleased to see you well." The Cardinal intones in his soft and whispery voice. "It would seem you had a run in with some violent anarchists, with heretical tendencies. Such vile adherents to the darkness have become all too common of late, growing ever bolder as the Dark Legion flex their muscles."

"I assure you, in light of these aggressions, we are doing everything we can to step up security and offer you the protection you need. However, I do hope these assaults demonstrate the pressing need we have in order to confront our enemies and subject them to final lasting defeat. You have done so much for us, and we thank you for it, always."

The Cardinal presents each of the Investigators with a large silver and pearl badge in recognition of their bravery and sacrifice. He listens to anything they have to say and makes polite enquiries as to their opinion of Butler Ewing and the progress they have made with the signals from Mars.

MISSIONS TO THE MOONS OF MARS

SECTION SUMMARY

Either through their own efforts, or with the help of their contacts, the Investigators will learn that Nero has begun to move towards the centre of the solar system along a course that could well result in it colliding with Earth.

Ancient weaponry on Mars is located, dusted off and a test firing against the approaching planet is arranged. However, baleful energies transmitted from the Martian moons prevents the operation of the weapons.

The Investigators are directed to travel to the moons in order to investigate the source of these transmissions and disable them if possible. This is no easy task, for every mission carried out to the moons in the past has had no result, aside from the fact that the scores of soldiers sent to the moons are now missing, presumed dead.

Butler Ewing, a man with various links to the Brotherhood, Capitol, and Cybertronic, has a plan to see that the Investigators reach the moons unscathed, using a new formula of the distilled fluids that have been found in the wrecks of Necromakina (something the Investigators might know about thanks to their earlier adventures—see the **Dark Legion Campaign**). Butler believes he has created a special chemical which, if applied to clothing and equipment, renders them effectively invisible to many creatures in the Dark Legion.

The Investigators are given a free rein on how they will tackle the moons, though despite all the special equipment they will have at their disposal they should find the two missions very challenging. Both moons are inhospitable environments, small airless rocks that have barely any gravitational pull. Phobos is home to some terrifying Dark Legion monsters, that aren't entirely fooled by the Investigators' tricks. Deimos, for the most part, has been abandoned, though the Investigators will suffer if they are not vigilant regarding the reasons why. A dreadful contagion has swept through the Dark Legion's

forces on the moon, and unless the Investigators are careful about quarantine they will pass this affliction to the citizens of Mars.

INVESTIGATING THE FLUCTUATIONS IN THE SIGNAL

The facilities on Phobos and Deimos, together with the location on Mars itself, produce an irregular signal. This signal is constant, but a surge in strength occurs whenever the planet and either or both of its moons are in conjunction with Nero. This means that the position of the moons around Mars, and the position of Mars around the sun, affect the degree of the signal.

If the Investigators show any interest in whatever might be causing the spike in signal intensity, they may think to plot the relative positions of Mars and the moons and see if there is anything unusual about their positions whenever the signal spikes. Of course, the Investigators will have to work out some way of monitoring the relative positions of Mars and its moons in order to do so, but, provided pertinent technology is available to them, this shouldn't be too taxing.

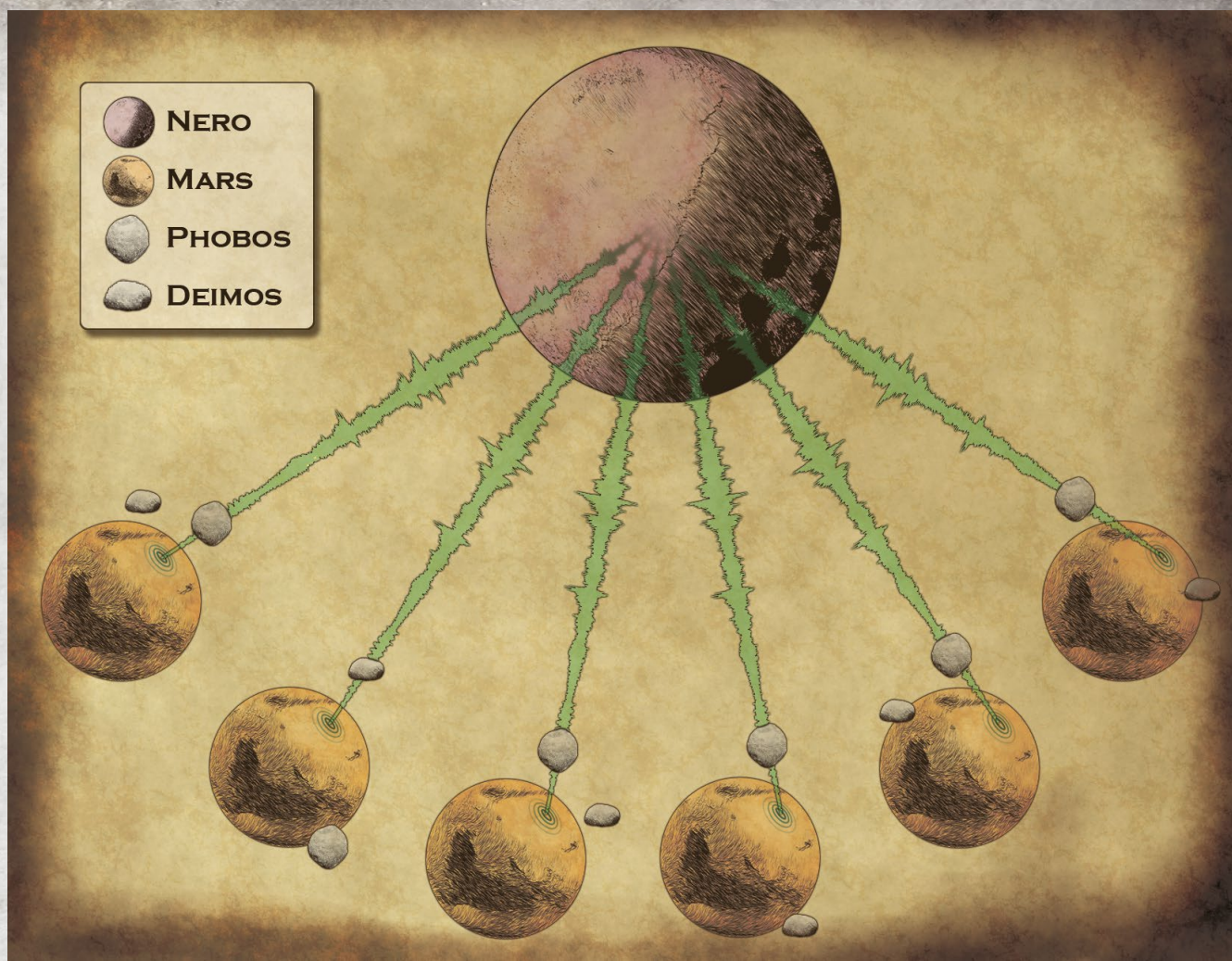
Should they do this, they will discover the spike in energy occurs whenever Phobos and/or Deimos pass between the facility on Mars and a distant point to the edge of the Solar System.

In the above figure, Mars is shown as a large red ball, Phobos as a small green ball, and Deimos as a smaller yellow ball. Nero is shown as a large purple ball and the spike in the signal occurs whenever one or both of the moons passes between the Martian facility (marked as a blue streak on the surface of the planet) and the distant Nero. This figure is not to scale, in reality, Nero is far out to the edge of the solar system and only the smallest variation in the angles of the green lines will be discerned (though they grow more distinct as Nero approaches).

Note: In reality the moons' orbits are rather more erratic than the above diagram suggests. We have simplified things in order to account for the degree of complexity of astrophysics that can sensibly be discussed in an RPG. If running a game with more realistic models is within your skillset, by all means feel free to elaborate.

If the Investigators do analyse the data themselves or run them through a computer, they will discover the following information provided they pass a **Challenging (D2) Sciences** Test:

- ◆ The spike in signal occurs every time either of moons passes between a particular point on the surface of Mars and a particular object towards the edge of the solar system.
- ◆ Over time the object towards the edge of the solar system seems to be getting closer.



- ◆ The rate at which the object is encroaching is slowly increasing.
- ◆ If the vector along which the object moves remains steady, and its rate of movement stays consistent with observable data, then it would collide with the Earth in three months.
- ◆ If the Investigators know anything about the location of the planet Nero (through researches or their previous adventures), they will be able to tell that the object can be traced to Nero's location, and that it is the size of Nero.
- ◆ If the Investigators know anything about the location of ancient weaponry on the surface of Mars, they will be able to find out (or correctly speculate) that the point on the Martian surface that produces the signal corresponds the location of the weaponry.

If the Investigators do not show any interest in analysing this pattern, contacts such as Valentin Gorev, Dwane Gascon, or Butler Ewing can coax them to put the pieces together. If the Investigators remain

disinterested in the signal fluctuations, one of their contacts could explain it all to them—though it would certainly be better if they took the lead with such discoveries. In order to keep things interesting and have the Investigators push the plot, the GM should encourage them to figure out that Nero is on the move, and then present this information to their contacts as opposed to the other way around. Of course, if they fail to make such connections one of their contacts can explain it to them.

THE MOVEMENT OF NERO

Soon after the Investigators put the clues together in order to theorise that the planet Nero is on an inbound course to Earth, the movement of the planet is confirmed.

Dwane Gascon wishes to consult with the Investigators about the matter. Read the following to the Investigators:

Dwane Gascon calls to your quarters and asks to speak with you. He is dressed in a very fine suit, the texture and colour of

brushed metal. "I need to speak with you," he says, "regarding a matter of some controversy."

Once the Investigators are settled Dwane continues.

"Our fears have been confirmed. Members of Cybertronic's astrophysics divisions have been gathering and analysing data from remote satellites towards the edge of the colonised solar system. A difficult task, as it seems Dark Legion transmissions have been designed to interfere with our systems. However, the numbers show that a large object is indeed encroaching slowly, but at an increasing rate, towards Earth, and this object... conforms to everything we know about the size and location of Nero."

"We are wondering what to do with this information. Broadcasting it early could help us forge alliances and prepare for what will surely be a significant confrontation with the Dark Legion. However, we are worried about spreading panic and tipping off heretic cults as to our information."

"What do you suggest? Is there anyone in particular you think we should inform as to these developments?"

Gascon will honour any sensible suggestions the Investigators make. Decisions made at this juncture have the following effect:

Keep information secret/inform close friends only: Should the Investigators decide to keep the information as close to their chests as possible, only informing trusted contacts, it will have both benefits and consequences.

One benefit is that they will be able to undertake certain upcoming challenges without interference from other corporations. For example, the Three Clients encounter on pg. 122 will not take place, as other corporations are not interested in the ancient weapons facility.

On the other hand, when it does come to the final battle that ends this campaign, forces belonging to other corporations will not be as prepared and compliant as they would have been if the Investigators had been more open. This consequence is dealt with in the section named Efficacy of the Ambush on pg. 178.

Inform pertinent parties in other corporations, but keep it out of the media: A wise compromise is to inform pertinent authorities in other corporations whilst keeping the news from going public. If this option is taken, the other corporations mobilise effectively and, out of respect for the Investigators' open attitude, Bauhaus do not complicate matters during the Three Clients encounter on pg. 122.

Broadcast news widely: A third option is to allow for widespread publication of the findings to the public at large. If word spreads

UNDER THEIR OWN STEAM

The Investigators could head to the location under their own steam. If they do so, they find that there is nothing between Vega and the Valley of Thousand Stones other than trackless red waste. They can pinpoint the location of the signal at its strongest, but, unless they organise their own excavating equipment, they won't be able to make any real progress. They will also have to fight off any Dark Legion patrols they encounter on their own.

Before they get too frustrated by such an occurrence, Dwane Gascon should catch up with them, congratulate them on their discovery, and then give them the same advice as offered in the instance of them not taking matters into their own hands.

about the movement of Nero, people begin to panic. The airwaves are full of doomy forecasts of what the planet's encroachment might mean, and how this movement is correlated with the increasing scale and frequency of Dark Legion assaults around the solar system.

There will be a negative consequence to this, as Military effort will have to be split between containing the anarchy and confronting the Dark Legion. The repercussions of this are dealt with in Efficacy of the Ambush on pg. 178.

THE ANCIENT WEAPON FACILITY

The Investigators will no doubt be interested in the exact location of the signal that is being broadcast from the surface of Mars.

Cybertronic will certainly want to uncover the facility even if the Investigators do not take the initiative in locating it. The signal can be traced to a location found in the wastes between Vega and the Valley of Thousand Stones. If the area is investigated, a structure will be detected buried nearly 100 metres beneath the sands.

As soon as this structure is detected, a number of corporations vie in their efforts to uncover it, and vast earth moving machines supplied and staffed variously by Bauhaus, Capitol, and Cybertronic are sent to the site. The Investigators will have to deal with these competing interests as well as protect the area from Dark Legion raids.

The following will need to be achieved at the site before the Investigators can continue.

◆ The site must be found, explored, and secured.

- ◆ The Investigators will have to decide which of the potential clients to award a contract to. If they are not diplomatic about this, their decisions may have repercussions later.
- ◆ The weapons, and a bunker to operate them from, must be excavated.
- ◆ The site must be protected from the Dark Legion.

FINDING AND SECURING THE SITE

Dwane Gascon will suggest that the Investigators head to the site of the signal with a Cybertronic exploratory unit in order to see what they can find and lay early claim to the area. Read the following to the Investigators:

Dwane pulls out a chart of the Wastes around the Capitolian city of Vega. He points to an empty tract of desert to the south-east of the city.

"The source of the signal from the Martian surface appears to be the desert between Vega and Valley of Thousand Stones. Satellite images of that area show no sign of anything that might produce the signal. All we know from previous expeditions to the area is that nothing is to be found there but sandy desert. We therefore suppose that whatever is producing this signal is buried underground."

"We need to source some heavy equipment in order to excavate the location. In the meantime, we'd like you to lead an expedition to the site. The Dark Legion have not been very active in the area, though small mobile patrols have been spotted around the city limits. We can offer you some supporting scout units. We just want you to get there, lay low, and secure the area. If you come under fire, just give the enemy a bloody nose; you should retreat if there's any heavy resistance. We'll send effective reinforcements as soon as we are able."

Gascon will provide the Investigators with a tracking device that shows the origin of the signal broadcast from (beneath) the surface of Mars.

SUPPORT

Read the following to the Investigators:

On the outskirts of San Dorado, just where the suburbs give way to trackless red desert, a small convoy has assembled, ready to venture forth. A unit of Doomtroopers, equipped with arms and armour associated with the Capitol Corporation, stands by a pair of armoured carriers. They clean their weapons and make an effort to appear tough and nonchalant as they wait for instructions. A light tank, built for desert operations, is parked nearby. A fourth vehicle, a large truck, is clearly not a Military vehicle. Monitoring equipment, a profusion of satellite dishes and antennae, is packed onto the roof of the container, and the crew have the pallid complexions and unkempt appearance of those who are more used to the research laboratory than outdoor work.

As you approach the vehicles, the Doomtroopers snap to attention and even the six technicians file into something like an expectant and dutiful line of people ready for action. One of the troopers, a lean and commanding woman with a face like a patchwork of old burns and scar tissue, steps forward.

"Lieutenant Jones and Unit Xyston at your service!" She barks as she snaps you a quick salute. "We're ready to roll on out just as soon as you give us the say so!"



Doomtroopers and Technicians take a break and share smokes while waiting for the Investigators.

As promised, Dwane has organised a unit to help transport and guard the Investigators on their way to the location. Unit Xyston (named for an ancient type of cavalry spear) consists of five pairs of Doomtroopers equipped with Tortoise MK I armour and an array of weaponry based upon their chosen expertise (Close Combat, Heavy Weapons, or Ranged Weapons). Each man carries two anti-personnel grenades and an anti-armour grenade. Each pair has access to a Gehenna Puker, a Deathlockdrum, or a DPAT-9 Rocket Launcher (with half a dozen munitions of each type). They have access to two APC 105 Hound Dog troop carriers and an AFV 110 Desert Fox light tank.

AFV 110 DESERT FOX LIGHT TANK

QUALITIES	Enclosed, Ponderous, Rugged, Tracked			
CRUISING SPEED	75 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	1	
CREW	1 commander, 1 driver, 3 gunners	CARRYING CAPACITY	65 enc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	9	12	9	5
MOTIVE SYSTEM	8	8	6	4
WEAPON	6	5	3	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+ $\uparrow$ 4			
ARMAMENTS	1x Mk. XLIV 'Slayer' Ultracannon: Range L, 3+$\uparrow$7, Semi-Automatic, Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 3. 3x M606 Machine Guns: Range M, 1+$\uparrow$6, Automatic, Spread 1.			
NOTES	Eight Reloads for Ultracannon. Six Reloads each for Machine Guns. The Ultracannon uses the Gunnery skill. Sand-dozer scoop grants $\uparrow$ 2 Cover Soak against land mines.			

APC 105 HOUND DOG TROOPER CARRIER

QUALITIES	Enclosed, Rugged, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	75 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 pilot, 1 gunner	CARRYING CAPACITY	10 passengers, 150 enc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	6	13	8	6
MOTIVE SYSTEM	5	8	6	4
WEAPON	4	6	4	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+ $\uparrow$ 5			
ARMAMENTS	2x linked M606 LMG: Range L, 1+$\uparrow$6, Automatic, Spread 1			
NOTES	M606 LMG have twelve Reloads. Disembarking the vehicle is a Restricted Action			

DOOMTROOPER ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	10	9	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	8	8	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE							
COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL		
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
4	3	2	2	3	2	2	2

WOUNDS: 8

SOAK: HFMP5-93 Tortoise MK I armour: (Head 3, Arms 2, Torso 3, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- **P60 Punisher (ranged):** 1+ $\uparrow$ 6, Range C, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockdown
- **Punisher Short Sword (melee):** 1+ $\uparrow$ 6, 1H, Parry 1, Vicious 1
- **M50 Assault Rifle (ranged):** Range L, 1+ $\uparrow$ 7, Burst, 2H
- **Anti-Armour Grenade (ranged):** Range C, 2+ $\uparrow$ 6, Munition, 1H, Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 1
- **Anti-Personnel Grenade (ranged):** Range: Range C, 2+ $\uparrow$ 6, Munition, 1H, Blast (Close)

Alternatively, replace the Punisher combo with the Piranha Handgun, below, and the M50 with one of the support weapons subsequent to the Piranha stats:

- **Piranha Handgun (ranged):** 1+ $\uparrow$ 5, Range C, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters, Hidden 1
- **CA-130 Deathlockdrum (ranged):** 2+ $\uparrow$ 9, Range M, Automatic, Unwieldy, Armour Piercing 1, Spread 1
 - **CA-130 Grenade Launcher (ranged):** Damage and Qualities as Grenade, Range M, Munition
- **DPAT-9 Deuce Rocket Launcher (ranged):** Damage as Grenade + $\uparrow$ 2, Range L, Munition, Unwieldy, Qualities as Grenade + Unforgiving 1
- **CA-451 Gehenna Puker (ranged):** 2+ $\uparrow$ 8, Range C, Munition, Unwieldy, Incendiary 4, Torrent, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Best of the Best:** Doomtroopers are well-trained and hand-picked by the Brotherhood and Cartel. They are veterans in combat and are used to being under extreme pressure. They may reroll one d20 when making an Acrobatics, Insight, Observation, Stealth, or Willpower test, or any dice that did not generate a success when making a Resistance test, but must accept the new results. Further, they may reroll up to one $\uparrow$

when making a Close Combat attack and up to three **↑** when making a Heavy Weapons or Ranged Weapons test if they are a Heavy Weapons or Ranged Weapons specialist, or vice versa if they are Close Combat specialist, but must accept the new results. Finally, GMs may assign two other talents to the Doomtroopers based upon their weapon expertise.

- ◆ **Taking It to the Legion:** Doomtroopers have just one reason to fight: opposing the Dark Legion. As such they are trained to resist heresy and Corruption. Doomtroopers have a Corruption Soak of 3 and increase their Wounds by one (already adjusted). Additionally, when making a test to avoid the effects of a Dark Gift or similar power or ability, each Dark Symmetry point spent to purchase additional d20s provides two d20, instead of one.

These troops are under direct command of the Investigators, and will follow their orders loyally, and to the best of their ability. They are still proud Doomtroopers, and their morale will suffer if asked to perform clearly absurd or suicidal acts. Even so, they would only ever abandon the Investigators if they are clearly misused by being given consecutive ill-advised missions or several stupid orders.

If such misuse does occur, they will look for an opportunity to slip away from the Investigators and join the fight against the Dark Legion in a more useful capacity.

If the Doomtroopers are well-led and survive the upcoming encounters in good shape they will ask to be made a personal bodyguard to the Investigators. Whilst they will not be able to accompany the Investigators to the moons of Mars, they will re-join them on their return to the planet and assist them in any upcoming conflicts.

As well as the Doomtroopers, there are half a dozen scientists on board a large truck packed full of tents, monitoring equipment and small scale digging gear. These experts plan to triangulate the precise location of the signal and begin preliminary excavations.

TECHNICIAN ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	8	7	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	11	9	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	-	1	-	3	2	1	1	3	2

WOUNDS: 5

CYBERTRONIC ASSESSOR VEHICLE, "THE LOCKER ROOM"

Dubbed "the Locker Room" (presumably due to the smell) by the Doomtroopers, this converted truck bristles with sensor antennae and communications dishes. Inside, the place is a mess of cables and a graveyard of old coffee cups and food wrappers. A **Challenging (D2) Observation test** will allow a perceptive Investigator to notice some Eaty-neaty wrappers in the debris—if they've played through the **Dark Symmetry** campaign, this may make them a little nervous (for no reason).

Run by a supercilious AI the techs have named "Butler", the truck has the latest in Cybertronic tech and thinking machines (the Brotherhood turns a blind eye in this case). It is used to monitor the site and compile possible models and solutions, as well as being a communications hub. At any given time, there will be four Technicians working feverishly at the consoles, spouting techno-babble.

QUALITIES	Exposed, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	65 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	0	
CREW	1 pilot	CARRYING CAPACITY	7 passengers or 120 enc	
LOCATIONS	SURFACE DAMAGE		SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	5		5	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	2		3	2
WEAPON	4		4	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+ ↑ 3			
NOTES	Any research Tests (including Science) have their difficulty lowered by one, with the help of the equipment and gear in the Locker Room.			

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Coveralls: (Arms 1, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Piranha Handgun (ranged):** 1+**↑**3, Range C, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Close Quarters, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **I'm Just the Tech Support!** Anyone expected to support the Doomtroopers will have received basic combat training, but that does not mean that they are ready to face the realities of combat. The technicians will require a successful Challenging (D2) Command test as a Restricted Action to direct their actions during each round of combat, otherwise they fail to act. Additionally, the Repercussion of any test taken by a Technician during combat is increased by one.

- ◆ **Try Switching It off Then on Again:** The Technicians are experts in their fields. They benefit from an Expertise of 4 and a Focus of 3 within their area of expertise (chosen by the GM as and when required). They may also reroll one d20 when making a skill test concerning their area of expertise, but must accept the new result.

LIEUTENANT IRMA JONES

The woman in charge of the Doomtroopers is a stereotypically tough and gruff Military veteran called Lieutenant Jones. She carries a Piranha Handgun and a CSA404 Heatsword. Jones is 28 years old, but the network of scars and burns that covers her face makes it impossible to guess at her age. She carries herself like a much older woman, with a natural air of authority and little compunction about taking rough disciplinary measures.

Beneath her gruff exterior, Jones is oddly besotted with the Investigators. A pious woman, she believes them to be agents of providence come to save humanity and fulfil holy writ and prophecy.

Her pride and social grace prevent her from making a fawning fool of herself in front of the Investigators, but once she has made their acquaintance she will remain a loyal and close companion, and a bulldog in their defence.

The Investigators would be wise to make good use of Jones, as she has extensive Military experience and will offer sound advice on tactical matters. As a true believer in the Investigators and their mission, even incompetent or cruel behaviour on their part will not sway her from her devotion. Of course, she will be even more pleased to see them act competently and wisely, and she will be a source of warm encouragement whenever they make good suggestions.

Like the rest of the Doomtroopers Jones will not be able to accompany the Investigators to the moons of Mars, but she will be on hand and willing to help at all other times. Should the other Doomtroopers leave the Investigators, Jones will remain. Indeed, she will regard the deserters as the worst of traitors.

Jones makes it her daily business to pray and meditate. This vigil is not so important to her that she would risk losing track of the Investigators in order to perform it. However, all else being well, she will take herself off to a private spot to spend one hour in quiet and private meditation, musing over the mysteries of the cosmos and the religious teachings of the Brotherhood. She usually does this shortly before going to bed.

Jones is not a sanctimonious woman, and regards her vigils as a private matter. Her habit of going off alone for an hour may arouse suspicion in the Investigators, but if they spy on her they will simply

see her sitting quietly with her legs and arms crossed and her eyes closed. All the other Doomtroopers know of Jones' habits, and refer to her jokingly as "The Mystic" behind her back.

IRMA JONES, DOOMTROOPER LIEUTENANT ☹

ATTRIBUTES

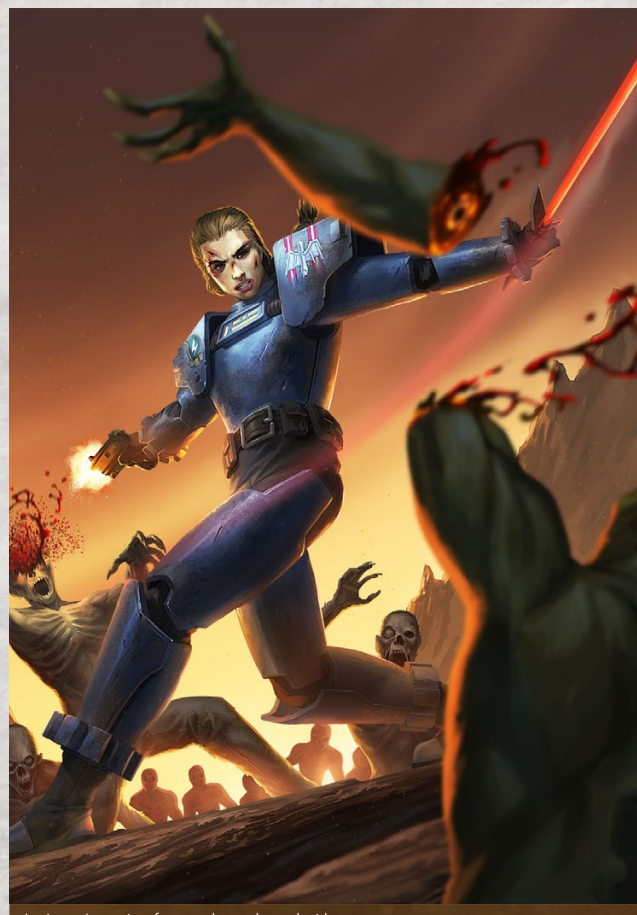
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	11	10	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	9	10	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
4	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	1	2	2

WOUNDS:

- ◆ Head 5
- ◆ Arms 6
- ◆ Serious 8
- ◆ Mental 11
- ◆ Torso 9
- ◆ Legs 7
- ◆ Critical 5



Lt. Irma Jones is a force to be reckoned with.

SOAK: HFMP5-93 Tortoise MK I armour: (Head 3, Arms 2, Torso 3, Legs 2)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **P60 Punisher (ranged):** 1+**T**6, Range C, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockdown
- ▶ **CSA404 Heatsword (melee):** 1+**T**7, 1H, Incendiary 2, Parry 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **Best of the Best:** Doomtroopers are well-trained and hand-picked by the Brotherhood and Cartel. They are veterans in combat and are used to being under extreme pressure. She may reroll one d20 when making an Acrobatics, Insight, Observation, Stealth, or Willpower test, or any dice that did not generate a success when making a Resistance test, but must accept the new results. Further, they she may reroll up to four **T** when making a Close Combat attack and up to three **T** when making a Ranged Weapons test, but must accept the new results. Additionally, she does not need to pay a Dark Symmetry point to take a Parry Response Action and can always attempt such an action so long as she has a free hand and a weapon within Reach. Finally, she reduces the penalty for firing at a range other than the weapon's optimal range by one, to a minimum of zero.
- ▶ **Taking It to the Legion:** Doomtroopers have just one reason to fight: opposing the Dark Legion. As such they are trained to resist heresy and Corruption. Irma has a Corruption Soak of 3 and increases all of her Wounds locations by one (already adjusted). Additionally, when making a test to avoid the effects of a Dark Gift or similar power or ability, each Dark Symmetry point spent to purchase additional d20s provides two d20, instead of one. Finally, she has Mysticism Expertise 2 and Mysticism Focus 2.
- ▶ **Move It You Apes!** Respected by the troops, and well-known in Doomtrooper circles for her tough and no-nonsense command, Jones is a capable officer. So long as at least one success is generated when performing any social test (including Command) that involves Doomtroopers, she may immediately roll one additional d20 and add the result to the test.
- ▶ **I'm not like you (optional):** If the GM is using the *Mutant & Heretics* source book, it is quite possible for Jones to be a mutant. Her career will have exposed her to a number of situations that have activated and elevated her Guardian DNA. Should her Guardian DNA be activated, she will be striving hard to hide it. Of course, for those PCs manifesting the first stages of DNA activation and possessing an understanding of what is to come, Irma can become a staunch ally.

DARK LEGION PATROLS

The Dark Legion are not currently massing or mobilising troops in this area of Mars, though they do gather information about the movement of other forces in the area by sending out scouting patrols.

These patrols are small groups of fast moving Ezoghoul. There are three Ezoghoul in each group. Their role is to gather intelligence on the movements of large forces of troops rather than interfere with small operations like the one the Investigators are involved in.

Whilst the ancient weaponry that lies underneath the sands of the Martian wastes is of no interest to the Dark Legion, they will take account of what looks like a Military build-up in the desert; and as time goes on, the excavation operation will begin to become more and more a serious matter of concern to them.

Depending on how much time the Investigators spend securing the location before they report back to their superiors, and how much more time they spend negotiating with the representatives of other corporations trying to win glory at the excavation site, the Investigators will be interrupted by the arrival of one or more of these patrols.

EZOGHOUL SCOUTS ★

The Ezoghoul scouts are skilled in infiltration and evading detection.

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
17 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+1)	13
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
13 (+1)	13	13	14 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	-	-	-

WOUNDS: 13

SOAK: Alien Flesh: (All 2)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **Ashreketh Howling Blade (melee):** 3+**T**10, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Dreadful, Parry 1, Vicious 2
- ▶ **Blutarch Hand Cannon (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**7, Semi-Automatic, 1H, Ammo (Vile)
- ▶ **Carcass Grenade Launcher (ranged):** Range M, 2+**T**7, Munition, Blast (Close), Vile

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ▶ **Dark Presence**
- ▶ **Fast Healing (2)**
- ▶ **Fear (3)**
- ▶ **Monstrous Creature**
- ▶ **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- ▶ **Supernatural Agility (1)**
- ▶ **Supernatural Coordination (1)**

- ◆ **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (2)**
- ◆ **Flight:** An Ezoghoul, through no visible means, is able to elude the bonds of gravity and pursue its prey as swiftly through the air as it can on the ground. An Ezoghoul can fly, at the same speed it moves on the ground, and may move through empty zones above the battlefield.
- ◆ **Illitachk:** Though they are incapable of breathing an atmosphere suitable for humans, Ezoghoul's are bonded with a parasitic device that provides a breathable atmosphere for them. An Ezoghoul is completely unaffected by poisonous gases, suffocation, drowning, or any other conditions that revolve around not being able to breathe. This parasite can be targeted by spending two momentum on an attack. The trauma of this parasite being damaged causes the Ezoghoul to be Dazed until the end of its next turn, in addition to the attack's normal damage.
- ◆ **Telepathic:** Ezoghoul's do not communicate with speech, instead projecting mental images using a form of telepathy. An Ezoghoul's communication is silent, wordless, and consists purely of unnerving sounds and images transmitted directly into the mind of the intended recipients, who must be visible to the Ezoghoul.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Creature of Symmetry:** An Ezoghoul is able to employ Dark Gifts as a powerful creature of Algoth. Ezoghoul's know and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Sense Weaves of Power, Dark Curse, Obfuscation, and Black Fire.
- ◆ **Chameleonic Necrobionics:** Implants beneath the Ezoghoul's skin mimic the surrounding terrain's colouration. This allows the Ezoghoul Scouts to add two d20s to their Stealth pool when attempting to remain unseen or unnoticed. Additionally, the difficulty of ranged attacks made against them from Medium range or beyond are increased by one.

SECURING THE EXCAVATION SITE

The journey from San Dorado to the wastes between Vega and Valley of a Thousand Stones is straightforward enough. After a couple of days travel, the Investigators own instruments will tell them they have reached the source of the signal and the accompanying technicians will be able to confirm this matches up with their own data.

The technicians hone in on the exact spot that is best to begin excavations at, whilst the Doombroopers set about creating a fortified perimeter, digging a ditch around the area.

The first Ezoghoul patrol will arrive shortly after the Investigators. They take some opportunistic pot-shots at the Investigators and their Doombrooper bodyguard, but will retreat from the area once they come under heavy fire and begin to take serious damage.

Refer to the map in the section The Dark Legion Pounce on pg. 129 to get a notion of the perimeter fortification. At this stage, anyone using the ditch for cover benefits from some protection, and any tests taken to target them suffer from an additional degree of difficulty.

THE THREE CLIENTS

NOTE: Much of this encounter will not take place if the Investigators decided to keep information about the location of the facility a secret (though the section dealing with the arrival of Technician Hartigan should be dealt with). If they decided to approach other corporations in a respectful and discrete fashion, this encounter still takes place, though Ernst Schlegel of Bauhaus does not complicate matters, and simply puts himself and his equipment at the Investigators' disposal.

Aside from their contacts in Cybertronic, interested parties in Bauhaus and Capitol may have caught wind of the discovery of the site. If they have done so, they will despatch their own excavation crews to help with the effort to uncover and examine the ancient weaponry. Shortly after the Investigators find and secure the area, they find they are joined by up to three very different people, each of whom wishes to be awarded the honour of being allowed to excavate the site and examine the alien weaponry first hand. Whilst Technician Hartigan is sent from Cybertronic, and is therefore cooperative with anything the Investigators should wish, the other two corporate contractors may have different priorities.

The Investigators will have to wear their diplomatic hats when it comes to dealing with these prospective allies if support from their respective corporations is to be relied upon in the future.

TECHNICIAN HARTIGAN

The man from Cybertronic is called Technician Hartigan. He is an expert on ancient technology and its implementation. His arrival signals the start of the excavation, and he comes with the blessing of Dwane Gascon. He arrives the day after the Investigators and their team locate the source of the signal.

Technician Hartigan is a man in his late fifties, though he looks almost twenty years older. An unassuming man with an easy but shy smile, Technician Hartigan is one of the most talented engineers in the Cybertronic Corporation and an intuitive expert when it comes to the reverse engineering of alien technology. He will become the Investigators' science advisor whilst they are on site. An accomplished musician, Hartigan can usually be found playing guitar in his private hut when not working on the facility.

Read the following to the Investigators:

In the distance, you see another convoy approach, a line of tough-looking Military rigs and armoured earthmoving tractors.

DARK EDEN PART 04

They bear the insignia of Cybertronic and the Cartel and when they pull up at your position another squad of ten Doomtroopers emerges, lugging heavy weaponry and crates of ammunition. A small, lightly built man, elderly and somewhat unsteady on his feet, drops down from one of the earthmovers and makes his way towards you. He is bespectacled, pale skinned, and wears a close cropped white goatee beard.

"Ah, Dwane sent me to see you." He states somewhat unconfidently. "I'm technician Hartigan, and I'm-uh, well-I'm here to oversee the excavation of whatever it is that is producing that signal of yours. Uh I, I hope that's OK with you. Uh, is, is there anything I should know about? Before we begin, I mean."

Like Jones, Hartigan is in awe of the Investigators, but, unlike her, his excitement about working alongside them manifests as an intense anxiety and a lack of belief in his ability to support them. If this is brought to his attention he will try to compensate for it by acting more professionally, but after any length of time spent in their company he will begin to look nervous and begin blushing, sweating, and stammering.

In Hartigan's party are:

- ◆ Another unit of Doomtroopers, Unit Rex. They are equipped in the same manner as Unit Xyston.
- ◆ Four M99 Mounted Machine Guns, which are set up on support platforms located at each corner of the perimeter area. Each is manned by another Doomtrooper.
- ◆ A further six technicians.
- ◆ 2 trucks and 2 armoured earthmoving tractors (these are of no real battlefield value).

The camp is getting quite busy now, with twenty soldiers, crew for the tank and machine gun emplacements, a dozen technicians, Hartigan, Lieutenant Jones, and the Investigators.

The Doomtroopers set to work reinforcing the perimeter with a line of barbed wire fencing, making it virtually impossible for man-sized creatures to enter the enclosed area except through three entrances, large enough to admit entry to a tank, to the north, east, and west.

TRUDY-MAY CARROLL

Capitol's representative is Trudy-May Carroll. Trudy-May's demeanour is one of a tough independent woman who brooks no nonsense, and for the most part this is true of her general character. However, she is deeply troubled and insecure regarding the existence of the Investigators, and this will manifest as an unpleasant passive-aggressive attitude that colours her interactions with them.

Trudy-May has two goals in negotiating with the Investigators.

First, whilst Trudy-May accepts that governments have to take special measures in times of war, she wants to ensure that the excavation site will not become a secretive "Black Site" once the Dark Legion is defeated. She sees the land here as Capitol's sovereign territory and wants their laws and values to apply, if practically possible.

Her second goal is to seek some form of reassurance that the Investigators are human after all. If they are modest and humble in their dealings with her, display some emotion or even a degree of failure, she will feel much better about their existence. If they seem cold, calculating, dishonourable, or snobbish she will take it poorly. She has a fine eye for Machiavellian scheming, and it holds no water with her.

Once the Investigators have been introduced to Technician Hartigan and the new arrivals, read them the following:



I'm Trudy-May Carroll. Us Capitol folk wants words with y'all.

Technician Hartigan approaches you, looking even more anxious than usual. "We're picking up some movement to the north west" he says. "seems to have originated from near Vega, but, I can't be certain."

Soon enough another group of vehicles can be seen approaching the perimeter. Lieutenant Jones nods approvingly. "Capitol Infantry. Fine troops. They won't serve you so well in the heat of battle as my Doomtroopers, but that's no real criticism, few can. As for having a couple more of those Desert Foxes around the place," she points to two of the light tanks that bring up the rear of the column, "well, that's always a welcome sight."

Allow the Investigators an initial round of reactions before continuing:

A sturdy earth mover pulls up in front of the convoy. The driver's door opens and a small woman of sturdy build climbs out. She looks to be in her early 40s, with long curly auburn locks that she stuffs into place with the help of a blue denim trucker's cap.

"Hey, are you the guys in charge of this operation?" She calls over to you. "I'm Trudy-May and me and my boys are here to see that this cockamamie Cybertronic adventure gets done right and proper by those of us calls Mars home for keeps, y'know?"

Trudy-May will listen to whatever the Investigators have to say to her on the matter, she has the following talking points she wishes to bring up.

1) "I ain't so sure you people in the Cartel, or that Cybertronic, gotta lotta respect for us hardworking Martian folk. What's so damn important that you gotta set up all this secretive rig out here? You sure this is all in the best interests of Martians?"

2) "Dark Legion's the big problem going on the moment, on that you got my assent. But, come tomorrow, fellers like you always gonna insist operations like this need to be the preserve of government, or Brotherhood, or Cartel, or whoever it is you work for. Seems to me, true owners of whatever it is you're searching for is long dead, so who's to say who gets to own this place now?"

3) "Now this ain't my position on the matter, but there are folk inclined to take a conspiratorial view of these things. Say someone sitting at home in Vega or San Dorado nurses fears that sites such as this one, beyond all media monitoring and acting in its own interests, might be used against them in some way?"

Provided the Investigators deal with Trudy-May patiently and don't play any mind-games with her she will likely calm down somewhat. If they find it too difficult to answer her questions she will continue

to probe insistently. The only way to satisfy her will be either answer her queries, or put her on to someone else who can. There are a few seemingly viable choices here, though only one will have a positive result.

Dwane Gascon could field a call from Trudy-May. He has a good grasp of the diplomatic minefield that talking to someone with Trudy-May's particularly Capitolian attitudes can present, and he will be able to assuage her most immediate concerns. Putting her on to Dwane produces a good result despite the actions of the Investigators.

If the Investigators decide to delegate the job of explaining things to Trudy-May to Technician Hartigan then matters take a turn for the worse. Technician Hartigan, already extremely anxious as a result of his feelings about the Investigators, will fluff, bumble, and stutter his way through a sorry set of excuses for secretive authoritarian operations that enrages Trudy-May. Count this decision as an automatic failure in diplomacy.

Lieutenant Jones isn't really fit to answer such questions, and she knows it. She will simply admit that she hasn't got anything to say to Trudy-May, and puts her back on to the Investigators. This will annoy Trudy-May, and the only way to prevent a failure in diplomacy is for the Investigators to field her questions and do a good job of it.

Assuming the Investigators do decide to answer Trudy-May the GM should keep a rough tally of things they say that will impress her, versus a similar tally of things she won't want to hear.

THE SORT OF THINGS TRUDY-MAY WANTS TO HEAR

- ◀ **This thing is a weapon that will kick Dark Legion ass.**
- ◀ **The security of Martian citizens is important.**
- ◀ **The freedom of Martian citizens is important.**
- ◀ **We regret the need for secrecy.**
- ◀ **This operation is not exclusive to any one corporation or organisation.**
- ◀ **We'd appreciate your help.**
- ◀ **Ownership of this site could be debated once the current operation is completed.**
- ◀ **We will endeavour to ensure that this site is not put to any totalitarian purpose.**

Also good for Trudy-May: polite, patient, humble, human attitudes. No funny stuff, no game playing or mockery. Sympathy for the little man. Clean humour.

THE SORT OF THINGS TRUDY-MAY DOES NOT WANT TO HEAR

- ◀▶ **Talk to (named third party).**
- ◀▶ **This operation is too important to talk about.**
- ◀▶ **The freedom of Martian citizens is not important to us.**
- ◀▶ **Long term plans for this site will be up to (third party).**
- ◀▶ **This operation is exclusive to any one corporation or organisation.**
- ◀▶ **We don't want any help.**
- ◀▶ **Conspiracy theorists are dumb.**

Also bad for Trudy-May: criticism of Martian politics, or defence of how things are done elsewhere. Rudeness. Defence of totalitarian attitudes, even if they are jokes. Elitism.

PUTTING TRUDY-MAY TO QUESTION

The Investigators may wish to turn the tables on Trudy-May by putting her to the question. In general, this is not a good idea, she will take counter-interrogation as a sign of rudeness. However, a couple of queries are only to be expected, so she will respond to the following questions in the following ways:

Who sent you/who are you acting on behalf of?

"I am a freelance contractor with experience in both the construction industry and the Capitol Military. I'm also politically active, though not partisan. I am here with the express permission of the Bureau, been both a friend to them and a serious thorn in their side for years. They thought I'd be just the person to sound this place out."

Any way to verify this?

Trudy-May has all the pertinent ID and paperwork to carry out an inspection of the site, and offer assistance to the operation in the form of Military support and excavation equipment. Trudy-May's immediate superior in the Bureau is listed as one Garth Eustace Mortimer III. He checks out as legitimate if the Investigators want to check this for themselves. If the Investigators contact the Bureau they will find that Garth works in Special Crimes, which may give them pause if they know Special Crimes' provision is to look into suspected heretical activity.

What do you plan to do here?

"If we like the smell of your gumbo we'll help you out. The boys

are trained and itching for a fight. I'm here with my digger. Your orders make sense to us, we'll follow them."

If the Investigators tend to do a good job answering Trudy-May's questions she will relax and start to reveal a warmer and more cooperative side to her character. The Capitol assets will be placed at the Investigators disposal, though Trudy-May will still want a say in their deployment. Refer to the map on pg. 129 to see how Trudy-May organises her detachment if left to her own devices.

If the Investigators do a bad job of dealing with Trudy-May she will have no compunction about turning her convoy round and heading back to Vega. It is possible that the Investigators could rescue the situation by chasing after her and trying to make amends, but unless they do so, and do so effectively, this is the last they will see of her or the assets she has brought with her.

It is possible that things become very heated between Trudy-May and the Investigators. She will not resort to violence except under extreme pressure, such as if the Investigators start using a Mystic Art to manipulate her bodily or mentally, or if they (for some reason) convince her that the operation really does have a nefarious purpose.

Under such circumstances, she may order an attack on the Investigators and their operation. This will be a desperate measure because her forces are so clearly outmatched by those within the perimeter. The GM should consider the option to have Trudy-May attack the Investigators very carefully; such an assault could lead to all manner of repercussions later on. It may just be simpler to have Trudy-May retreat in an extremely sour mood, swearing all manner of comeuppance, only to reach Vega and be talked down by her superiors, who will, by then, have a better idea of what is going on.

ERNST SCHLEGEL

Like Capitol, Bauhaus have also caught wind of an important operation happening in the desert. However, Bauhaus are less concerned with the protection of their citizens' security and freedoms and more interested in protecting their reputation as the foremost font of expertise and professionalism in the solar system.

Dealing with the Bauhaus contingent should be easier than satisfying Trudy-May, though an attack by a patrol of Ezoghoul's could complicate matters if it isn't prudently handled.

Ernst Schlegel is a representative of House Richthausen, who have made their name in no small part due to their expertise in the fields of heavy industry and construction. On learning that an important and prestigious archaeological dig, associated with the discovery of alien technology, is underway, the House has sought to get involved by providing a small fleet of top-of-the-range excavation equipment as well as a small contingent of elite soldiers to guard it.

Schlegel dresses and comports himself as is fitting for a senior scion of the Bauhaus corporate structure. He dresses in an ancient, yet lovingly tended, suit of hussar armour, complete with spiked pickelhaube and a plethora of medals. In attitude, he is conservative, serious, and unashamedly snobbish. Most of his face is hidden behind beetling brows and magnificently cultivated and groomed mustachios.

Schlegel and his team arrive not long after matters with Trudy-May are concluded. Read the following to the investigators:

Technician Hartigan rushes up in a state of some agitation. "More movement outside the perimeter!" He gasps. "Another, uh, convoy from the looks of things!"

Through binoculars you can see three vehicles ploughing through the desert sands, approaching an area of rocky outcroppings that lies a quarter of a mile to the east. One is a simple truck, but the others are more remarkable. A large fully-equipped battle tank and a strange, articulated container bearing derricks, cranes, scoops, and a drill. The brass cogwheel of Bauhaus is resplendently displayed on each of the vehicles.

Lieutenant Jones whistles in admiration. "An MBT-42!" She says of the battle tank. "That's a mighty machine to have backing up your front line. The best heavy tank the Homebuilders have to offer."

If she is consulted even Trudy-May is impressed:

"I thought I had driven every kind of rig that's ever been made, but just look at that beauty. The Bauhausers used to reshape whole worlds, so you can be sure they know about the tools needed for a big dig."

At this point the convoy is nearly half a mile to the east of the facility, at about the same time a patrol of Ezoghoul's are moving through the area, on an intercept course.

Technician Hartigan speaks up again:

"It looks as if there's something else out there." He points to a small handheld tracking device showing a set of red three blobs. "Here is the convoy, and, um, here," he points to another smaller set of three blobs, moving in from the edge of the screen, "is, well, something else. These signatures would be comparable to those given off by the large creatures that attacked shortly after our own arrival."

Nearly a quarter of a mile to the east of the perimeter is an area of rocky outcropping rising from the dust of the desert. The three Ezoghoul's are making for this area, from which they will be able to

fire upon the convoy with the benefit of significant cover. It will take them five turns to reach the rocky bluff, and the convoy will be in range of their weaponry after a further three turns.

This gives the Investigators eight turns to react to the developing situation. They can attempt to hail the oncoming convoy to warn them of a likely ambush. Another thing they could do is arrange for some of their own forces to sally forth and assist the convoy.

If the Investigators do absolutely nothing, then the Bauhaus convoy will not find it too difficult to fight off the Ezoghoul's. They have a squad of Venusian Rangers and an MBT-42 with them after all. However, timely intervention by the Investigators could see to it that not a single drop of human blood is spilled in order to repulse the creatures, and will obviously earn them the good will of Schlegel and his team.

After the Ezoghoul patrol is dealt with, Schlegel will pull up his rig in front of the perimeter and ask to speak to the Investigators.

"My name is Schlegel and I have the honour of speaking to you on behalf of the Bauhaus Corporation and the Great House of Richthausen. We are given to understand that you have decided to undertake a ground-breaking exploration of unknown artefacts buried here. We come with all due pride in our earthmoving device, made with the highest Bauhaus specification to detail, quality, and performance. You would, it pains me to say, be remiss not to take the opportunity to avail yourselves of our generous offer."

The Investigators can either agree to use Schlegel's rig or not. He will be happy to let them examine the vehicle, and if they do they will find it nothing short of impressive. Hartigan, if he is consulted, will agree that the Bauhaus vehicle is far superior to anything else the team has to hand, and Trudy-May does not challenge the wisdom of the Investigators in choosing to use the rig in place of her worn earthmover.

"By all means use the Homebuilder's machine to excavate the big job, my boys can just get on with building up your defences."

If the Investigators delay whilst checking over the rig, Schlegel does not complain. He is happy with the attention even if it means he does not get to perform any actual excavation. The Bauhaus team would even stay indefinitely so long as the Investigators paid them regular attention and promised them a role if things checked out.

It is only if the Investigators refuse Schlegel's offer that things could get difficult. If they assisted him in fighting off the Ezoghoul's he and his men will stay and defend the perimeter, proud to show off the might of the Bauhaus Military even if their offer of the rig was overlooked.

However, if the Investigators did not offer to help Schlegel with the Ezoghoul's, and did not accept his offer of help with the excavation, he will shake his head and utter a morose contemplation.

"An old saying runs along the lines of never looking a gift horse in the mouth, and I represent those who take great personal pride in ensuring that their horses are thoroughbreds with full sets of teeth. I will take my leave, and pray that you do not come to rue your rash decisions too greatly."

THE BUILDING OF THE FACILITY

Once the area is secured, construction teams move in with prefabricated buildings and banks of computer systems. A small archive building is set up containing all the paperwork and books that Cardinal Durand and Dwane Gascon have been able to locate that concern themselves with rumours of Ancient technology and the history of human exploration of the Martian Waste and the two moons.

A large armoured shelter is also constructed, with a bombproof layer of armoured cladding facing the dig site. Snaking cables run from this location to the strange bulbous brass antennae that protrude from the ground. Inside, all manner of computer technology can be seen, monitoring the energies emanating from the structure and running them through multiple forms of analysis.

The rest of the site begins to look much like a Military encampment. Rows of large green tents for soldiers to sleep in and secure prefabricated buildings to house equipment and the offices of supporting staff. A long and reeking line of latrine pits is dug to the west of the site.

THE TEST FIRING

When, at last, the weapon is ready to fire read the following to the Investigators:

A klaxon wails and the tinny voice of Technician Hartigan can be heard over the camp's PA system, audibly brimming with confidence for a change. "Attention! Attention! All staff and



The Cartel ideal: Corporate cooperation.

TRANSITIONS & TECH TALK

Of course, it may well be that the Investigators begin feeling like a fifth wheel whilst the excavations continue apace and the device is prepared for its test firing, which is a great time for GMs to build a sense of foreboding over the forthcoming attack that follows in the wake of the weapon's test run. Chasing shadows that can never quite be caught, rumours of saboteurs and spies delaying preparations, extended patrols that require the Investigators skills; there are plenty of events and narratives that can be used to involve the players in day-to-day activities and thereby avoid the sensation that they are merely observers overseeing the inevitable. Engineering or Mechanically minded characters may even wish to offer their services and provide some input on the excavation or reconstruction of the device. Again, this should be encouraged; the Investigators are, by now, respected allies after all and their opinions will certainly be given due consideration.

The act of excavating the facility and repairing the device will require a week of around the clock work. If the Investigators do take a more active role, each event dealt with—patrol, saboteur, scouting mission—can be deemed by the GM to remove up to six hours from the total repair time, to a maximum of twenty-four hours. Each successful roll made to assist with excavation or technical repairs can be also be used reduce the total repair time by six hours, though this can never total more than twenty-four hours of time between each type of assistance. Repercussions may serve to extend the repair time of course, alongside drawing the ire of their peers.

The excavation and repairs will not be going unnoticed by the Dark Legion of course, as the inhabitants of the base will discover following the test firing. The intervention and assistance of the Investigators will only serve to increase their enemy's agitation, which is where the tension can be brought into play against the player characters; they will be experiencing success in securing and repairing the base, but the odds will still be stacking against them in the form of the Dark Symmetry pool.

If the Investigators are taking active roles, the entire construction sequence could be deemed to be a Dark Symmetry generating event, which would allow a GM to add between one and three points to the Dark Symmetry pool per day of construction and repair prior to the test firing, to a maximum ten additional Dark Symmetry points. On a day of zero activity by the Investigators, only one point could be added to the Dark Symmetry pool, whilst a particularly active day that averted disaster and avoided several days of setbacks may net three Dark Symmetry points. The GM is free to switch this around on occasion if they so choose, so that the Investigators do not feel as though their actions are constantly causing a negative impact (even reducing the Dark Symmetry pool may be an option for outstanding success).

In this way, the Investigators will feel less like they are taking a back seat to the events around them, but will also understand that their actions are causing an equal and opposite reaction. They are securing a shelter against a coming storm, but are acting as lightning rods by doing so.

visitors prepare for an upcoming test firing of the device! Those with the requisite clearance should make their way to the main control room. Those without should stay to the outside of the perimeter fence. Attention! Please stay to the perimeter. We are to commence a test firing of the device in just under ten minutes."

Entering the main control room, you can see a small army of Cybertronic engineers and lab assistants crowding round computer monitors and staring out of the great reinforced window, paned with thick, darkened glass, which is to the front of the room. From there you can see the great bronze structure of the ancient device rising from the sands of the Martian wastes.

"Ten! Nine! Eight!" Technicians begin the count down and a low, deep thrumming noise can be heard, gathering in intensity as power is fed to the device. "Three! Two! One!" The great bronze structure begins to shake, vibrating in harmony with the thrumming noises. Thin strands of bright blue plasma begin to emanate from the device, spreading over its surface and gathering until the whole structure seems to be a great glowing rod of crackling energy.

But then all Hell breaks loose. The thrumming comes to an abrupt stop, there is a bright flash of white light, almost blinding despite the protection afforded by the darkened glass. A shower of sparks fly from a bank of computers to the side of the room, and technicians shout and scream as they run for extinguishers to fight a number of small fires that have broken out.

When the chaos dies down Technician Hartigan reports the following to the Investigators:

When the chaos dies down Technician Hartigan reports the following to the Investigators, though he has noticeably resumed his aura of inferiority once again:

"It, uh, seems as if our test firing actually went better than it might have looked. We

had no problems powering the device, or arming it. It was when we tried to access its targeting matrix that problems began. The technology used to aim the weapon seems to rely on communication with the, um, with the sites on the surface of the Martian moons. Yet when it did so, there was an unexpected form of feedback, malicious data that caused the weaponry to misfire. We are working on confirming the data to see if this can be verified and what might be done about it."

THE DARK LEGION POUNCE

It is at this point that the Dark Legion launch a determined attack on the facility. The constitution of the attacking forces, as well as the forces available to the Investigators in order to defeat them, will depend on how they have comported themselves since arriving at the excavation site.

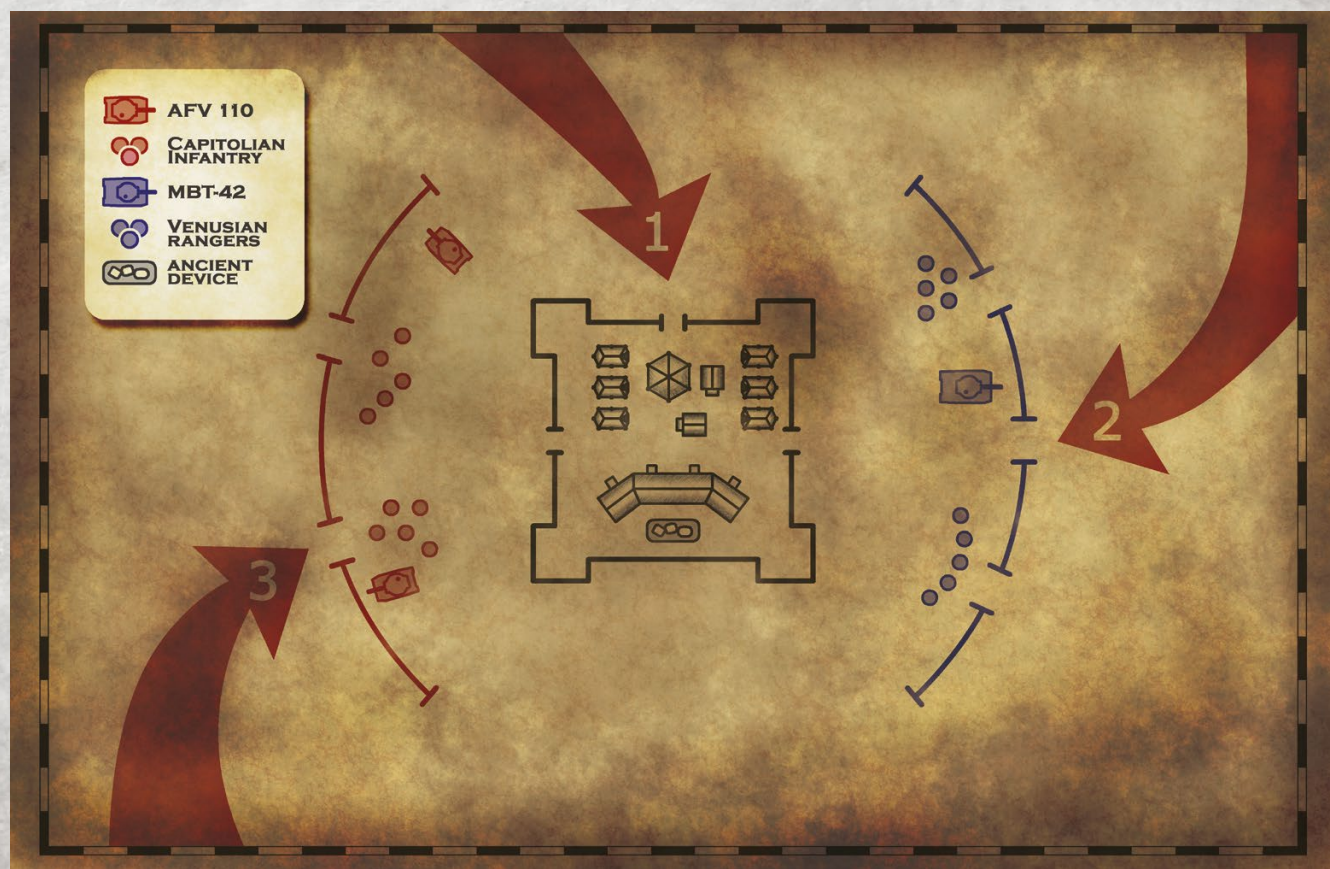
The above map shows the layout of the battlefield. In the centre is the excavation site, surrounded by the perimeter fence. To the south of the enclosure is the ancient device. The large armoured control room can be seen just to the north of it, and other tents and buildings are also within the perimeter fence.

To the west of the perimeter, in dark red, can be seen the Capitolian forces under the direction of Trudy-May Carroll. If the Investigators have alienated Trudy-May these forces will not be here. They consist of:

- ◆ Two AFV 110 Desert Fox light battle tanks.
- ◆ Two squads of five Capitolian Infantry armed with M50 Assault rifles and Tortoise Mk 1 armour.
- ◆ The Capitol troops will have erected three lines of defensive fortifications in front of their position, as shown on the map.

To the east of the perimeter, shown in blue, are the Bauhaus forces directed by Ernst Schlegel. If the Investigators have alienated Ernst these forces will not be here. They consist of:

- ◆ Two squads of five Venusian rangers, each equipped with a Deathlockdrum autocannons and Hussar Mk IV armour.
- ◆ One MBT-42 Wolf Mark 2 heavy battle tank.
- ◆ The Bauhaus troops will have erected several lines of defensive fortifications in front of their position, as shown on the map.



ASSAULT OUTCOME

CIRCUMSTANCE

BAUHAUS TROOPS REMAINING

CAPITOL TROOPS REMAINING

No support	Four Venusian Rangers	Five Capitol Infantry
Little pertinent support or advice	Six Venusian Rangers, battle tank	Six Capitol Infantry, one light tank
Good pertinent support or advice	Eight Venusian Rangers, battle tank	Eight Capitol Infantry, two light tanks
Ezoghouls present on each flank	Two more Venusian Rangers are killed	Three more Capitol Infantry are killed

A SHORT HISTORY OF PHOBOS

Most Martians know that Phobos means "fear", though most have forgotten anything about the ancient Greek language and mythology that inspired the name. Shortly after Mars was first terraformed and colonised, the moon of Phobos was explored and a penal colony was established on its surface. The male prisoners of Phobos were set to work in its mines and soon the moon was riddled with tunnels and its craters filled with piles of slag. The moon was infamous for the desperate conditions in which its inhabitants slaved, but, despite several calls for reform, the prison remained in business.

When the Dark Legion came to Mars they quickly conquered both moons and set about fortifying them. A huge rune, the symbol of the Dark Apostle Muawijhe, was carved into the surface of Phobos. It is visible from the surface of Mars and spreads fear and terror wherever it is seen.

Since the appearance of the rune on Phobos, a number of attempts have been made to capture the moon and demolish the unholy symbol. However, each attempt has been repulsed by the forces of the Dark Legion on the moon. The remains of hapless freelancers litter the surface of Phobos, and so many Imperial Conquistadors were slaughtered in their last attempted invasion that questions about the debacle were raised in parliament.

Whilst plans for the retaking of Phobos are regularly mooted by the corporations and the cartel, the general consensus is that to set foot on the moon is certain death, and no mission to Phobos has been given the green light for decades.

What no one has realised about Phobos is that it once formed an integral part of a devastating weapons system designed by the Ancients. A device embedded in the centre of the moon interacts with a similar device at the centre of Deimos. Together they help to target and fire a devastating weapons system that is located on the Surface of Mars. A weapon of such destructive magnitude that it could blow apart a small planet.

The Dark Legion's interest in the moons is therefore not merely a matter of terrifying the populace of Mars, but of disabling the Ancient weaponry and keeping it secret.

The Investigators could ask for these troops to be repositioned if they so wish, and, provided that they have a good relationship with the Investigators, both Ernst and Trudy-May will comply with such requests.

The perimeter fence and the lines of fortifications set up by each of the corporate forces afford decent cover to anyone using them to hide behind. Anyone trying to shoot at troops taking cover behind a fence or fortification should add two steps to the difficulty of pertinent tests.

The Dark Legion have split their forces into three groups, each of which attempts to breach the perimeter fence at one of the three gates. Each Dark Legion group consists of:

- ◆ Centurion
- ◆ Two Razides
- ◆ Five Necromutants
- ◆ Ten Undead Legionnaires
- ◆ Any scouting Ezoghouls that were not killed in previous confrontations are present, split as evenly as possible between the three groups.

RESOLVING THE ASSAULT

If the Bauhaus and Capitol contingents are in place, they will be able to repulse the second and third groups of Dark Legion attackers at heavy cost, even if they receive no support from the Investigators. Refer to the following table to judge how badly they are mauled in the defence of the perimeter:

The Investigators and their Cybertronic allies will have to face the Dark Legion forces that are not held up and killed by the Bauhaus or Capitol forces to their flanks. Of course, if the Investigators have alienated both these corporations, they will have to face the entire Dark Legion force with only their Cybertronic allies to help them.

Pertinent support includes things like:

- ◆ Pre-battle preparations, such as setting booby traps or ordering the construction of additional fortifications.
- ◆ Investigators moving to the flanks to support their allies.
- ◆ A well-planned sortie to disrupt the Dark Legion forces before they arrive at the excavation site.
- ◆ Using mystic arts or other abilities to delay or confuse the Dark Legion forces.
- ◆ Directing heavy weapons emplacements to prioritise large or important targets.
- ◆ Sharing information about the abilities or weaknesses of Dark Legion creatures.

The Investigators and their Cybertronic allies will have to confront any Dark Legion creatures that make it through to the perimeter fence. Again, the more effort the Investigators put into confronting enemies themselves the fewer of their allies will die.

Rather than work out every conflict in detail the GM could just base the performance of their allies on the performance of the Investigators. If they do a great job slaying the creatures of the Dark Legion, they also provide more opportunities for their allies to assist without taking too much damage themselves. If the Investigators perform well, perhaps as little as a quarter of their allies will be killed or seriously injured in the battle. However, for every blunder or fumble the Investigators commit, another Doomtrooper will be added to the list of casualties sustained.

Lieutenant Jones will fight bravely and effectively, and she will survive the fight as long as the Investigators are not wiped out themselves.



CHAPTER 8: THAT'S NO MOON!

A MISSION TO PHOBOS IS ISSUED

The Investigators will have to accomplish, or have accomplished for them through delegates, the following tasks in order to carry out the mission.

- ◆ Realise that time is of the essence, as the weaponry on Mars will only be able to fire on Nero over the next couple of weeks.
- ◆ Propose a mission to Mars (or accept one from Durand if they don't show the initiative themselves).
- ◆ Liaise with Butler Ewing and acquire some cutting-edge stealth technology and decide how best to employ it.
- ◆ Research the likely location of the transmitter and learn about Operation Shklovsky.
- ◆ Travel to Phobos.
- ◆ Enter the facility near the Shklovsky crater and sneak or fight their way to the Transmitter Room.
- ◆ Escape back to Mars.

The Investigators may well volunteer to travel to the moons under their own steam, but Durand and his advisors will warn against hasty action, particularly since so many have died in previous attempts to retake the moons from the Dark Legion. Whilst Durand and his staff are eager for the Investigators to attempt a raid on Phobos, they know the situation there is too dangerous to risk a frontal assault. If the Investigators are to survive the upcoming mission they will need two things, a mastery of stealth and knowledge of precisely what it is they are looking for and where to find it.

Fortunately, in both these critical regards, help is at hand.

FAST TRACK TO DEIMOS

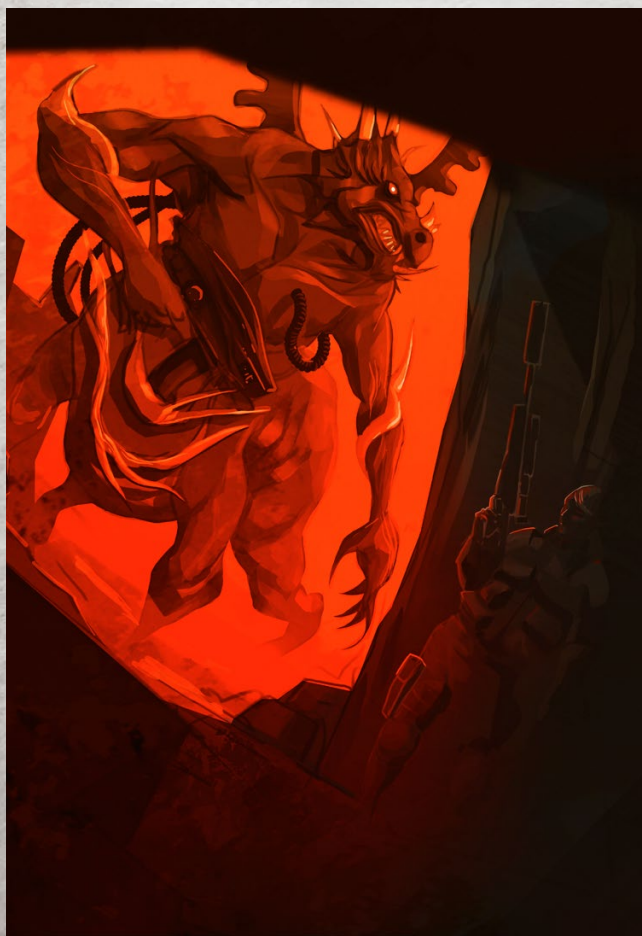
It may be that the Investigators decide they would like to try and explore Deimos first, at this point. There is nothing to prevent them from doing so and, at this point, they enjoy such a high regard amongst the people they are working with that, if they believe exploring Deimos is the best course of action, they will be offered just as much support as if they were to forge ahead with going to Phobos.

Cardinal Durand, Dwane Gascon, and other advisors the Investigators might consult with, do feel that Phobos makes the more obvious destination for the following reasons:

THE WHISPER—FAST STEALTH CRAFT

A fusion of Bauhaus engineering excellence and Cybertronic innovation, the Whisper is one of a kind. Sleek and deadly-looking, despite a lack of weapons, she is covered with Butler Ewing's experimental alloy. As an additional bonus, the Whisper is capable of atmospheric flight. Space on-board is limited, but the Investigators could not ask for a more reliable or fast ship.

QUALITIES	Agile, Light Craft		
INTERPLANETARY RANGE	10 days	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	1
CREW	1 pilot	PASSENGERS	10
DAMAGE	SOAK 2	DAMAGE	4
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+12	FUEL LOAD	3



The fine line between being hunter or hunted is stealth. Especially with Ezoghoul.

- It is the closer and larger moon, so the journey is more straightforward.
- During their research the Investigators may find the exact location of the transmitter on Phobos, as well as maps and coordinates to the area, whereas the transmitter on Deimos is not obviously accessible.

Should the Investigators decide to ignore such advice and head to Deimos anyway,, it will be a simple matter of running that section of the adventure first. However, bear in mind that a consequence of such a decision might be that the plague the Investigators contract on Deimos will have more time to spread and develop.

STEALTH

Butler Ewing is a 36-year-old chemical engineer with an impressive resume listing his many achievements in the creation and marketing of several ground-breaking applications in Military technology. He is also an accomplished spy and a personal acquaintance of Valentin Gorev. Like Valentin, Butler has sympathies for, and contacts within, the Cybertronic Corporation, and he keeps their interests in mind despite his day-to-day role within Capitolian Military research.

Recently Butler has been examining the abilities of some Dark Legion creatures to evade detection of those trained in the mystic arts, as well as managing a team of researchers who have been looking into the strange properties of fluids recovered from the wrecks of Dark Legion Nekromakina (this is a topic the Investigators may know something about thanks to their earlier adventures).

Butler and his team have come up with an alloy that they believe is undetectable to the technology used by many of the Dark Legion's forces, and which may even be partially invisible to the eyes of many of the alien creatures that make up the Dark Legion. The process involved in manufacturing this metal is hugely expensive, and it has not been rigorously tested, but enough has been produced to provide the cladding for a small interplanetary craft, six suits of armour, and enough spare parts to upgrade twelve man-portable weapons of the Investigator's choosing.

The Investigators will be provided with this equipment. As long as they are wearing the armour and carrying the upgraded weaponry, they benefit from the following rules:

The Investigators become virtually invisible to Dark Technology. They will not show up on corrupted radar or scanner systems and creatures such as Cable Marionettes will be unable to detect them. If any pertinent tests are to be performed using such technology in order to act against the Investigators the character using the technology must first pass a **Daunting (D3) Observation test**.

- ◆ Alien creatures, such as Necromutants, Zenithian Soulslayers, and Ezoghoul, discern the alloy as a vague ghostly presence. In order to notice the Investigators, such creatures must first pass a **Challenging (D2) Observation Test**. They can then act against the Investigators as normal unless the Investigators move position. In such a case the creatures must pass another **Challenging (D2) Observation Test** before they can take further actions.
- ◆ Partially human creatures like Undead Legionnaires are better able to see the Investigators, and only need to pass an **Average (D1) Observation Test** before they can take actions against them.
- ◆ Human foes, such as heretics, are able to perceive the Investigators normally.

Should the Investigators be so foolhardy as to equip themselves with items that are not made from the alloy, they will reduce the effectiveness of the invisibility. Depending on the degree to which they carry items that aren't made from the alloy, the GM should reduce the difficulty of any Observation Tests made against the Investigators by one or two degrees.

PRECISION

Within the core of Phobos is a piece of ancient technology designed to communicate with the ancient weapons system on the surface of Mars as well as a sister device in the core of Deimos. Together the three devices triangulate the exact location of the designated target and, once the weaponry is locked on, trigger the firing mechanism.

The reason the Ancient Weaponry won't fire properly is because these systems have been corrupted by the Dark Legion.

Despite the extensive mining operations on each of the moons, these devices went undiscovered despite centuries of human colonisation. However, shortly before the Dark Legion arrived on Phobos, the miners did uncover the antennae of the device jutting through the rock just below the surface of the moon.

In strictest secrecy, a facility was excavated for the purpose of studying the device, but before it could be completed the Dark Legion arrived on Phobos and overran the moon. The paperwork covering these events has been long forgotten, but copies of it have been included in the archive that has been set up as a small prefab building on the excavation site.

If the Investigators decide to look into the history of Phobos for the purpose of finding out if there is anything unusual about the moon, they come across mentions of "Operation Shklovsky South 005". Asking around after this operation, or otherwise researching its legacy, soon turns up a large manila file containing a number of documents and photographs.

Shklovsky is the name of a large crater on the surface of Phobos. A mining operation in this area uncovered a "strange bronze artefact" that emitted electromagnetic and radio signals. The description of the frequencies and the location of the artefact correlate to what the Investigators know of the signal.

PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS OF PHOBOS

Phobos orbits Mars at a distance of 6,000 km. It is a small irregular moon, about 27 km wide at its widest point, and 18 km wide at its most narrow point. It takes a little over seven hours to orbit Mars.

The surface of Phobos is pitted with craters and towering slag piles. A huge rune associated with the worship of Muawijhe, Dark Apostle of Visions, has been burned across the surface of the moon, and is clearly visible from the surface of Mars. There are a number of citadels as well as miles of trenches and fortifications on the surface of the moon, and the mines and subterranean prison blocks are infested with Dark Legion forces.

THE LANDING AND THE PHOBOS FACILITY

Choosing a landing site will depend on a few different factors.

- ◆ The skill with which the Investigators pilot their spacecraft.
- ◆ The skill with which they track the signal to its source.
- ◆ The degree to which they researched the history of Phobos.

These skills must be demonstrated via the following tests:

- ◆ A **Daunting (D3) Mechanics test**.

This test is made in order to triangulate the signal and scan for a suitable landing site. If the Investigators researched the history of Phobos using the resources available to them at the excavation site, this test becomes **Average (D1)** difficulty.

If this test is passed the Investigator's job is made easier, reduce the following three tests by one step each.

- ◆ A further **Challenging (D2) Space test**.
- ◆ If passed an additional **Daunting (D3) Space test**.
- ◆ If also passed, a final **Dire (D4) Space test**.

If the first of these tests is failed the Investigators land a mile away from the entrance to the facility. They will be able to find the location of the signal, though this will be a slow process and, in the course of their travels, they will encounter three enemies from the "Denizens of Phobos" list.

GRAVITY AND ATMOSPHERE

Technological devices used to be employed on the surface of the moon in order to provide it with an artificial gravity and atmosphere for the benefit of the prisoners held there, though these have long been destroyed by the Dark Legion. The Investigators have no hope of repairing these devices, so they will have to cope with the effects of very low gravity when they are operating on Phobos.

The surface gravity is very slight, and anything moving at more than 11 metres a second could feasibly be propelled from the surface of the moon and into space. The moon has no atmosphere so the Investigators will need to wear all-enclosed suits with inbuilt air supplies in order to operate on the moon.

SOUND: There is no noise on the moon, though if they are wearing fully enclosed armour the Investigators will be able to communicate to one another using communicators in their suits. However, they will not be able to hear enemies moving about, or any weapons fire or explosions. Observation Tests based on sound are not possible on the moon. Abilities, Arts, and weaponry that rely on sound increase the difficulty of any associated test by at least two steps, or simply will not work.

PROJECTILES: Shots and even thrown items will encounter no wind resistance or effective gravitational pull on the moon, which means that there is no effective limit to the range of projectile weaponry used on the moon. All ranged weapons, including thrown weapons, increase their optimal range by one, to a maximum of Long.

ENERGY WEAPONS AND FLAMETHROWERS: These weapons behave in unexpected ways when fired under such conditions. Add one step to the difficulty of any tests made in connection to firing such a weapon.

MELEE ATTACKS: Melee attacks will not be affected, though cumbersome weaponry will not weigh as much. The GM may like to describe enemies being swept off their feet by blows, or objects snookering around rooms in which combat takes place, though this should be a cosmetic change rather than calling for different rules.

COMBAT MOMENTUM: It is difficult to make use of Combat Momentum in the same way as when acting in normal gravity. Any points of Combat Momentum gained during combat whilst on Phobos or Deimos are halved (rounding down), unless the investigator succeeds at a **Daunting (D3) Vacuum test** (which itself may also generate Momentum).

DIFFICULT AND HAZARDOUS TERRAIN: Because the Investigators are likely to end up floating uncontrollably if they do not take care to keep their footing, the whole moon counts as difficult terrain. In areas where fighting takes place, the whole area could become quite dangerous due to debris, bullets, and body parts floating around, snookering off each other and ricocheting from the walls. At the GM's discretion, any room or corridor in which fighting has taken place could become hazardous terrain. This could be the direct result of Complications arising from dice rolls or through the expenditure of Dark Symmetry points.

ENCUMBRANCE: The effective weight of items becomes a small fraction of what it was, though bulk remains an issue. Reduce the ENC value of items to a tenth of their original value, to a minimum of 1.

If the first test is passed but the second one failed, the Investigators land a half of a mile from the entrance to the facility. They will be able to find the location of the signal, but, in the course of their travels, they will encounter two enemies from the Denizens of Phobos list.

If the first and second tests are passed but the third failed, a landing site a quarter of a mile from the facility is found. The Investigators will encounter one enemy from the Denizens of Phobos list.

If all the tests are passed the Investigators land virtually on top of the facility and can enter it as soon as they disembark from their craft.

DENIZENS OF PHOBOS

Phobos has been claimed by Muawijhe, and his servitors prowl the surface of the planet. If the Investigators are lost on the surface of the moon, or tarry too long after raising an alarm, they may encounter some of these patrols. Roll one d20 and consult the following table to see what sort of creatures the Investigators encounter.



PHOBOS

Mining Station



The unnumbered rooms of the Phobos facility generally consist of shattered technological equipment, abandoned research laboratories, and arcane engineering devices from another age. GMs can spend two or more Dark Symmetry Points and roll two ⬆ for a chance to generate a random encounter in these locations. If any Dark Symmetry Icons are generated, then the Investigators have either stumbled into a random encounter (use the Creatures Encountered table on pg. 136) or potentially unearthed 1d6 worth of salvageable Assets (providing they spend the time to search for them), with a fifty percentage chance of either. For each Dark Symmetry Point spent above two, add one to the roll on the Creatures Encountered Table (but still only roll two ⬆ on the initial roll) or subtract one from the Assets uncovered (to a minimum of one).

D20 CREATURES ENCOUNTERED

1-7	Three Mummified Legionnaires, one armed with Tzoteth.
8-13	Five Mummified Legionnaires, one armed with Tzoteth.
14-15	Seven Mummified Legionnaires, one armed with Tzoteth. One Mind Render.
16-17	Nine Mummified Legionnaires, two armed with Tzoteths.
18	Zenithian Soulslayer armed with Cenarath whip.
19	Three Mind Renders.
20	Screaming Nephrite with five Mummified Legionnaires, one armed with Tzoteth.

Note that Mummified Legionnaires are much the same as Screaming Legionnaires, but they have become stiff and desiccated due to the long time they have existed exposed on the surface of Phobos. See pg. 137 for more information. Also note that many of the creatures of Muawijhe use abilities that rely on noise, and that these will not work on the airless moon.

A FURTHER COMPLICATION

It is now important to talk about one of the reasons Phobos is such a deadly place to visit and why so many men have lost their lives there. Whilst the Dark Legion have many forces on the world and can mount an effective defence of their bunkers and trench networks without support, there is a further consideration.

Phobos is sacred to the Dark Apostle of Visions, Muawijhe, and his malefic symbol infuses the entire moon with a baleful madness-inducing energy. Those who seek to invade Muawijhe's sovereign territory begin to succumb to dread and paranoia, and imagine themselves assailed by enemies even when they are under no threat.

ENVIRONMENTAL DARK SYMMETRY SPEND-THE MADNESS OF PHOBOS

This Dark Symmetry spend is effectively caused by the moon itself, a wave of paranoid fantasy which emanates from the symbol burned into the surface of Phobos. When using this spend, the GM should make the use of Dark Symmetry points so as to further fuel the unease of the players and their characters.

At any time, the GM may spend between one and five Dark Symmetry points and choose one target at random from amongst the investigators and their cohort. The target must immediately attempt an Insight test with a difficulty equivalent to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent.

If the test is passed the target sees nothing, but experiences an acute sense of creeping fear and paranoia. The target suffers mental damage as if he had failed a mental assault.

If the test is failed, the target believes an enemy or some other form of threat to have entered the immediate vicinity. This enemy acts as if it is aware of the target and is apparently taking immediate and appropriate action in order to either harm or trick the target. These enemies are human sized or smaller, but can otherwise take the form of any creature or follower of the Dark Legion that the Investigators have met in their travels.

If additional targets are affected in subsequent rounds they can either perceive their own threats, or they could share in the visions already affecting other targets.

Some ideas for the sort of threats perceived by the target follow, the GM should use these as appropriate and add more ideas of his own along similar lines:

- ◆ *Through a doorway staggers a rotting Undead Legionnaire, clutching a corrupted rifle in its filthy fingers. It lolls its head from side to side and then seems to fix you with a milky-eyed glare. It raises its rifle and draws a bead on you.*
- ◆ *A metal shutter in the wall near your position slides open. You spy a strange creature peeking at you through the slit. It seems about the size of a toddler, but it bears many hideous marks of corruption. You see pulsing mechanical tubes threaded through the flesh around its jaw and neck. It gazes at you with beady green eyes. Before you can react, it slides the shutter closed once more.*
- ◆ *The ceiling here is covered in ducts, cables, and ribbed supporting reinforcements. A section of this material seems to have come alive, the various cables and hoses writhing and coalescing, gathering together to form a vague humanoid figure, poised as if to spring down.*
- ◆ *Looking down at your feet you see a strange break in the pattern of the tiles on the floor. A couple of smaller shapes can be perceived, rectangular tiles within the larger squares that stand slightly proud of the floor. They could be part of some ancient trap mechanism.*
- ◆ *Something to the side of your vision catches your eye, flashes of bright yellow-green. It is gobs of viscous liquid, dripping from a torn duct in the ceiling. A blob of it lands, spattering onto your armour, and you watch in horror as the goo begins to smoke and bubble, burning its way through your protective suit.*
- ◆ *Something odd is happening to the investigator next to you. One of the grenades at his belt is working loose, unseen forces*

are working the pin free. It clatters to the floor, and a second later the live grenade falls from his belt, rolling to a stop at your feet.

- ◆ You watched dismayed as the gloom around the antennae begins to regenerate (see Transmitter Room, below), coalescing once again around the thrumming device and waving its tendrils gently to and fro.

This phenomenon is meant to add an additional sense of challenge and tension to this section of the adventure. If the Investigators get wise to what is going on, the GM should only use the ability in novel ways, or to inflict mental attacks on the Investigators. Simply presenting them with illusory foes that they realise are illusions would defeat the purpose.

ROOM 1: THE ENTRANCE

Read the following to the Investigators as they approach the entrance to the facility:

The entrance to the facility seems to be unguarded. Grey granite steps lead down under the surface of the moon. At the bottom of the stairs you can see the opening of a passage leading westwards. The stairs are marked with filth and copious brown stains that look like old, dried blood.

ROOM 2: GUARD ROOM

This room is the first area of the facility that serves any purpose. A group of Undead Legionnaires guard it. These Legionnaires were created when the Dark Legion first conquered Phobos, and they are truly ancient.

Read the following to the Investigators as they reach this location:

White ceramic tiles line the walls of the passageway. The tiles were once bright and glossy, but have been marked with the filth of ages, as you tread down the passage way you stir up a thick cloud of dust.

The far end of the wide entrance corridor is guarded by a pair of old and dessicated corpses. Unlike other Undead Legionnaires you have encountered during the course of your adventures, these creatures have barely any flesh covering their bones. Tanned skin stretches tightly across their features, and, in the places where it has frayed away, stringy fibres of muscle and sinew are exposed.

The Mummified Legionnaires will respond appropriately if they perceive the Investigators by trying to shoot them and raise the alarm.

AN OPTIONAL PLOT COMPLICATION

The Investigators may theorise that, since some of the prisoners and warders of the old penal colony have been turned into apparent Undead Legionnaires, there must be a facility for the producing these abominations on the moon. If they know about Nekromakina, thanks to previous encounters, they might wonder if there is such a device on the moon.

If the GM possesses the **Dark Legion Campaign**, they have all they need to add a Necromakina location close to the facility. The Investigators could choose to raid the machine in order to look for Human Factor or other booty.

They can do this, though the Nekromakina is disused and largely empty. All the Investigators will likely achieve through taking such a diversion will be having to face more enemies and waste more time. If the GM sees fit a dose of Human Factor could be found therein.

Inside the room are another six Mummified Legionnaires, a pair of each guarding the trio of doorways leading further into the complex.

MUMMIFIED LEGIONNAIRES ▲

Neither alive nor dead, Mummified Legionnaires are a product of the Madness of Phobos. Tougher than Undead Legionnaires, they remain shattered minds to the service of Muawijhe's will.

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11	13	5	3
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	3	3	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	2	1	-	-

WOUNDS: 5

SOAK: Scraps of armour and Leathery Hide: (Head 1, Arms 2, Torso 3, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Corroded Blade (melee):** 2+↑5, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Vile
- ◆ **Shrieketh (ranged):** Range C, 1+↑4, Burst, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Mind Breaker

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Braindead**
- ◆ **Fast Healing (1)**
- ◆ **Slave to Symmetry (3)**
- ◆ **Unliving**

ROOM 3: THE MUSTER HALL

This room had been intended as a laboratory used by those who were due to come and study the alien device in room 4. The Dark Legion have swept the old equipment to the sides and instead intend the room to be used as a gathering place for troops should the facility ever come under attack.

Read the following to the investigators as they enter the room:

This is large and well-lit room, again lined in white tiling. A couple of desiccated Undead Legionnaires patrol the room with listless steps. They are dressed in ancient and bulky suits of armour that bear faded Imperial insignia. The sides of the room are littered with rubbish, old computer terminals, filing cabinets,

desks and other furniture and equipment befitting some ancient laboratory, now shattered and covered in a thick layer of dust.

The Legionnaires here were once part of an Imperial task force sent to win Phobos from the Dark Legion. They have the same profile as the Mummified Legionnaires in the Guard Room, but also benefit from wearing suits of Mk III Heavy Assault Combat Armour.

The rubbish to the sides of the room is not particularly valuable. If the Investigators search through the filing cabinets, they will discover reams of printed data that take all manner of electromagnetic and radio frequency readings from the "artefact" in the Transmitter Room. However, they may also disturb a hidden Scrambler that infests an old computer monitor to the south side of the room.

◆ **SCRAMBLER:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 333.

ROOM 4: TRANSMITTER ROOM

This room has been outfitted by the Dark Legion for the purpose of confusing the communications system of the Ancient weaponry. It



That which is dead can eternal lie - unless the Investigators wake the Mummified Legionnaires.

is this room that is the main objective of the Investigators' mission, and if they destroy the equipment here they will have succeeded in their primary objective.

Read the following to the Investigators as they enter the room:

Despite the non-existent atmosphere, you feel, rather than hear, a deep thrumming noise as you enter this chamber. The room is lined with white tiles and has a clean, almost clinical appearance.

In the centre of the room is a circular hole, lined about with a ring of marble slabs. From the hole projects a long antenna, made from the same shining bronze globular projections as the ancient weaponry found on the surface of Mars.

There is something attached to the antennae. A pulsating smear of sticky translucent goop, about a metre square in terms of size. It sticks close to the apex of the antennae. Bladders and primitive organs project from its surface and pump and throb wetly as you watch. A fringe of long barbed tendrils hang from the base of the object, waving gently to and fro.

The translucent goo is the result of attempts made by Muawijhe at emulating the success of Algoth's biotechnical engineering. So far, these attempts have only ever led to the creation of a living sludge whose few uses seems to include the dampening of radio transmissions. The device has been employed by the Dark Legion to render the antennae incapable of broadcasting a full signal. It will need to be destroyed in order to repair the antennae and fire the ancient weaponry. The goop is semi-sentient and capable of defending itself from attack. It also broadcasts a psychic distress call that will rouse nearby creatures of the Dark Legion to come to its defence.

The Crud is tough, can absorb lots of damage, and is able launch a number of attacks on multiple opponents per turn with its tendrils. However, it is not an able combatant and its attacks are poor, though dangerous if they hit. It counts as an alien creature for the purpose of perceiving Investigators using the stealth alloy.

BIOENGINEERED CRUD ★

ATTRIBUTES							
STRENGTH		PHYSIQUE		AGILITY		AWARENESS	
12		14		4		9	
COORDINATION		INTELLIGENCE		MENTAL STRENGTH		PERSONALITY	
10		4		10		2	

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	4	2	2	—	2	1	—	—	—	—

WOUNDS: 8

SOAK: Translucent Sticky Hide: (All 2)

ATTACKS:

◆ **Grasping Pseudopods (melee):** 1+15, 1H, Mind Breaker, Reach, Stun, Vile

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Braindead**
- ◆ **Fast Healing (2)**
- ◆ **Grasping**
- ◆ **Inured to Disease**
- ◆ **Inured to Pain**
- ◆ **Inured to Poison**
- ◆ **Inured to Vacuum**
- ◆ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◆ **Formless Death:** Essentially a large patch of semi-sentient liquid, its widespread form renders traditional weaponry virtually ineffective. Melee weapons and ranged attacks that do not possess the Blast (Close) or Torrent quality deal only a single point of damage to the Crud. This point of damage is unaffected by a character's bonus damage and additional damage generated by Momentum spends other than the Bonus Damage spend or Reload expenditure. The Bonus Damage Momentum spend inflicts one additional point of damage for each two Momentum spent. Weapons or effects—such as Art spells—with the Blast (Close) or Torrent quality deal their normal damage.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Creature of Symmetry:** Bioengineered Crud is able to employ Dark Gifts as a creature of Muawijhe. The Crud knows and can employ the following Dark Gifts: Corrupt Device, Symmetry Burst, Waking Nightmare, and Distil Horror.
- ◆ **Numerous Pseudopods:** The Crud has a virtually unlimited number of pseudopods to attack with. For each Dark Symmetry point spent, the Gloop may attack an additional target with a Grasping Pseudopod.

As soon as the Crud is damaged in any way it will issue a psychic distress call that brings any surviving Dark Legion creatures in the facility to its aid. These creatures will arrive mostly from the direction of the Dormitories, though the longer the Investigators remain in the facility the more likely it is that more creatures from other areas of Phobos will arrive to confront them. See Reinforcements on pg. 40 for more details.



ROOM 5: RECREATION AREA

This room had been intended to be used by the staff of the facility to relax in. Partitions once separated areas intended to be used for cooking, lounging about, and playing games. However, the Dark Legion have demolished most the furniture here.

Read the following to the investigators as they enter the room:

This room lacks the clinical coldness of the earlier areas, papered and carpeted as it is in rich reds and greens. In one corner a small tiled area is littered with the remains of shattered cooking equipment and now useless plumbing. The wreckage of furniture lies all about the room, pushed to the sides in great heaps of wood and upholstery. The floor is littered with bits of broken glass, playing cards and broken chess pieces.

There are no enemies within this room.

ROOM 6: ARMOURY

Racks of weapons and armour were kept in the room for the use of the prison guards. The creatures of the Dark Legion, in need of less comfort than human warriors, tend to keep their own weaponry on them at all times, nevertheless, some bulkier pieces of kit are kept here.

If the Investigators arrive at this location without alerting the creatures in the Dormitories (Room 7) by attacking the Crud in the transmitter room, they could disable a lot of the equipment they find here, which would make the remaining creatures much easier to defeat.

Read the following to the investigators as they enter the room:

Racks of strange corrupted weaponry line the walls of this room. Three large weapons are the size of large flamers, and built to a similar design. However, parts of the weapon seem to have been constructed from withered and dried leather rather than metal. Propped up along the length of one wall are three long-handled whips of twisted organic cords. A couple of withered Legionnaires in heavy armour stand guard to either side of the chamber.

The Undead Legionnaires here have the same profile as the Mummified Legionnaires in the Guard Room, but also benefit from wearing suits of Mk III Heavy Assault Combat Armour.

There are three Tzoteth weapons, and three Cenarath whips in this room. If they are destroyed or hidden by the Investigators before the creatures in the Dormitories are alerted, they cannot be used by the Dark Legion forces in the facility. If not, the Zenithian Soulslayers and some of the Mummified Legionnaires will take them and make use of them.

ROOM 7: DORMITORIES AND COMMAND CENTRE

This large room used to be compartmentalised into a number of smaller offices and sleeping areas. The Dark Legion, having no need of the comforts and privacy humans enjoy, have knocked down the adjoining walls and piled the mattresses in the middle of the area in one large heap.

Read the following to the investigators as they enter the room:

This large area is a complete mess. The floor is a patchwork of different kinds of tiling and carpet, dissected by the scars left from the removal of partitions and walls. Sheets of plasterboard have been broken up and piled against the outer walls, alongside the ruined remains of dozens of drawers, cupboards, filing cabinets, tables, and chairs. A large number of old and stained mattresses, pillows, and duvets have been collected and piled up in the centre of the room, forming something of a nest for the creatures of the Dark Legion to climb upon or hide within.

Within the room are a large number of Dark Legion creatures.

- ◆ **TWO SCRAMBLERS:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 333. One inhabits an old bank of computers that rests on the west side of the room, whilst the other infests a wrecked power generator on the north wall.
- ◆ **THREE MIND RENDERS:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 331. They are at rest within the heap of mattresses and pillows.
- ◆ **A ZENITHIAN SOULSLAYERS:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 333. It lies on top of the heap.
- ◆ **ELEVEN MUMMIFIED LEGIONNAIRES.** They patrol about the room in rather aimless circuits.

REINFORCEMENTS

Once the Gloop in the transmitter room is assaulted it will emit a psychic distress signal that lures nearby creatures of the Dark Legion to its location.

Any Mummified Legionnaires in the Guard Room (Room 2) or the Muster Hall (Room 3) or the Armoury (Room 6) will make their way to the Gloop, taking two rounds each to reach the Transmitter Room. The GM may spend one Dark Symmetry point per group to reduce this by one round.

The three Mind Renders in the Dormitories (Room 7) will make their way to the Transmitter Room, taking three turns to reach it. The GM may spend one or two Dark Symmetry points to reduce this by one or two rounds.

REINFORCEMENTS

TURNS SINCE CRUD ASSAULTED...

FORCES ARRIVING...

2

Any surviving Mummified Legionnaires from Guard Room, Muster Hall, and Armoury will arrive in Transmitter Room.

3

Mind Renders from Dormitories will arrive in Transmitter Room.

4

Zenithian Soulslayer from Dormitories will arrive in Transmitter Room.

5

Eight Mummified Legionnaires from Dormitories will arrive in Transmitter Room.

7

Three Mummified Legionnaires from Dormitories will arrive in Transmitter Room, armed with Tzoteths.

10

Group from "Denizens of Phobos" will arrive in Entrance, and take three turns to move through to Transmitter Room.

EVERY SUBSEQUENT 1020 TURNS...

Another group of "Denizens of Phobos" arrive at the Entrance.

The Zenithian Soulslayer will follow close behind, but will spend a turn in the armoury to arm itself with a Cenarath whip (see **Mutant Chronicles** rulebook pg. 335), taking four turns to reach the Transmitter Room. Again, The GM may spend one or two Dark Symmetry points to reduce this by one or two rounds.

The Mummified Legionnaires in the Dormitories will also make their way to the Transmitter Room. Eight of them arrive after five turns. The remaining three will arrive after seven turns, but will have armed themselves with Tzoteth weapons from the Armoury (also on pg. 335 of the **Mutant Chronicles** rulebook).

After ten turns, reinforcements from the surface of Phobos will begin to arrive at the facility. To work out what these forces consist of refer to the table in the Denizens of Phobos section on pg. 134. The first group of reinforcements arrive after ten turns, and then a further group arrives after every D20 turns. They will enter at the Entrance (Room 1) and then take three turns to move to the Transmitter Room.

BACK TO THE SHIP

Once the Investigators have fled the facility they need to get back to their ship. If the Investigators did not find a convenient landing zone when landing on Phobos, the GM may decide that they encounter more "Denizens of Phobos" on their return to the ship.

However, by this point, the Investigators should have faced enough punishment, so it may be best to let them escape without further interruption. This can be justified through the fact that many of the creatures in the immediate vicinity of the facility will have already responded to the Investigators in one way or another. If they only managed to land a mile away from the facility, the Investigators should definitely face one more group of enemies before reaching their vessel, no matter how generous the GM is feeling.



THE FATE OF DARK EDEN

CHAPTER 9: THAT'S NO MOON II!

NERO PROGRESS

Between the missions to Phobos and Deimos the Investigators will return to the Excavation site to recuperate and re-equip.

The Investigators will be under pressure to continue with their missions, but their contacts and superiors will sympathise with their need to recover from injuries and enjoy a little rest and relaxation if it is requested.

However, one thing will become obvious, word of Nero's encroachment is now widespread news. All the corporations are responding to the news by mobilising forces. In particular, armies are being sent to Earth to help Whitestar defend the area around the seal.

Once the Investigators have dealt with the immediate aftermath of their mission, and have landed back at the excavation site, read the following:

You notice that activity around the excavation site is intense, with soldiers moving out or arriving and teams of technicians erecting all manner of monitoring equipment and scaffolding around the ancient weapon, swapping gossip and jargon as they do so. The news is on everyone's lips: Dark Legion forces around the solar system are continuing to increase hostilities, and whilst the degree of defences around the excavation site are formidable enough to see off a likely assault there is a lot of talk about relocating all able-bodied soldiers to Earth in order to defend the seal.

Lieutenant Jones approaches. She is clearly worried about the security implications of the changes around her. "We haven't the time to vet all these newcomers properly. Do you have any contacts amongst the Brotherhood who might be able to scan for heresy?"

Technician Hartigan is less cautious. "Oh! Uh, well, uh, we should be vigilant of course." He says. "But the real risk that we run is stalling when we have—um—a good head of—steam. Time is the more apparent enemy than the Dark Legion right now."



The Dark Legion's foul forces mobilise across the solar system.

MISSION TO DEIMOS

DISEASE ON DEIMOS

Up until recently Deimos was an impregnable fortress for the forces of Semai, in every bit the way that Phobos is for the creatures of Muawijhe. Semai's forces roamed the planet and manned defences that repelled the most determined of assaults on the moon. However, in recent months, a strange and powerful contagion has taken hold of the denizens of Deimos, and has rendered many of them incapacitated or dead.

It is not the disease itself that kills, rather it affects the psyche of those it infects and turns them on one another. The creatures are taken over by a sense of pure terror and panic, seeing all around them as enemies out for their lives. Throughout the minions of Semai the plague has caused widespread destruction. Creatures have either killed each other in a terrified panic, or fled into inhospitable parts of the moon where they have succumbed to exposure and lack of nourishment.

Quite why the plague has afflicted the creatures on Deimos is a mystery. Perhaps some form of internecine rivalry between the Dark Apostles has seen Demnogonis unleash one of his contagions on Semai, or maybe the Lord of Spite is so full of Malice he would seek to cause such suffering amongst his own minions merely in order to strike at the forces of humanity.

A PLAGUE OF PANIC

This disease is new to humanity and could potentially sweep the solar system until it is isolated or an effective treatment is found. Exposing a character to this disease requires the expenditure of three Dark Symmetry points.

VECTOR: Contact (the microorganisms that carry the plague must make contact with the skin or mucous membranes of the intended host. A person wearing full body protection will not be at risk of infection).

VIRULENCE: 2.

INCUBATION PERIOD: one hour.

SYMPTOMS: The disease affects the brain (or equivalent) of the victim. It inflicts stress and hysteria through fear and panic, which can only be resolved by acting in such a way as to remove threats from the immediate area. Refer to the description following the Interval.

INTERVAL: Minutes, Chronic (5). At the time of the adventure, humanity has yet to discover this disease, so no treatments are available. In time, medicines will be developed to combat the disease, and it will become treatable in much the same way as Venusian Fever.

A SHORT HISTORY OF DEIMOS

As with Phobos, most inhabitants of Mars are unable to explain why the name of the moon means "terror", they just know that it does. Deimos was once a prison planetoid like her sister moon, though the prisoners of Deimos were all women. Like Phobos, the moon fell to the forces of the Dark Legion and a great rune, associated with the Dark Apostle Semai, appeared on its surface.

In recent months, a strange affliction has come to plague the Dark Legion forces on Deimos—a virulent mutant plague that has weakened or killed many of the creatures who manned its citadels and fortifications. Quite why this malady has caused so much destruction on the moon is unknown. Perhaps it is a sign of rivalry between the Dark Apostles, as, whilst the moon is sacred to Semai, plagues and infections are associated with the Dark Apostle Demnogonis.

Or perhaps the infection is a trap, set for those who might seek to assail the Dark Legion on the beleaguered moon.

In the case of the PCs, and important NPCs, the effects should be resolved in the following way. Once the disease becomes symptomatic, the character make a **Daunting (D3) Willpower test** during each Interval. If the test is failed, the character suffers a mental assault and gains one Dread. If the test is passed, the character may act normally—within the confines of their current level of Hysteria of course (see Hysteria Rating Table, below). The GM may choose to spend two Dark Symmetry points to inflict one Dread on a character who has passed their Willpower test.

As a result of failing this test, however, the character can decide to either take mental damage as normal, or gain one level of Hysteria. In the early stages of panic the character need not take too drastic an action in order to assuage the feelings of paranoia and distress they are experiencing. However, if tests are failed for consecutive turns, the feelings of panic become increasingly intense and more action is need in order to avoid taking mental damage.



HYSTERIA RATING TABLE

HYSTERIA LEVEL ACTION REQUIRED TO ALLEVIATE HYSTERIA

0	May act normally.
1	Seek a safe hiding place as urgently as possible.
2	Accuse people in vicinity of behaving in a threatening manner. Try to scare them away.
3	Attack most obvious threat in the immediate vicinity.
4 OR MORE	Lash out at the nearest available target.

A character's level of hysteria can be reduced in one of three ways:

- ◆ A successful Psychotherapy test with a difficulty level equal to one plus the character's current hysteria level. Two points of Momentum from this test may be used to reduce the character's hysteria rating by an additional level, to a minimum of zero. This option may only be used once per successful test.
- ◆ Two points of Momentum from a character's successful Willpower test as the result of an Interval may be used to reduce the character's hysteria rating by one additional level, to a minimum of zero. This option may only be used once per successful test.
- ◆ Any character choosing to accept a mental assault instead of an increase in hysteria may reduce their hysteria rating by one, to a minimum of one.

When it comes to determining the reactions of affected minor NPCs (such as members of a crowd in a busy space port, for example) the GM can either work things out as described above, or simply refer to the NPC Hysteria Table for a quick result.

NPC HYSTERIA TABLE

D20 REACTION

1-5	The NPC is clearly terrified, but for the time being they react to the circumstances around them as normal. Roll again for this NPC next turn.
6-10	The NPC seeks to find a safe place to hide. They will attack anyone who tries to block their path, but will seek to flee rather than fight.
11-15	The NPC collapses to the floor in a hysterical fit, screaming and crying. They will attack anyone who seeks to interfere with them.
16-19	The NPC attacks anyone in their proximity. They will prioritise targets that present a credible threat (such as armed people or creatures of the Dark Legion), but will continue to attack as long as there are available targets.
20	The NPC attacks anyone in the vicinity, beginning with those who are closest.

Should anyone attempt to interact with NPCs under the influence of the disease, perhaps by using public address or other forms of communication, they will not make much sense. They simply issue forth a stream of paranoid, panicked babble, reacting to any movement around them as if it is a serious threat.

The disease will also affect creatures of the Dark Legion. They are slightly more resistant to it than human beings and it only has an effective virulence of 1 in such cases. Other animals are not susceptible to the affliction.

THE TREACHERY OF PAUL GELL

During the Investigators' time on Phobos, things have gotten worse for Paul Gell. The Black Guard, realising that the incredible personal prowess of the Investigators makes them too dangerous to take on in a fair fight, have come up with a plan to take them out with overwhelming force.

As a result of their arcane meditations and unholy insights into the nature and deeds of the Dark Legion, the leaders of the Black Guard have come to realise that a deadly contagion exists on the second moon of Mars, one that could cause widespread chaos if it was allowed to reach the surface of the planet. Thanks to information passed to them from Paul Gell, they know the Investigators are due to visit the moon. As a result of this, they plan to do everything they can to make sure that the Investigators' mission is a success, but that their return to Mars is undertaken in such a way so as to spread as much contagion as possible.

In order to facilitate their plans, the Black Guard have revealed to Paul Gell that he is now implicated in heretical activities. Such revelations mean that it is only a matter of time before the Brotherhood comes to learn of Paul Gell's treachery. The Black Guard have offered Paul the use of their network of safe houses and support, but on two conditions: that he help them spread disease amongst the citizens of Mars, and that he present them with the Investigators' heads on a platter.

Together they have come up with the following plan. They will see to it that the Investigators are not able to land their ship at the landing site near the alien weaponry. Instead, they will have to use one of the spaceports in a major city. Gell will meet them at the spaceport, and do all he can to ensure that no quarantine measures are taken, and that matter from Deimos is spread throughout the port.

The better he performs this task, and, assuming the Investigators do not realise what he is up to, the more people will be infected.

Once Gell feels that enough has been done to spread disease, he will contrive some excuse to deem the Investigators heretics, and order his compatriots in the Fury to attack them. The Black Guard will also assist in the fight, which may give the Investigators the chance they need to plead their innocence to the rest of the Fury. This fight may be further complicated by the fact that members of the public will start to succumb to the disease if it has been effectively spread.

PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS OF DEIMOS

Deimos orbits Mars at a distance of 23,460 km. The moon is even smaller and more irregular than Phobos, about 15 km wide at its widest point and 11 km wide at its most narrow point. It takes a little over thirty hours for Deimos to orbit Mars.

The surface of Deimos is pitted with craters and towering slag piles.

A huge rune associated with the worship of the Dark Apostle Semai the Corrupter, Lord of Spite and Master of Lies, has been scorched into the surface of Deimos and is clearly visible from the surface of Mars.

EXPLORING DEIMOS

The underground complex on Deimos is much more sparsely populated with enemies than the facility on Phobos, and many of those that the Investigators do discover will be in a wounded state and offer little resistance.

The Investigators may feel that, after all the trouble they may have had on Phobos, the relative lack of challenge on Deimos represents an anti-climax. However, the main challenge to them will confront them on their return to Mars. As such, it is imperative that they complete this part of the adventure with relative ease so that they aren't in too perilous a state when they arrive back on the planet. It should be up to the GM to use this section to build tension and make the Investigators feel that they are actually going to suffer a serious attack at any moment, but in fact keep the big surprises for when they return home.

SETTING THE SCENE

Unlike the situation on Phobos, the alien transmitter on Deimos was never discovered prior to the Dark Legion arriving on the moon. Instead it was found by the Dark Legion during their excavations.

As such, the Investigators are not able to research the location of the transmitter as they may have done for the facility on Phobos, and there is no paper trail to follow.

Landing on Deimos is handled in the same way as landing on Phobos, but no bonuses for knowing about the location of the transmitter are available. However, no matter how far the Investigators have to travel in order to reach the source of the signal, they will not encounter any creatures on the surface of the moon. The GM should try to build up tension by asking them to make occasional **Dire (D4) Insight** or **Observation tests** once for every half mile of travel. If these are passed, the Investigators spot slight movement in the shadows of distant craters, or come across the tracks of a creature.

If these movements or tracks are followed, they lead to a deserted fortification or the entrance to an underground facility. The Investigators should be encouraged to keep to their mission, but, if they do go about exploring other facilities, they will be in much the same state as the underground complex in which the transmitter is located.

FOLLOWING THE SIGNAL

The Investigators will be able to follow the signal given off by the alien artefact to the entrance of the underground complex without much difficulty. However, once inside the complex, interference and proximity to the source make the signal more confusing to read.

The alien artefact is in room 8 in the underground complex, and, given the layout of the complex, it will be relatively easy to reach the artefact, remove the corrupting influence, and return to the ship. However, each time the Investigators reach a junction in the complex they should take a **Challenging (D2) Mechanics test** in order to follow the signal accurately. If the test is passed, the GM should let them know which turn to take to lead them closer to the artefact. If the test is not passed, they should be left to guess which of the available routes to take.

THE STALKER

Hiding near the entrance to the underground complex is a lone Callistonian Intruder. Thus far, the creature has not succumbed to the Plague of Panic, and is still an effective operative. It will follow the Investigators into the complex, remaining approximately one room behind them as they make their way in. It will use its Dark Gifts as often as possible in an attempt to harm and disorient the Investigators. If the Investigators double back at any point it will take cover and try to use its Jahkt at range, before charging in to melee with its Vilihak.

◆ **Callistonian Intruder:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 326.



A Callistonian Intruder gets the drop on a Doomtrooper.

THE DENIZENS OF DEIMOS

The population of Deimos has been devastated, and, of those creatures remaining, most have been wounded in battle or are suffering the effects of starvation. Every time the Investigators enter an old den they should roll on the following table to see what creatures remain alive in the area.

If the Investigators spend a lot of time wandering around the tunnels to the south of the complex, they should also come across some denizens of Deimos. Check every four turns (or equivalent) of exploration.

DENIZENS OF DEIMOS TABLE

D20	CREATURES ENCOUNTERED
1-5	Shadowy movements that turn out to be nothing.
6-10	Heretic Legionnaire with 2 wounds remaining (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pg. 327)
11-14	Heretic Legionnaire with 4 wounds remaining.
15-17	Two Heretic Legionnaires, in the process of fighting one another.
18-19	Enabler (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pg. 327)
20	Corrupter (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pg. 324)

INSIDE THE UNDERGROUND COMPLEX

The underground complex was mined out by creatures of the Dark Legion in order to provide dens for the creatures of Semai who infest the planet. During their delving, they discovered the alien transmitter and compromised it in a similar manner to the one on Phobos.

Unlike the facility on Phobos, this complex is more like a rough cavern, crudely excavated by the creatures living within. No furniture or equipment is within the complex and it consists of little more than a series of winding irregular tunnels. Occasionally these tunnels widen out into small discreet areas, the equivalent of rooms.

ROOM 1: THE ENTRANCE

Read the following to the Investigators as they approach the entrance to the complex:

You arrive at the lip of a deep pit, dug into the ground by some unknown means. Great spiralling ridges descend, affording plenty of hand and footholds as you clamber into the depths.

Once you reach the cavern floor you can see a tunnel, roughly hewn through the rock of the moon. It is narrow and dark, and the walls and floor are covered in a thin but sticky layer of dirty muculent slime.

ROOM 2: MUDDY PIT

The passage widens at this point. Read the following to the Investigators as they enter this room:

The tunnel widens into a roughly circular area, carved out of the rock of the moon with deep gouges. The floor of this area glistens and you can feel with your feet that a thick black layer of sticky, sucking mud coats the whole area.

The Investigators will each have to take a pair of **Dire (D4) Acrobatics** or **Athletics tests** in order to cross the area. Those who fail will fall over into a deep pool of mud. This presents little actual danger, though the Investigators will get thoroughly covered in filth.

ROOM 3: OLD DEN

This area used to be used as the sleeping quarters of a number of Heretic Legionnaires. Read the following to the Investigators as they enter this room:

A pile of corpses covers the ground in a great swathe here. Once they may have been human beings, but, even before their final deaths, they were twisted into strange and disturbing forms, grey skinned, hollow eyed, and twisted. There seems to be little mystery as to how they have died, as their talons and weaponry are covered in the ichor of their fellows. Here and there you can

even see a couple dead with their hands wrapped around each other's throats, or with twisted bayonets jammed deep into each other's torsos.

Hiding amongst the corpses, or crouching in a crevice in the walls, may be a wretched survivor of the fighting. Roll on the Denizens of Deimos Table to see.

ROOM 4: MUDDIER PIT

Deep and sucking mud coats the floor of this room, and conceals hidden dangers. Read the following to the Investigators as they enter this room:

The floor of this area slopes down steeply, and then disappears under a great pool of slopping slurry and mud. As you watch, great bubbles rise, bulge, and then pop on the surface of the pool.

This room presents the same problem as the Muddy Pit in room 2. The mud here is even deeper, and the Investigators will have to wade through the mud in places.

If the Investigators state that they are taking a closer look at the mud before crossing the room they should be called upon to make a **Challenging (D2) Observation test**. If they pass it they see the head of a Heretic Legionnaire, coated in mud. The creature has buried itself in the filth and is hiding there at the side of the room.

If they do not spot the creature it will launch an attack on them as they cross the room.

◀▶ **Heretic Legionnaire:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 327.

ROOM 5: MUDDY PIT

This room is treated in exactly the same way as room 2 above.

ROOM 6: OLD DEN

This room is treated in exactly the same way as room 3 above.

ROOM 7: OLD DEN

This room is treated in exactly the same way as room 3 above.

ROOM 8: TRANSMITTER ROOM

The alien transmitter is in this room, and, as on Phobos, the Dark Legion has used a bioengineered creature of symmetry to corrupt the signal.

Read the following to the Investigators as they enter this room:

As you approach the next widening in the tunnel complex you begin to feel a deep vibration, thrumming through the rock of the floor and rattling your very bones.

The area is a small circular cavern in the rock, hollowed out by the same regular, deep, spiral gouges as other areas of the complex. However, in the floor to the south of the cavern a strange object lies protruding from the muddy earth. It is a long antenna formed from bronze globular projections, the metal dulled by a layer of Verdigris and filth.

Attached to the antennae is a mass of muculent gloop, about a metre square in terms of size. It sticks close to the apex of the antennae. Pulsating cysts and half-formed organs project from its surface, dripping slime and beating softly. A dangling skirt of thin tendrils hangs from the base of the object, brushing from side to side in regular waving sweeps. Each tendril ends in a swollen barb, from which drips evil-looking green venom.

This creature is a similar organism to the Gloop found in the Transmitter Room on Phobos, and acts in exactly the same way. However, whilst it still emits a psychic distress call if attacked the only surviving creatures on Deimos are too distressed and traumatised to respond to it.

ROOM 9: MUDDY PIT

This room is treated in exactly the same way as room 2 above.

OTHER TUNNELS

The Investigators may spend time wandering around smaller tunnels, particularly towards the south of the complex. They might be lost or looking for more areas of interest. There is nothing important to be found within the tunnels, but, the more time the Investigators spend there, the more likely they are to encounter survivors of the Plague of Panic. For every four turns the Investigators spend in the tunnels roll once on the Denizens of Deimos table.

MEET ME AT THE SPACEPORT

As the Investigators travelled to Deimos, Paul Gell has sent some of his subordinates within the Fury to check up on progress at the Excavation site. Gell delegated this task to an overzealous and aspiring member of the Fury named Raoul Gish. Gell is aware that Gish holds a fair degree of contempt for the current Cardinal due to his reversal of many of the previous Cardinal's edicts. This has made Gish somewhat lazy and lax in his ability to organise missions without making oversights. Some agents of the Black Guard, particularly zealous cultists who are willing to die for the glory of the Dark Apostles, joined the hastily arranged mission and, once they reached the excavation site, set off explosives resulting in the ruin of the landing pad at the excavation site.

Returning from Deimos, the Investigators learn that the excavation site has been sabotaged, and that it is no longer safe for the Whisper to land there. Arriving at a spaceport in Vega, they are met by Paul Gell

DEIMOS

The Mines



and some members of the Fury. Paul, now committed to the cause of the Black Guard, has convinced the Fury that the Investigators present a danger to humanity and the Brotherhood. However, before attacking them, he tries to acquire their gear and dispose of it in such a way so as to spread disease throughout the bustling spaceport.

If Gell's plans go off without a hitch the Investigators will find themselves fighting on three fronts, against Gell and the Fury, his allies in the Black Guard, and infected humans succumbing to a panicked rage.

After the Investigators have completed their mission on Deimos and commence heading back to Mars, read them the following:

You have barely commenced your return journey to Mars when you receive an incoming communication from the excavation site. The querulous voice of Technician Hartigan sounds even more trembling over the airwaves.

"Uh. I regret to t-tell you this, but there has been a terrible accident at the excavation site. Saboteurs have, um, snuck past our defences and set off some explosives. We are dealing with the damage, but you will have to make your landing elsewhere, as the landing area here is strewn with rubble and holes. Um, sorry about that"

If, and only if, the Investigators ask Technician Hartigan about the events that led up to the explosions will he tell them the following:

"A, uh, delegation from the Brotherhood arrived to survey the site. They arrived in a convoy together with a number of citizens. There must have been agents amongst these people; some of th-them blew themselves up around the site."

If the Investigators ask Technician Hartigan for more details about the Brotherhood delegation, he will tell them that members of the Fury made up the leadership of the delegation. Technician Hartigan says their leader identified himself as Raoul Gish. He does not know a Paul Gell and no man of Gell's description was amongst the members of the Fury.

PAUL GELL'S PLAN

It is important for the GM to understand the various elements of Gell's plan, especially so that if, and when, the Investigators frustrate elements of the plan the GM will be able to adapt to the changing circumstances. The plan is as follows:

- ◆ Use the armour to spread contagion before destroying it.
- ◆ Set the Fury on to the Investigators under the pretext that they are traitors.
- ◆ Join with Black Guard members and, together with them, eliminate the Investigators and any remaining members of the Fury.
- ◆ Escape.

MEETING IN VEGA

Gell, four members of the Fury, and a group of eight Black Guard cultists are stationed at the spaceport in Vega.

If the Investigators decide to land at Vega, the closest spaceport to the excavation site, then Gell and his teams will be in position and well prepared. Proceed with the rest of the encounter without making any changes.

If the Investigators decide to arrive at another spaceport, it somewhat upsets Gell's plans. He does not command the manpower to man every port in force. His contingency is to have fast vehicles to hand, with which to intercept the Investigators no matter where they go.

However, the need to quickly redeploy his resources does cause Gell some problems. In particular, he has to communicate to his Black Guard team in such a manner so as not to let his Fury team know about the Black Guard. This benefits the Investigators in two ways:

- ◆ The Fury will become somewhat suspicious of Gell and the Black Guard. Any **Insight** or **Observation tests** they take in order to work out what is going on during the subsequent combat are reduced in difficulty by one step, to a minimum of one.
- ◆ The Black Guard become split. Four of them arrive when they are supposed to, but the other four only arrive after a further four turns. They will also be wearing the wrong uniforms, and this will impair their ability to operate as well as they should.

QUARANTINE

When the Investigators touch the Whisper down at the spaceport they receive a message from the Comms tower. Read the following to the Investigators:

"We understand you have recently arrived from a site of possible infectious contamination. Please remain in your vehicle whilst we undertake quarantine measures."

After a short wait a group of people can be seen approaching the ship, pushing a large plastic container. Some of them appear

to be port staff, though they are dressed head to foot in hazmat suits. Paul Gell walks alongside them, dressed in his suit of Fury armour but holding his helmet under his arm. He looks towards you and beams with a warm smile. "Just stay where you are, nothing to worry about" he shouts, before giving you all a thumbs-up.

The staff in the hazmat suits roll the plastic container to the door of the ship, they pull out hoses and begin washing down the Whisper. Gell stands to one side and calls out to you again.

"We have reason to believe you may be carrying some sort of contamination. Please remove all your armour and any gear you carry that may have been exposed to material on Deimos and place it in the container. We will then take you through to quarantine. This shouldn't take long"

He then dons his helmet and waits.

If the Investigators choose to resist at this point, proceed to Feeling the Full Force of the Fury on pg. 151. Whilst there are some advantages to anticipating malice on Gell's part, the Investigators will implicate themselves in the eyes of bystanders, and may spread contagion if they don't do anything about their gear. The following changes will apply:

- ◆ If the Investigators resist Gell's attempts to put them through quarantine, the GM may spend two Dark Symmetry points for the Fury to become convinced that they are traitors. The Fury will then also assume that the Black Guard are merely being helpful when they arrive to attack the Investigators. As such, no Insight or **Observation tests** will be taken by the Fury in order to work out what is happening—unless they are presented with incontrovertible proof.
- ◆ If the Investigators continue to bear the arms and armour they wore whilst exploring Deimos, they risk passing the infection on to everyone they meet. Whilst the fight will take place in a relatively deserted area—which will certainly limit the degree to which the contagion is spread initially—if the Investigators do not make use of the quarantine facilities themselves, they might spread the contagion even more effectively than Gell plans to do. The GM will need to think carefully about the consequences of the Investigators remaining infectious beyond this encounter. If they don't take measures to protect others from the Plague of Panic the results should be dire, but not so bad that the rest of the adventure becomes untenable. A possible outbreak amongst the staff at the excavation site could occur, though named NPCs such as Lieutenant Jones and Technician Hartigan should survive the plague.

INFECTION AND DESTRUCTION

If the Investigators cooperate with Gell, they are asked to place their arms and armour into the container and are then taken to a shower room where port staff thoroughly disinfect them. The benefit of following these procedures is that the Investigators are spared the need to take any further tests to see if they suffer from the Plague of Panic.

However, whilst they are getting clean, Gell will take their equipment and leave it in a room used by port security, ostensibly to be cleaned and maintained.

One of Gell's Black Guard associates will take it from there, he will scrape off any matter and gunge stuck to the suits and weaponry, and then spread the filth about on door handles, toilet seats, and other locations likely to be touched by visitors to the busy port.

He will then remove the equipment to a van outside and drive it to a Black Guard facility, where it will be destroyed.

The Investigators can complicate or foil these plans in a number of ways.

If they cleaned their gear before leaving Deimos, it will be much harder for the Black Guard agent to find enough infectious material. The degree to which the Investigators take care to sterilise their own gear ought to be taken into account by the GM. If the GM feels the Investigators completely scoured themselves on their own without prompting, taking care to be completely clean before they make their way back to Mars, then they can be rewarded by making it effectively impossible for the Black Guard to find infectious matter.

If the Investigators make a token effort to clean themselves or sterilise their equipment, then the GM should decide which of three degrees of infectiousness ought to apply to the material given their efforts (see Cleanliness Table on pg. 131).

The short-term effect will apply to the following encounter. As the infection spreads throughout the people in the port, more and more NPCs will begin to succumb to the plague. See the section Panic Spreads on pg. 154 for more information.

The long terms effects are more of a narrative device, and only have further consequences for this adventure if the GM sees fit. If an outbreak occurs, then the plague of panic will become a disease that many people suffer from and transmit to one another throughout the solar system.

If the outbreak reaches pandemic level, a great many people will be infected and the disease will spread to all major human settlements throughout the solar system. News about people succumbing to the disease will constantly be in the headlines and, every time the

CLEANLINESS TABLE

GEAR CLEANLINESS	SHORT TERM EFFECTS	LONG TERM EFFECTS	DARK SYMMETRY COST
Not clean	2 cases per turn	Pandemic	One per turn
Somewhat clean	1 case per turn	Limited outbreak	Two points per turn
Almost clean	1 case per two turns	No outbreak	Two points, only useable every other turn.

Investigators travel through populated areas, signs of the disease will be apparent. Efforts to combat the disease are manifest, such as people wearing full body protection when outside of their own homes. This will also do much to drain the resources of humanity throughout the solar system, which will have repercussions on the Investigators' later efforts to defeat the Dark Legion. See The Efficacy of the Ambush on pg. 178 for details about how the outbreak might affect the success of the Investigators down the line.

A limited outbreak means that only Mars is effected, quarantine measures in other ports are put in place so that the disease does not reach epidemic proportions elsewhere.

If no outbreak takes place the disease is quickly controlled by quarantine measures that take place in the immediate aftermath of this encounter. The disease still breaks out in small populations from time to time, but is a rare event that does little to drain public resources.

The Investigators may also try to sneak out of their own quarantine to check up on what is going on with their gear and give chase to anyone doing anything suspicious. The GM should reward such behaviour by giving the Investigators a chance to save their gear, but subsequent events will still take place, though with the Fury and Black Guard caught somewhat off guard by the Investigators.

FEELING THE FULL FORCE OF THE FURY

Aside from Paul Gell there are four members of the Fury at the port. They have been briefed by Gell with a set of lies and half-truths as he tries to convince them that the Investigators are traitors who have smuggled back pathogens from Deimos with the plan to cause chaos in the name of the Dark Legion.

The members of the Fury are somewhat dubious of Gell, who has been acting increasingly out of character recently, so, whilst they are in the process of following his orders, they might be willing to listen to the Investigators.

Read the following to the Investigators as they finish their business in the quarantine area.

As you step from the showers, port staff hand you warm, soft towels to dry yourself with, and suits of freshly laundered clothing. Then they usher you through to the arrivals lounge.

The staff do not know anything about where Paul Gell has gone, or what he has done with the Investigators' gear. They simply tell the Investigators that "the man from the Brotherhood will meet you in the arrivals lounge."

A great crowd of travellers, bearing the insignia and styles of every major culture and corporation in the solar system, mills around, looking for lost luggage or trying to find their friends and family members. Racks of shifting destinations, times, and gate numbers flicker and flash as they update themselves and muffled voices over the public address systems tell people to be ready for a new flight or arrival.

Suddenly there is a gap in the crowd, as five members of the Fury force their way through the tightly pressed masses. "Clear the way! Clear the way!" Shouts their leader, "we are here on official Brotherhood business! Clear the way!" The men draw up in front of you in a rough line. Their leader points at you. His face is hidden, all the men wear their helmets, but you recognise the voice of Paul Gell. "These men are worshippers of the heretical powers and terrorists fighting against the forces of humanity. They are dangerous. Keep your distance. Please clear the area so that we may carry out our duties unhindered!"

The four members of the Fury fan out around Paul and level their weapons in your direction.

How the Fury react now will depend on the Investigators. If the Investigators raise reasonable complaints or make counter accusations about the likely loyalties of Paul Gell, they will hold off from attacking. Whilst they have been convinced that the PCs are



heretics, they can also see that they have no weaponry. Dissonance between the need to follow their commander's orders, and the apparent needlessness of killing heroes of humanity whilst they are unarmed, stays their trigger fingers unless the Investigators exacerbate matters.

If the Investigators make aggressive moves against the Fury—revealing concealed weapons, using martial or mystic arts and so on—then they defend themselves and snap into following Gell's orders to the letter, doing everything they can to take the Investigators down. Subtle use of skills or abilities that affect the members of the Fury may go unnoticed, but the Fury ought to be allowed to make pertinent Observation tests to spot any surreptitious activity.

If the Investigators make attempts to communicate with the Fury, denying that they have been involved in Heretical activity, or making counter-accusations towards Gell, then the Fury will attempt to compromise, demanding that the Investigators give themselves over to interrogation back at the Cathedral of San Dorado. Gell will seem flustered and anxious and will continue to state that the Investigators

are too dangerous to parley with, but the rest of the Fury will be willing to ignore him if the Investigators remain calm, cooperative and continue to make their case.

The Fury may react poorly if the Investigators make undue allegations about Paul Gell. If they politely suggest that Paul Gell has been acting oddly, or if they point to the series of events that has led to their current situation, and Gell's likely role in such events, then the Fury will hear them out provided they articulate their ideas clearly and pass a **Challenging (D2) Persuade test**. Each two points of Momentum generated from this test can be used towards the cumulative score if the Fury Response Table is being utilised.

If the Investigators mention that a man called Raoul Gish led a group associated with the Fury to the excavation site shortly before the explosions, it will greatly confuse them. Raoul was an applicant for the Fury who performed well during the early stages of the process, but failed to make the grade due to weakness of character and criminal tendencies. Whilst not expunged from the order, Gish was deemed too unstable to make a good member of



The Fury: fearsome allies or implacable enemies.

the Fury. Furthermore, one of the few people who stood up for Gish, well beyond the degree that other adjudicators had deemed him unsuitable, was Paul Gell.

Roleplaying through the situation would be best, with the GM being the final arbitrator on how the Fury will react. If required, the Fury Response Table (below) can be used as a systematic aid for the GM to judge how well the Investigators manage the stand-off with the Fury. Some of these scores could be cumulative (so if the Investigators made disrespectful comments about the Brotherhood and threatened violence this would count as -10 rather than -5 points).

Unless the Investigators perform an action that results in an automatic failure, the Fury will continue to communicate with them and debate amongst each other as to the best way to handle the situation.

Regardless, the Black Guard will intervene at the end of approximately eight turns if matters are not resolved, and at this point the Fury will have to make up their minds about whether or not to attack or defend the Investigators; the score should be tallied up and the appropriate actions taken.

Less than zero points: The Investigators will have convinced the Fury that they themselves present a threat, and the Fury will cooperate with Paul Gell and the Black Guard in bringing down the Investigators.

0 to 4 points: In the eyes of the Fury, the arrival of the Black Guard reinforces the threat that the Investigators represent, and they join in the attack on the Investigators one turn after the Black Guard begin firing. However, they may well observe things about the Black Guard that persuade them otherwise, as explained later.

5 to 10 points: The Fury will be somewhat split as to what to do. When the shooting starts, they will try for four turns to calm the situation. If the Investigators do not attack the Fury in this time, but merely restrict their actions to self-defensive measures, then the Fury will decide to help the Investigators.

11 or more points: The Fury will decide that the Investigators are innocent of any crime, that Paul Gell has turned heretic, and that the Black Guard are hostile. They will act to defend the Investigators rather than attack them.

FURY ELITE GUARD ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
11	10	9	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	8	11	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE							
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
4	2	2	1	2	2	3	2

WOUNDS: 8

SOAK: Fury Battleplate: (Head 6, Torso 6, Arms 4, Legs 5)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Deliverer Powersword (melee):** 1+8, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1, Duelling, Parry 1, Pious 2, Vicious 2
- ◆ **Protector Power Shield (melee):** 1+5, 1H, Deflect, Full Defence 3, Knockdown

FURY RESPONSE TABLE

INVESTIGATOR'S ACTIONS

	SCORE
Overt attacks on the Fury, attempts to use supernatural powers—including the Arts—against them.	AUTOMATIC FAILURE
Clumsy or self-sabotaging attempts to manipulate the Fury, shows of disrespect, threats or verbal hostility, revealing concealed weaponry.	-5
Poor argumentation, such as irrelevant points, fallacies, wild accusations about Paul Gell, stalling tactics.	-2
Remaining calm, cooperative, rational, on point.	2
Pertinent criticism of Paul Gell.	5
Pertinent mention of Raoul Gish.	10
Failed Persuade Test.	-3
Passed Persuade Test.	3

- ◆ **Deflect:** A character wielding a Protector Power Shield may spend two Momentum after a successful Parry action against a ranged attack in order to reflect a ranged attack to strike a single enemy within Close range; this requires a Ranged Weapons test to hit.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Mystic Warriors:** Fury are chosen hand-picked from Brotherhood warriors who have trained in the Art. They have Mysticism Expertise 3 and Mysticism Focus 2. Further, they know all basic spells, plus Inner Gaze, Paragon, Perfection, Regeneration, and Swiftess from the Aspect of Mentalism. Additionally, when attempting a Mysticism test to cast an Aspect of Mentalism spell, they may roll one additional d20 if they score at least one success.
- ◆ **Defence Against the Dark Arts:** Fury are charged with the protection of the Brotherhood and Curia; a task for which they steel their bodies and souls. They have a Corruption Soak of 3 and increase their Wounds by one (already adjusted). Additionally, when making a test to avoid the effects of a Dark Gift or similar power or ability, each Dark Symmetry point spent to purchase additional d20s provides two d20, instead of one.
- ◆ **Protect Thy Charge:** Fury are veterans of many campaigns who take their allotted role extremely seriously. They may re-roll one d20 when making an Acrobatics, Insight, or Observation test, up to three ⬆ when making a Close Combat attack, or one ⬆ when making a Ranged Weapons attack, but must accept the new results. Further, Fury need not pay a Dark Symmetry point to attempt a Parry Response Action and may always take the Parry Response Action so long as they have a free hand and a weapon with Reach. Additionally, they may immediately pay a Dark Symmetry point to make a standard melee attack against any foe they have successfully used a Parry Response Action against, with Momentum from the Parry action able to carry over to the attack. Also, they may substitute their Close Combat skill for Acrobatics when attempting a Dodge Response Action. Finally, they reduce the difficulty of Defend Other Response Actions by one, to a minimum of one.

THE BLACK GUARD MAKE THEIR MOVE

The Black Guard have dressed themselves in the uniforms of local security forces. They arrive and quickly attack the Investigators with little thought to the safety of bystanders or notions of due process.

If the Fury are already engaged in combat with the Investigators they will be grateful for the assistance and will not likely wonder about the true allegiances of the new arrivals.

However, the more the Investigators have done to complicate Paul Gell's plans, the less likely it is that the Fury will simply allow the Black Guard to act with impunity.

The Black Guard are committed to taking down the Investigators, and will not listen to pleas for calm or orders to cease. They attack in a relatively abandoned manner, paying small heed to things like tactics or bystanders.

Such acts are unusual, even for the most trigger happy of Martian security forces. Every turn the Black Guard attack, a single **Challenging (D2) Observation test** should be taken for the Fury. If this test is passed, the Fury will begin to notice that something is not right.

On passing one such test they will call off their own attack to take the measure of the Black Guard. In this case, they can attempt another **Daunting (D3) Observation test** the following turn.

If this test is failed, they will assume things are going to plan and resume their own attack on the Investigators.

However, if the second test is passed, they will notice the Black Guard for the stooges they are, and will fight on the Investigators side from that point onward.

Remember, if the Investigators changed the location of their arrival to a city aside from Vega, the haste with which the Black Guard are forced to redeploy and the difficulty of communication with Gell means that some of them will be wearing the wrong uniforms, in which case, the difficulty of the Observation tests taken by the Fury will be reduced by one step.

PANIC SPREADS

As the confrontation between the Black Guard, the Fury, and the Investigators continues, more and more people in the arrivals lounge are likely to succumb to the Plague of Panic. In order to check how significant the outbreak is, refer to the table in the Infection and Destruction section on pg. 150. Depending on the degree to which the Investigators took responsibility for cleaning their own equipment after their adventures on Deimos, there may be cases of people succumbing to the Plague of Panic in the area.

To work out how such people react to the situation around them, refer to the rules given in to the rules given for NPC Hysteria on pg. 114. It is not likely that these people will present an actual threat to the Investigators, but they will spread confusion, violence, and infection in an already heated and crowded situation.



PANICKED CIVILIANS ▲ OR ●

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
7	7	7	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
7	7	7	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE					
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
-	-	-	-	1	-
SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	-	1	-	-	-

WOUNDS: 3

SOAK: None

ATTACKS:

◆ **Unarmed Strike (melee):** 1+12

SPECIAL ABILITIES

◆ **Innocent Bystanders:** The crowd has no idea what is happening, and are milling around trying to find cover, sometimes crossing directly into the line of fire. They increase the Repercussion range of all combat tests for other characters by one.

ARRIVALS AREA MAP

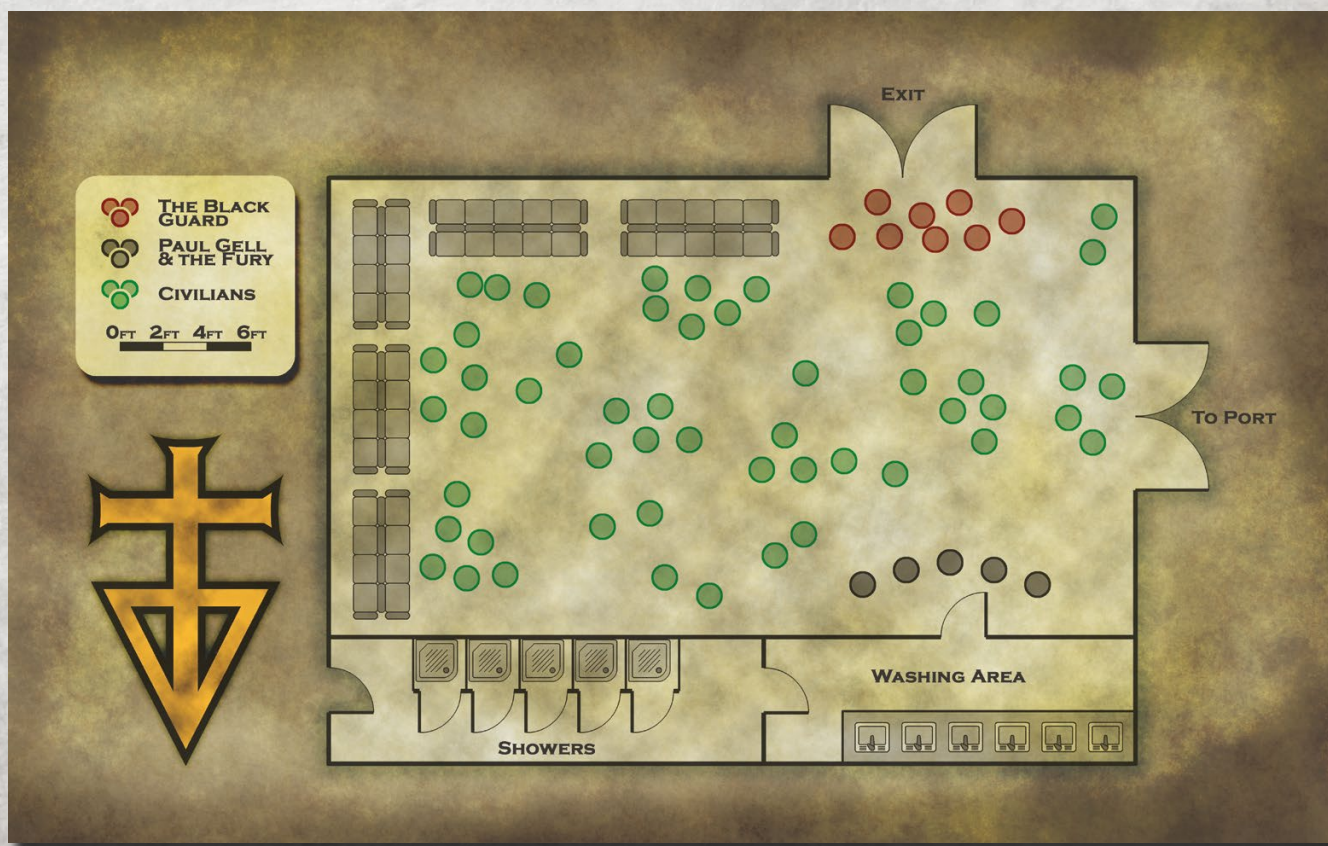
The above map shows the likely layout of the encounter in the arrivals lounge. The Investigators will have come from the shower and washing areas to the south of the map, to be confronted by Paul Gell and the Fury (purple dots) as they enter the arrivals lounge.

The Black Guard (red dots) will arrive in a group of eight (or two groups of four) from the large double doorway to the north of map.

Civilians (green dots) will mostly try to stay out of trouble and avoid being caught in the crossfire. However, it is from their ranks that people affected by the Plague of Panic will be drawn, though it is left up to the GM to decide who succumbs and how the people in their vicinity react.

RETURN TO THE EXCAVATION SITE

After the Investigators have dealt with the repercussions of Paul Gell's treachery, they will probably want to return to the excavation site. This is a straightforward operation, as, by now, news of Gell's treachery has reached the Brotherhood and they have despatched agents to kill Raoul Gish and attend to repairs of the damaged facilities.



If the Investigators seek to complain to Cardinal Durand about their treatment at the hands of the Fury, he is intensely contrite. He apologises profusely for the mistakes that led up to the confrontation at the airport, and says that he has a team of talented mystics checking and double checking his nearest advisors for any taint of corruption.

Over the next 48 hours the chaos at the site is sorted out, the damage repaired and the weapon is readied to fire once more.

FIRE!

Read the following to the players.

Once again, the great bronze structure starts to vibrate, bulbous vanes judder and shake, at first with irregular jolts but then a rising rhythm that steadies and takes hold. An enveloping aura of blue begins to glow, shining from the metal, the brightness intensifying until the whole structure becomes a thrumming tower of light. The pulsing rhythm gathers pace, causing the whole valley floor to shake and thump in time. And then it stops, and there is a flash of brief but intense heat. The blue light, formed into a great roiling ball of crackling plasma, lifts from the surface of the structure and is ejected through the atmosphere of Mars and into space.

Technicians in the bunker turn their attention to radar screens and trajectory readouts, voicing approving updates of the plasma blast's progress. An overhead projector flickers into life, and you can see the radar imagery, clearly displaying the encroaching Nero and the speeding missile heading straight towards it.

And Nero is hit. A devastating blast. Debris and clouds of ash are thrown from the great explosion. In the bunker, technicians cheer and clap, and then grow silent. Nero has been shattered, but a great chunk of the planet continues on its previous course. A massive spike of rock, pock-marked with craters, tunnels and ruins. It speeds towards Earth at an even greater velocity than before, propelled by the very same explosion that was wrought to destroy it.

Technician Hartigan stares wide-eyed with fear at the overhead display. "It's ... uh ... it's possible we've got a bigger problem now."

If the Investigators take the initiative, they can order another firing of the weapon, though technicians warn them that the weapon presents a problem. In order to fire safely, the weaponry must be left to cool, but at the present speed the shard of Nero will pass out of the weapon's arc of fire before the weapon is capable of safely firing again.

The Investigators could demand that the weapon is fired again before it is properly cooled. If so read the following to the Investigators.

And so, the great structure begins to vibrate and thrum once more, the blue glow of roiling plasma accumulates and intensifies. But before the rhythm of the weapon can reach its full and steady peak there is a great and mournful wrenching sound. Some of the more delicate vanes twist and buckle and there is a noise like a great wheezing gasp. Frazzling energies fry and dissipate into the air and a great pall of white steam rises from the stricken machinery.

The technicians let out a collective moan of despair. Some wail and weep, or bang their fists on their desks. Others cast resentful glares in your direction.

STOPPING THE SHARD

The technicians immediately jump to hypotheses regarding how best to stop the shard. Read the following to the Investigators:

A gaggle of technicians in white coats coalesces in the centre of the room and they start to argue and jostle one another, waving handheld monitors displaying approach vectors and angles, or jotting down quick abstract diagrams and strings of complicated maths. Within minutes, they have split into two competing groups, one led by a short balding man whose lab coat is stained with many inky patches, and an angry looking red haired woman with large black-rimmed spectacles.

"The Remburn hypothesis is clearly the best way to proceed!" shout the followers of the short balding man, to which the followers of the angry looking woman shake their heads. "Such a course would be naive and dangerous", they say. "Professor Glikk's speculations illustrate the only possible course of action".

If the Investigators do not realise that their stated preferences are the only way to break the deadlock, Technician Hartigan will make the quandary clearer to them.

"It, uh, seems that the technicians are split on the best way to continue. Perhaps you could talk to Glikk and Remburn and see which of the two plans strikes you as more workable."

THE REMBURN HYPOTHESIS

Talking to Remburn is not a particularly pleasant experience. He is deeply conceited about his fields of expertise, and unacknowledged feelings of inadequacy manifest as a habit of pedantic correction and intellectual snobbery. Should any of the Investigators make the slightest error in grammar, mathematics, history, or science whilst talking to him, he will take great pleasure in pointing it out, at length and repeatedly.

If asked about his hypothesis he has the following to say:

"My calculations show that you could travel to the shard in the Whisper, carrying three high-power repulsor units of my own design. These repulsors will slow the progress of the shard through the utilisation of magnetic frustration which will act upon the Nero shard's high iron content. These devices must be positioned on the shard in three locations on the near-Earth side. They will each need to be precisely placed and activated simultaneously. If done in a timely manner, my calculations show that the total power generated by the repulsors will be considerable and sufficient to reduce the velocity of the shard to such a degree that it will touch down safely on Earth. Once the repulsors are in place, escape from the shard and rendezvous with Military forces on Earth to eliminate any Dark Legion forces that survive the impact."

THE GLIKK PROPOSAL

Talking to Glikk is a particularly awkward experience. She is wholeheartedly devoted to her theorems and calculations and views any interruption as an unnecessary diversion from her work. Because of this, she is spiky and pursues any communication with the combative energy of a committed prosecutor. Sarcasm, humour, innuendo, subtle threats, and most other social nuances are also completely lost on her because of the disconnect she has maintained from social interaction.

If asked about her proposal she has the following to say:

"Rather than rely on the risky business of planting untested devices on the surface of a speeding comet stuffed full of enemy troops, I propose that we utilise resources that are already available to us. I speak of the Planetary Defence Network around the seal. If my theories regarding a possible implementation of the transmissions produced by ancient technology are correct ... and the statistical likelihood of my calculations is ... close to significant ... then an adjustment of the wavelength produced by the stations could turn a metaphorical transdimensional shield into a literal one,

THE SHARD

The shard consists of a lump of hardened black stone that plugged a large volcanically active area near the southern pole of Nero. The strange geology of the planet, influenced by the weird physics of the Dark Soul's home dimension, caused this area to grow in size and density like some canker within the crust of the world.

The shard is significantly smaller than Phobos, but larger than Deimos. It is a highly irregular shape, roughly oblong, but covered in jagged edges and riddled with tunnels and catacombs in which an army of Dark Legion creatures are barracked. The outer surface is dark, lustrous, and slightly translucent, like slimy, smoked glass. Inside, the material is not even properly real, containing portals and soft areas where the universe of the Dark Soul bleeds into our own.

The shard homes in on Earth, so tactics that involve misdirecting the object will not work (technicians at the excavation site will notice that the shard corrects its course, and will be able to hypothesise that it is somehow piloted towards a site in eastern Turkey). The shard is also unnaturally dense, and no known weaponry exists that would damage it further.

Whilst the shard is smaller than Phobos, its density means it has a similar gravitational pull to the (pre-terraforming) moon. Still, unless the Investigators somehow compensate for the low gravity, they will suffer the same penalties as they did on Phobos if they land on the shard (see the Gravity and Atmosphere section on pg. 158).

At its present velocity, the shard will destroy most of life on Earth if it crashes into the planet, so the only way to prevent the annihilation of every human on the planet is to slow the shard down. The following section of the adventure deals with different ways of slowing the shard, and depending on their success, the Investigators will meet with one of the following three results:

Forceful Landing: If the Investigators do not perform well, or if they delegate the task to NPCs, the shard will land with considerable force. Life in eastern Turkey will be wiped out, and earthquakes and tidal waves will devastate much of western Asia, eastern Europe, northern Africa and the Middle East. Human forces left to defend against the Dark Legion will be considerably weakened as a result.

Expected Landing: If the Investigators perform as expected, the shard is slowed but still hits with the force of a large nuclear explosion that has dire aftereffects. Much of eastern Turkey will be devastated, but more widespread destruction is avoided. Some damage to useful assets will occur but will be limited.

Optimal Landing: If the Investigators go the extra mile and utilise multiple strategies they might be able to slow the shard to a crawl. This will limit destruction to the landing site and give the forces of Humanity time to evacuate and prepare.

GLIKK'S DISMISSAL OF REMBURN

If she is told that the Investigators are seriously considering Remburn's suggested course of action, Glikk will have the following to say about his notions:

"Is the man quite mad? This is a shard of the dread planet Nero we are talking about. It is sure to be swarming with all manner of Dark Legion soldiery, has he accounted for that? Who knows what sort of monstrosities you'll face if you adopt this rash strategy? Not to mention the needless complication required to deploy three separate devices in order to activate the repulsor effect. Should there be even the smallest timing or placement discrepancies then the effect could lead to even greater catastrophe than that which is currently predicted. Remburn will never accept that a mere former student such as myself might offer a more conclusive hypothesis than his own.. My own plan is radical in its innovation, whilst reducing risk in its implementation."



REMBURN'S REBUTTAL OF GLIKK

If he is told that the Investigators are seriously considering Glikk's proposals Remburn will have the following to say about her plan:

"Ah, I can tell from your willingness to take Miss Glikk seriously that you are unlikely to be scientifically literate yourselves. A hah ha hah! Her plan involves the theoretical application of unproven speculations that have not even shown statistical significance. Certainly, her poorly justified notions do not involve the admitted risk of landing on the shard, but it does run the risk of not working at all, which would result in the destruction of the Earth! I suggest you ignore Miss Glikk's suggestion, she was never more than a mediocre student at best and struggled to make the grade. Between you and me, I had to scrape marks for her test papers on more than one occasion."

producing a repulsor effect to the same efficacy as anything Remburn suggests, with only a fraction of the corresponding risk. If you take the Whisper now, you should have enough time to reach Earth and adjust the signal from the stations."

COMING TO A DECISION

If Technician Hartigan is consulted about the two opposing viewpoints he will console the Investigators in regard to the attitude of his colleagues ("If only more of us scientifically inclined individuals were more socially graceful!"). For his part, he prefers Remburn's plan.

"Um, I wouldn't want to seem to approve of his attitudes, but Remburn's plan uses tested applications of technology which, safely implemented, w-w-would work. Miss Glikk has some interesting ideas, and she is unrivalled in theoretical applications, but I just can't be certain that her suggested actions would have the, uh, the predicted results."

Aside from the technicians who support Glikk, everyone else the Investigators consult about the issue will also state a preference for Remburn's suggestions.

FOLLOWING REMBURN'S PLAN

If the Investigators agree to Remburn's plan he will give them the following briefing:

"The shard is a large chunk of planet that is somewhat larger than Phobos but significantly smaller than Luna. You are familiar with moons, thanks to your earlier missions, yes? Well, working on the surface of the shard will be much like your time on Phobos or Deimos. Little gravity, no atmosphere, and the high likelihood of encountering all manner of enemies."

"The shard is turning slightly as it moves towards the Earth. In order to slow it enough to avoid widespread disaster as the result of a crash we will have to activate the repulsors at a significant distance—at least four hundred thousand kilometres, or roughly as far away from the Earth as Luna is."

"Now don't worry about working out what part of the shard will be facing the Earth at that distance, I've done all the complicated calculations for you. You will need to place three repulsors in the shape of an equilateral triangle, each side of which is a distance of 45 kilometres. These repulsors will be activated as soon as the shard passes the orbit of Luna, and if they are not in place by then it could result in all manner of catastrophe."

"Time is pressing so I suggest you get on with it."

APPROACHING THE SITES

In order to approach each of the sites the Investigators will have to pilot the Whisper to the shard and land on a likely area. The repulsors are large and bulky pieces of equipment that will have to be carried to each site (fortunately the limited gravity means one person can lug a repulsor).

Finding a suitable landing site is handled in exactly the same way as landing close to the facility on Phobos (See The Landing and the Phobos Facility on pg. 133). The only differences are that the sets of Mechanics and Space tests will have to be taken separately for each of the three sites, and instead of rolling on the Denizens of Phobos Table, the GM should refer to the Denizens of the Shard Table. Dark Symmetry points may be spent to increase the result of the roll on a one-for-one basis. The characters may spend two points of Momentum to decrease the result of the roll by one. There is no limit to how many Dark Symmetry or Momentum points may be spent.

SETTING UP A REPULSOR ON THE SHARD

Each repulsor has a locator light attached to the top that will glow green when they are in a good position. As such, it is effectively impossible to place them incorrectly. Each Investigator that places a repulsor should still pass a **Challenging (D2) Mechanics test** to see if they position it in an optimal manner.

Should one of these tests fail it won't have an effect on the landing. However, the shard will land particularly forcefully if two such tests are failed.

SUMMARY OF REPULSOR MISSION

- ◆ In order to approach the first position, Investigators must pass a Mechanics test and three Space tests.
- ◆ Depending on these tests, the Investigators may be some distance from the position, and during their journey they may encounter Denizens of the Shard.
- ◆ In order to correctly place the repulsor, Investigators must pass a mechanics test.
- ◆ Repeat process for the next two sites.

If two mechanics tests are failed when placing repulsors, or if there are any other major shortcomings (such as Investigators abandoning the mission before last repulsor is placed), the shard has a forceful landing.

Provided that two or more mechanics tests are passed, the shard lands as expected.



The Whisper closes in on the shard.

DENIZENS OF THE SHARD

D20 ENEMIES ENCOUNTERED

1-4	Three Necromutants led by a Centurion. (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pgs. 301 & 302)
5-7	Six Necromutants led by two Centurions.
8-9	Two Mind Renders (Elite). (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pg. 331)
10-11	Three Necromutants led by a Razide. (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pgs. 302 & 305)
12-13	Six Necromutants led by two Razides.
14-15	Three Callistonian Intruders (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pg. 326).
16-17	Ezoghoul. (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pg. 305)
18	Zenithian Soulslayer armed with Cenarath whip. (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pg. 333)
19	Twin Praetorian Stalkers (see <i>Mutant Chronicles</i> rulebook pg. 307).
20	Nepharite accompanied by troops from result 5-7 (GM's choice as to Dark Apostle).

FOLLOWING GLIKK'S PLAN

If the Investigators agree to Glikk's plan she gives them the following briefing:

"You'll need to jump to things. In order to enact my vision, you'll need to reach at least three of the stations on Earth and adjust the signal. Despite anything my former teacher might have told you, I excelled in various engineering fields, so I've jury rigged a number of small transducers that will intercept the signal produced at the stations and emit frequencies that will work to slow the shard."

"Simply leave the devices on the floor of the main area of each of the stations. Three at minimum should work at slowing the shard, though if you have time to leave additional devices they will have a greater chance of working well."

"Clock's ticking!"

APPROACHING THE SITES

Glikk's devices are handheld bronze objects with a size and design reminiscent of old pocket watches. They have a simple on/off switch to the side.

In order to deploy the devices, the Investigators will have to revisit the stations they explored in the earlier part of the adventure. They can do this in any order they wish, but the time they have to deploy the devices within an effective window is limited.

The GM should secretly assign 8 time points to the Investigators, and tick them off every time the Investigators spend time doing the following:

- ◀ Seeking to spend time recovering from wounds.
- ◀ Engaging in any form of distraction, such as visiting sites other than the stations, or shopping for equipment.
- ◀ Time spent recruiting additional assistance.
- ◀ Time spent at each station.

On the other hand, the Investigators can save themselves time if they announce that they are getting on with the mission and that they will push the Whisper to its limits in order to reach Earth as quickly is possible. If they announce such a course of action, the pilot of the Whisper ought to take three **Daunting (D3) Space tests**, with a time point added to their score for each success—plus one per two points of Momentum. Failing this roll will have no effect. Failure with Complications, however, could result in further delays.

Once on Earth, the Investigators will find that corporation forces have secured many of the station sites. However, they are hard pressed by Dark Legion forces that are pouring forth from the awakened Necrocities (see necrocities in **Appendix 01: Dark Legion**, pg. 181).

The first station the Investigators approach is safely secured, and they will encounter no problems entering and placing a device.

The second station comes under attack whilst the Investigators are approaching. Whilst the Whitestar forces stationed there are able to repel the attackers, the Investigators will encounter Dark Legion forces as they disembark from the Whisper (roll once on the Denizens of the Shard table to see what they face).

DARK EDEN PART 05

The third station is secure.

The fifth Station has fallen to the Dark Legion. Whilst Whitestar forces are due to attempt to reclaim it, the Investigators won't have time to wait for them if they want to place a device in time. Roll four times on the Denizens of the Shard table to work out what forces lie in wait for the Investigators.

The fourth station—detailed on pg. 96—is mysteriously abandoned, and whilst the Dark Legion are not inside, the Investigators may encounter some of the mutated fauna described in the earlier part of the adventure. Dependent upon the actions of the Investigators during the earlier parts of the campaign, the station also may or may not be powered up. The GM may wish to make a judgement call on whether allied factions have managed to effect repairs to the station, which may also impact upon the pool of time points.

RESULT OF TRANSPONDER MISSION

If a transponder is left in at least one of the stations the shard is slowed, but it has a **Forceful Landing**.

If a transponder is left in five stations the shard is slowed a great deal, and lands as an **Expected Landing**.

AFTER THE IMPACT

The Investigators have no sooner dealt with the shard than the airwaves are buzzing with news about further escalation of conflicts with the Dark Legion on Earth. They get messages from the following people:

CARDINAL DURAND: "I must once more, with great humility, both thank you for your indispensable service and sacrifice, but, in the next breath, beg you to do more. The arrival of the shard on Earth has coincided with a weakening of the protective function of the stations protecting the seal, and creatures of Darkness are beginning to manifest close by. But there is hope, many sensitives and mystics feel that this effort is the last push. If we can throw back this assault, we may have at long last dealt a killing blow to the Dark Soul and its slaves. We are preparing to confront the armies of Darkness at the seal and would greatly benefit from your assistance. Please join us."

DEALING WITH SENSIBLE INVESTIGATORS

Many Investigators will be suitably gung-ho and heroic and wish to simply charge off and attempt complicated cutting edge scientific procedures unaided. However, more level-headed sorts might insist that such matters are best left to the experts, and that Glikk or Remburn ought to assemble their own teams of technicians to undertake their respective missions.

Whilst this is entirely sensible it is somewhat counter to a story in which the Investigators are the central heroes.

If the Investigators suggest that another team undertake either of the missions available then the most pertinent objection will be that there is a very limited window available in terms of time, and that the Whisper is the only fast and stealthy vehicle available to the team in terms of resources. Other corporations might be willing to provide a fast ship, but this will require additional negotiation and, given that Butler Ewing is a member of Cybertronic and has only managed to manufacture enough of his alloy to cover the chassis of one craft, the Whisper is the best available vessel for these missions.

If the Investigators still insist that a team of technicians is sent in their stead they will have to assemble a team from fairly unwilling participants (negotiation and the passing of Persuade tests

should apply in the case of every technician recruited) and brief them on how to carry out their tasks. If the Investigators insist on sending a team of technicians in their stead, then the result is tragic. On the shard, the technicians will just about manage to set up Remburn's repulsors before being killed by the Dark Legion, whilst on Earth they are killed by mutated fauna whilst adjusting the signal in the stations. In both cases the shard is slowed, but still causes widespread destruction as it slams into the Earth.

The Investigators could include a pertinent technician or two on their mission if there is space within the Whisper. This is a good idea and the GM should reduce the difficulty of tests taken by one step for every technician on the team, to a minimum of difficulty **Average (D1)**.

Another plan that might be suggested, and would work well, would be for the Investigators to take the Whisper to the shard, and follow Remburn's plan, whilst despatching a team of technicians to Earth in order to carry out Glikk's plan. This will involve requisitioning another fast ship (the Cardinal will be able to provide one if asked) and putting together a team of technicians (who will be happy to volunteer if they know that the Investigators are risking their own lives on the shard). If this is done, and if the Investigators perform well on the shard, then the shard will be slowed a great deal through the combination of Remburn and Glikk's suggested procedures.

VALENTIN GOREV: "We have been monitoring the site of the shard's crash landing. For a while there was little activity at the site, but, a few hours ago, it began to emit thick plumes of dense smog. We can discern creatures and undead soldiers massing near the base of the structure. Soon they will have the strength of numbers to make a push towards the seal."

LIEUTENANT JONES: "I'm here with some of the others from the excavation site. The holy Cardinal has been rounding up a team of specialists from various corporations and placing them under my command for the time being. We are setting up a line of fortifications close to the seal. There's been sporadic fighting with the forces of Darkness, but nothing too serious, yet. Our scouts have located a valley in between the seal and the shard. If the Dark Legion march along a direct route to our position this could be a good place to launch a counter attack. If we could rendezvous and discuss leading a sally out I would be honoured to accompany you."



Smaller shards of Nero are already causing problems on Luna.

CHAPTER 10: HUMANITY'S LAST HOPE

THE BATTLE FOR THE SEAL

Whilst the Investigators have succeeded in stopping it from destroying the Earth, the shard presents a continuing danger as

creatures spill forth from the interior and begin to congregate around the landing site.

Whilst Undead Legionnaires and Necromutants make up the majority of the initial forces, soon larger and more dangerous foes join them. Portals to alien realms open up within the shard and reinforcements from other areas of the planet join the Dark Legion assault force.

At the seal, Cardinal Durand leads a coalition force made up of a motley of troops, tanks, and artillery. He also has a couple of special forces teams at his disposal, and is planning on sending one of them to enter the shard and plant explosives within.

He plans to send another special forces team, led by the Investigators, to a valley around the ruins of the town of Avenessa. Here, they are tasked with inflicting as much damage as possible to a column of Dark Legion forces as they make their way to the Seal. Durand hopes that the more damage the Investigators inflict, the more the Dark Legion will be distracted from his other special forces operation.

VOLCANIC PLUMES

The Shard begins to emit clouds of thick smoke, dense in ash and particles. Clouds of foul smelling vapour drift over the skies of central Turkey. During this time the few remaining pilots available to the Investigators and their allies report problems with their aircraft. After the failure of engines clogged with ash and particles the remaining planes are grounded, only to be used in circumstances of direst need.

RUNNING THE BATTLE MISSION

This is a complicated section in which the Investigators are given command of a sizable force of troops with the intention of doing as much damage as they can to a column of Dark Legion forces that are heading from the shard of Nero towards the Great Seal.

Because of the complexity to this section it is imperative that GMs familiarise themselves with the content before running this section of the adventure. The actions of the Investigators could have serious ramifications on the behaviour of NPCs, so the GM ought not only to be familiar with the content here, but also have a few ideas as to how to react to likely courses of action the Investigators could take and how the Dark Legion might attempt to counter them.

The Investigators have some serious resources at their disposal during this section, but they could also miss out on some potentially interesting roleplaying opportunities if they simply delegate all the interesting tasks, such as scouting and sniping, to NPCs. This could present a problem, as part of the fun of this section is undoubtedly grand strategic decision making.

A good way to solve this problem may be to give the players control over the NPCs they send on missions, so that, when the Investigators give an order, the players “become” the relevant NPCs until the mission is over. If an Investigator or two accompany the NPCs, then the players can continue to control the Investigators where this is possible.

For example: Johnny, Solveig, and Burt are the three players whose Investigators are undertaking this section of the adventure. They decide to use their forces to scout the area and secure some objectives. Johnny sends his investigator off with a squad of Wolfbane Cavalry to investigate the town of Avenessa in the centre of the area. Solveig decides to accompany a unit of Etoiles Mortants to investigate the marshy area to the west. Burt decides to muster the remaining forces on the high ground to the southeast of the area, but also orders a unit of Doomtroopers to occupy Kavuse, the small town to the south of the map.

The GM could simply sketch out the outcome of such decisions, focussing on each player in turn, briefly describing what the Investigators find, quickly running through a few key combats, and then moving on.

However, a better way to handle the situation would be to focus on each character’s mission in turn and assign pertinent NPCs into the control of players whose characters are not present. So, when Johnny heads off to Avenessa, he could control his Investigator whilst Solveig and Burt each control a member of the Wolfbane Cavalry. The taking of Avenessa could therefore become a fairly intricate separate scenario, which could take up an evening’s play session provided the GM has put in preparation for it.

The following session could deal with Solveig’s Investigator leading the Etoiles Mortants into the marsh, with Johnny and Burt each controlling a separate member of the squad.

Burt’s Investigator could then lead an expedition to the high ground, with Johnny and Solveig taking control of some of the NPCs following him. At the GMs discretion, a further episode could be carried out with each of the players taking control of one of the Doomtroopers ordered to capture Kavuse.

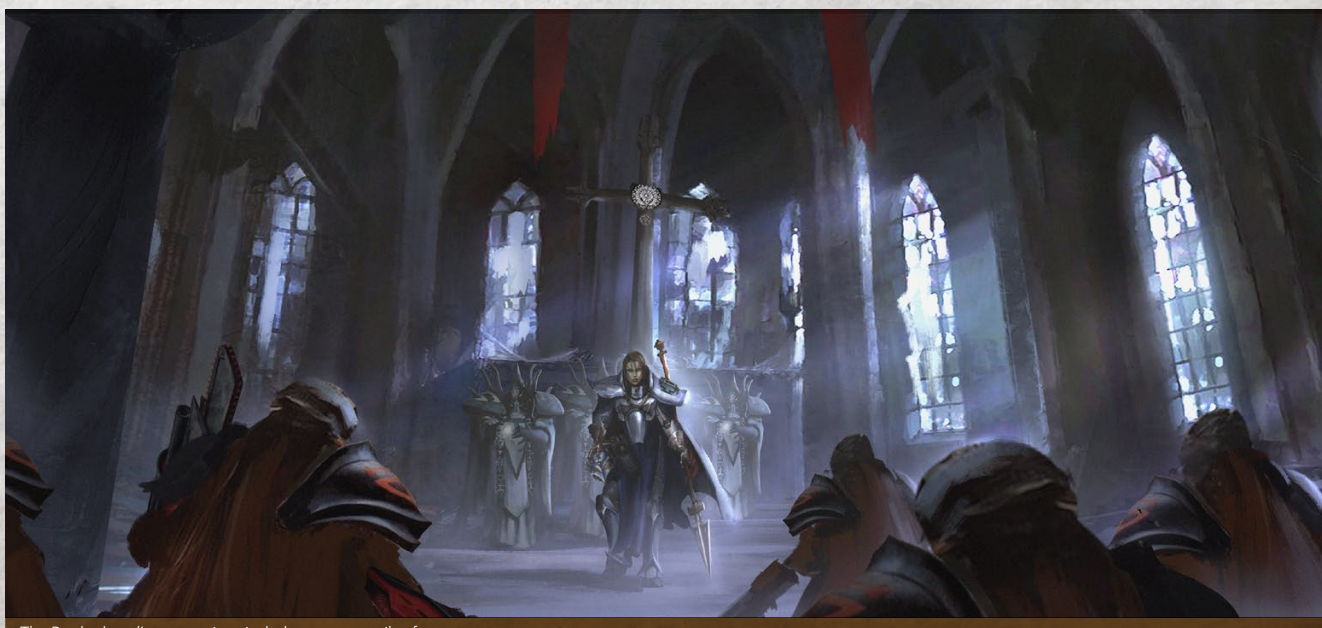
Another group may decide that the Investigators participate fully in every possible scenario. Whilst this does miss the opportunity to make interesting strategic decisions, it also makes the GM’s life a bit easier as he can simply run through each of the scenarios with the Investigators present.

It is important for the GM to decide what sort of game they would like to run. If they are happy to arrange for grand strategic plans and able to facilitate the players taking temporary control of NPCs, then they should guide the game in that direction. On the other hand, if they would prefer to keep the focus on the Investigators at all times, they should plan to run through the various scenarios one at a time.

ARRIVING AT THE SEAL

Read the following to the Investigators as they arrive at the seal:

Surrounding the site of the Seal in a wide circular arrangement is a massive earthwork, studded with machine gun nests and recessed trenches housing tanks and artillery pieces. Combat engineers in earthmovers pack additional loads of earth and



The Brotherhood's preparations include many councils of war.

DARK DAYS & APOCALYPTIC NIGHTS

It may seem as though the Investigators have been side-lined for the coming final battle, but make no mistake, Unit Oscar has an important part to play throughout the coming confrontation. Dark Legion forces have already moved to occupy nearby Necrocities, which will have effectively transformed them into Dark Citadels. These Necrocities are merely waiting for more raw material—in the form of Undead Legionnaires, fresh corpses, or untainted technology—in order to begin churning out all sorts of other abominations. With more troops at their disposal and greater access to raw Symmetry, it will only be a matter of time before the Planetary Defence Network begins to crumble.

Despite having been pierced by the shard of Nero, the shield projected by the Planetary Defence Network is currently still preventing the Dark Apostles from making their presence felt on Earth. Although it is inevitable that one of these dread siblings makes an entrance onto the battlefields of Dark Eden, any delaying action to prevent this will prove pivotal. Denying the forces that are exiting the shard access to the Necrocities and the battlefield around the Seal is vital for a number of reasons.

GM's are encouraged to use the larger war as a backdrop for the Investigator's own battles. News and communications can regularly be received concerning events at the Seal or outlying stations, delivered either by outrider or supply drop. Although he will not have forgotten Unit Oscar, the Cardinal and his troops will be hard pressed on all fronts as the war escalates, whilst the psychic backlash following the arrival of an Apostle would completely occupy the attention of the Brotherhood's Mystics. The battle around the Seal should in some ways mimic the Investigators own results. If they are struggling to contain the Dark Legion forces or have experienced a number of defeats, then reports can arrive of outlying stations falling or the defences at the Seal being sorely tested. Conversely, if the Investigators are experiencing outstanding success, then reports can provide more heartening news, such as the destruction of a Necrocity or an influx or reinforcements around the Seal.

Heresy and treachery will become rampant over the course of this battle however, as many hidden worms throw caution and allegiance to the wind in order to tip the scales of this apocalyptic war. Even though the Investigators may be containing the Dark Legion menace, the GM should feel free to ratchet up the surrounding events as a result of sabotage or infiltration. Always be careful of exposing the Investigators to insurmountable danger however; the threat of an Apostle on distant battlefields is far different from facing one themselves.

stone into the wide walls and erect encircling lines of razor wire and tank traps.

As you approach the lines a shout goes up, and a great cheer is raised amongst the troops as they recognise you and spread the word. Squads of infantry climb from their trenches, stand to stiff attention and offer you salutes.

You are escorted to a large concrete bunker set some way behind the front lines. There, members of the Fury and Cardinal Durand consult with a team of Military commanders from each of the corporations. Valentin Gorev is among them, and he catches your eye and smiles. You see Lieutenant Jones, stood towards the back of the room. She stiffens her burned upper lip and offers you a quick salute.

Everyone is stood around a large table, most of which is covered by an old, tattered and much annotated map.

"We are blessed by your return!" Cardinal Durand states. "But we have pressing need for Unit Oscar to perform yet one more miracle. Here." His finger sketches a circle on the map to his left. "Here is our position, and here," he jabs at the map to his right, "is the landing site of the shard. We have news of creatures mustering near the shard of Nero. Several small units have already begun to peel off and occupy newly formed fortifications surrounding our own position. We anticipate that we will soon see a significant push through the area in order to assault the location of the Seal."

"Right now, such an assault would be disastrous for us. We are still awaiting reinforcements and whatever infernal influence our enemies have over our aircraft makes it impossible to launch air raids on their position."

"We need you to occupy a valley in the mountains to the south east. We can spare you a portion of our own strength but it must be used wisely. Try to delay any encroaching forces for as long as you possibly can. By all means, give the Dark Legion a bloody nose if need be, but wiping them out isn't so much the order of the day as ensuring we have time to reinforce and fortify here, you understand me? Good!"

"Now, we best crack on with getting these men and women into action. Time is of the essence people!"



AVAILABLE FORCES

This is a list of the forces made available to the Investigators in order to harry the Dark Legion column as they cross the map. The Investigators have full command over these forces and can order them to carry out missions or hold ground on the map as they see fit.

Each unit, regiment, or squadron has been trained to fight together to peak effectiveness. Splitting units is not a good way to achieve high performance. If the Investigators mix and match members of different units into motley assortments of troops the soldiers will grumble and argue as to how to interpret orders. They will still fight with loyalty and bravery, but their effectiveness will be much reduced. Full units sent on missions alongside one another will collaborate without such issues.

The first of the two quotes in italics are Lieutenant Jones' opinions on the unit in question, (though she can also give them details of the weaponry and armour worn by units if they want more information).

The second of the two quotes is given by a member of the unit, but only if the Investigators ask them to provide such information. Asking for such information is something of a double-edged sword. Not all units have sensible ideas about their own deployment, and some may articulate misgivings regarding other units in the force. The more the Investigators spend time interviewing units about how they ought to be employed the less trust the force, as a whole, will have in the Investigators' ability to lead. This will not manifest in the game as anything more than grumbling and dirty looks, though note there are penalties for delays in the section titles The Efficacy of the Ambush (pg. 178).

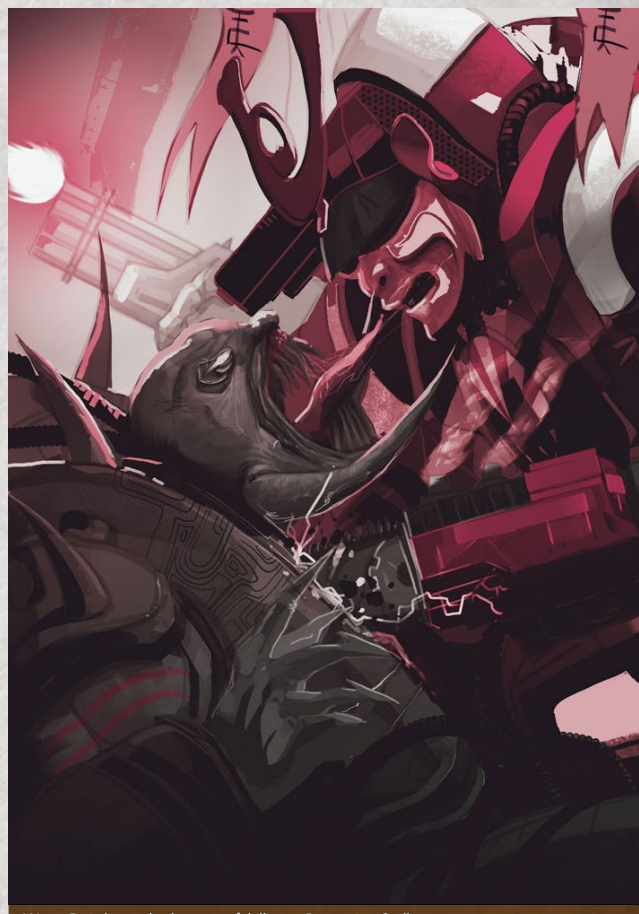
Whilst some of the units might voice prejudices against others, they are professional soldiers who will not let their feelings get in the way of doing their duty. However, it might be fun to allow the Investigators to observe the occasional dirty look or withering remark, just to add to the tension.

SAMURAI IN BATTLESUIT

A Mishiman Samurai wearing a Shoa Ace Custom Battlesuit armed with a Dragonstorm Turbocannon and a Chainsword. Having come from the highly patriarchal Mishiman society he is somewhat outraged to see women among the Etoiles Mortants units and the squad of Capitolian Infantry.

LIEUTENANT JONES: "Our Mishiman allies claim to be too hard-pressed to send much in the way of aid, bless their little cotton socks. However, Wang Dai here is a capable battlesuit pilot. Also, he has, conveniently enough for you, sworn to fight to the death rather than let a single Dark Legionnaire pass him by. If I were you I'd stick him in a choke point where he can't be picked off by heavy weapons fire and let him rip."

WANG DAI: "If you would be so good as to honour my preferences as to my employment in the upcoming confrontation I would ask simply to be allowed to approach the enemy and slay them at your command. I would prefer not to be told to skulk and hide. Direct confrontation is always best. I am also moved to voice concern as to the makeup of some of the units sent by other corporations. With respect, the battlefield is no place for a woman."



Wang Dai claims the honour of killing a Praetorian Stalker.

WANG DAI, MISHIMAN SAMURAI ★

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
10	10	10	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	8	9	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	1	1	2

WOUNDS: 7

SOAK: Shoa Battlesuit: (Head 5, Arms 5, Torso 5, Legs 4)

- ◆ **Power Assisted:** Samurai powersuits provide two additional Momentum on all strength-based tests, and the wearer may ignore the armour's encumbrance while the suit remains active. Further, melee damage bonus is increased by **T3** while wearing the armour (already included in the weapon profile below). However, the awkward weight and bulk of the armour increases the difficulty of all Acrobatics and Stealth tests the character attempts by one.
- ◆ **Stable Platform:** A character wearing a powersuit always counts as Braced when using Unwieldy weapons, and may use Two-Handed or Unbalanced weapons one-handed without any penalty.

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Dragonstorm Turbocannon (ranged):** Range M, 2+**T5**, Automatic, Unwieldy, Armour Piercing 2, Spread 2, Vicious 2
- ◆ **Chainsword (melee):** 1+**T12**, Unbalanced, Parry 1, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Rend and Tear:** As a member of the Blademaster school of martial arts, Wang Dai has the *ki* Ability Awaken the Sword's Spirit (see *Mishima* sourcebook pg. 36). He inflicts an additional **T2** damage when using his chainsword in melee (already included in the weapon profile above). Additionally, he may reroll up to four **T**, but must accept the new results. Further, when spending Dark Symmetry to gain additional dice for a Close Combat test when making a Close Combat attack with an Unbalanced weapon, each point paid provides two d20s, instead of one. Finally, also when wielding Unbalanced close combat weapons, each point of Momentum spent for the Bonus Damage Momentum spend will add two points of damage, instead of one.

CYBERTRONIC CUIRASSIER ROBOT

Cybertronic's contribution to the battle is something of a mixed bag. An 'Ultra' Attila Mk.III Cuirassier that seemingly experienced some complications during its transition to Earth. Consequently, the ranged combat protocols have been damaged or have glitches, and the CAW2500 Enhanced SMG it carries is currently useless. To diagnose and fix the problem will take Cybertronic technicians several weeks. It is still a formidable force in close combat though.

The Ultra is partnered with the slightly hyperactive and neurotic Anderson Bentley as a controller. Dressed in what can only be described as loudly colourful clothing, he treats his role with the Attila as a subreality game.

LIEUTENANT JONES: "These stainless-steel Johnnies give me the creeps to tell the truth, but they're tough, no doubt about it. We tried upgrading this one to deal with ranged combat but, I'll

be honest with you, our backroom boys made a hash of the job. He's locked into close assault protocols. Find him some place where he can launch himself into the fray and I'm sure he'll give you his money's worth."

The Cuirassier is programmed to follow orders and has no opinions regarding its deployment.

'ULTRA' ATTLA MK. III CUIRASSIER

The current favoured model of front-line Attila, the Mk. III is a statuesque, three-metre tall chrome killing machine. Their size makes disguising their nature impractical, so instead, these androids are flaunted as the marvellous war machines they are. Individual Ultra Attilas are terrifying to behold in battle, able to fight toe-to-toe with some of the deadliest creatures the Dark Legion is able to produce. Their biggest drawback is that their hardware consumes so much of the Cuirassier's processing power, meaning that they require constant monitoring by their partners.

ULTRA' ATTLA MK. III CUIRASSIER ☹

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13 (+1)	13 (+1)	9	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	6	13	4

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

WOUNDS:

- ◆ Head 7
- ◆ Arms 8
- ◆ Serious 10
- ◆ Mental 13
- ◆ Torso 12
- ◆ Legs 10
- ◆ Critical 7

SOAK: Armoured Chassis: (All 6)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **CAW2500 Enhanced SMG (ranged, currently offline):** Range C, 1+**T5**, Automatic, Unbalanced, Armour Piercing 1
- ◆ **Cybernetic Fist (melee):** 2+**T7**, 1H, Armour Piercing 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Supernatural Physique 1**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength 1**
- ◆ **I, Robot:** An Attila is not a living being, being constructed of steel and superconducting fluids rather than flesh and blood. It is immune to all environmental conditions—extremes of heat or

cold, vacuum, and suffocation—as well as all poison and disease effects. It cannot be healed by regular means or recover wounds naturally, and cannot be affected by abilities, attacks, and effects that only work on living creatures. Any attempt to repair an Attila requires Mechanics, in place of Treatment or Medicine. As Cybertronic technology, a Cuirassier is immune to the effects of Corruption.

- ◆ **RF366 Resonant Field Generator:** The Attila contains a generator that makes its armour resonate at a specific frequency. This frequency has no effect on the Cuirassiers' own structure, or on alloys used in Cybertronic armour, but it has an odd effect that compromises the armour of others nearby. A Cuirassier can activate or deactivate this generator as a Free Action. While active, any attack against an enemy within Close range of the Attila gains the Armour Piercing 1 quality (or increases any Armour Piercing quality it already possesses by one). This effect is cumulative if multiple Attilas are present in the same zone. This device can only be used by an Attila.
- ◆ **A Dose of Pure Violence Required:** It is possible that one of the Investigators may try to fix the Cuirassier's SMG. A Dire (D4) Observation or Sciences test will locate the problem: the Attila's weaponry connection is slightly misaligned, which can be fixed with a good thump; much to the bafflement of any Cybertronic technicians. Otherwise, this will take Cybertronic some weeks to discover.

THREE UNITS OF IMPERIAL BLOOD BERETS

Each unit consists of four troopers, a sergeant, a medic and two grunts. All of them are equipped with Mark III Heavy Assault Armour and an L & Y Plasma Carbine. The sergeant and medic also carry Chainswords. Grunts are also equipped with Scanners and the Medic carries a First Aid Kit.

LIEUTENANT JONES: "OK, so you've twelve of these guys, trained to fight in effective units of four. Well armoured and with top quality rapid fire from those plasma carbines. Get them dug in deep somewhere and they'll mow down any passing enemy like grass."

SERGEANT FRANK THOMPSON: "Just put us where you want us, squire! Well, if you insist on my opinion I reckon we'd be best off occupying the town in the centre of the map. Just send us all there. One unit to the front left of the bridge, one unit to the right, and one on the other side. Catch them in a cross fire."

BLOOD BERETS ▲ OR ☆ (SERGEANT)

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	8	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	10	10	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	3	2	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2

WOUNDS: 4 or 6 (Sergeant)

SOAK: Mk.III Heavy Assault Combat Armour: (Head 4, Arms 5, Torso 3, Legs 3)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Plasma Carbine (ranged):** Range M, 1+↑7, Burst, 2H, Burning 1, Vicious 1
- ◆ **PSA Mk. XIV Aggressor pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+↑5, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters
- ◆ **Bayonet (melee):** 1+↑4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1
- ◆ **Chainsword (melee):** 2+↑5, Unbalanced, Parry 1, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

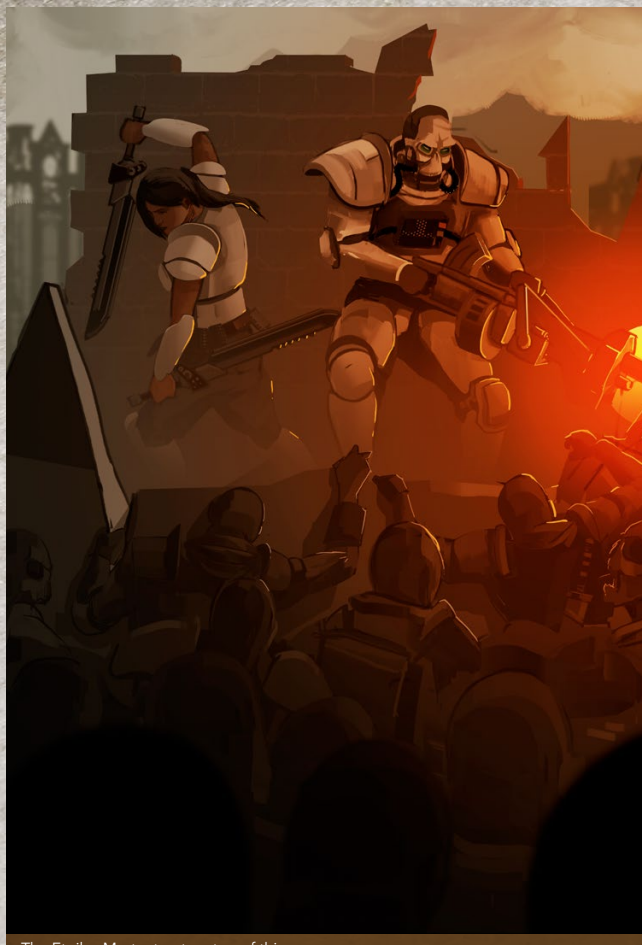
- ◆ **Brew Up in the Face of Danger:** It is said (by many of their critics) that the Blood Berets have a stubborn streak and sense of reckless flamboyance. They can reroll one d20 when making a Mechanics, Stealth or Willpower test, or up to two ↑ when making a Close Combat or Ranged Weapons test, but must accept the new results. Further, they generate two additional successes on any Athletics test that generates at least one success.
- ◆ **Rupert-Free Zone:** Blood Berets are trained to work as a unit and respect their own chain of command, answering directly to the Ministry of War. As such they are used to working independently, and rarely take orders from non-Imperial commanders. All Command tests towards the Blood Berets from non-Imperials suffer one level of increased difficulty.

TWO UNITS OF ETOILES MORTANTS

These small units of four lightly armed scouts are equipped with Demo Charges, Punisher combos, and AG-11 assault rifles. One unit has optional access to PSG 99 Sniper Rifles as well, and will use them instead of their assault rifles if ordered to do so (they will not normally carry both weapons whilst on operations). The Etoiles Mortants are experts in reconnaissance and identifying forces of the Dark Legion.

Despite their relative lack of armour or hitting power, the Etoiles are some of the more useful troops available to the Investigators. If they are placed in a particular area, they will be able to correctly assess and report on pertinent threats and suggest appropriate counter measures. For example, if they are sent to demolish either the eastern or western bridges they will realise that the birds there are Plague Vultures, or if they are stationed with the MBT-42 Battletank they will be able to recognise the threat posed by teleporting enemies.

THE FATE OF DARK EDEN



The Etoiles Mortant get on top of things.

They are also the best troops for destroying a particular terrain feature in a controlled manner. An Etoiles Mortants unit can use two of its demo charges to blow up the bridges across the River Halys, or a given building, if need be. They can also set the demo charges to go off via remote control or according to a timer.

LIEUTENANT JONES: "These guys and gals from the Bauhaus corporation could prove an important part of your operations. Bauhaus' reputation for only using the best troops applies to their scouts as well as their rank and file. No one knows better how to reconnoitre than the Etoiles Mortants. Get them within spotting distance of the enemy and they'll tell you all you need to know about what you're facing and how to deal with it. There are some tasty options in their armoury too. Want something blown up? A few Etoiles with demo charges should see to it. If you want some snipers in position, then see to it you talk to them about it too."

SERGEANT JAWINE RAGNARSDOTTIR: "Well we're a scout unit sir, so how do you think we'd be best employed?"

If the Investigators continue to ask her advice:

SERGEANT JAWINE RAGNARSDOTTIR: "I would split the units apart and use one to cover the banks of the Halys with sniper fire. Position them to the east of the area, on the northern bank. They'll be able to get a good look at our enemies as they enter the area, and hopefully rack up some kills in the process. Send the others to mine the central bridge in town, that's where they are likely to cross the river. Wait until they're halfway over and then Boom!"

ETOILES MORTANT ★

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	10	9	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	9	10	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	2	1	2

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Undersuit, Medium Military Shoulder Pads: (Head 0, Arms 3, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **P60 Punisher (ranged):** Range C, 1+⚡6, Unbalanced, Close Quarters, Knockdown, Pious 1
- ◆ **Punisher Short Sword (melee):** 1+⚡5, 1H, Parry 1, Pious 1, Vicious 1
- ◆ **AG-11 Assault Rifle (ranged):** Range M, 1+⚡7, 2H, Ammo (Armour Piercing 1, Spread 1), Pious 1
- ◆ **PSG 99 Sniper Rifle (ranged):** Range L, 2+⚡6, Burst, 2H, Ammo (Spread 1), Pious 1, Unforgiving 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Nemesis of the Legion:** Not only does hatred of the Dark Legion run deep amongst the Etoiles Mortant, but they are also trained to perform reconnaissance, sabotage, and assassination tasks against any number of its foul minions. Etoiles Mortant have Mysticism Focus 1 and Mysticism Expertise 1. Additionally, Etoiles Mortant may reroll up to two ⚡ from any damage roll made by a melee or ranged weapon against creatures of the Dark Legion.
- ◆ **Strike Hard, Strike Fast:** The Etoiles Mortant are well versed in the arts of speed and stealth. Whilst wearing only armour that provides a Soak of two or less in any location, or no armour at all, Etoiles Mortant gain an additional d20 to their Stealth pool and may reroll one d20 when making an Acrobatics test, though the new result must be accepted.
- ◆ **Demolition Charges:** Each Etoiles Mortant carries a demo charge. These specially-made explosive charges are designed

to be used quickly in the field against armoured vehicles. Each consists of a quantity of high-powered explosives contained within a dense ceramic shell, with a flat magnetic plate on one face. The ceramic shell focuses the blast towards the flat side of the charge, allowing it to blast holes through the toughest armour plate. A demolition charge can be affixed to a vehicle (or another metallic surface) within Reach as a Standard Action, requiring a Challenging (D2) Mechanics test. This doesn't require a toolkit of any kind, and cannot benefit from uses of Parts. If the test is successful, the charge will detonate at the start of the next round, inflicting 2+**T**6 damage with the Blast (Close) quality; it also gains the Armour Piercing 3 and Vicious 1 qualities, but only against the vehicle itself. When the Mechanics test is made, the user may spend one Momentum to dive out of the way, moving to any point within Close range (preferably into cover).

VENUSIAN RANGERS

Consisting of three troopers armed with Deathlockdrum machine guns, and one with a Panzerknacker. All rangers wear Guardsman Mk.III armour.

LIEUTENANT JONES: "Pains me to say it when you've got some of the Blood Berets under your command, but the Venusian Rangers might be the single most hard-hitting unit of infantry you got here. They'll do well in dense terrain, but consider the range on those Deathlockdrums, effective from up to a kilometre away those things are Nasty! Got a Panzerknacker too if you need something heavy taken out."

SERGEANT KASPER BRUN: "I would position my men here in Akteppy, and then advance on the Dark Legion forces as they pass through. There is good cover there and a clear line of fire on to the road. Whilst we are talking, I would prefer it if you not deploy my men anywhere near the Cybertronic monstrosity. Such machines are not to be trusted. Keep an eye on it during the fighting, I urge you. The Dark Legion are able to exert all manner of influences over such constructs."

VENUSIAN RANGER ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	10	10	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	8	9	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	-	2	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: Guardsman Mk.III armour: (Head 4, Arms 4, Torso 3, Legs 3)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **HG-12 (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**4, 1H, Close Quarters, Hidden 1
- ◆ **AG-17 Panzerknacker (ranged):** Range M, 1+**T**6, Burst, 2H, Ammo (Armour Piercing 1, Spread 1)
- ◆ **CA-130 Deathlockdrum (ranged):** Range M, 2+**T**8, Automatic, Unwieldy, Armour Piercing 1, Spread 1
 - ◆ **CA-130 Grenade Launcher (ranged):** Damage and Qualities as Grenade, Range M, Munition
- ◆ **Combat Knife (melee):** 1+**T**4, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Stealthy and Skilled Survivalists:** Venusian Rangers are highly trained in the skills of Survival and Stealth. They may reroll one d20 when making a Stealth or Survival test, but must accept the new result. Additionally, they gain one d20 when attempting to remain unseen or undetected. Further, they reduce the difficulty of the test by one step when attempting to track an opponent, which may eliminate the need for a test. Finally, they may substitute a Survival test for a Treatment test when in a rural environment.

CAPITOLIAN INFANTRY

This ten-man unit includes seven troopers with light machine guns (MG606), one trooper with a DPAT9 Deuce Rocket Launcher, one with an Improved M89 heavy machine gun, and a sergeant with a chainsword. All members of the unit carry Ironfist handguns and wear ADMPS-4 Survivor Armour.

LIEUTENANT JONES: "They might lack the dash of some of your elite units, but these Capitol boys and girls are no slouches. Give them a commanding fire position and protect them from close assault and they'll do the red planet proud."

SERGEANT HEIDI GRAHAM: "Sir! Just get us into Avenessa sir. We could make good use of those buildings for cover. Perfect position for us sir. Sir!"

CAPITOLIAN INFANTRY ▲ OR ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	8	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	7	8	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-

WOUNDS: 4 (Troopers) or 6 (Elite Sergeant)

SOAK: **ADMPS-4 Survivor Armour:** (Head 3, Arms 2, Torso 3, Legs 2)

- ◆ **Survivor armour:** Unpleasant to wear, but very effective, Survivor armour is considered to include an armour-compatible vac suit with four Oxygen Loads. It also allows the wearer to subsist without food or water for ten days without suffering any penalties.

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **M15 Ironfist (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**3, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters
- ◆ **GL-240 Grenade Launcher:** Damage and Qualities as Grenade, Range M, Munition
- ◆ **MG606 LMG:** Range M, 1+**T**6, Automatic, 2H, Spread 1
- ◆ **Improved M89:** Range L, 2+**T**7, Automatic, Unwieldy, Spread 1
- ◆ **DPAT9 Deuce Rocket Launcher:** Range L, Damage as Grenade + **T**2, Munition, Unwieldy, Qualities as Grenade plus Unforgiving 1
- ◆ **Chainsword (melee):** 1+**T**6, Unbalanced, Parry 1, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Disciplined and Dependable:** What the Capitolian Infantry lack in special forces training they make up for with discipline and determination. They may re-roll one d20 when making a Willpower test, or up to two **T** when making a Ranged Weapons attack, but must accept the new results. Additionally, they reduce the penalty for firing at a range other than a weapon's optimal range by one step, to a minimum of zero.

IMPERIAL WOLFBANE CAVALRY

A squadron of four drivers and their Hedgehog Necromower vehicles, each one armed with a mighty Mega-Charger. The Wolfbane cavalry are fast moving and experts in laying down heavy direct fire support. The unit can also be used in a reconnaissance role, though the Necromowers are too loud for subtle scouting missions.

The Hedgehog Necromowers are all-terrain vehicles. Nevertheless, they will still find it difficult to move and manoeuvre in the craggy areas marked on the map, and they are useless in the marshy area.

LIEUTENANT JONES: "The Wolfbanes are the most manoeuvrable unit available to you, and those Mega-Chargers pack a punch at medium range. Stick them somewhere where the terrain won't hamper them and where there is space to retreat in good order, redeploy, and lead another charge."

SERGEANT BOYD MCBOYD: "Sir, what yon lass said, sir. Got her heid screwed on that wee one has, sir!"

IMPERIAL WOLFBANE CAVALRY ★

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	10	8	8
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	7	10	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	1	2	1	1	1
2	1	2	1	1	1

WOUNDS: 6

SOAK: **Mk.III Heavy Combat Armour:** (Head 4, Torso 5, Arms 3, Legs 3)

ATTACKS:

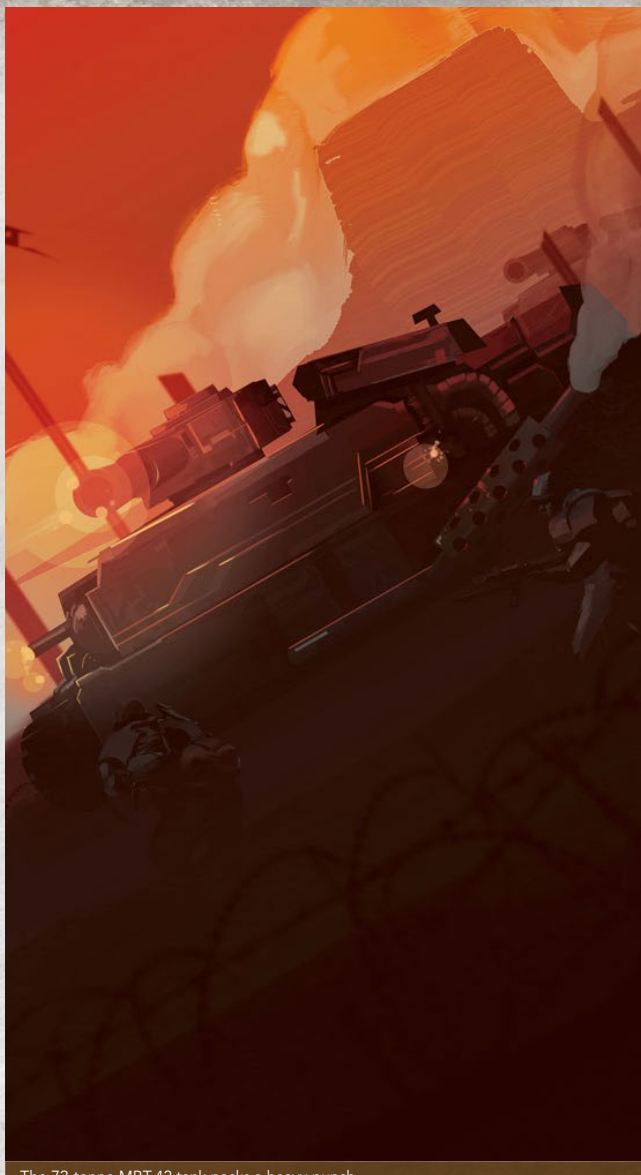
- ◆ **Mk IV Aggressor Pistol (ranged):** Range C, 1+**T**4, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters
- ◆ **Clansman Claymore (melee):** 2+**T**6, 2H, Parry 2, Pious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Bleed With Me:** Masters of both their own fate and their vehicles, the clansmen's tactics favour thunderous charges amid crazed and raucous laughter. They may re-roll one d20 when making a Pilot or Willpower test, or up to two **T** when making a Close Combat or Heavy Weapons attack, but must accept the new results. Additionally, when making a successful Heavy Weapons attack, the weapon gains the Spread 1 quality—or increases the Spread rating by one if already possessed. Further, they reduce the Pilot test for ground-based vehicles by one, to a minimum of one. Finally, when performing a Pilot test with a damaged vehicle, the damage modifies the difficulty of the test by one less than normal, to a minimum of zero.

HEDGEHOG NECROMOWER

QUALITIES	Agile, Exposed, Rugged, Wheeled			
CRUISING SPEED	90 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	2	
CREW	1 commander	CARRYING CAPACITY	25 effnc	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	4	7	4	2
MOTIVE SYSTEM	3	5	3	2
WEAPON	2	4	2	1
IMPACT DAMAGE	2+ T 2			
ARMAMENTS	• B&G Mega Charger HMG (ranged): Range M, 2+ T 6, Automatic, Spread 2, Vicious 1			
NOTES	The Mega Charger has nine Reloads. The crew can mount or dismount the vehicle as a Restricted Action.			



The 72-tonne MBT-42 tank packs a heavy punch.

MBT-42 WOLF MARK 2

A Bauhaus-built 72 tonne battletank, reliable over open terrain. It may not move through craggy areas on the map unless along a road. The tanks bristles with weaponry: a mortar, a 180mm main gun, three 60mm smoothbore guns, and six light machine guns.

LIEUTENANT JONES: "We can spare you one piece of heavy artillery from the front lines, and, luckily for you, it's a great piece of kit. The Bauhaus MBT-42 comes with a fantastic long range cannon a mortar, three smaller back-up guns and six machine guns should it get into trouble at close range. Just be careful you don't leave it open to counterattack. You're going to want this piece to last long enough to do some real damage."

MBT-42 WOLF MARK 2

QUALITIES	Enclosed, Ponderous, Rugged, Tracked			
CRUISING SPEED	15 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY		2
CREW	1 commander 1 pilot 9 gunners		CARRYING CAPACITY	35 enc
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	12	18	15	12
MOTIVE SYSTEM	10	9	6	4
WEAPON	9	8	6	4
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+↑4			
ARMAMENTS	Each of the turrets below is operated by a single gunner, barring the Commander Turret, which is operated by the Commander. Main Turret, containing: • 230mm Mortar: Range L, 2+↑7, Munition, Blast (Close), Dreadful, Knockdown, Vicious 2 • K-180 Cannon: Range L, 3+↑7, Munition, Armour Piercing 2, Unforgiving 2 • K-60 Autocannon: Range L, 2+↑8, Semi-Automatic, Armour Piercing 2, Vicious 1 • Bergdahl Stonecleaver LMG: Range M, 1+↑6, Automatic, Dependable, Spread 2 Front-Right Turret, with twin Bergdahl Stonecleavers (as above, but Spread 3) Front-Left Turret, with: • Flamethrower: Range C, 1+↑6, Munition, Incendiary 3, Torrent • 30mm Mortar: Range L, 2+↑5, Munition, Blast (Close), Dreadful 4x Side Turrets, with Bergdahl Stonecleavers 2x AA Turrets, with Triple Bergdahl Stonecleavers (as above, but Spread 4) Rear Compartment, with: • K-60 Autocannon • Bergdahl Stonecleaver LMG • Commander Turret, with twin Bergdahl Stonecleavers (as above, but Spread 3)			
	NOTES	230mm Mortar has 20 Reloads.K-180 Cannon has 30 Reloads. Each K-60 Autocannon has 18 Reloads. Each Bergdahl Stonecleaver has 21 Reloads. Flamethrower has 10 Reloads. 30mm Mortar has 10 Reloads. No more than three turrets may attack a single target. The Rear Compartment may not attack the same targets as either of the Front Turrets.		

GEV 10 KRAIT

Light amphibious Bauhaus-built hovercraft armed with a light machine gun. May carry up to 20 troops. Two crew. The GEV 10 can journey with impunity along the river or within the marshy area (60 mph). In this terrain, it crosses solid ground slowly (20 –30 mph) and cannot enter craggy areas (if ordered to do so it invariably becomes stuck).

LIEUTENANT JONES: "The Krait means a squad could deploy on one side of the river, prove a distraction to the Dark Legion, and then shoot over to the opposite bank when things get too hot for them."

GEV 10 KRAIT

QUALITIES	Agile, Enclosed, Hover			
CRUISING SPEED	95 kph	COMBAT MANOEUVRABILITY	2	
CREW	1 commander 1 gunner	CARRYING CAPACITY	20 passengers	
LOCATIONS	SOAK	SURFACE DAMAGE	SYSTEM DAMAGE	STRUCTURAL DAMAGE
HULL	6	12	8	3
MOTIVE SYSTEM	6	8	6	4
WEAPON	4	6	4	2
IMPACT DAMAGE	3+↑4			
ARMAMENTS	• Turret-mounted MG-40 LMG: Range M, 1+↑6, Automatic, Ammo (Armour Piercing 1), Spread 2			
NOTES	MG-40 has 6 Reloads			

LONG TERM EFFECTS OF EARLIER DECISIONS

Earlier in the adventure the Investigators may have made decisions, or allowed certain events to occur, that have repercussions at this stage.

These include:

- ◀ Widely publicising the fact that Nero has started to move towards Earth (resulting in widespread panic).
- ◀ Facilitating, through negligence, the spread of the Plague of Panic.
- ◀ Choosing to follow Professor Glikk's advice as to how to slow down the shard of Nero.

Each of these factors will have resulted in destruction or disorder that will have drained the resources of the corporations and their armies.

When it comes to determining the effectiveness of the ambush (pg. 178) these factors will play a part. They will also play a part in the short term. For each of these factors that apply, the soldiers available to the Investigators will take one Wound, representing damage they took from having to deal with rioting civilians or the seismic destruction that occurred when the shard of Nero hit the planet. If any of these factors is particularly egregious, the GM may wish to impose a further Wound. If destruction and rioting was somehow contained to a particular area, then soldiers from that area will be particularly effected, and others less so.

The GM should make the effect of these wounds obvious to the Investigators. If the soldiers have taken no wounds the GM should note that they seem refreshed, in good morale, and well prepared,

whereas more wounded soldiers will bear signs of injury, exhaustion, and poor morale.

If the shard made a forceful landing, then vehicles will have been rattled and shaken by the impact. All vehicles count as having Buckled Transmissions (in terms of motive system damage) and Struggling (in terms of hull damage) in this circumstance.

READILY AVAILABLE INTELLIGENCE REGARDING THE BATTLEFIELD

The following map should be available to the investigators from the outset of their mission.

Lieutenant Jones can let them know the following details about the proposed battlefield:

- ◀ This area is roughly 20 miles by 20 miles.
- ◀ The grey shaded area represents ground that is steep and craggy. It will be hard to manoeuvre troops through this terrain, and nearly impossible for vehicles to get through here. Even all-terrain vehicles such as the Necromowers will face difficulty. Infantry and large creatures or battlesuits can make progress through these areas, but only at quarter speed.
- ◀ The River Halys, a wide and slow moving watercourse, snakes through the shallow valley. To the west of the area, the river widens out into a stagnant and stinking lake around which the ground is marshy. This area is effectively impassable for the purpose of moving troops or vehicles unless they are aquatic. At all times of day, a pall of thick mist rises from the marshes and swathes the area around them.
- ◀ Roads, passable in ancient times, and the ruins of three towns are marked on the map. A large town called Avenessa used to be sited in the centre of the map, and plenty of cover can be found in the ruins there. The other towns, Kavuse and Akteppy, are much smaller, and provide little effective cover.
- ◀ Three bridges across the river are shown.
- ◀ The Dark Legion forces are expected to arrive from the east. The shard of Nero is to the southeast of the map, but the seal's location is to the northwest. At this point in time the Dark Legion are predicted to arrive either on the road running from the east, or one of the roads running from the south. Either way they are predicted to move towards the centre of the area before heading off towards the northwest.

DARK EDEN PART 05

THE BATTLEFIELD— GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES

HIGH GROUND AND LOW GROUND

1 – The hills to the south east of the map are 1,246 metres above sea level. These hills are strategically important as they present both a commanding firing position, but are not so steep and craggy as to prevent easy access.

2 – 1,350 metres above sea level.

3 – The lowest point in the valley is 912 metres above sea level.

4 – The highest of the northern hills is 1,581 metres above sea level.

5 – 1,400 metres above sea level.

6 – 1,413 metres above sea level.

MAN MADE STRUCTURES

The area around the battlefield has been desolate and deserted for centuries. Avenessa was once a large town in the centre of the battlefield area, consisting of more than 4,000 buildings. It is now little more than a collection of tumble down walls and shattered streets, littered with broken earthenware pottery and a few burned-out cars. A couple of buildings still stand and cover is easy to find, so this would be a good place to position troops and snipers.

In and around this town are the only convenient crossing points over the River Halys. Three bridges, none of which are in good repair.

There are two smaller towns, Kavuse and Akteppy, to the south of the area. They are also shattered and deserted, but could also provide decent cover for a unit of troops. There are other buildings and structures scattered about the area, but they are too small and rundown to be of any strategic value.

The roads are cracked, potholed, and littered with debris, but they still make a good surface for armoured vehicles. There are two places where the roads have become utterly impassable however. To the north, the road that snakes through the mountain pass has become jammed with fallen boulders and earth from landslides. To the west, the road that runs through the marshy land has become covered in mud and vegetation.



INTENDED ROUTE OF DARK LEGION FORCES

The Dark Legion column is moving from the east towards the location of the seal, to the west of the battlefield. They are prevented from moving to the north of the area by the craggy mountainsides. They intend to take the road that runs near the south bank of the River Halys until they reach the ruined town in the centre of the area. Here they will cross the river and continue on to the other bank. They will leave the road before it enters the marshy area and continue west across the gentle hills to the north of the marsh.

The column travels at around three miles an hour. It will take them just over eight hours to traverse the area covered by the map.

There are several tactical benefits to taking the route as planned. The column gives itself space to manoeuvre that would be denied to it if it were to try and move between the craggy mountainsides and the river, a route that would also leave it vulnerable to fire from the hillsides. The central bridge is the largest and most stable of the three crossing points over the River Halys.

The forces come in three waves. The first is a vanguard consisting of a sacrificial meat shield of undead legionnaires plus some specialist creatures that will react quickly to appropriate opportunities. Although a standard force is described below, the GM can scale to suit dependent upon the competency of the Investigators and the resources they have available; characters that possess Guardian DNA and wield Ancient technology will likely require more of a challenge than presented here for instance.

The main body follows on at a distance of a kilometre. This is a small but effective fighting body that intends to take up a position a few miles from the seal and await reinforcements.

A tail consisting of Praetorian Stalkers and their escort follows directly behind the main body.

Tailing the rest of the force, at a distance of a kilometre, are a pair of Ezoghoul.

◆ **VANGUARD:** Fifty Undead Legionnaires, supported by a Defiled Avatar, four Nasca Razides and two Callistonian Intruders.

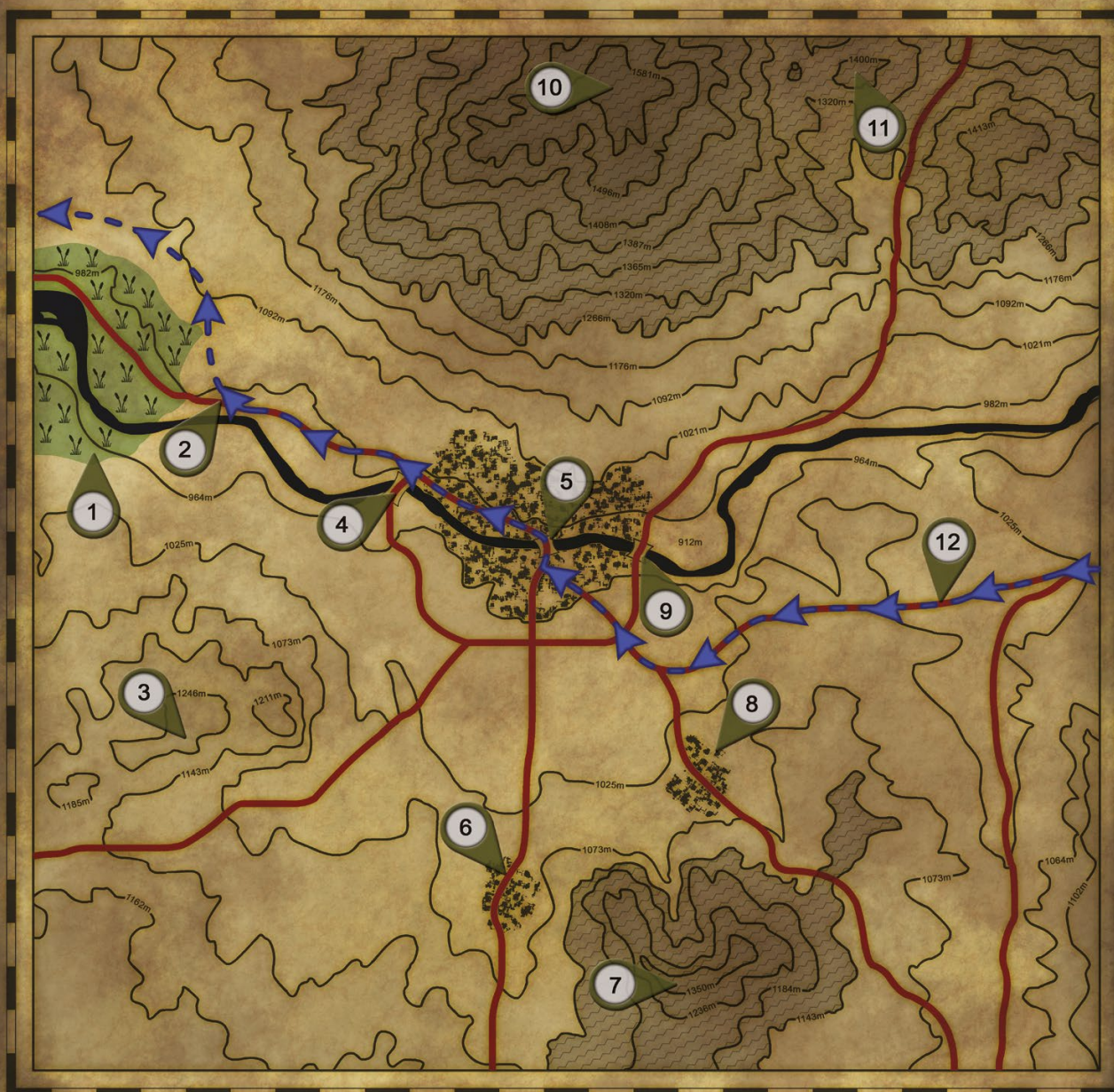
◆ **BODY:** Two hundred Undead Legionnaires, twenty Necromutants, two Centurions, four Ezoghoul (acting as outriders to the flanks of the column), two Gomorrian Emasculators, one Nephrite of Algeroth.

◆ **TAIL:** Twenty Undead Legionnaires acting as escort to two Praetorian Stalkers.

◆ **REAR-GUARD:** Two Ezoghoul.

THE FATE OF DARK EDEN

READILY AVAILABLE INTELLIGENCE REGARDING THE BATTLEFIELD



- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 THE MARSH | 5 AVENESSA TOWN & CENTRAL BRIDGE | 9 EASTERN BRIDGE | STEEP & CRAGGY GROUND |
| 2 ROAD TOWARDS THE NORTH WEST | 6 KAVUSE | 10 HIGH GROUND TO THE NORTH | MARSHLAND |
| 3 HIGH GROUND TO THE SOUTH WEST | 7 HIGH GROUND TO THE SOUTH | 11 HIGH GROUND TO THE NORTH EAST | PREDICTED DARK LEGION ROUTE |
| 4 WESTERN BRIDGE | 8 AKTEPPY | 12 ROAD FROM THE EAST | 0 MILES 3 MILES |

NEW DARK GIFT

GHOSTS IN THE SHADOWS

This Dark Gift is very similar to the “Realm of Fear” Dark Gift. Any Heretic or creature able to use Realm of Fear can alter its effects to Ghosts in the Mist at a cost of X Dark Symmetry points if they so wish, where X is the chosen difficulty of the Gift.

DIFFICULTY: D1+

DURATION: A number of hours equal to the Gift’s difficulty

TARGET: One intelligent living creature within Long range. Furthermore, in order to work, this gift must be employed in an environment in which clear vision is not possible, such as a dimly lit street at night, a gloomy underground environment, or a foggy day.

EFFECT: The Heretic fills the target’s senses with a sense of creeping paranoia and half seen glimpses of figures disappearing into the gloom. The figures resemble creatures associated with the Dark Legion, such as cloaked human figures or shambling corpses. The Heretic may decide where the target perceives the figures to be, and in which direction they are perceived to travel. The gift is often used to distract targets from the Heretic’s own position, or lead them into traps.

While this Gift is in effect, whenever the target suffers a Repercussion on any test, he must immediately attempt a Willpower test or suffer a mental assault. The difficulty of this Willpower test starts at **Average (D1)** for the first test, and increased by one step for each successive test, pass or fail.

BLEED: The Heretic becomes shrouded by the same gloom that confuses the target’s Observations. Any attempt made by the target to perceive the Heretic is increased in difficulty by one step.

SCOUTING THE BATTLEFIELD

In this section the Investigators will reach the battlefield ahead of the main forces. They will have the chance to survey the scene, meet opposing scouts in combat, and seize the best ground.

Whilst the area is mapped out, no serious reconnoitre of the terrain has been carried out for centuries. The Investigators will need to undertake some form of scouting before they can truly know what the strengths and weaknesses of the battlefield are.

Some of the encounters listed below could feasibly form the basis of a more complicated scenario if the GM is up for doing some extra work. If the GM knows the Investigators are planning to scout one of the towns, or travel near the marsh, then he or she should consider the ideas given for turning such encounters into a fuller blown adventure.

1) THE MARSH

The Marsh is not a particularly important location as it is difficult to enter and the Dark Legion plan to circumvent it anyway. The Dark Legion know this and so have set up a ruse involving the marsh that they hope will confuse their opponents and distract them from the real task at hand.

Within the marsh is a single Zenithian Soulslayer. Whilst this horrific creature is a capable opponent, it is well aware that it is no match for hardened combat units. Instead, it attempts to lurk within the marsh and use its Dark Gifts to confuse and bewilder any opponents into wasting their time and potentially becoming lost or even drowned within the marshes.

The Zenithian Soulslayer has its lair in an abandoned hut on the small island that can be seen in the lake at the centre of the marsh, and this is where it can be found when it is not active.

If any enemy troops come close to the marsh, the Zenithian Soulslayer will attempt to sneak into a hidden position within Long range and then distract them. It will use all its cunning and its mastery of Dark Gifts to do this. In particular, it will use the power “Ghosts in the Shadows” to create half seen phantoms that disappear into the mists.

The Zenithian Soulslayer will not attack outright unless it is cornered or in support of other Dark Legion forces. If the Investigators try to scout the marsh, it will use its Dark Arts to keep itself hidden, and to try to lure them into sucking pools of mud. When the forces of the Dark Legion finally reach the area of the marsh it will leave its lair and join them for the final assault on the seal.

◆ **Zenithian Soulslayer:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 333.

Turning this encounter into a larger scenario: If the GM has time to prepare, he or she could draw a map of the marsh and lake, outlining several areas where the Zenithian Soulslayer has left booby traps or knows of areas of soft mud and other hazards. The Investigators will therefore have to contend with not only distracting illusions, but also the fact that very real dangers might befall them as they chase either the phantoms in the mist or the creature that causes them.

2) THE ROAD TOWARDS THE NORTH WEST

This would be a good place to gain early control over as the Dark Legion plan to march along this road as they leave the area to the

northwest. It is also an easy place to secure as the Dark Legion have sent no vanguard forces here to control the area.

However, if this area is claimed and the marsh is not scouted, then the Zenithian Soulslayer in the marsh will attempt to distract any troops stationed here (see location 1 for details).

Positioning the Wolfbane Cavalry here would be a good tactical decision. With lots of room to manoeuvre they could harry the Dark Legion to good effect.

3) HIGH GROUND TO THE SOUTH WEST

This position is a useful one for the positioning of long range artillery. The area is of no real interest to the Dark Legion, and they have not positioned any vanguard forces here. The Investigators are free to claim this area with no contest.

However, if large artillery forces are positioned here, the Dark Legion will spot them as soon as their column enters the map. If heavy artillery is placed here, then a Defiled Avatar will move within 5 kilometres (3 miles) of the artillery before using its teleportation ability to move itself and a pair of the Nasca Razides into close range of the guns. The Defiled Avatar and the Razides will do everything they can to destroy any big guns here. If they survive the encounter they will join the Dark Legion column again.

The only way to counter this threat will be to anticipate it by leaving some extra troops at the ready to guard the artillery.

Note that the longest ranged weapon available to the Investigators (aside from items they may have in their possession) is the main gun on the MBT-42 battle tank. This can fire 5 kilometres—the same distance the Defiled Avatar can teleport. Because of this, the crew of the tank will only be able to get a single shot off at the Defiled Avatar before it teleports into close range of them. In order to make this shot they will need to be aware of the creature and have some notion of the threat it poses them. They will not be able to do this from a distance, so the only way they will be able to make such a decision is if appropriate scout units have identified the Defiled Avatar and communicated the risk it poses to the tank crew. Clued-up investigators or members of the Etoiles Mortants are the only likely candidates for anticipating such dangers.

◀▶ **Defiled Avatar:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 290.

◀▶ **Nasca Razide:** see pg. 186 of the appendix.

4) WESTERN BRIDGE

The westernmost bridge is in very bad repair. An old stone bridge with enough space for two lanes of traffic, it is now crumbling and potholed. The bridge makes for a good objective but for one problem, the Dark Legion are not planning to cross here.

One plan that might work well would be to wire up explosives around the bridge and destroy them as the Dark Legion forces are crossing. Alternatively, two of the three bridges could be destroyed which would force the Dark Legion to cross at a point of the Investigators' choosing.

The Dark Legion have anticipated that damage to the bridges may occur, and so they have deployed scouts. These scouts are a pair of plague vultures, one stationed at each end of the bridge.

When enemy forces approach the bridge, the plague vultures take wing and begin to circle the area at high altitude. They will not attack, but will do their best to look like a pair of carrion birds. They will observe the goings on at the bridge for a while before one of them peels off and flaps towards the east.

If the vultures are left to make their reconnaissance, then no activities the Investigators or their forces carry out will come as a surprise to the Dark Legion. They will know if bridges have been demolished, or wired with explosives. They will know if enemy troops are stationed near or on the bridges.

If the vultures are attacked, they will try to escape and will drop plague bombs from the air onto attacking units.

If very clever Investigators guess that the vultures are scouts for the Dark Legion, and attempt to trick them by performing distracting actions, this sort of ruse could work well. For example, if they order a lot of traffic to cross back and forth on the bridges whilst covertly wiring explosives using light troops. The vultures are not the brightest of creatures and are easily fooled.

Any forces native to Earth who observe the vultures will show surprise, as mutant vultures have not been observed behaving this way. Whitestar troops, for example, will be quick to identify them as alien.

◀▶ **Plague Vulture:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 315.

5) AVENESSA TOWN AND THE CENTRAL BRIDGE.

This is a very important location and one that makes for an obvious objective. The Dark Legion plan to cross the River Halys at this point, and the surrounding buildings offer many places from which to launch an ambush.

6) KAVUSE.

Kavuse is a small town of less than a thousand buildings. Only a dozen or so houses still stand though, the rest are tumbled down and rubble is strewn about the streets.

If troops are sent to Kavuse and ordered to find cover they will soon discover that many of the buildings in the town have extensive

cellars, sometimes more than one story in depth. These cellars are often connected via tunnels, meaning the whole town sits on top of a hidden subterranean network.

The hidden tunnels do offer good protection for troops wanting to set an ambush, but they also present a risk. A Curator is at large in Kavuse. This creature of Demnogonis is holed up in the cellar of one of the few remaining buildings in the town. If troops are stationed in the town, it will sit tight and wait for individual soldiers to peel off in order to snatch a moment's privacy. It will ambush such stragglers, kill them with its Curator Sword, and resurrect them as Kadavers. If it goes undiscovered, it will assemble a small force of Kadavers before leading them on an assault against any surviving enemies. The Curator will make a canny opponent. It will use all its Dark Gifts and abilities to escape harm if it can. It only fights to the death if cornered or if the Dark Legion forces are in need of support.

Despite the fact that the Curator in Kavuse could form a significant distraction and maybe even lead to the death of many soldiers, the town itself is of no strategic value. Time spent here is time wasted.

◆ **Curator:** see *Mutant Chronicles* rulebook pg. 316.

Turning this encounter into a larger scenario: If the GM has time to prepare, he or she could draw a quick plan of a small tunnel network that links the cellars of all the houses in a particular district of Kavuse. The Curator could be at large in this network, and any soldiers hidden in cellars in the area would be at risk.

7) HIGH GROUND TO THE SOUTH.

This area is not contested and the Dark Legion have no interest in it. It is so far away from their intended route that it is of no strategic value.

8) AKTEPPY.

Akteppy is in much the same shape as Kavuse, and can be treated in the same way. If the Investigators order for the occupation of both Akteppy and Kavuse then the Curator in Kavuse only appears there. Troops stationed in Akteppy face no opposition.

However, if Akteppy is occupied and Kavuse left alone the Curator can be moved to Akteppy, where it will attack troopers in the same way as described in Kavuse.

Like Kavuse, Akteppy is of little strategic value. However, it is closer to the Dark Legion lines than the other town, so long range fire from here could conceivably affect the column.

9) EASTERN BRIDGE

The eastern bridge is similar in every significant respect to the western bridge. As such it is treated in the same way as location 4.

10) HIGH GROUND TO THE NORTH.

This very high ground is difficult to reach and a long way from the planned route of the Dark Legion.

The ground here is riddled with potholes and caves, and one large cave in this area leads into a subterranean system. If the Investigators scout the caves use the map of the cave system on Deimos (see pg. 122—though these caves are cut through dry pale limestone and contain no pools of mud or other special features). A vanguard of Dark Legion forces has found the caves and is hidden within. Roll three times on the Denizens of the Shard table (pg. 96) to work out what creatures are in the caves (reroll results of 18, 19 or 20—such large and important creatures will not be deployed in the caves).

The creatures are resting in rooms 3, 5, and 7. They are not expecting an attack, so if the Investigators take care to explore the cave quietly they could surprise them.

If the caves are not explored the creatures will appear at the mouth of the cave when the Dark Legion vanguard are about half the way across the map. If fighting is in progress, they will try to help their fellows. If not, they will simply move to join their column.

If a group of Etoiles are sent to scout this area they will clear the caves. However, they will be so mauled in doing so that they will no longer be an effective fighting unit, the few survivors will have to evacuate for urgent medical aid.

11) HIGH GROUND TO THE NORTH EAST AND BANKS OF THE RIVER HALYS.

This is one of the better places to gain control of. Because the Dark Legion forces are planning to journey along the southern bank of the River Halys, troops on the northern bank can find cover and fire upon their enemies with relative impunity.

The Krait could also be well deployed here as per Lieutenant Jones' suggestion. It could support troops stationed on the southern bank to shoot at the approaching Dark Legion, then ferry them over to the northern bank if the Dark Legion manoeuvred to assault them.

12) ROAD FROM THE EAST

The terrain here is relatively flat and open. Units deployed here will be obvious to the Dark Legion, and will bear their full brunt. The Wolfbane Cavalry would perform moderately well here as space for hit and run tactics is available. Other units will simply be sitting ducks, and quickly eliminated.

SCOUTING OTHER LOCATIONS

Of course, the Investigators are free to scout the whole area and claim other objectives if they so wish. However, none of the other locations on the map are of particular strategic value or interest to the Dark Legion.

CONTRIBUTING FACTOR	SEE AREA...	EFFECT
During "Movement of Nero" (see pg. @@), Investigators kept movement of Nero secret, resulting in lack of preparation amongst other corporations.	N/A	-1
During "Movement of Nero", Investigators widely publicised movement of Nero, resulting in widespread panic.	N/A	-2
Plague of Panic became a Pandemic.	N/A	-4
Plague of Panic had a limited outbreak.	N/A	-2
Shard of Nero hit Earth forcefully.	N/A	-2
Both Remburn and Glikk's plans utilised in slowing down Nero.	N/A	4
Investigators launch quickly into deploying units and giving orders.	N/A	1
Investigators spend significant time planning deployment.	N/A	-1
Investigators spend a long time interviewing each sergeant and arguing over deployment.	N/A	-2
Zenithian Soulslayer effectively distracts Investigators or their allies for a significant portion of time.	1 -Marsh	-2
Investigators do not let Zenithian Soulslayer distract them.	1 -Marsh	1
Investigators eliminate Zenithian Soulslayer prior to arrival of Dark Legion forces.	1 -Marsh	1
Wolfbane Cavalry deployed on road to the northwest.	2 - Road to NW	4
MBT-42 battletank deployed on high Ground to southwest.	3 - High Ground SW	2
MBT-42 battletank protected from close assault by teleporting defiled avatar.	N/A	4
Plague Vultures fooled by ruse.	4, 5 and/or 9	6
Plague vultures killed.	4, 5 and/or 9	3
Plague vultures escape with useful info.	4, 5 and/or 9	-2
Bridges destroyed to funnel Dark Legion.	4, 5 and/or 9	4
Bridges destroyed as Dark Legion cross.	4, 5 and/or 9	*
Battlesuit and/or Cuirassier deployed at chokepoint.	Any suitable chokepoint.	2 each.
Infantry unit given time to find suitable cover in Avenessa provided Dark Legion move through Avenessa.	5	3 per unit.
Infantry unit deployed in town with Curator.	6 or 8	-4
Caves cleared by Investigators.	10 - High Ground to S.	4
Caves cleared by Etoiles.	10 - High Ground to S.	2
Caves not cleared.	10 - High Ground to S.	-4
Infantry unit with Krait deployed on banks of the river Halys	11	5
Wolfbane Cavalry deployed on road to the East.	12 - Road to E	2

THE EFFICACY OF THE AMBUSH

Whilst the players may have a lot of fun deploying their units and confronting the creatures of the Dark Legion across the map, at the end of the day their job is to ensure that the Dark Legion column is held up as long as possible, and that significant damage is inflicted upon it as it makes its way to the site of the seal, which is where the real fighting is to be done.

As such, whilst individual actions still play their part, wise strategic decisions are really what will win or lose the day.

In order to work out how well the Investigators did in their job of inconveniencing the Dark Legion forces, consult the Contributing Factor table and total up the Effect score in the right-hand row.

Where a * exists, a number no higher than nine should be assigned in these cases depending on how effectively timed or carried out the GM thinks the operation was. For example, if a bridge is blown up as soon as the vanguard started to cross it, 3 points would be a good award. If it is blown up as the body are halfway across then 9 points would be suitable. If the bridge is blown up as the rear-guard cross, 1 point would be generous.

Also, bear in mind the Investigators may strand or inconvenience their own troops if they blow up bridges, and penalties should apply to such cases.

Once the column begins to cross the map the GM may add up to a further 10 points for good snap decision making and performance on behalf of the Investigators. These points should be hard earned, though; to repeat, this section is more about grand strategy.

Once the Investigators have exhausted all their options in trying to stop the column they should calculate their score:



While the Investigators fight their own battles, war is met on all fronts

LESS THAN -10: Disaster. To put it plainly, this is the end of the campaign and possibly the end for humanity. The Investigators do nothing to dent the momentum of the Dark Legion forces and the Doomtroopers at work in the shard are discovered and slain before they can carry out their acts of sabotage. More columns of Dark Legion forces arrive at the valley and utterly overwhelm any surviving defenders there.

The Investigators will have to beat a fighting retreat, but are likely to have to fight to the death. Whatever their immediate fate, the seal will be lost to the Dark Legion and future adventures, whilst technically possible, will take place in a very different universe. The Earth effectively becomes a new Nero, and intense war is waged from there on the other inhabited areas of the solar system.

ZERO TO -10: Poor. The Investigators manage to buy a little time for the forces around the seal, and the Doomtroopers in the shard set off some of their explosives before they are discovered. The Dark Legion is inconvenienced, but is still able to summon forth a trickle of reinforcements.

Another Column of Dark Legion forces enters the valley hot on the heels of the first, and the Investigators will have to deal with them if they are to make it back to the seal. If they perform well against

this second column (unlikely given their depleted resources) then a narrow victory is won. If not, then the Dark Legion will claim the Earth.

1 TO 25: Narrow Victory. The column is compromised and enough time is bought for the forces at the site of the seal to reinforce and fortify. The Doomtroopers destroy much of the shard and further columns of Dark Legion forces are tied up. The Investigators can return to the seal, but face three further encounters as they do so. Whilst the forces of humanity will be hard pressed, they will eventually win through.

26 TO 40: Clear Victory. The column is shattered and the site of the seal is secure. The shard is ripped apart by explosions. Dark Legion creatures throughout the solar system begin to wither, fade or scatter to far-flung hiding places. The Investigators have won a clear victory, but will still have to face two encounters on their way back to the seal.

40 OR MORE: Great Victory. The column is annihilated and so is the shard. Many Dark Legion creatures around the universe suffer immediate destruction as their connection to the Dark Soul is severed. The few wretched survivors will haunt remote ruins and wilderness, but will do little to trouble humanity in years to come. The Investigators have won a great victory, but will still have to face one last encounter on their way back to the seal.

THE FATE OF DARK EDEN

ENCOUNTERS ON THE WAY BACK TO THE SEAL

Provided they scored some sort of victory, the Investigators and the survivors of the ambush in the valley can journey back to the seal. Read the following to the players in the case of a close victory (in the case of clear or great victories, emphasise the destruction of the shard more and deemphasise the prevalence of the Dark Legion).

A great roaring noise splits the air, and to the east you see a pall of white smoke underlit by flickering fires, rising against the banks of thick black smog. The landing site. Something must have happened at the shard.

Comms traffic is confusing. A chatter of reports: heavy fighting now happening at the seal; portals to other dimensions opening and disgorging all manner of behemoth creatures twitching and clawing their way into reality; regiments of walking corpses continue to troop down from the hills of central Turkey.

Yet, against all hope, reports that human forces are beating them back. That a team of brave soldiers have infiltrated the shard itself and wrecked it in a grand act of sabotage, and that the armies around the seal are being reinforced by new arrivals from other parts of earth, and other corporations and planets.

And that it's all thanks to you, the famous Unit Oscar. By holding the valley around Avenessa, the Dark Legion were too distracted to protect their own assets, and too weakened to overwhelm the site of the seal.

Is it too soon to celebrate?

The Investigators can now make their way back to the site of the seal. As they go they will see further signs of their victory. The skies clear of the thick smog and aircraft can be seen, bringing supplies or reinforcements to the troops, or sallying out to rake Dark Legion forces with gunfire or bombing runs.

However, there are still a great many enemies in the vicinity, and the Investigators will have to confront a few more before they reach the seal. How many encounters they have depends on how thoroughly they succeeded in their last mission.

As to what they encounter, it is left entirely to the GM.

Priority should be given to any surviving Dark Legion creatures in the valley itself. If the Investigators did not deal with the Curator in Akteppy, or the Zenithian Soulslayer in the swamp, then they should certainly be considered as candidates for encounters on the way out of the area.

Other encounters can be generated using the Denizens of the Shard table on pg. 96. Or, if the GM has any other Dark Legion creatures in rule books or sourcebooks that they haven't used in an adventure so far, they should feel free to do so now, after all, the Dark Soul is rounding up every asset it has at its disposal in order to claim a victory.

After these encounters, if they have survived, the Investigators will make it to the front lines again. Fighting is still fierce, but humanity is continuing to beat their enemies back. The Investigators are hailed as heroes once more, and escorted through the lines of trench and razor wire to recover from their wounds and traumas. Their adventure ends here, inside a ring of fortifications, at the edge of the ancient seal.

CODA AT THE EDGE OF THE SEAL

So, this is what you fought for, a swirling vortex-like coloured nebulae and scatterings of stars at the heart of an ancient mechanism. You have spoken to Brotherhood Mystics and Cybertronic experimental theorists about the potential of this device, how it could unlock travel to nearby stars, or far flung galaxies. How it could cross to alternate universes in which physics as we know it would barely apply and life, if possible at all, would be experienced in strange conditions and frequencies.

And, standing here at the lip of the swirling chaos, you get a sense of it. Countless existences across dimensions and planes and worlds. All the drama and pain and love and excitement of a myriad alien cultures, their histories and philosophies, their scientific discoveries and their art. Just waiting to be discovered.

And there, in each and every case, an aspect of the Dark Soul, hungry, hateful, and waiting.



DARK LEGION RAMPANT

A SOLAR SYSTEM AT WAR

The Second Dark Legion War has been escalating for nearly two decades by the time the events in the **Dark Eden Campaign** begin, with humanity becoming sorely pressed across many old and new fronts throughout the intervening years.

Citadels on Mars and Venus have required increased dedication from the corporations that are active there; initially with a view to once again shattering the Dark Legion's forces though, as the years advance, this evolves into an act of desperate containment. The Lord Heirs of Mishima also grow increasingly tight-lipped over matters concerning Mercury, where their forces have been waging desperate tunnel warfare against the creatures surging from the Darkways. The Brotherhood itself has been stretched to the breaking point due to their need to maintain a presence on all battlefields whilst simultaneously attempting to curb a rampant increase in Heresy. With humanity on the back foot across the entire solar system, Dark Eden initially appears to be the eye of the storm.

With the forces of Darkness and Light contending across so many battlefronts across the entire solar system, it will be impossible for either side to divert massive numbers of troops towards Dark Eden without risking total collapse. The pyrrhic victory that humanity would experience were they to withdraw all of their forces to defend the Great Seal would be beyond imagining, while the Dark Legion would risk weakening themselves to the point of extinction were they to attempt the same.

Thankfully for humanity, the Ancients and Guardians were savvy enough to erect a Planetary Defence Network that prevents interdimensional travel onto Earth's surface, otherwise the troops around the Great Seal would be swept aside in moments. It is for these reasons and more that the defensive and offensive assets of both sides begin as a trickle onto Dark Eden, but rapidly escalate toward ever-increasing numbers once the shard of Nero strikes Earth.

The entire solar system is at war and events on Dark Eden will bring it all home.

NECROCITIES

The first Necrocity on Dark Eden—the Alpine Necrocity—began self-construction at the outset of the Second Dark Legion War. Its sentry aside, none of the Dark Legion reside there until the war for the Great Seal begins, though prior to this, it is easy to imagine the

streets filled with massed Dark Legion troops ready to wreak havoc across the globe. The mysterious sarcophagus contained within the Dark Soul's Unholiest of Unholies is reputed to be where the Dark Soul will be reborn.

The first Necrocity sprouted as the Second Dark Legion War gathered pace, though others soon followed. By the time of the climatic events of this campaign, the Necrocities have become Dark Citadels on earth and sites of pilgrimage for Heretics looking to pledge themselves to the Dark Soul. Much to the chagrin of his peers, Valpurgius assumes command of the Alpine Necrocity near the campaign's climax and immediately alters its capabilities to mass-produce the fearsome Nasca Razides and line-breaking Gomorrian Emasculators, amongst other hideous creations.

Seemingly empty as they take shape, each Necrocity harbours a deadly hidden sentry that bides its time and protects its city until it fully awakens. The powerful Black Puppeteer Sector Defence Arrays are largely inactive or in maintenance mode unless the Necrocity's alien intelligence or control nodes are threatened; at which point they will activate with a murderous fury.

DARK EDEN HERETICS

The Heretics of Dark Eden are very different to those from off-world. Many have freely worshipped the Dark Soul all their lives—in some cases, for generations. Whole families and tribes may worship the Darkness. With the Dark Soul largely unable to act on Earth and the Apostles effectively cut off, the Heretics of Dark Eden have only just begun to receive their Dark Gifts and powers as the Dark Soul stirs and Nero gets closer.

Nonetheless, they have learnt to hide themselves among both the Tribes and megacorporations. Although they may not yet be as powerful as those from off-world, Dark Eden Heretics have the numbers and in some cases—such as Xeno-Ys of the Sons of Rasputin—the corruption goes right to the top. Some will be drawn to the Battle of the Seal, hiding in the ranks of the Tribes and megacorporations.

DARK LEGION FORCES

The battle for the Great Seal is no overnight affair. Ultimately, the final confrontation can be as long or short a battle as the GM deems necessary, but regardless of this, the Dark Legion will work tirelessly to foil the defences of the forces of Light.

Below are a number of creatures that are new to the forces of the Dark Legion, largely thanks to the tinkering of Valpurgius and the Tekrons of Algeroth. It may seem impossible for these beasts to begin appearing on battlefields if the climax of the campaign lasts only a few short days or weeks, but there is much that the Dark Legion can accomplish in that time thanks to the alternate dimensions and warped realities that they are able to access.

EVER-INCREASING TORRENTS

The Planetary Defence Network acts as a barrier and works to prevent a massive influx of Dark Symmetry onto Earth's surface—particularly in the form of the Apostles—but it cannot prevent smaller rifts being opened once a creature of Darkness is beyond this barrier.

This is the limitation that humanity must contend with and hope to contain. Ever-increasing numbers of Dark Legion troops not only jeopardise the physical components of the Planetary Defence Network, but the resultant exponential presence of raw Symmetry also risks shattering the metaphysical component. Simply put, the more raw Symmetry present beneath the barrier, the weaker the barrier becomes, thereby allowing ever more powerful Dark Legion creatures through until the point of its collapse.

BLACK PUPPETEER SECTOR DEFENCE ARRAYS

A Black Puppeteer prowls its Necrocity looking for intruders. They resemble a huge bio-mechanical spider, an unholy melding of metal and flesh, although where the head would be there is instead a cluster of black crystals. The crystals also appear to provide some form of power to the construct. Their bodies are a boiling mass of necrobionic tendrils that are usually hidden within a swirling Necromosaic cloud, whilst their ranged blast has enough power to shoot craft from the sky.

Their Symmetry Blast attack is able to corrupt technology, but this is not the only tool in their arsenal. They also have the ability to create Twisted Marionettes in the defence of the city, backed up by the powerful Symmetry Amplifiers they carry.



BLACK PUPPETEER SECTOR DEFENCE ARRAY ☠

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13 (+1)	15 (+3)	14 (+3)	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	7	5	3

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

COMBAT	FORTITUDE	MOVEMENT	SENSES	SOCIAL	TECHNICAL
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	2	1	–	1

WOUNDS:

- ◀ **Head 9** ▶ **Torso 14**
- ◀ **Legs 12**
- ◀ **Serious 13** ▶ **Critical 9**
- ◀ **Mental 5**

SOAK: Metallic Alien Tissue: (All 3)

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Tendrils & Claws (melee):** 2+**T**5, Armour Piercing 2, Reach, Vicious 1
- ◀ **Symmetry Blast (ranged):** Range L, 1+**T**6, Munition, 1H, Corruption, Incendiary 2, Mind Breaker, Splash 4, Torrent, Vicious 2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀ **Fast Healing (2)**
- ◀ **Fear (2)**
- ◀ **Grasping**
- ◀ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◀ **Night Vision**
- ◀ **Slave to Symmetry**
- ◀ **Supernatural Agility (3)**
- ◀ **Supernatural Physique (3)**
- ◀ **Supernatural Strength (1)**
- ◀ **Scuttling Climb:** The creature can climb freely on any surface—sheer walls and ceilings included—and is able to reconfigure and alter its form to move through tight spaces easily.
- ◀ **Unliving**
- ◀ **Arachnid Automaton:** The creature's spider-like appearance means that any hits on the Arms location hit a Leg Location instead.
- ◀ **Machine Tyrant:** Any Twisted Marionettes created by the Black Puppeteer's abilities are connected to the Puppeteer itself, and will move with it to create a Squad.
- ◀ **Necromosaic Cloud:** The swirling cloud of Necromosaic pieces make Black Puppeteers hard to hit, as they whirl around the creature, distorting vision. All attacks, both ranged and melee have their difficulties increased by one.

- ◆ **Symmetry Blast:** This is the primary ranged weapon of the Puppeteer. A ray of black radiance blasts the target from the crystals on the Puppeteer's "head". As well as the damage from this, any technology caught in the blast is immediately subjected to corruption check against its Reliability Rating using an amount of corruption equal to the number of Dark Symmetry Icons generated on the damage roll.
- ◆ **Symmetry Amplifier:** Like Harbingers of the Void (see the *Dark Soul* sourcebook), Black Puppeteers have the ability to boost powers and units using their symmetry amplifiers. This makes it easier to use symmetry powers for all those standing near the Puppeteer. Whenever any creature within Close range of a Puppeteer attempts to use a Dark Gift, it may reduce the Difficulty by one without reducing the Gift's effects. Thus, a Gift could be counted as Average D1 for the purposes of using it (the Willpower test, or the number of Dark Symmetry points it costs), but as Challenging D2 for the purposes of its effects.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Grasping Rend:** If a Black Puppeteer Grasps an individual with its tendrils, it may spend three Dark Symmetry points to try and pull the target apart. The victim suffers 2+**T**5 damage with the Vile quality that ignores Soak. The target must also succeed at a Resistance test with a difficulty equal to the number of Dark Symmetry icons rolled or be torn into two pieces, which kills

them instantly.

- ◆ **Puppet on a String:** The Puppeteer hurls a bundle of its necrobionic tendrils to the ground in any zone within Medium range. It can alternatively throw them at any target within Medium range—including those in the air—as a ranged attack that inflicts 1+**T**4 damage with the Knockdown quality. Each bundle creates a Twisted Marionette (Trooper) for one Dark Symmetry point, or an Elite variant for two Dark Symmetry points. The Twisted Marionette appears even if the bundle has been used as a ranged attack.

CARNAL HARVESTER

Much like their Gomorrian Emasculator cousins, the Carnal Harvesters are another example of the Tekrons of Algeroth splicing the DNA of a Razide with the indigenous populations of Dark Eden.

Captured members of the Lutheran Triad and Templars have been dissected and dissembled until the Tekrons are satisfied that they understand the specific genetic mutations that allow these two races to function relatively unhindered on the shattered surface of Earth. These twists and kinks in their genetic makeup have then been inserted into the altered processes that are used to construct Razides, though not without producing unexpected side-effects.



A Carnal Harvester gets a taste of its own medicine.

The resultant creatures that emerged from the growth vats resembled an almost perfect amalgamation of Tribal and Razide characteristics, though they required the insertion of additional necrotechnology in order to ensure their survival. They retained an inherent resistance to the toxic atmospherics of Dark Eden, but also gained a unique twist to the Razides' often boundless rage: a senseless lust for the taste of blood and marrow. The gruesome feasts that they ingest, however, also boost their bodily self-repair functions, allowing them to regenerate from near death to full health in moments.

Because of their berserk penchant for blood, they are most often deployed as long range support for rapid assaults, their punishing Valchek machine-guns laying down withering bursts of suppressive fire as the Gomorrian Emasculators and assault troops close in to rend the enemy to pieces. They then follow closely behind to gorge on the blood and bones of the corpses strewn across the battlefield.

CARNAL HARVESTER ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
14 (+2)	15 (+3)	9	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	9	9	12 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
3	2	2	2	1	–	2	1	1	–	1	–

WOUNDS: 14

SOAK: Bio Armour: (All 3)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Valchek HMG (ranged):** Range M, 1+[†]8, Automatic, 2H, Ammo (Vile), Spread 1
 - ◆ The Valchek machinegun uses the Heavy Weapons skill rather than the Ranged Weapons skill.
- ◆ **Fists and Claws (melee):** 2+[†]7, Knockback, Vicious 1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Fear (1)**
- ◆ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Personal Dark Symmetry (2)**
- ◆ **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (3)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (2)**
- ◆ **Dark Eden Genealogy**

- ◆ **Unstoppable Onslaught:** A Harvester's assault is unrelenting and undeterred by impediments. Its attacks ignore negative penalties for obscured targets.
- ◆ **Visceral Regeneration:** Carnal Harvesters lust for the coppery taste of blood. As a Standard Action, a Carnal Harvester may attempt drink to the blood of a freshly slain corpse—or a living victim if they can pin one down. Unless someone or something prevents the Harvester from drinking the blood, it gains the Fast Healing 2 for the next [†]3 rounds, with Dark Symmetry Icons counting as two rounds. A Carnal Harvester may not gain more Wounds than its initial Wound score with this ability. Creatures witnessing a Harvester gorging itself on the blood of a slain victim must succeed at a Challenging (D2) Willpower test or suffer a mental assault.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Taste of Iron:** Carnal Harvesters are used as ranged support for assaults due to their ingrained thirst for blood; they can often be driven into a frenzy of feeding at the first scent of blood on the winds of a battlefield. When within Close range of a fresh corpse, the GM may spend one or more Dark Symmetry points to drive the Harvester into a feeding frenzy. While in this state, the Harvester gains two additional momentum on a successful melee attack, but it cannot fire any ranged weapon it possesses (though it may still make improvised ranged attacks). It must move directly toward the nearest corpse in order to feed, knocking opponents clear of its path and attacking anyone that attempts to prevent its feast. This rage lasts for a number of rounds equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent, or until the Harvester has used its Visceral Regeneration ability, whichever occurs first.

GOMORRIAN EMASCULATOR

The Tekrons of Algoth are forever tinkering with the genetic structure of their subordinates as they seek to provide further bio or necrotechnological improvements. Along with the Carnal Harvester, the Gomorrian Emasculator is one such attempt at producing a new strain from the building blocks of a Razide.

Gaining access to Dark Eden has allowed the Tekrons to introduce entirely new DNA into the Razide genetic structure, including that of the Rivet Bulls ridden by the Sons of Rasputin, amongst others. The results of this experimentation produced the Gomorrian Emasculator; a cunning creature that exhibits many of the strengths that make Razides so deadly, but is also further resistant to the deadly toxins that permeate the Earth's atmosphere.

Emasculators are able to channel torrents of raw Dark Symmetry through the massive Brainbuster Hammers that they wield, which creates forceful explosions with each hammer blow that will also blast nearby opponents from their feet. The pulse not only taints the air, but also serves to bolster the strength of any Symmetry patterns

APPENDIX 01



Brainbuster hammers, amplified by the Dark Symmetry, make Gomorrian Emasculators heavy hitters indeed!

nearby. A combination of great strength, hunched back, and protruding head presented a perfect weapon platform to the Tekrons, who then designed the dual Agethz Minigun system to complete the creature's armoury. Shaped and melded to each Emasculator's form, the minigun draws from an ammunition feed that converts each round into a Black Bullet by coating them in the internal fluids that maintain the creature's internal organs and systems.

Gomorrian Emasculators are used as shock troops to smash through enemy blockades and trench lines. The devastating minigun array will shred enemy defences shortly before the charging Emasculator punches through and wreaks havoc on the rear lines with bone-shattering blasts from its Brainbuster Hammer.

GOMORRIAN EMASCULATOR ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	9	10	15 (+1)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	1	1	–	1	–	1	–	1	–

WOUNDS: 13

SOAK: Bio Armour: (All 3)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Agethz Minigun (ranged):** Range M, 2+↑9, Automatic, Unwieldy, Ammo (Vile), Spread 2
 - ◆ The Agethz Minigun uses the Heavy Weapons skill rather than the Ranged Weapons skill.
- ◆ **Brainbuster Hammer (melee):** 4+↑10, Knockback, Reach, Spread 1, Stun, Vicious 1
- ◆ **Fists and Claws (melee):** 3+↑7, Knockback

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Fear (2)**
- ◆ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◆ **Night Vision**
- ◆ **Personal Dark Symmetry (2)**
- ◆ **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Personality (1)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (2)**
- ◆ **Dark Eden Genealogy**
- ◆ **Twin-Linked Mayhem:** Gomorrian Emasculators are considered to be dual-wielding their Agethz Miniguns, which allows them to take the Swift Strike combat Momentum spend for one

Momentum, instead of the usual two.

- ◆ **Unstoppable Onslaught:** An Emasculator's assault is unrelenting and undeterred by impediments. Its attacks ignore negative penalties for obscured targets.

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Brainbuster Smash:** The amplification systems of the Brainbuster Hammer enable the Emasculators to channel raw Dark Symmetry into their hammer blows. For one Dark Symmetry point, the Emasculator's next attack with the Brainbuster Hammer gains the Blast (Close) quality. The Dark Symmetry point must be spent and declared before the attack is made. Each attack, including those made with the Swift Strike Momentum spend or other sources, must be paid for separately each time.
- ◆ **Bounding Leap:** By spending one Dark Symmetry Point as a Restricted action, the Emasculator can leap into any zone within medium range, ignoring all obstacles and hindrances shorter than itself.

NASCA RAZIDE

Valpurgius and his Tekrons constantly look for new ways to improve their troops in the service of Algeroth. The Nasca Razides are one of their successful horror stories. Slightly smaller but more resilient than a normal Razide, Nasca Razides are a blue-skinned tactical support for their larger brethren.

Not prone to rage like their larger cousins, they are cunning fighters with the ability to use some of Algeroth's Dark Gifts, although the Ashnagaro HMGs they carry are formidable enough. Nasca Razides sometimes take the field in squads of four, with one carrying a Hellblaster Heavy Mortar.

NASCA RAZIDE ★

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
15 (+2)	15 (+2)	10	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
12	12	12	12 (+2)

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	–

WOUNDS: 13

SOAK: Bio Armour: (All 3)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Fists and Claws (melee):** 3+ ⚡7, Knockback

- ◆ **Ashnagaro Heavy Machine Gun (ranged):** Range L, 1+ ⚡6, Automatic, 2H, Ammo (Armour Piercing 1), Spread 1
 - ◆ The Ashnagaro uses the Heavy Weapons skill rather than the Ranged Weapons skill.
- ◆ **Hellblaster Heavy Mortar (ranged):** Range L, 3+ ⚡8, Munition, Mounted, Armour Piercing 3, Splash 4, Vicious 3
 - ◆ The Hellblaster uses the Gunnery skill rather than the Ranged Weapons skill. Razides can carry this weapon.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◆ **Fast Healing (2)**
- ◆ **Inured to Disease**
- ◆ **Inured to Poison**
- ◆ **Monstrous Creature**
- ◆ **Personal Dark Symmetry (2)**
- ◆ **Slave to Symmetry (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Personality (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Physique (2)**
- ◆ **Supernatural Strength (2)**
- ◆ **Unstoppable Onslaught:** A Razide's assault is unrelenting and undeterred by impediments. Its attacks ignore negative penalties for obscured targets

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◆ **Bounding Leap:** By spending one Dark Symmetry Point as a Restricted action, the Razide leaps into any zone within medium range, ignoring all obstacles and hindrances shorter than it is.
- ◆ **Dark Gifts:** As creatures of Algeroth, Nasca Razides can use the Dark Gifts of Dark Curse, Obfuscation, and Vile Cloud.
- ◆ **Shock & Awe, Nasca-style:** By spending one or more Dark Symmetry points, the Nasca Razide orders another Razide within Close range to immediately fire upon the same target as itself. One Razide is commanded for each point spent. The target of these attacks must make a Willpower test, with the Difficulty equal to the number of Razides attacking. Whether the Razides hit or not, failure inflicts a mental assault and the Rattled X condition, where the rating is equal to the number of Dark Symmetry points spent, to a maximum of 5.



UNITING THE TRIBES

Despite having many interests on Dark Eden, the megacorporations are now less than native in every sense; that right belongs to the Tribes. Humanity clung to existence on Dark Eden in the form of these various groups, although most have changed greatly from the ancestors that left them behind. In fact, some of the smaller Tribes could barely be called human. The **Dark Eden Setting** source book contains comprehensive details of the various Dark Eden Tribes and the force lists provided under the Battle of Avenessa later in this appendix assume that GMs have access to this supplement.

This section describes how some of these tribes can be incorporated into the campaign. Some of these major tribes are large enough to become involved in the Dark Eden campaign (or are already involved). Their motives and diplomatic relations with the megacorporations are discussed, along with ways to recruit their forces.

UNITING THE TRIBES

The Investigators may wish to recruit some of the Tribes of Dark Eden to the fight against the Dark Legion; the Cardinal or another major NPC may be used to suggest them as additional forces, as this is the battle to decide the ultimate fate of humanity, after all. A series of adventures in which the Investigators attempt to sway the leaders of the

various Tribes could form an interesting and enjoyable side-campaign. Additional guidelines to support this scenario are provided below.

TESTING DIPLOMACY

The approach and pitch to each Tribal leader would provide an excellent roleplaying opportunity that could provide great entertainment in the form of honour duels, strange and dangerous rituals, and side-quests to earn favour, for example. If a mechanical system is required, it will normally require a **Dire (D4) Persuade test** (the "Diplomacy Test") by the Investigators to convince each the leaders of each Tribe to fight in the oncoming battle. They can reduce the difficulty by impressing the leaders of each faction through the previously mentioned forms of tribute, with specific suggestions for handling this listed with each Tribe, below. The suggested tribute can be drawn from the characters' own interactions with the Tribes, suggested by NPCs who may have interacted with the Tribes, or offered as the result of any result that is undertaken; which itself may require an Education or Lifestyle test.

The Investigators will be required to represent themselves as part of a faction. The Diplomatic Relations Table should be referenced in order to determine what effect this may have on proceedings.

DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS TABLE

	SONS OF RASPUTIN	TEMPLARS	CRESCENTIA	LUTHERAN TRIAD
Bauhaus	Friendly	Hostile	Neutral	Neutral
Brotherhood	Friendly	Neutral	Friendly	Hostile
Capitol	Neutral	Hostile	Neutral	Neutral
Cartel	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Cybertronic	Neutral	Friendly	Hostile	Hostile
Imperial	Neutral	Hostile	Neutral	Friendly
Mishima	Neutral	Hostile	Neutral	Neutral
Whitestar	Hostile	Neutral	Hostile	Neutral
Crescentia	Neutral	Neutral	—	Neutral
Lutheran Triad	Hostile	Hostile	Neutral	—
Sons of Rasputin	—	Hostile	Neutral	Neutral
Templars	Hostile	—	Neutral	Hostile

The relationships modifiers related to the Diplomatic Relations Table are also listed as follows:

- ◀ **FRIENDLY:** The Diplomacy Test difficulty is reduced by one.
- ◀ **NEUTRAL:** No modification.
- ◀ **HOSTILE:** The Diplomacy Test difficulty is increased by one.

For example, introducing themselves as emissaries of the Cardinal to the leaders of the Lutheran Triad will be met with a Hostile reaction, requiring an **Epic (D5) Persuade test**. Each megacorporation and their relationship with the Tribes is listed, along with their reaction.

THE SONS OF RASPUTIN

The Obersts of the Sons of Rasputin will likely be firmly entrenched during the latter events of the Dark Eden campaign. The Investigators will already have encountered the Sons in their travels, though this will largely have been due to incursions by the Heretical Seven Sons faction. Trust on both sides will be in short supply, particularly if the Sons are considered to be at fault for the kidnapping or death of the Tsarina. The Investigators will likely need to contend with the machinations of the Heretic Oberst Xeno-Ys in order to succeed, although uncovering his devious machinations and defeating the threat will earn them grudging respect with the Sons as a whole. Of course, the Heretical factions within the Sons may also be looking to infiltrate the forces of light.

The Obersts will show no remorse concerning the Tsarina's abduction, though they may grudgingly blame the event on rogue elements and dangerous malcontents within the Sons. The Durand brothers will certainly require the return of their Guardian sister as part of any alliance, which could be a major impediment to relations. Though they will never offer direct assistance in recovering the Tsarina, one or two of the Obersts might be convinced to help locate her.

Though they have an immense war machine perched within a stone's throw of the battle for the Seal, inviting the Sons to the party will be no easy task and will certainly invite an increased risk of sabotage to the war.

Impressing the Sons: One possible way to recruit the Sons is to resort to offering power, wealth, and lands—or at least the trappings of such when dealing with the leadership. This should be negotiated carefully however, as a schism with another Tribe or even Whitestar could ensue as a result.

THE TEMPLARS

Meeting the Templars will be something of a challenge. Travelling to Western Europe to treat with the Ascended Templars is a must for any negotiations, as the Templars act as one. The Investigators will likely receive a cordial, if slightly cold and condescending, response.

Appealing to the Templars' ego can prove beneficial. They believe themselves to be the most evolved race on Dark Eden, so if the other Tribes are involved they would be offended if they were not invited. Anyone exhibiting obvious signs of mutation or wielding supernatural powers may also gain an advantage in negotiations due to the Templars belief in the ascendancy of evolution. They will be intrigued by any Investigator with bionics or implants from Cybertronic, which they view as an alternate form of evolved humanity.

Impressing the Templars: Convincing the Templars to begin a religious crusade against the Dark Ones is the best way forward for the Investigators. Any individual wearing a Cartel symbol provides an advantage; the Cartel symbol can be found across Templar territory as stylized religious icons and bas reliefs. Emissaries could otherwise be asked to carry out a trial in the form of retrieving a holy artefact, the hunting of a Tusk Beast, or perhaps the retrieval of the body of a fallen Templar from a dangerous place (a Sons of Rasputin stronghold or the Alpine Necrocity, for example).

CRESCENTIA

The Crescentian nation—if a loose confederation of nomadic settlements can be termed as such—may be encountered in some small way during the Investigators travels across the former Turkish lands. The Investigators will likely deal with small groups or individuals initially, rather than the communities that travel across Crescentian lands on the backs of the vast, plodding Eclipse Mammoths. Gathering the various communities together will be something of a logistical nightmare for the Investigators, but they should certainly begin this venture by paying a visit to the Khan at his palace within the undergrounds caverns of the Pale Womb.

Garnering the assistance of one or two communities in the fight against the Dark Legion would be a relatively easy task, but convincing the entire Crescentian nation will require the Investigators to sit through a lengthy debate with the Khans and Prophets.

Impressing Crescentia: Any high-ranking Brotherhood member who engages with the Khans and Prophets will have a beneficial effect on recruitment efforts. Offers of technology, such as water recycling devices, mining gear, long-range communications devices, or other useful items, will be welcome. Respect and honour being a cornerstone of the Crescentian culture, any threats or violence within their community by the Investigators will induce a negative effect.

APPENDIX 02

THE LUTHERAN TRIAD

The Three Kins of the Lutheran triad have little to do with the rest of Dark Eden, their battles with the Templars aside. When travelling across Dark Eden, the likeliest point of contact will be the Wrought Kin of the Southern Triad. With no ability to speak vocally and a powerful hatred of the Brotherhood, the Lutheran Triad are a difficult group to recruit to the cause, especially as they view the Cardinal as the ultimate Heretic.

Proof of the Dark Legion's existence may go some way to convincing them to join the battle, especially should any references or links to the Triads' own prophecies be proven. Any use of the Art by Brotherhood agents will be met with hostility.

Impressing the Lutheran Triad: A difficult task at best considering that the entire defence is being overseen by the Brotherhood. Perhaps the best way for the Investigators to impress the Lutheran Triad is to prove their worth and honesty. Imperial agents may be critical in convincing the Triad to send troops to the aid of their cause. Offers of technological items will be met with suspicion.

THE TRIBES AND THE BATTLE OF AVENESSA

It is entirely possible that the Investigators fail to recruit any of the Tribes to their cause. Bringing just one of the Tribes into the fold is no mean feat. In no way will failure diminish their stature amongst the Investigator's own troops, as the task would have been perceived as a herculean one.

If any are convinced to join the forces of humanity, each of the Tribes can also contribute some of their forces to the Investigators assault on the Dark Legion column near Avenessa. These additional forces can be balanced by the option of additional Dark Legion events.

CRESCENTIA

Forces: Ten Brotherbound Warriors (Elites) mounted on Two-tusk Mastodons, Twenty Lamented (Elites) mounted on Two-tusk Mastodons. They are led by a Prophet mounted on an Eclipse Mammoth.

Deployment: The heavy cavalry are best deployed in a similar fashion to the Wolfbane cavalry in areas 2 and 12.

LUTHERAN TRIAD

Forces: Fifty Lutheran Disciples (Ten Elites, Forty Troopers), Ten Greymourn, one Wrought-kin Patriarch.

Deployment: The lightly armoured Lutheran Triad troops are best deployed to any chokepoint. Their best function is as a "flying squad" of reinforcements or infantry support to units such as the Cuirassier.

SONS OF RASPUTIN

Forces: One Hundred Soldat Troopers (Troopers), twelve Soldat Scherwaffe, one Soldat Vicar.

Deployment: As heavy infantry, these troops are best deployed in areas likely to see heavy fighting at the bridges (areas 4, 5 and 9).

TEMPLARS

Forces: One hundred Horde Troopers lead by a Centur. Two hundred Templar Legionnaires

Deployment: The Templar forces are lightly equipped but can be deployed anywhere the Lutherans or Sons of Rasputin are not. Keen to fight the Dark Legion, areas 2, 4, and 9 are ideal placements for them.

DARK LEGION EVENTS

The following events can be used to add further options to the battle of Avenessa.

BETRAYAL AT AVENESSA

This incident only happens should the Sons of Rasputin be located next to Lutheran Triad, Templar, or Whitestar troops.

A Heretic among the Sons of Rasputin ranks sees the opportunity to cause some havoc. He begins shooting at the nearest rival faction. Believing the Sons are attacking them, the other faction responds in turn, ignoring any orders.

Unless the Investigators are nearby they may fail to notice this without a **Challenging (D2) Observation test**. Stopping the hostilities requires a **Daunting (D2) Command test**. Otherwise, neither side stops until completely wiped out.



BIO-GIANT

The ground trembles and an earth-shaking roar heralds the arrival of this titan of the battlefield. An addition to the tail troops of the Dark Legion convoy, the Bio-Giant moves slowly but implacably. If the investigators allow it to reach the town, many of their troops will be annihilated along with the town itself.

It is hard to say if Bio-Giants are actual creatures or a type of vehicle. They are massive, hideous beings that stand about ten meters tall. A patchwork of parts that have been vat-grown in the citadels, they have been created to cause death and destruction. The parts are stitched together by the Tekrons who then infuse them with unholy life. Bio-Giants are often used to spearhead assaults aimed at enemy fortifications. The very ground shakes as they march and their rumbling voices shatter glass. They are slow and clumsy, but they possess an incredible destructive capability. The very sight of these undead abominations is enough to strike fear in the hearts of the bravest of men.

Bio-Giants have a humanoid shape. Their skin is made out of a twisted patchwork of stitches and scar tissue, and, in many cases, large spikes penetrate their skin from within. Their bodies are extremely powerful, and they have been known to overturn and even throw tanks. They are as hardy as they are strong but, luckily for their enemies, they are also incredibly slow witted.

Often their arms have been partially replaced with giant flamethrowers, chain guns, or mortars on one side, and a gigantic chainsaw on the other. Some Bio-Giants, particularly the largest, make use of a metal exo-skeleton, which they need to support their own weight. Some even have a type of howdah on their backs where they carry provisions, ammunition, and other type of equipment troops might need, or even mounted machineguns operated by Necromutants.

BIO-GIANT ☠

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
15 (+10)	15 (+10)	6	16
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
8	8	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE											
COMBAT		FORTITUDE		MOVEMENT		SENSES		SOCIAL		TECHNICAL	
EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC	EXP	FOC
1	1	4	4	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–

WOUNDS:

- ◀ **Head 25**
- ◀ **Arms 27**
- ◀ **Serious Wounds 29**
- ◀ **Mental Wounds 8**
- ◀ **Torso 31**
- ◀ **Legs 29**
- ◀ **Critical Wounds 26**

SOAK: Thick Armour Plate: (Head 7, Torso 8, Legs 7)

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Sweeping Smash (melee):** 1+**5**, 1H, Reach, Knockback, Spread 2, Stun
- ◀ **Colossal Smash (melee):** 11+**7**, 1H, Reach, Knockback, Stun, Vicious 1
 - ◀ **Clumsy:** A Colossal Smash attack requires a Daunting (D3) Close Combat test against any target that is not either a vehicle or a Monstrous Creature
- ◀ **Obliterator Cannon (ranged):** Range M, 3+**9**, Munition, Blast (Close), Incendiary 4, Knockdown, Toxic 4

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- ◀ **Colossal Creature:** A Bio-Giant is an immense creature, some ten metres tall, and terrifyingly strong. Few things can face such a towering creature and survive. A Bio-Giant may treat any creature within Close range as being within Reach. Further, any creature making a close combat attack against a Bio-Giant increases the difficulty by one step, but any creature attempting a ranged attack against the Bio-Giant reduces the difficulty by one step instead. The Bio-Giant inflicts an automatic 1+**3** damage with the Spread 1 and Knockdown qualities on any creature that attempts to make a close combat attack against it and fails.
- ◀ **Cumbersome:** A Bio-Giant is a slow and awkward creature, unable to move quickly due to its sheer size and bulk. It may not take the Sprint Standard Action or any Response Action.
- ◀ **Dark Presence**
- ◀ **Fast Healing (2)**
- ◀ **Fear (4)**
- ◀ **Grasping**
- ◀ **Inured to Disease**
- ◀ **Inured to Pain**
- ◀ **Inured to Poison**
- ◀ **Slave to Symmetry (1)**
- ◀ **Supernatural Physique (10)**
- ◀ **Supernatural Strength (10)**

DARK SYMMETRY SPEND

- ◀ **Bellowing Roar:** The Bio-Giant unleashes a terrifying, deafening roar. As a Restricted Action, it may spend three Dark Symmetry points to unleash this roar. All creatures within Medium range must attempt a Challenging (D2) Willpower test or suffer a mental assault. If one or more Dark Symmetry Icons are generated when rolling to determine how much mental damage is inflicted, that creature is knocked prone with shock and fright.
- ◀ **Thunderous Stomp:** The Bio-Giant may stomp down on the ground, causing the ground to shake and knocking foes aside. The Bio-Giant spends two Dark Symmetry points, and automatically inflicts 1+**5** damage with the Dreadful, Knockdown, and Stun qualities.

FLIGHT OF THE EZOGHOULS

Two of the Ezoghoul take flight, crossing the town. One their way they will strafe any ground troops with their blutarch hand cannons, caracass grenade launchers. Unless stopped, they will reach the East bridge (area 9), attacking any troops deployed there. Once on the ground they will use their combat abilities and Dark Gifts to create as much chaos as they can, then fly to another location.

RAZIDES ON HIGH

Four Nasca Razides in the vanguard (additional to the Dark Legion troops listed) take up positions on one of the three hills (areas 3, 7, 10, or 11). If there are any of the Investigators troops located there, a bloody conflict ensues. Equipped with Hellblasters, they will immediately begin to rain fire down on the nearest position.

TELEPORTING TEMPLARS

The Defiled Avatar teleports into the centre of the Investigators command post accompanied by four Templars of Ilian, who immediately lay about them with lethal precision. These Templars of Ilian are additional to the forces listed on pg. 173.

THE EFFICACY OF THE AMBUSH ADDITIONS

Using the tribes at the Battle of Avenessa adds further modifications to the conditions of victory for the Investigators (see table below).

CONTRIBUTING FACTOR	SEE AREA...	EFFECT
Lutherans deployed at Chokepoint	Any suitable chokepoint	2
Defeating the Templars of Ilian	N/A	1
MBT-42 Battletank is destroyed	N/A	-2
Recruiting Crescentia	N/A	1
Recruiting the Sons of Rasputin	N/A	1
Recruiting the Templars	N/A	1
Recruiting the Lutheran Triad	N/A	2
Investigators fail to intervene in Betrayal at Avenessa	N/A	-2
Crescentians deployed on road to NW	2 – road to NW	2
Sons of Rasputin deployed at W Bridge	4	2
Bio-Giant reaches Avenessa	5	-4
Sons of Rasputin deployed at E Bridge	9	1
Ezoghoul are allowed to touch down beside E bridge	9	-1
Crescentians deployed on road to the E	12 – road to E	1
Templars deployed on road	2, 4, 9	2
The Nasca Razides take and hold the high ground	3, 7 or 10	-2



SUB-PLOTS TO DARK EDEN

Both the **Dark Eden Campaign** and **Dark Eden** sourcebook provide a number of adventure seeds for GMs to consider that can take place in or around the main content. The following text offers some guidance on how to incorporate these sub-plots into the larger campaign.

THE MEGABODY CAMPAIGN

The **Dark Eden Sourcebook** contains the Megabody campaign: a series of connected threads that sets the Investigators trekking across Dark Eden at Cardinal Durand's request in search of the elusive Megabody codes. The threads of the Megabody campaign can provide some serious diversions for the main campaign, to the point that Nero's growing proximity to Dark Eden can add a real sense of urgency to proceedings.

Cardinal Durand is all too aware of events occurring across the solar system outside of Dark Eden during the course of the campaign. Prior to this however — through the workings of the Art — he was also made aware that a deadly vortex of Darkness would threaten the millions of souls calling Luna home as the final battle approached. The impact of a weapon on Earth's surface would have deadly psychic repercussions for the denizens of Luna, but luckily, he was also gifted with a solution.

Buried deep beneath the Luna city surface slumbers the Megabody. These nuclear weapons, once a source of Humanity's damnation and an act of betrayal, could be repurposed with reverse engineered Ancient technology in order to shield the masses. With his fellow Guardians, Peter and the Tsarina, at his side, Durand and the Brotherhood unearthed and disarmed the nuclear warheads, then set to installing replacement technology. The circuitry that connects the myriad Megabody chambers would require too much time and effort to replace, however, which is where the need for the Skulls of the Apocalypse has arisen. Death and betrayal have become hope and salvation.

GMs could consider a parallel game with two separate groups of Investigators. It can make for an interesting cinematic game across multiple different sessions: one group hunting the Megabody keys, the other following the **Dark Eden Campaign** plot, with both intertwining.

RESCUING THE TSARINA

While the Investigators themselves are not strictly in a position to rescue the Tsarina, others in Whitestar are. Valentin Gorev is likely to call upon all the resources he can to follow the Tsarina's captors. It is a political and possibly tactical mistake which could draw off vital Whitestar forces that will be needed at the final battle. Would-be rescuers will, of course, argue that her presence at the battle will be worth the sacrifice.

A chase across the Federation and Europe is likely to ensue, with Whitestar also having to fend off any Sons of Rasputin forces seeking to take advantage of Whitestar's leadership crisis. In a similar vein to the Megabody campaign, this would work well with a second group of Investigators, particularly if the events of the campaign at large outpace the main group's ability to conduct a rescue. In this way, the players may feel they maintain some control over external events.

What of the Tsarina herself? She is currently being kept drugged and masked to prevent her using her powers. Her fate is a point of contention among the Obersts. Some want to use her as a political tool to force Whitestar into concessions or even surrender. Some among the Sons' ranks think she should be killed as soon as possible, as she is too powerful to keep locked up.

The Heretics among them have a darker plan. If they can get to the Dark Legion forces, there is a chance that she can be converted to their cause as a Lost One, a corrupted Ancient fallen to the Darkness; refer to the **Mutants & Heretics** source book).

BLASTING THE NECROCITY

Despite the best efforts of the Cardinal, the Dark Legion has a hidden foundation on Dark Eden: the Necrocities. These Citadels-in-waiting will swing into full production as the final battle intensifies, with Valpurgius assuming command of the Necrocity hidden in the Alps. After the Battle of the Seal, the Dark Legion scatters but will rally behind Valpurgius' walls, where they will dig in and gather their forces.

The awakening of the Necrocities will enable the establishment of secure rifts beyond the bounds of the Nero shard, which will allow Dark Legion reinforcements to take to the battlefield in increasing numbers. Humanity will, of course, attempt bombardment, but much like Citadels, Necrocities can extend far below the surface.

WHY NO NUKES?

Far from having outgrown the need for weapons of mass destruction, Humanity has instead been guided by prudence, for once. The guidance systems for nuclear weapons are prone to Corruption, as are the materials needed to create them, which has seen them become extremely rare since The Fall.

A number of high profile mistakes has seen the Cartel put a moratorium on all nuclear research, as the collateral damage is too high. Although some archaic devices may still exist in megacorporation armouries, the biggest cache of such weapons is the Dead Hand of Whitestar, though these are hidden in secret underground locations known only to those possessing the highest levels of security clearance within the Federation.

If running the Megabody campaign, consider the possibility that all of the devices might not have been found. Triggering any weapons still concealed would devastate large parts of Luna City

After this failure, there is likely only one option: to take a nuclear device and detonate it deep beneath the surface. This will require a group to not only fight their way into a Dark Legion stronghold, but also detonate a nuclear device.

For those with the **Mutants & Heretics** sourcebook, this would make a good end to the campaign, as only those with Guardian DNA or Mutant powers are likely to survive such an assault. Alternatively, Doomtroopers are already familiar with, and trained to assault, Dark Citadels (see the forthcoming **Siege of the Citadel** boardgame).

THE WORM TURNS

GMs may also wish to consider running the campaign from a Dark Legion perspective. Although this might work with one or two of the group operating as embedded Heretics, this will likely work best as a complete Heretical campaign in which they are all attempting to thwart the forces of Light; the potential for internal conflict amongst the players will be too great otherwise.

This will, of course, require a little work on the GMs part, but will be greatly rewarding if a campaign of Darkness and mayhem is something that will be well received by the players. More information on playing Heretics can be found in both the **Dark Soul** and **Mutants & Heretics** sourcebooks.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Dark Eden is a harsh environment. In many places, even the Tribes suffer under the effects of the poisoned air. The Templars and Lutheran Triad have adapted to the poisonous atmospherics and dangerous flora and fauna to some degree, but there are parts of Dark Eden where even they dare not tread.

For normal humans, even those possessing Guardian DNA (see **Mutants & Heretics** sourcebook), travelling without a rebreather or environmental suit is ill-advised. Most of the Tribes (such as the Sons of Rasputin) incorporate rebreathers in their armour, as do the agents of the megacorporations.

Food and water is also a major concern. The majority of water supplies are contaminated or fatally toxic, whilst most of the flora and fauna have adapted to the toxins to some degree, which usually means that they possess dangerous natural defences or their own deadly toxins. Most humans will need to carry their food and water supplies with them.

As Whitestar Resectors will testify, having faulty or damaged equipment in Dark Eden's wilds will likely get you killed. And maybe not just you. More than one convoy has been lost owing to a failure to check equipment or vehicles before use. Corrosion, clogging of equipment, damage or even sabotage mean that most travel across Dark Eden is preceded by very careful checks and double-checks of vehicles, rebreathers and suits. "It's better to lose some time than your life" as Whitestar Resectors often say.



PREGENS

THE EYE OF THE STORM

The events of the **Dark Legion Campaign** take place at the outset of the Second Dark Legion War; although only alluded to, the Investigators breaking free from stasis is also part of an event that releases the Dark Apostles and once more unfetters the full fury of the Dark Legion.

Once the events of the campaign conclude, the Dark Apostles will withdraw in order to take stock of the solar system and properly order their forces. A slow build-up then begins as the Dark Legion lay plans to besiege humanity on every front possible until they either overwhelm them by dint of near limitless numbers, or by locating and unlocking the Dark Soul's prison. Having weathered the initial tempest unleashed during the **Dark Legion Campaign**, the Investigators will therefore experience an uneasy period of slow escalation until the tumultuous events of the Dark Eden Campaign are reached.

A number of ways to handle the passing of the years between the two campaigns have already been suggested at the start of this book (see Timing sidebar on p. 8), with the ultimate decision left to the GM's discretion. For the purposes of continuity between the campaigns, the pregens have also been updated and enhanced to reflect their experiences during the **Dark Legion Campaign** and the years leading up to this one.

AGEING INVESTIGATORS

As already described in the Timing sidebar on p. 8, the Investigators will have aged little thanks to the influence of Human Factor, so it can be assumed that ageing effects will not apply. The decades between both campaigns can be handled with a summary, a series of one-shot adventures, a number of flashbacks during play (which might make excellent narrative spends for Chronicle Points), or in any other way that is agreeable to both players and GM. The four pregens that follow are presented as the survivors of the events of the previous campaign, but GMs should feel free to alter this as required. This can be achieved by adjusting the backstories to suit, awarding any character or pregen not presented here 5000 XP, then working with each player to develop each character's talents and skills across the years.

THE SHADOW YEARS

The Investigators will not have rested lightly during the years between campaigns. There will have been many options available to them at the culmination of the **Dark Legion Campaign** and many factions seeking to garner the Investigators' attention, whether for good or ill. The backstories presented below assume that the Investigators have shunned the limelight and steered clear of the Brotherhood somewhat. Unless events during play have precluded it, they will all likely have the backing of their own corporations in some financial way, which could be in the form of investment bonds, shares in a subsidiary company, or even nameless cheques that arrive in blank envelopes; which at least—in the minds of the executives anyway—allows each corporation the chance to keep a string tied to their favoured son or daughter (in game terms, and unless they are already higher, assume that each pregen has an Earnings Rating of at least 4 and access to Upper class Social Status accommodation somewhere).

Despite pursuing their own agendas in different areas and across planets, all four characters will have remained in contact across the years, which presents Dwane Gascon with the perfect opportunity to gather them all in one place once again. Having largely stayed off the radar where the Brotherhood are concerned, the Investigators will have begun to feel comfortable in the fact that their abilities and escapades have largely been forgotten about. Dwane can therefore be used to disabuse them of this notion and offer Cybertronic as the sheltering arms that they need to truly free their potential.



VENTS

SEASONED INVESTIGATOR



Mikhail "Vents" de Vent is a Luna-born Bauhauser. He spent time serving with the BLEU's and Luna P.D. before being yanked through time and space on a desperate mission to confound the Dark Legion. Losing his friend Vance Ryder to the Order of Unstinting Blood hit him hard, though finding out that the Human Factor had slowed his ageing considerably gave him a new lease of life; he now has ample time to work on confounding the Order. Over the last few decades, he has largely used his charm and influence to stay one step of the Brotherhood while hunting down any clues to the mystery of the Ancients.

TRAITS: Bauhaus, Working Middle, Luna City, Technical "On The Job" Training, Police (Beat Cop) x3

CHRONICLE POINTS: 3

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	9	10
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	10	9	9

SKILLS:

- ◆ **Athletics** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◆ **Close Combat** Expertise 1, Focus—**Education** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◆ **Lifestyle** Expertise 2, Focus—**Mechanics*** Expertise 2, Focus 2
- ◆ **Mysticism*** Expertise 2, Focus 2
- ◆ **Observation*** Expertise 3, Focus 3
- ◆ **Persuade*** Expertise 3, Focus 3
- ◆ **Pilot** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◆ **Ranged Weapons** Expertise 3, Focus 2
- ◆ **Thievery** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◆ **Treatment** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◆ **Willpower** Expertise 3, Focus 2

DAMAGE BONUSES: Melee (+↑1), Ranged (+↑2)

WOUNDS:

- ◆ **Head 3**
- ◆ **Arms 4**
- ◆ **Serious 6**
- ◆ **Mental 9**
- ◆ **Torso 8**
- ◆ **Legs 6**
- ◆ **Critical 4**

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Fatigues, Heavy Civilian Shoulder Pads: (Arms 2, Torso 1, Legs 1)



ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Brass Chakram(ranged):** Range C, 2+↑6, Gruesome, Pious 3, Unforgiving 2
- ◆ **MP-105GW (ranged):** Range C, 1+↑5, Burst, Unbalanced, Ammo (Spread 1)
- ◆ **GW 1055 Grenade Launcher:** Range M, Munition, As Grenade
- ◆ **Baton (melee):** 1+↑4, 1H, Stun

TALENTS

- ◆ **Citizen/Subject of Bauhaus**
- ◆ **Natural Engineer:** Re-roll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll when making a Mechanics test, but keep the new results.
- ◆ **Snap Diagnosis:** Reduce the difficulty of any Mechanics test by one, which may eliminate the need for a test. When an Exploit Weakness action is taken against a device, Snap Diagnosis grants the Armour Piercing 2 quality to his subsequent attack.
- ◆ **Charismatic:** Influence bonus is increased by ↑1
- ◆ **Haggler:** Make an Average D1 Persuade test prior to a Lifestyle test for goods or favours. Each point of Momentum earned provides one additional d20 to the Lifestyle test.
- ◆ **Naturally Charming 1:** A successful Persuade test yields one additional point of Momentum.
- ◆ **Strong-Armed Tactics 2:** Gain one additional d20 to any Persuade or Command test when attempting to intimidate an opponent.
- ◆ **Sharp Senses:** Re-roll one d20 for an Observation test, but keep the new result.
- ◆ **Toss the Room:** Identify all the important clues in an area quickly, requiring a D1 test to search within Reach, or a D2 test to search within Close range.
- ◆ **Sniper:** Re-roll up to two ↑ when attacking with Ranged Weapons, but keep the new results.
- ◆ **Clear Shot:** Reduce the range penalty for firing at a range other than the weapon's optimal range by one, to a minimum of zero.

HUMAN FACTOR ABILITIES

- ◆ **Corruption Soak 4**
- ◆ **Bastion of Purity:** The difficulty of any power used against Vents is increased by two, or he gains two additional d20's to resist the effects of such. Additionally, he gains two Soak to all locations against any resultant damage.
- ◆ **Heightened Empirical Senses:** Vents no longer increases the difficulty of tests because of darkness or other visual impairments such as fog or smoke (although any range penalties still have an affect). Additionally, invisible and hidden people will appear in plain sight, disguises will not fool him, and supernatural powers used to deceive will be obvious to him. Even hidden objects and secret doors are as clear as day, and normally-invisible uses of supernatural powers are apparent.

SUB-PLOTS TO DARK EDEN

EQUIPMENT (INFLUENCE +12)

Basic urban survival kit, basic repair kit, mini-torch, MP-105GW (+2 Reloads), laser sight, two GW-1055 anti-personnel Reloads, leather jacket, baton, handcuffs, Medkit, Brass Chakram, Armoured Car (Luna PD Pursuit Car), twenty Assets.

BRASS CHAKRAM

Vents may choose to increase the difficulty of his next Ranged Weapons test by one to increase the Brass Chakram's range to Medium, though it may not be increased beyond this. The Brass Chakram will not return after every throw; it is considered to be within reach of the target once thrown, regardless as to whether it hits or misses.

Creatures of the Dark Legion that attempt to move within Reach of a Brass Chakram must first pass a Dire D4 Willpower test. Failure results in a Mental Assault that also inflicts two points of Dread. Further, if the creature takes one or more Mental Wounds as a result then it will also gain the Terrified status effect for the next hour, with the Chakram as the object of its fear.



TSUYOSHI REFORMED TRIAD



A towering, broad figure, Tsuyoshi has spent his life beneath the heel of men claiming themselves his better. Years of servitude to monolithic Keiretsu and vainglorious Samurai made him bitter and contemptuous of the powerful. Campaigning alongside Vents and the others allowed him to shake his reputation as a criminal thug to and become known as a loyal and dependable comrade. He has put the gifts provided by the Human Factor to good use in learning the ways of humanity's enemies, whilst the loss of two of his friends fuels his hatred of Heretics in particular and drives him to destroying them wherever they might be found.

TRAITS: Mishima, Unemployed Underclass, Heritage Foothold, Traits: Grew Up On The Streets, Military (Basic), Triad Enforcer

CHRONICLE POINTS: 3

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
13	10	10	9
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	8	9	6

SKILLS:

- ◀ **Acrobatics*** Expertise 3, Focus 2
- ◀ **Athletics*** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◀ **Close Combat*** Expertise 4, Focus 3
- ◀ **Mysticism*** Expertise 2, Focus 2
- ◀ **Observation** Expertise 1, Focus–**Persuade** Expertise 2, Focus–**Ranged Weapons** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◀ **Resistance** Expertise 2, Focus 2
- ◀ **Stealth** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◀ **Survival*** Expertise 3, Focus 1
- ◀ **Thievery** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◀ **Unarmed Combat** Expertise 2, Focus 2
- ◀ **Willpower** Expertise 2, Focus 2

DAMAGE BONUSES: **Melee** (+13), **Ranged** (+11)

WOUNDS:

- ◀ **Head** 4
- ◀ **Arms** 5
- ◀ **Serious** 7
- ◀ **Mental** 9
- ◀ **Torso** 9
- ◀ **Legs** 7
- ◀ **Critical** 4

SOAK: **Hardback armour:** (Head 2, Arms 1, Torso 2, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◀ **Tambu "Airbrush" (ranged):** Range C, 1+16, Semi-Automatic, 2H, Knockdown, Spread 1
- ◀ **Two Daggers (melee):** 1+16, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Darkslayer, Deadly Accuracy, Hidden 1
- ◀ **Unarmed Strike (melee):** 1+15, 1H
- ◀ **Brass Knuckles (melee):** 1+16, 1H, Vicious 1

TALENTS

- ◀ **Citizen/Vassal of Mishima**
- ◀ **Hardy:** Re-roll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll when making a Resistance test, but keep the new results.
- ◀ **Just a Scratch:** Regain an additional Light Wound when resting or recovering naturally.
- ◀ **Resilient:** When an effect has been triggered that requires a Resistance test to avoid a status condition, the difficulty of the test to avoid the negative effects is reduced by one, which may eliminate the need for a test.
- ◀ **No Mercy:** Re-roll up to 3 1 when making a close combat attack, but keep the new results.
- ◀ **Deflection:** Do not pay a Dark Symmetry point in order to take a Parry Response Action.
- ◀ **Riposte:** After successfully executing a Parry Response Action, immediately pay a Dark Symmetry point to make a melee attack against the parried foe.
- ◀ **Martial Artist:** Re-roll up to 2 1 when making an unarmed combat attack, but keep the new results.

- ◆ **Quick Grab:** Reduce the cost of the Disarm Momentum spend by one. Additionally, spend one further Momentum to gain hold of the item the target dropped.
- ◆ **Spiritual Understanding:** Re-roll one d20 for a Mysticism test, but keep the new result.
- ◆ **Dark Knowledge:** Reduce the difficulty of any Mysticism test to identify a creature or power of Darkness by one, which may eliminate the need for a test.
- ◆ **Dark Defence:** During combat with a Heretic or creature of Darkness, take a Standard Action to attempt an Average D1 Mysticism test. If successful, gain a free Response Action against an attack from a Heretic or creature of Darkness. Each Momentum spent nets an additional Response Action, all of which may be used at any point before the end of combat.

HUMAN FACTOR ABILITIES

- ◆ **Corruption Soak 4**
- ◆ **Fury of the Ancients:** All of Tsuyoshi's attacks gain the Pious 2 quality. Additionally, following a successful attack, each extra success generates two points of Momentum instead of one when made against a creature of the Dark Legion.
- ◆ **Purification:** He has the Inured to Disease and Inured to Poison abilities, is immune to the Toxic quality and cannot suffer Vile wounds (treat each Dark Symmetry Icon rolled against him by a Vile weapon as one point of damage instead).

EQUIPMENT

Battered hip flask, stylish and fashionable clothing, basic Medkit, Tambu "Airbrush" Shotgun, two daggers, brass knuckles, sports car, twenty Assets.

Both of Tsuyoshi's daggers have the following additional qualities:

- ◆ **Darkslayer:** The weapon gains the Pious 2 quality, and the wielder gains an additional point of Corruption Soak while wielding one or more weapons with this property.
- ◆ **Deadly Accuracy:** When spending Momentum to alter the hit location struck, adjust the location roll by one additional point per Momentum spent. In addition, the weapon gains the Vicious 2 quality.

NIX HIGH-OCTANE SNIPER



Nicholas "Nix" Cullen is a myth, but a convincing one. Whatever the truth of him, he is a deadly shot and quiet as a ghost when he wants to be. Although he never discusses his past, his cheery demeanour and thrill seeking nature have endeared him to his

companions. The Human Factor has not only boosted his previously slender physique, but also driven his previously razor-sharp reflexes to preternatural levels. It was Nix who took care of the abomination that had once been Angelica Kramer after she sacrificed herself to the Venusian Necromakina to save everyone. An octane-fuelled deathwish is his means of dealing with the responsibility he feels over this.

TRAITS: Imperial, Working Middle, Heritage Hotspot, Military Academy, Intelligence Operative, Blood Beret

CHRONICLE POINTS: 3

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
9	9	9	11 (2)
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
10	8	11	9

SKILLS

- ◆ **Acrobatics** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◆ **Athletics** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◆ **Close Combat** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◆ **Education** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◆ **Heavy Weapons** Expertise 1, Focus—**Insight** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◆ **Linguistics** Expertise 1, Focus—**Mechanics** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◆ **Mysticism*** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◆ **Observation** Expertise 2, Focus 2
- ◆ **Pilot*** Expertise 3, Focus 2
- ◆ **Ranged Weapons*** Expertise 4, Focus 3
- ◆ **Stealth*** Expertise 3, Focus 3
- ◆ **Thievery** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◆ **Willpower** Expertise 2, Focus 2

DAMAGE BONUSES: Melee (+↑1), Ranged (+↑2)

WOUNDS:

- ◆ **Head 3**
- ◆ **Arms 4**
- ◆ **Serious 6**
- ◆ **Mental 11**
- ◆ **Torso 8**
- ◆ **Legs 6**
- ◆ **Critical 4**

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Fatigues, Reinforced leather jacket: (Arms 1, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ◆ **Aggressor Pistol (ranged):** Range Close, 3+↑6, Burst, Unbalanced, Close Quarters
- ◆ **SR-50 Sniper Rifle (ranged):** Range Long, 4+↑7, Semi-Automatic, Unwieldy, Unforgiving 3
- ◆ **Dagger (melee):** 1+↑3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 1

SUB-PLOTS TO DARK EDEN

TALENTS

- ◀ **Citizen/Kinsman of Imperial**
- ◀ **Sniper:** Re-roll up to 4 ⚡ when making an attack with a ranged weapon, but keep the new results.
- ◀ **Clear Shot:** Reduce the penalty for firing at range other than the weapon's optimal range by one, to a minimum of zero.
- ◀ **Precise Targeting:** Momentum spent for the Called Shot benefit on an attack made with the Ranged Weapons skill shifts the hit location roll by up to two points.
- ◀ **Through and Through 2:** The Secondary Target Momentum spend only costs one Momentum when using Ranged Weapons. Further, the character can select up to two additional targets.
- ◀ **Scout:** Re-roll one d20 when making a Stealth test, but keep the new result.
- ◀ **Living Shadow:** Add two d20s to the Stealth pool when attempting to remain unseen or unnoticed.
- ◀ **Sharp Senses:** Re-roll one d20 when making an Observation test, but keep the new result.
- ◀ **Ace:** Re-roll one d20 when making a Pilot test, but keep the new result.
- ◀ **Push the Envelope:** Dark Symmetry points paid when attempting to increase the speed or performance of an airborne vehicle provide two dice instead of one.
- ◀ **Born to the Wheel:** Decrease the difficulty for Pilot tests using ground-based vehicles by one, to a minimum of one.
- ◀ **Stubborn:** Re-roll one d20 when making a Willpower test, but keep the new result.
- ◀ **Irrepressible:** Recover two Light or Mental Wounds for each Momentum spent when taking the Shake It Off action.

HUMAN FACTOR ABILITIES

- ◀ **Corruption Soak 4**
- ◀ **Proliferation:** Nix has gained the Supernatural Awareness (2) ability.
- ◀ **Transcendence:** Nix has the Inured to Pain special ability. Additionally, he may use Recover as a Free Action and Shake It Off as a Restricted Action. Finally, he adds one Momentum to any Treatment or Medicine test made to heal him.

EQUIPMENT

Mini-torch, modest wardrobe, Aggressor handgun (+2 Reloads), fake ID, disguise kit, SR-50 Sniper Rifle (+2 Reloads), silencer, advanced sight (IR, night vision, or telescopic as a Restricted Action), dagger, reinforced leather jacket, civilian Jetcycle, twenty Assets.



ARSENI SECURITY EXPERT



An engineer turned criminal of Bauhaus descent, Arseni Daniela combines quality and precision with flair and ingenuity. Brash and effervescent prior to her torture at the hands of the Duoki Blood Worms, she has become much more grim and focussed since. The loss of her good friend Angelica, who she had considered to be her own personal redeemer, also struck her deeply. Inspired by her dead friend's memory, Daniela has now turned her stealth and Human Factor enhanced prowess towards trying to understand what has happened to her team on a genetic level by stealing secrets and test results from corporate hands.

TRAITS: Microcorp (Bauhaus), Working Middle, Luna City, Technical Pre-Career Training, Technical (Repairman), Criminal (x2)

CHRONICLE POINTS:

ATTRIBUTES			
STRENGTH	PHYSIQUE	AGILITY	AWARENESS
8	10	10	11
COORDINATION	INTELLIGENCE	MENTAL STRENGTH	PERSONALITY
9	11	8	9

SKILLS

- ◀ **Acrobatics** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◀ **Close Combat** Expertise 2, Focus 2
- ◀ **Education** Expertise 1, Focus–**Lifestyle*** Expertise 2, Focus–**Mechanics*** Expertise 3, Focus 3
- ◀ **Medicine** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◀ **Mysticism*** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◀ **Observation*** Expertise 3, Focus 2
- ◀ **Pilot** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◀ **Ranged Weapons** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◀ **Sciences** Expertise 2, Focus 1
- ◀ **Space** Expertise 1, Focus–**Stealth** Expertise 2, Focus 2
- ◀ **Survival** Expertise 1, Focus–**Thievery** Expertise 3, Focus 1
- ◀ **Treatment** Expertise 1, Focus 1
- ◀ **Willpower** Expertise 3, Focus 2

DAMAGE BONUSES: Ranged (+⚡2)

WOUNDS:

- ◀ **Head** 3
- ◀ **Arms** 4
- ◀ **Serious** 6
- ◀ **Mental** 8
- ◀ **Torso** 8
- ◀ **Legs** 6
- ◀ **Critical** 4

SOAK: Ballistic Nylon Fatigues, Medium Military Shoulder Pads: (Arms 2, Torso 1, Legs 1)

ATTACKS:

- ▶ **CAR-24 Close Assault Rifle (ranged):** Range Close, 1+⚡6, Burst, 2H
- ▶ **GL-240 Grenade Launcher (ranged):** Range Medium, Munition, As Grenade
- ▶ **Pocket Knife (melee):** 1+⚡3, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Hidden 2
- ▶ **Tiger Claw Glove:**
 - ▶ **Pounce (ranged):** Range C, 2+⚡5, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Close Quarters, Gruesome 1, Vicious 1
 - ▶ **Pin (melee):** 2+⚡3, 1H, Parry 1, Vicious 1
 - ▶ **Rake(melee):** 2+⚡5, 1H, Armour Piercing 1, Duelling, Gruesome, Parry 2, Vicious 1

TALENTS

- ▶ **Under the Radar**
- ▶ **Natural Engineer:** Re-roll any dice that did not generate a success on the initial roll when making a Mechanics test, but keep the new results.
- ▶ **Grease Monkey:** When attempting a repair, each point of Momentum spent to reduce the repair time divides the time taken by four, rather than halving as normal.
- ▶ **Jury Rig:** Make an Average D1 Mechanics test to repair a device temporarily if required components are unavailable. On success, it will function normally for one hour. Each point of Momentum earned on the test can be spent to add an additional hour of function.
- ▶ **Design Savant 1:** When designing or modify an existing piece of equipment, she may reduce the difficulty of the Mechanics test by one. This may eliminate the need for a test.
- ▶ **Sharp Senses:** Re-roll one d20 when making an Observation test, but keep the new result.
- ▶ **Life of Crime:** When at least one success is generated on a Persuade or Education test to relate to or interact with the criminal element, immediately roll one additional d20 and add the result to the test.
- ▶ **Bypass Security:** Re-roll up to three d20 any time she attempts to pick or overcome a security system, whether mechanical or electronic. The new results must be accepted.
- ▶ **No Mercy:** Re-roll one ⚡ when making a close combat attack, but keep the new result.
- ▶ **Operator:** Re-roll one d20 when making a Sciences test, but keep the result.
- ▶ **Biologist:** When paying Dark Symmetry Points to recall information about or identify an organism, gain two d20 instead of one.
- ▶ **Scout:** Re-roll one d20 when making a Stealth test, but keep the new result.
- ▶ **Disguise:** Gain two Momentum for each success gained on a Stealth test to create a disguise, instead of one.
- ▶ **Impersonation:** She may substitute Stealth for Command, Persuade, or Education when impersonating someone.

TIGER CLAW GLOVE

A weapon of Ancient design, this glove is essentially a metal gauntlet (for the right hand) which is studded with spikes. The metal glove itself is made of a fine but dense mail which offers a surprising amount of flexibility as well as excellent protection.

An **Average D1 Mysticism** test is required to extend or retract the claws (Rake or Pin), or a **Challenging D2 Mysticism** test to use the Pounce ability.

Daniela gains the Supernatural Strength 1 and Grasping special abilities whilst wielding the glove. The Tiger Claw's Pin attack may be used to attack an opponent that has been grabbed. When used as a ranged attack with the claws extended, the Tiger Claw can grab and pin its opponent as though it had been wielded in melee.

HUMAN FACTOR ABILITIES

- ▶ **Corruption Soak 4**
- ▶ **Proliferation:** Daniela has gained the Supernatural Agility (2) ability.
- ▶ **Unnatural Celerity:** Daniela has become possessed of heightened speed and reactions. She may perform Restricted Actions as Free Actions. Additionally, once per round, she may pay one Dark Symmetry point to perform an extra Standard Action. Finally, she need not pay a Dark Symmetry point for the first Response Action taken during any round (additional Response Actions from any source still require payment).

EQUIPMENT

Basic urban survival kit, mini-torch, advanced tool kit, CX-Multitool, breaking and entering kit, flawless fake ID, CAR-24 (+2 Reloads), two GL-240 anti-personnel Reloads, pocket knife (slicer), Tiger Claw Glove (from *Dark Legion Campaign*), twenty Assets.



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HUMANITY'S LAST STAND

The Second Dark Legion War has escalated to encompass the entire solar system, with humanity hard-pressed to hold back the swelling tide of Darkness. A surge of Heresy has stretched the Brotherhood to the breaking point, while the megacorporations are throwing a rising body count into the ever-hungry maw of the Dark Legion. A slim chance of salvation leads the Cardinal to call upon the heroes of yesteryear and task them with uncovering Ancient technology that will turn the tide of war in humanity's favour. Technology that is hidden on humanity's former home, Dark Eden.

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