The 2016 Gongfarmer's Almanac:
A Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG Zine

Written, Illustrated, Edited and Produced by the DCC RPG G+ Community

CRAWLJAMMER & INTERDIMENSIONAL TRAVEL
VOLUME 6 OF EIGHT BOOKLETS

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THE
TECHNO-NECROMANCER
A CHARACTER CLASS FOR DCC/CRAWLJAMMER
by Tim Callahan

You have learned the secrets of mechano-mystical artifacts and use that knowledge to penetrate the veil between the life and death. But you are as much a cleric as you are wizard and alchemist: you manipulate the mechanisms of life itself, touching the divine every time you thrust your hand into the stone-cold hearts of the dead. Techno-necromancers use a combination of thaumaturgically-inspired crafting and arcane evocations to create awesome devices and animated creature-constructs powered by the unstable energies of the phlogiston flux. By understanding the differences between life and death, animate and inanimate and science and alchemy, you move beyond simple conceptions of "good" and "evil" to achieve your destiny as... a techno-necromancer!

Most techno-necromancers remain hidden in their lab-crypts and science-temples; the few who emerge into the world are the curious sort. With hordes of cyberzombies and skelematons these intrepid researchers assault long-lost, floating temples and unearth the truth behind the legends of the ancients to further your corrupted reach. Adventuring techno-necromancers thrive on exploration and discovery, seeking new spells and technologies for their profane rites. Investigators into the mysteries of man, machine, and the metaphysical membranes between the worlds, the techno-necromancer is rarely appreciated for his vile techniques, but is nonetheless a useful addition to any band of adventurers seeking gold, glory, and survival.

Hit points: A techno-necromancer gains 1d4 hit points at each level.

Weapon training: Uncovering lost crypts and unearthing alien corpses lead techno-necromancers into situations where some facility with weaponry is useful. Techno-necromancers are trained in the hammer, laser sword, longsword, mace, and short sword for melee combat and the laser pistol and shortbow for ranged attacks. Techno-necromancers may wear any armor, though the check penalty affects spellcasting, so they prefer to craft their own custom mysti-mechanical means of protection whenever possible.

Alignment: Defying nature and the order of the universe, techno-necromancers are devotees of Chaos. This does not mean that they are evil, necessarily, but their practice of creating animated corpse-constructs through technomagic is a pure violation of everything held sacred by the galactic agents of Law such as Paladins, as well as those devoted to Neutrality, such as Druids. All techno-necromancers are of chaotic alignment, and any change

in their alignment (due to divine intervention, exotic helms, or the like) cause them to lose all spellcasting abilities (until or unless their alignment reverts to chaotic).

Techno-magical Accessory: Techno-necromancers are constantly tinkering, trying to meld technology and magic in innovative, seemingly impossible ways. At level 1 and each time the techno-necromancer attains a new level, one of many ongoing projects comes to fruition in the form of a usable techno-magical accessory. What usable accessory emerges can be determined by rolling on **Table TN-3**. (Alternately, judges may work with players to select or custom-create something appropriate to their campaign.) At first level, a d12+1 is rolled to determine the result. At each level above 1st, a d12+character level is rolled. Unless otherwise noted, for the purposes of breakage checks, each techno-magical accessory created in this way is considered to have an AC of 15 and 5 hp. Once an accessory is destroyed, it cannot be repaired.

Magic: Through a bizarre commingling of self-experimentation, insight into the divine providences of life and death and natural talent, techno-necromancers possess innate spellcasting power. They need no spellbooks, and though some necromancer-specific incantations and rites may be recorded for posterity, techno-necromancers cannot "read" magic in the typical sense. They cannot cast spells from wizard scrolls or spell books and they cannot identify arcane runes except for runes in which necromancy is central to the magic that created them.

Techno-necromancers' innate spellcasting power channels certain kinds of spells and the list of spells accessible by the techno-necromancer is found in **Table TN-2**. **Table TN-1** indicates the number of spells available per level. All spells are cast with an Action Die determined by level (see **Table TN-1**) then modified by Caster Level and Intelligence. Thus a level 2 techno-necromancer with a 15 Int would cast a spell with a roll of a d20+3.

Like wizards, techno-necromancers may spellburn to increase any spell check roll by the same number as the number of points deducted from physical abilities prior to making the roll. But a Techno-necromancer's access to spellburn comes from his connection to the divine mystery of life and death. Thus, in order to regain ability points lost to spellburn, a techno-necromancer must perform a necromantic sacrifice: kill a living creature and bathe in its blood in a four-hour-long ritual. For each HD of the creature killed, the techno-necromancer regains 1d4 ability points that may be distributed among the points lost to spellburn. The ritual only works once per day, and only one creature's blood may be used in any single ritual.

Non-dependence on Techno-artifacts for Spellcasting: Techno-necromancers' fluency with magic comes from some combination of natural talent, extended exposure to arcane alchemies and metaphysical insight. Thus, techno-necromancers, unlike their "cousins" the technomancers, do

NOT need linked artifacts to cast spells. At the discretion of the judge or if indicated on **Table TN-3**, some techno-magical accessories can amplify techno-necromancers' spellcasting by acting as linked artifacts.

Cyberanimate Dead: All techno-necromancers have the ability to animate the dead using "inspired technology," creating grotesque, mechanically-enhanced mockeries of life. Manufacturing an undead construct requires at least one partially-intact corpse and at least 1 turn of uninterrupted concentration per corpse. The process involves the intricate attachment and integration of various magic-mechanical devices and enhancements to the corpse and then a final fueling of the constructed cyber-corpse with necrotically-synthesized anti-life force.

Cyberanimation acts like a spell: the techno-necromancer performs a spell check with all relevant bonuses and modifiers on **Table TN-4: Cyberanimate Dead**. Though this class ability does not require a "spell slot," it may be lost for the day like any other spell; spellburn may be used to "recall" it so it can be cast after being lost. For this purpose the ability is treated as if it were a level 2 spell (i.e. 2 points of spellburn may allow a single use of the ability if it was otherwise lost for the day).

Cyberanimated beings have no will of their own, no memories of their past, and no ability to function outside of the control of the techno-necromancer. They are, in effect, programmed meat puppets rather than traditional un-dead and are thus unaffected by spells or clerical abilities that would affect un-dead types.

Luck: Techno-necromancers choose to apply their Luck modifier either to their Will saving throw bonus or to their Cyberanimate Dead spell checks. This application of Luck is determined when the character reaches level 1 and is set for the life of the character.

Languages: A techno-necromancer knows Common. If the character has a positive Int modifier, then he knows one additional language for each point of the modifier.

Action dice: A techno-necromancer can use his action dice for attack rolls, spell checks or checks for spell-like abilities (e.g. Cyberanimate Dead).

TABLE TN-1: TECHNO-NECROMANCER

Level	Attack	Crit Die/ Table	Action Dice	Spells Known	Max Spell Level	Ref	Fort	Will
1	+1	1d6/I	1d20	2	1	+0	+0	+2
2	+1	1d8/I	1d20	3	1	+0	+1	+2
3	+2	1d10/I	1d20	4	2	+1	+2	+2
4	+2	1d12/I	1d20	5	2	+1	+3	+2
5	+3	1d14/I	1d20+1d14	6	3	+2	+3	+3
6	+3	1d8/II	1d20+1d16	7	3	+2	+4	+3
7	+4	1d10/II	1d20+1d20	8	4	+2	+4	+4
8	+4	1d12/II	1d20+1d20	9	4	+3	+4	+5
9	+5	1d14/II	1d20+1d20	11	5	+3	+5	+5
10	+5	1d16/II	1d20+1d20+1d14	13	5	+4	+5	+6

TABLE TN-2: SPELLS AVAILABLE TO TECHNO-NECROMANCER, BY LEVEL
W = from Wizard list   C = from Cleric list

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
1	Cantrip (W)	Cure paralysis (W)	Animate dead (C)	Cause earthquake (C)	Mind purge (W)
2	Chill touch (W)	Curse (C)	Breathe life (W)	Sanctify/ desecrate (C)	Replication (W)
3	Choking cloud (W)	Detect invisible (W)	Consult spirit (W)	Vermin blight (C)	Weather control (C)
4	Comprehend languages (W)	ESP (W)	Demon summoning (W)	Wizard sense (W)	Whirling doom (C)
5	Darkness (C)	Invisibility (W)	Eldritch hound (W)		
6	Detect evil (C)	Knock (W)	Exorcise (C)		
7	Detect magic (W)	Levitate (W)	Fly (W)		
8	Find familiar (W)	Lotus stare (C)	Lightning bolt (W)		
9	Magic missile (W)	Mirror image (W)	Planar step (W)		
10	Magic shield (W)	Phantasm (W)	Remove curse (C)		
11	Paralysis (C)	Ray of Enfeeblement (W)	Speak with the dead (C)		
12	Sleep (W)	Scare (W)	Slow (W)		
13	Spider climb (W)	Shatter (W)	Transference (W)		
14	Word of Command (C)	Spider web (W)			

TABLE TN-3: TECHNO-NECROMANCER ACCESSORIES
Acquires new accessory at each level – roll 1d12+caster level
Reroll if caster already has an intact version of the accessory rolled)

2   **Helm of seeing:** This ornate steel helmet adds +1 to all Int checks, including spellchecks.

3   **Additional arm:** This extra bio-mechanical appendage adds an additional action die that may be used each round. Action die is equal to the highest action die available to the character at that level -3d.

4   **Sphere of unmaking:** This small silver sphere simulates the casting of *dispel magic* at -1d to the spell check. Takes 1 turn to recharge after each use. Destroyed if a natural 1 is rolled on the spell check.

5   **Regeneration choker:** This leather choker laced with cybercircuitry allows the techno-necromancer to regain ability points lost to spellburn at the rate of 1 point per round, without the need for any additional rituals.

6   **Retractable claws:** These weapons provide +2 to hit, deal 1d6 damage. Type of claws (roll 1d4): (1) fingernail blades, (2) two-pronged wrist blades, (3) single wide blade from back of hand, (4) curved forearm blades

7   **Shoulder enhancements of the prophet:** This armor of the upper torso and shoulders provides +2 AC without any check penalty. Specific attempts to destroy this portion of armor must hit AC 18 and deal 10 damage to these shoulderpads. Appearance (roll 1d6): (1) green gaping demon maw, (2) gray gravestones on brown armor, (3) red spikes, (4) golden eyeballs on black armor, (5) crystal shards, seemingly inhabited by the souls of the dead, (6) bleached, serrated bones.

8   **Girdle of devouring:** This wide belt with a mechanical mouth may consume flesh of the recently-deceased (within the past hour) to heal the techno-necromancer 1d6 hp. May be used once per character level per hour.

9   **Reinforced arm:** This banded-metal arm guard adds +1 to AC with no check penalty. May be used as a melee weapon at +1 to hit, dealing 1d6+character level damage.

10   **Laser sword:** This cylindrical hilt can spring to life with a glowing blade at +1 to hit, dealing 1d8+1 damage. Color of blade (roll 1d6): (1) blue, (2) green, (3) red, (4) purple, (5) white, (6) prismatic.

11   **Staff of Despair:** This skull-capped staff provides an aura of sadness and despair which provides psychic protection for the techno-necromancer. All melee attacks against the character are performed at -1d.

12   **Gauntlet of command:** This leather-and-metal glove imbues character with knowledge of *word of command* at an additional +1 spell check. If *word of command* is already known when this accessory is rolled, the spell check is at +2.

13   **Knuckles of detonation:** This strip of studded metal around the hand provides "unarmed" melee attacks at +1 to hit and damage is variable (roll 1d6 if the strike is successful): (1-2) 1d4 damage, (2-4) 1d6 damage, (5) 1d12 damage, (6) 1d16 damage and the target is knocked back 10 feet unless a Fort save is made vs. the attack roll.

14   **Hood of the fallen:** This executioner-style hood is laced with powerful technomagic that provides an additional +1d to any attempts to cast *darkness, sleep, ray of enfeeblement, scare*, or *animate dead*.

15   **Skull of the outer reaches:** This floating, human-sized green skull hovers around the techno-necromancer and may blast darkforce energy beams from its three eye-sockets as an additional d20 action each round, at +3 plus the characters Int modifier, dealing 1d20 necrotic damage. The missile fire blasts have a short range of 100', medium range of 180', and a long range of 250'.

16 **Eye implant:** One of the character's eyes has been replaced by this artificial construct. It provides *darkvision* at a range of 100', +2 to all missile fire attacks and spell checks at a range farther than touch. Eye appearance (roll 1d4): (1) yellow serpent eye, (2) green cat eye, (3) white eye, pulsating with energy, (4) black eye, speckled with throbbing stars.

17 **Gravesword:** This black, rune-and-circuit-laced two-handed sword feels natural in the hands of the techno-necromancer. While in possession of this sword, the character gains an additional +1d6 to his or her Strength ability score (determined when this accessory is rolled) and may attempt to control any un-dead in the vicinity. This effect simulates the cleric's *turn unholy* class ability, using that table to determine the effect. Any result of "T" do not turn the un-dead, but instead place the un-dead under the character's total control for the corresponding duration. No additional action is needed to maintain the control as long as the Gravesword remains intact.

18 **Demontooth Necklace:** This primitive-looking necklace contains high-potency technomagic granting the *demon summoning* spell at +1d. If the *demon summoning* spell is already known when this accessory is rolled, the character instead gains +1d+2 to cast that spell but suffers major corruption the first time it is cast.

19 **Mirrormask of the departed:** This white cloth mask looks like bandages but can reflect spell-based attacks back upon the original caster. Any offensive spells directed at the character may be redirected toward the caster if the techno-necromancer successfully rolls a Will save vs. the spell check or attack roll. The character may "burn" hit points prior to the roll as an enhancement, and for each hit point spent, add +1 to the saving throw roll. If the spell is successfully redirected, it resolves against the original caster as determined by the original roll.

20 **The Reaper's Scythe:** This menacing techno-magical scythe may be used as a two-handed weapon at +2 to hit and dealing 1d16+2 damage. In addition, the weapon grants +1d spell check to *paralysis, curse, animate dead, cause earthquake, whirling doom*, and *cyberanimate dead*.

TABLE TN-4: CYBERANIMATE DEAD
Works like a spell (does not require a spell slot) - requires a spell check per normal for this class.

Level: Class Ability   **Range:** 10'   **Duration:** varies   **Casting Time:** 1 turn per corpse (multiple corpses may be attempted with a single check)   **Save:** N/A

General	The caster attaches strange devices and arcane circuitry to the corpse of a dead humanoid or the carcass of a dead animal. After performing tech-necrotic magic for one turn per corpse or carcass, the creatures return to a mechano-mockery of life under the command of the caster. The mechano-magically animated creatures resemble un-dead in appearance, but are constructs, and therefore unaffected by any spells or abilities that affect un-dead. Once animated, the creatures follow the commands of the caster until they are destroyed or the spell ends. Controlling the creatures is telepathic and does not require an action by the caster. Regardless of the result rolled, the number of resurrected creatures can never exceed the number of corpses/carcasses used in the ritual.
Manifestation	Roll 1d4: (1) a flickering crown of ashen serpents emerges from the caster's head during the ritual as the corpses float around him, (2) crackles of energy spark from the mechanical contraptions on the heads of each corpse, jolting them to life, (3) the caster levitates above the corpses as tears of blood stream down his face and fall into the cyber-devices affixed to the shoulders of the corpses, (4) the caster crawls beneath the pile of corpses as if repairing the axle of a carriage and chants strange phrases until the corpses begin to shudder to "life."

Corruption	Roll 1d6: (1-2) minor; (3-6) major. Note, each time a major corruption result is rolled, add one mercurial magic effect to this spell (rolled at -10%).
Misfire	Roll 1d4: (1) techno-magical acessory malfunctions during the ritual, leaving the caster paralyzed for 1d8 hours, (2) the caster seems unaffected but his willpower is sapped – he takes a -5 penalty to all Will checks until resting for 24 hours and one of his techno-magical accessories begins to shrivel and turn to dust after 1d4 days, (3) the techno-magic explodes in a ring of blue flame, causing every living thing within 50' to take 3d6 damage, including the caster, (4) untamed magicks disrupt the philogiston, creating a rift into the land of the dead.3d6 zombies rise from the ground to attack the caster.
1	Lost, failure, and worse! Roll 1d6 modified by Luck: (1-2) corruption + misfire; (3-4) corruption, (5+) misfire.
2-13	Lost. Failure.
14-15	One cyberzombie arises, its body a mechanized, magical puppet under the control of the caster. The creature will short cicuit after 2d6 rounds, dealing 1d4 damage to anything touching it at the time, but leaving the corpses available for further re-animation attempts. **Cyberzombie:** Init -1; Atk electric claws +1 melee (1d6); AC 10; HD 2d4; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP takes ½ damage from blunt weapons; SV Fort -2, Ref -2, Will -2; AL N.
16-19	Up to two enhanced cyberzombies. The technology that animates them will sputter and fail after 2d6 rounds, leaving the corpses available for further re-animation attempts. **Enhanced Cyberzombie:** Init +2; Atk electric claws +2 melee (1d6+2) or laser vision +1 missile fire (1d4) ; AC 10; HD 2d6+2; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP laser vision range = 50', takes ½ damage from blunt weapons; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -2; AL N.
20-23	Up to two skeleton-automatons — "skelematons" — arise from the available corpse(s), technomagical puppets under the control of the caster. The skelematons will remain operational for 1d3 turns or until the caster attempts this spell again. After the skelematons fail, their remains cannot be used for further resurrection attempts. **Skelematon:** Init +3; Atk razor fists +4 melee (1d10+2); AC 14; HD 3d8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP take a maximum of 1 damage from any edged, non-magical weapons, immune to mind-control effects or sleep; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +0; AL N.
24-27	Up to three 8' tall golems, patchworks of parts and flesh joined with welds and stitched together with crude circuitry, are produced from the available corpse(s). The golems will be operational for 1d6 turns or until the caster attempts this spell again. After the synth-flesh golems fail, their remains cannot be used for further resurrection attempts. **Synth-Flesh Golem:** Init -1; Atk grab +2 melee (1d12 special); AC 16; HD 4d8; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP successfully grabbed victims will be automatically hit with a 1d8 bite attack each round until they break free – requires an opposed Strength check vs. this creature's +5 Str to escape; SV Fort +5, Ref -1, Will -2; AL N.
28-33	Up to four enhanced skelematons arise. The enhanced skelematons will remain operational for 1d6 turns or until the caster attempts this spell again. After the enhanced skelematons fail, their remains cannot be used for further resurrection attempts. **Enhanced Skelematon:** Init +4; Atk drill fists +5 melee (1d12+2); AC 14; HD 5d8; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP take a maximum of 1 damage from any edged, non-magical weapons, immune to mind-control effects or sleep, two or more enhanced skelematons may interlock their circuity and limbs, combining into a superior creature which gains +1d to attacks and damage and adding together their remaining hit points plus an additional 1d8 hp; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1; AL N. Note: a combined skelematon only gets one attack per round, no matter how many have combined together.

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34+	Up to five phlogiston-feeding vampires arise from the available corpse(s). These pale, pulsating energy suckers remain operational for 1d4 hours or until the caster attempts this spell again. After that, they vanish into glittering smoke. **Phlogiston Vampire:** Init +4; Atk hypnotic gaze + 2 missile fire vs. Will save (special) or bite +4 melee (1d16 + special) ; AC 15; HD 4d8; MV 30' fly; Act 1d24; SP immune to mind-control effects or sleep, take ½ damage from heat or cold, take double damage from wooden weapons, hypnotic gaze attack paralyzes victim within 30' for 1d6 rounds, bite attack weakens magical constructs; bite also imposes a -1d penalty on all rolls by the victim; bite attack also saps magical energies from the target which causes a -1d penalty to all spell checks for the remainder of the day; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3; AL N.

Fred Dailey 2016

TABLE TN-5: TECHNO-NECROMANCER TITLES	
Level	Chaotic
1	Corpsedigger
2	Blood-bather
3	Resurrectionist
4	Lichseeker
5	Cybervancer

CRAWLJAMMIN' ON THE RED PLANET:

A BARSOOM BESTIARY

Compiled and Converted by Jon Hershberger.
Based on notes from Thomas J. Scott, Allan T. Grohe, Jr,
and the Knights and Knaves Alehouse online Community.

Edgar Rice Burroughs' stories of John Carter
and his amazing life on Barsoom are chock-full
of hair-razing adventures set in inspiring locales!
From the twin Cities of Helium to the Forest of Lost Men,
from the arid, sun-baked plains to the Valley of Dor,
and from the Marshes of Toonolian to the northern
Ice Barrier and the Kingdom of Okar!

These Appendix N sources by ERB contain both stark and vivid landscapes, and the stories present some of the most easily mined pulp science fantasy material you will find for your Dungeon Crawl Classics RPG *Crawljammer* game! This Barsoom Bestiary presents the stats and creature descriptions of the primary creatures encountered by John Carter while living on Barsoom. Following the details of the bestiary are a series of random encounter tables, suitable for use in an ongoing Barsoomian campaign.

Ape, White
Apt
Banth
Calot
Darseen
Malagor
Martian – Black Martian
Martian – Green Martian (a/k/a Thark)
Martian – Red Martian
Martian – White Martian (a/k/a Therns)
Martian – Yellow Martian
Orluk
Plant Men
Sith
Thark (Green Martian)
Thoat
Zitidar

Ape, white (2d4 appearing): Init +3; Atk bite +6 melee (1d10+5) and 4 x claw +8 melee (1d6+5) or stone club +6 melee (1d6+5); AC 14; HD 10d8; MV 40' or climb 20'; Act 5d20; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +2; AL N.

The white apes of Barsoom are very much similar in appearance and build as the green martians (see Thark), having six limbs and of tremendous size. The strength of a white ape seems to be about double that of a Thark. The head of the savage creature is like that of the African gorilla and a shock of thick, stiff-bristled hair runs from the back of the skull and neck to the upper shoulders.

These terrible monsters are possessed of a cunning almost equal to human. Many seem to have a rough tribal organization, and those that do almost always use stone clubs. Because of this glimmering of true intelligence, apes will not always behave as a typical animal. The white apes can be found everywhere on Barsoom, but frequent the dead cities which provide them with shelter and hunting.

Apt (1): Init +4; Atk pummel/slam +8 melee (3d6+8); AC 14; HD 12d8; MV 30';
Act 1d20; SP slam (upon successful attack, target must make a DC 10 Fort save
or be knocked unconscious for 1d4 rounds); SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +2; AL N.

Apts are huge white-furred creatures with six limbs, four of which are short
and heavy to carry it through snow and ice; it is a denizen of the Barsoomian
north pole. The remaining two limbs grow forward from the shoulder on
either side of the powerful long neck and terminate in white, hairless hands
which it uses to capture and hold its prey. Its head and mouth are like that
of the hippopotamus with two large, down-curving horns extending forward
from the bottom jaw. Two huge eyes, each composed of hundreds of ocelli,
are oval patches running downward from the center of the cranium to below
the horns on either side of the head. Each ocelli is equipped with its own lid
and the apt can, at will, close as many of the facets as desired. Curiously the
creature goes without sleep for periods of up to a month, then sleeps for a
whole day before beginning anew the hunt for food in the harsh north. The
animal is domesticated by the yellow martians. Apt fur is generally worn by
northern warriors.

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Banth (2d4): Init +3; Atk bite +4 melee (1d12+2) and 4 x claw +5 melee (1d4+2);
AC 15; HD 6d8+2; MV 40'; Act 5d20; SP iron jaw (if the banth succeeds in biting
its opponent, its grip locks them in place and any claw attacks that round are
made at +8 melee); SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; AL N.

This ten-legged beast is the most ferocious carnivore which roams the low
hills surrounding the dead seas of Mars. It is almost hairless, having only
a great, bristly mane about its thick neck. It has a long lithe body that is
powerfully muscled. The huge jaws are equipped with several rows of long
needle-like fangs, and its mouth reaches to a point far back of its tiny ears. It
has enormous protruding eyes of green.

When engaged in battle or taking down its prey, the banth will try to grab
foes in its vice-like jaws while clawing at them with its four front legs.

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Calot (5d6): Init +5; Atk bite +3 melee (2d4); AC 13; HD 3d8; MV 60'; Act 1d20;
SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will -2; AL N.

The calot is essentially the undomesticated Barsoomian dog. About the size
of a Shetland pony, the omnivorous calot has ten short legs. The head bears
a slight resemblance to that of a frog, except that the jaws are equipped with
three rows of long, sharp tusks. Calots have been described as "pop-eyed" in
reference to their protruding eyes. The calot is endowed with extraordinary
strength and stamina. Only the thoat can cover more territory in a single day.

Darseen, greater (2d6): Init +4; Atk bite +2 melee (1d6+2); AC 15; HD 3d8+1; MV 50'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +1; AL N.

Darseen is a generic term for a whole family of species of Martian reptiles. There are small darseen, little chameleon-like lizards, and greater darseen, huge reptiles capable of severing the head from a man in one bite.

The largest mentioned is the monstrous albino lizard beneath Kadabra. The more common of the greater darseen are those that appear to be about half again as big as a monitor lizard.

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Malagor (1-2): Init +1; Atk claw (talons) +3 melee (3d6) or bite (beak) +3 melee (4d6); AC 16; HD 18d8; MV 10' or fly 90'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +2; AL N.

The malagor is a giant flying creature thought extinct by the general population of Barsoom. In point of fact, however, there are 500 domesticated malagors in Morbus and the areas surrounding the Tonoolian Marshes. These domesticated creatures are used as a means of transportation in and around the Marshes.

With a wing spread of up to 20', malagor are able to fly great distances at speeds up to 60 miles per hour. They prefer to fly by day because the creature does not see well at night.

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Martian Men & Women

The martians of Barsoom are basically human except for the variation of their skin color: red is the dominant skin color, while yellow martians are found in the north. White martians (also known as Therns) are exceptionally rare, and black martians are generally known as being pirates, and are less common than red martians but more common than the white martians. Green martians are actually Tharks (see Thark).

Black martian (10d30): Init +2; Atk cutlass +5 melee (1d8+1); AC 15; HD 1d8+2; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4; AL C.

The black martian is perhaps the single finest type upon all Barsoom, for its members are above average in both height and musculature. They are handsome in appearance and brave beyond compare. Furthermore, their bravery is matched by their fighting ability. They claim to be the "First Born" of all Barsoomian humans, and this is what they call themselves. Others, however, know them as the Black Pirates because of their propensity for raiding and plundering. They comprise about 5% of the population. The black martians inhabit the underground world of Omean and the "Rift" in the northern part of the Western Hemisphere.

Green martian (a/k/a Thark)

The green martains are really Tharks. See Thark below.

. . . .

Red martian (10d30): Init +1; Atk rapier +4 melee (1d8-1); AC 14; HD 1d8; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; AL L or N.

The red race of humans is the most numerous upon Barsoom, and its members run the gamut, from the most superb fighters to the most abject cowards. It is this race which maintains most of the inhabited cities upon the planet, and, excluding the Green martians, they account for perhaps 75% of the population.

. . . .

White martian (a/k/a Therns) (10d30): Init +1; Atk rapier +3 melee (1d8-1); AC18; HD 1d8; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2; AL N or C.

White martians include the almost extinct Orovarions who have blonde or auburn hair and the bald Therns who wear yellow wigs. Although the latter are somewhat ignoble, both types are among the staunchest of fighters. They regard all races as beneath them, although they are somewhat in awe of the First Born (black martians). All Therns are not of equal ability, the best are awarded the title of Holy Therns. These latter constitute perhaps a third of all Therns. White martians comprise 10% of the Barsoomian population, with the Orovarions being only about 3%. Orovars are found only in lost cities; Therns inhabit the Valley Dor at the South Pole and some colonies within red martian cities.

. . . .

Yellow martian (10d30): Init +1; Atk hook sword +3 melee (dmg 1d8-1) or javelin +2 missle fire (1d6-1); AC 16; HD 1d8+2; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; AL L or N.

These sturdy, black-bearded men are known as Okarians. They live in domed cities scattered about the northern polar region. As a race they are exceptionally capable fighters. Their chief weapons are the javelin, and the "cup shield" and hook sword used together. Any fighter engaging an Okarian with hook sword and cup shield would not violate the Barsoomian Code if he were to counter with long sword and short sword. The yellow men comprise about 10% of the total population.

. . . .

Orluk (1d12): Init +5; Atk 2 x front-claws +5 melee (2d8), 2 x mid-claws +4 melee (2d6), and bite +5 melee (2d6); AC 14; MV 35'; Act 5d20; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +2; AL N.

An elephantine beast of prey with black and yellow striped fur, it is common

to the northern pole region of Barsoom. Their fur is exported to all parts of Barsoom. Orluk fur is gnerally worn by northern officers. Orluk are about the size of a jaguar, has four legs, great fangs, and a lust for blood like the little Jasoomian animal whose form it resembles. Although it has a keen sense of smell, it has rather weak eyes or else it would be far more deadly than it is.

. . . .

Plant men (1d10): Init +5; Atk 2 x talons +4 melee (1d8+4) or tail slam +2 melee (2d8+4); AC 16; HD 8d8+2; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +1; AL N.

The plant men inhabit the Valley Dor exclusively. They are 10' to 12' when standing erect, with short arms fashioned after the manner of an elephant's trunk, supple and sinuous. The body is hairless and a ghoulish blue except for a broad band of white which encircles the single, protruding eye, the pupil, iris, and ball of which are dead white. The nose is a ragged, inflamed circular hole in the center of the blank face, resembling an open wound. There is no mouth in the head. With the exception of the face the head is covered by a tangled mass of jet-black hair, some eight or ten inches in length. Each hair is the thickness of a large angle worm. The body, legs and feet are of human shape, but of monstrous proportions, the feet being fully three feet long and very flat and broad. The method of feeding consists of running their odd, dual purpose hands over the surface of the turf, cropping off the tender vegetation with razor-like talons and sucking it up through the two mouths, one in each palm. They are equipped with a six foot long massive tail, quite round where it joins the body, but tapering to a flat, thin blade toward the end, which trails at right angles to the ground.

. . . .

Sith (1d20): Init -2; Atk bite +3 melee (2d4+2) or stinger +1 melee (1d4 + poison); AC 14; HD 4d8; MV 5' or fly 50'; Act 1d20; SP poison (DC 8 Fort save or death); SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -3; AL N.

Sith are hornet-like monsters of the forests of Kobal, bald faced and about the size of a Hereford bull. The sith have frightful jaws on the front of their head and a poison stinger in their behind. The eyes, of myriad facts, cover three-fourths of the head, permitting the creature to see in all directions at the same time.

. . . .

Thark (green martian, and includes other tribes, such as the Warhoons; 1d8 for smaller tribes or 10d30 for larger tribes): Init +4; Atk 2 x greatsword +4 melee (4d6) or radium rifle +4 missle fire (3d6); AC 14; HD 10d8+1d4; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +0; AL N.

Also known as green martians, these creatures have six limbs: two for walking erect, two used as arms and two in-between which can be used as either. Eyes are set at extreme sides of heads and above center and can look in one or two directions without turning the head. Ears, slightly above

eyes and close together; small cup-like antennae protruding about one inch on small specimens. Noses are longitudinal slits entered in face midway between mouth and ears. The iris are blood-red, pupils are dark, eyeball is very white, as are the pair of tusks extending from the lower jaw upwards in a curve toward the center of the face where human eyes would be. They range in height from 12' to 15' tall and weigh up to 400 pounds.

These strange creatures are all nomadic, roaming about the dead sea-bottoms of Barsoom's once great seas. There are many tribes of green men, the largest being the Tharks, and the fiercest being the Warhoons. Smaller tribes are not noted on the most common Barsoom maps. The green martians typically take their tribal name from the abandoned city which they have chosen to house their Jed or Jeddak (Emperor). Of all their warlike abilities, their marksmanship with the radium rifle is by far the most outstanding. They are not prone to use their 40' lances against humans, except in large battles against many times their own number of red men, for example. They do, however, employ the lances extensively against other Green peoples. The greatsword is undoubtedly their favorite weapon!

There are perhaps two millions green tribesmen on Barsoom, with a total population of perhaps five million when females and children are considered.

. . . .

Thoat, lesser (4d10): Init +1; Atk hoof +2 melee (1d8) or bite +1 melee (1d3); AC 13; HD 3d8; MV 50'; Act 3d20; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Wil +2; AL N.

Thoat, greater (4d10): Init +1; Atk hoof +3 melee (1d12) or bite +2 melee (1d6); AC 13; HD 6d8; MV 50'; Act 3d20; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Wil +2; AL N.

The martian horse, or thoat, comes in two sizes. The green martian, or greater thoat stands 10' high at the shoulder with four legs to either side; a broad flat tail, larger at the tip than the root which is held straight out behind while running; a mouth splitting the head from snout to long massive neck. It is entirely devoid of hair and is of a dark slate color and exceedingly smooth and glossy. It has a white belly and the legs are shaded from slate at the shoulders and hips to a vivid yellow at the feet. The feet are heavily padded and without nails. Red martians ride a similar though smaller beast. The animal is a food source as well.

. . . .

Zitidar (1d12): Init -2; Atk front-claws +3 melee (2d8) and mid-claws +2 melee (2d6) and bite +1 melee (2d6); AC 16; HD 12d8; MV 35'; Act 5d20; SV Fort +8, Ref -3, Will -2; AL N.

Zitidar are six-legged mastodon-like draft animals. Their leather hides are used to make sandals, and they serve as a food source to many Barsoomian races.

BARSOOM BESTIARY ENCOUNTER TABLES

DEAD CITIES (ARID DESERTS)	
d20 Result	**Encounter Type**
1–3	Banth
4–5	Thoat
6–7	Calot
8–9	Ape, White
10–12	Thark (Green Martian)
13	Darseen
14	Martian – Yellow
15–16	Martian – Red
17	Martian – Black
18	Martian – White (Therns)
19	Special 1
20	Special 2

FOREST OF LOST MEN	
d20 Result	**Encounter Type**
1–2	Banth
3	Thoat
4	Calot
5–6	Ape, White
7–8	Sith
9–10	Forest People ('green' variation of 'blue' plant men)
11–12	Thark (Green Martian)
13–14	Darseen
15	Martian – Yellow
16–17	Martian – Red
18	Martian – Black
19	Martian – White (Therns)
20	Special 1 or Special 2

DIAMOND MINES OF GOTHAL	
d20 Result	**Encounter Type**
1–2	Calot
3–5	Ape, White
6–7	Darseen
8–15	Martian – Red
16	Martian – White (Therns)
17–18	Cannibal (as subhuman, see core rulebook p429)
19	Special 1
20	Special 2

MARSHES OF TOONOLIAN	
d20 Result	**Encounter Type**
1–3	Banth
4	Thoat
5	Calot
6–7	Ape, White
8–9	Sith
10–11	Forest People ('green' variation of 'blue' plant men)
12	Thark (Green Martian)
13–14	Darseen
15	Martian – Yellow
16	Martian – Red
17	Martian – White (Therns)
18	Cannibal (as subhuman, see core rulebook p429)
19	Special 1
20	Special 2

THE ICE BARRIER AND THE KINGDOM OF OKAR	
d20 Result	**Encounter Type**
1-3	Apts
4	Calot
5-6	Ape, White
7	Thark (Green Martian)
8-13	Martian – Yellow
14-15	Martian – Red
16	Martian – White (Therns)
17-18	Orluk
19	Special 1
20	Special 2

SPECIAL 1 – ONE OR MORE NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS	
d14 Result	**Encounter Type**
1	Alchemist
2	Cleric
3	Ecclesiast (*Crawljammer* #5, p33)
4	Fighter/Warlord
5	Helmsmen (*Crawljammer* #6, p6)
6-7	Lizardman Mercenary (*Crawljammer* #1, p14)
8	Merchant
9	Pitman (Crawljammer #6, p6)
10	Psychic Knight (*Crawljammer* #3, p7)
11	Riftrunner (*Crawljammer* #4, p8)
12	Sage
13	Technomancer (*Crawljammer* #2, p6)
14	Wizard

SPECIAL 2 – OTHER PLANAR CREATURES AND EXTRATERESTIAL ENTITIES	
d60 Result	**Encounter Type**
1	Ape-men War-party (*Crawljammer* #7, p10)
2	Ape-men Warriors (*Crawljammer* #7, p27)
3	Beholder
4	Bloodworms, Giant (*Crawljammer* #7, p12)
5	Cactus Men of Alpha Centauri (*Crawljammer* #2, p3)
6	Corpse Worm (*Crawljammer* #7, p23)
7	Cyber-hounds (*Crawljammer* #1, p31)
8	DeathJay (*Crawljammer* #7, p10)
9	Demon
10	Devil
11	Djinni
12	Dragon
13-15	Efreeti
16	Eldritch Leech (*Crawljammer* #6, p17)
17	Elemental
18	Evil Android (*Crawljammer* #2, p25)

19	Feral Tigerwoman (*Crawljammer* #2, p26)
20	Flatworms, Giant (*Crawljammer* #7, p12)
21	Flying Attack Drone (*Crawljammer* #5, p19)
22	Fungaloid (*Crawljammer* #4, p14)
23	Giant
24	Githyanky
25	Gorgon
26	Guardina, Invisible (*Crawljammer* #4, p32)
27	Hydra Worm (*Crawljammer* #7, p20)
28	Jann
29	Ki-rin
30-31	Lich
32-33	Lizardmen, green (*Crawljammer* #4, p29)
34-36	Lizardmen, red (*Crawljammer* #2, p21)
37	Martian Genetically-Altered Rage Zombie (*Crawljammer* #2, p30)
38	Mechanical Brain (*Crawljammer* #7, p5)
39	Mechaoid Soldier (*Crawljammer* #5, p19)
40	Moon Octopus (*Crawljammer* #2, p3)
41	Moonrock Crawler (*Crawljammer* #6, p27)
42	Muckworms, Giant (*Crawljammer* #7, p13)
43	Pale Neptunian (*Crawljammer* #2, p31)
44	Phase Creature or Shadow Creature
45	Phlogiston Eel (*Crawljammer* #6, p15)
46	Pseudodragon, Bronze (*Crawljammer* #2, p30)
47	Ring Bats (*Crawljammer* #7, p14)
48	Robot (*Crawljammer* #6, p26)
49	Rock Terror (*Crawljammer* #6, p17)
50	Shapeshifter (*Crawljammer* #3, p29)
51	Silvermander (*Crawljammer* #1, p24)
52	Sky Scavenger (*Crawljammer* #6, p30)
53	Slaad
54	Space Harpies (*Crawljammer* #2, p31)
55	Spore Slavers (*Crawljammer* #2, p4)
56	Titan
57	Vampire
58	Violent Voidspace (*Crawljammer* #2, p5)
59	Vulkagon Savages (*Crawljammer* #2, p5)
60	Zanist, Treerangers (*Crawljammer* #1, p30)
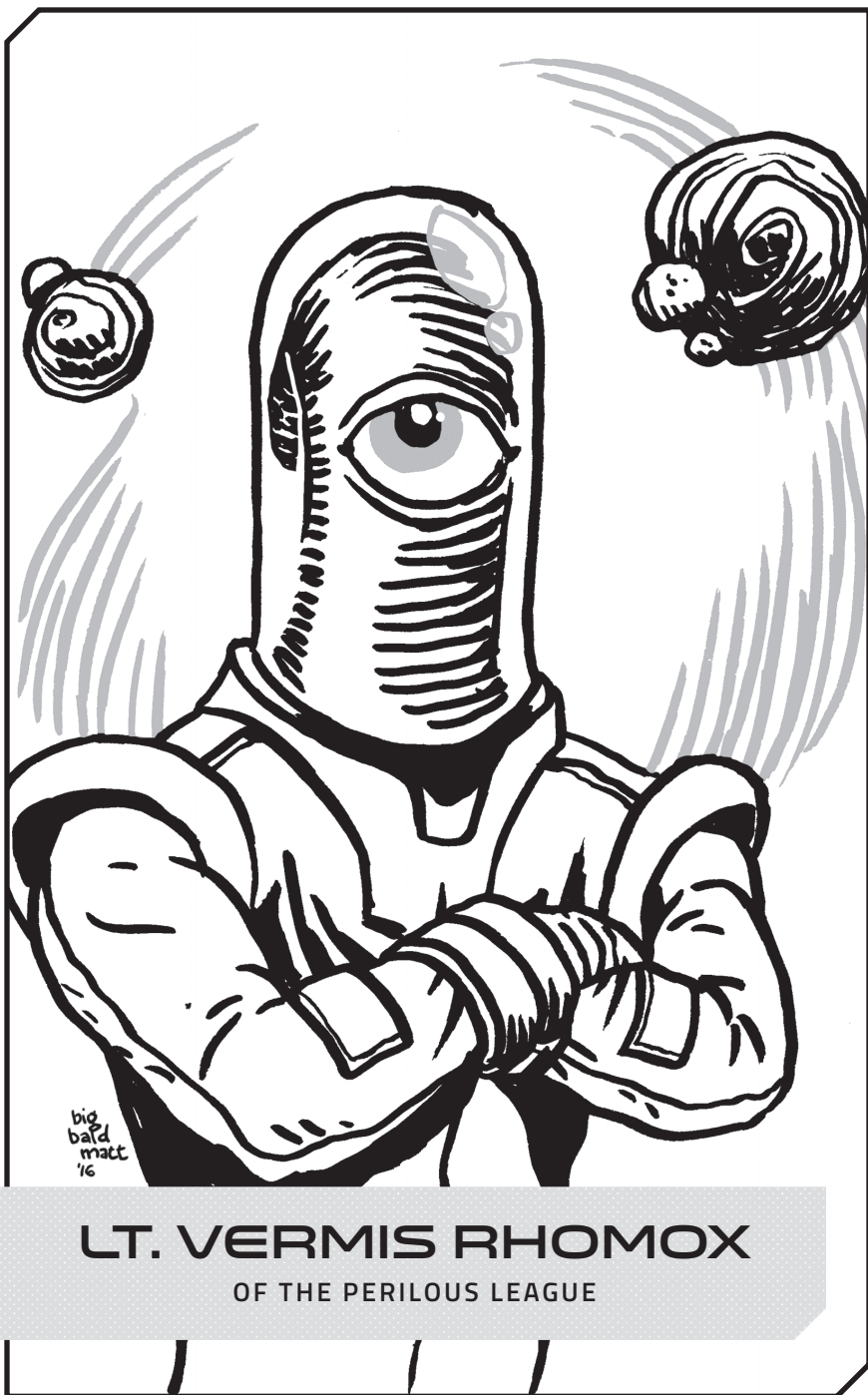
LT. VERMIS RHOMOX
OF THE PERILOUS LEAGUE

TO HALLS OF VALHALLA... AND BACK AGAIN!

HOUSE RULES FOR EXPANDING PLANAR TRAVEL

By Jon Hershberger and Jon Carnes

The City of Brass... Valhalla... Asgard... Olympus... Limbo.... Tarterus... Hades... the Abyss... the Nine Hells!

These names conjure up vivid images for those familiar with their uses in mythology, fantasy literature, and role-playing games. And for good reason — these locations represent some of the most fantastical, supernatural, and otherworldly locations we've only read about. Through these mediums, we can at times be transported to many of these otherworldly locations for exploration and adventure.

Here, then, is a working set of house rules for expanding and fleshing out the 'travel' or 'journey' aspect of planar travel for fantasy campaigning. The basic concept for these house rules came from my reading of Jeff Grubb's "Plane Speaking" article from *Dragon* #120, which outlined some guidelines for dealing with the material component of AD&D's fifth level clerical spell plane shift, and from my reading of Larry Granato's "Plenty of Planar-encounter Possibilities" article from *Dragon* #213. My hope is that these supplemental planar travel guidelines will help you maintain some of the wonder, mystery and whimsy in your game, characteristics that at times may seem to have been lost over the years.

In DCC RPG, magic users have the third level magic user spell planar step, which allows the spellcaster to step, quite literally, to another place in the universe. The spell's details provide for varying degrees of success, as well as for spell failure and the resulting misfire. The concepts in this article are not meant to replace how planar step works in your game. Rather, the concepts in this article are meant to supplement those rules for instances not specifically addressed in the DCC RPG rules. For example:

- a spellcaster might come across a new spell or spell-like ability that enables the caster to project him or herself into the astral or ethereal planes;

- a character might encounter a phase door apparition or device and wish to see what lies on the other side;

- a party of adventurers might discover a new magic item that opens a dimensional portal, or maybe they discover the portal itself, and decide to see where it leads;

Planar Travel – the Basics

When using planar travel, by whatever means available, there is a base 35% chance of a planar encounter or a planar mishap of some kind occurring, meaning that 65% of the time the caster would arrive at the desired destination just as intended and without having any kind of planar encounter or mishap take place. This base 35% chance can be reduced by any of the following (but not generally below 1%, or 5% if the judge is feeling meddlesome):

- By acquiring an enchanted focusing device, such as a magical tuning fork, an enchanted ocular prism, a pair of magical optics or lenses, or any other sort of device that helps the spell caster focus their energies upon the planar destination. (Maximum adjustment to the base probability from a magical focusing devise should not exceed 15%.)

- By becoming familiar with the desired destination, either by conducting research and investigative surveys about the destination, or by making repeated visits to the target destination. (Maximum adjustment to the base probability from familiarity with the destination should not exceed 10%.)

- By being of a higher experience level, the caster increases his or her chances of successful planar travel, and reduces the probability of an unexpected planar incident. (Maximum adjustment to the base probability from level progression should not exceed 10%.) **Game Master Tip:** consider allowing a 2% improvement in the chance of successful planar travel for every level the caster exceeds the level needed to cast the specific spell.

It is left to the individual Game Master or judge to help the characters figure out the parameters of enchanted focusing devises, the costs and time required for planar research, and how the caster's level impacts the degree of success of planar travel. **Game Master Tip:** Presenting the characters' search for such enchanted focusing devises as a potential opportunity for a quest could be a great adventure hook.

Planar Encounters and Planar Mishaps

As a point of reference, Appendix C of the (First Edition AD&D) *Dungeon Masters Guide* suggests checking for encounters at the beginning, the midpoint, and the end of a planar journey, with encounters occurring 5% of the time.[1] That

TABLE A: PLANAR ENCOUNTER OR MISHAP	
1d6 Roll	**Result**
1-3	A planar encounter is about to occur. Consult **Table B-1**.
4-6	A planar mishap is about to occur. Consult **Table B-2**.

TABLE B-1: PLANAR ENCOUNTERS	
2d12 Roll	**Result**
If traveling the Astral Plane, Consult AD&D *DMG*, Appendix C, page 181 — Astral Encounter Table.	
If traveling the Ethereal Plane, Consult AD&D *DMG*, Appendix C, page 181 — Ethereal Encounter Table.	
2	Basilisk or Cockatrice
3	B' older (a/k/a Eye Killer)
4	Brain, Elder
5	Characters: party of high level NPCs
6	Couatl
7	Death Knight riding a Nightmare
8	Demon (select randomly or choose from minor, major, or prince)
9	Devil (select randomly or choose from lesser, greater or arch)
10	Djinni or Jann
11	Dragon (select randomly or choose as appropriate)
12	Efreeti (choose between lesser, major, or elder)
13	Elemental (select randomly or choose as appropriate)
14	Giant (choose between storm or cloud)
15	Githyanky assault team
16	Gorgon
17	Ki-rin
18	Lich
19	Night Hag
20	Phase Creature or Shadow Creature
21	Team of Slaad 'missionaries'
22	Rakshasa
23	Titan (choose between lesser, major, or elder)
24	Vampire

approach may be acceptable, or it may be presenting more risk than you're willing to subject your players to on a regular basis. Whatever the frequency of checking you decide upon, once an encounter or mishap is determined to occur, consult the following tables for the specifics of what your characters are going to get to deal with on their inter-planar journey.

TABLE B-2: PLANAR MISHAPS	
2d8 Roll	**Result**
2	Slows planar travel, necessitating additional check(s) for encounter(s).[1]
3	Intra-planar misdirection: caster is disoriented and lost for 1-10 days, then arrives at a randomly determined (or judge chosen) location on 'current' plane.[2]
4	Spell corruption: spellcaster experiences a planar mishap which triggers minor spell corruption. Refer to page 116 of the DCC RPG rulebook for specific Minor Corruption results.[3]
5	Planar misdirection: caster is disoriented and lost for 2-20 days, then arrives on desired plane but at a randomly determined (or judge chosen) location.[4]
6	Planar misdirection: caster is disoriented and lost for 2-20 days, then arrives on a randomly determined (or judge chosen) plane.[5]
7	Planar misdirection: caster becomes disoriented during casting, then arrives on one of the following energy/other planes: the Positive Material Plane, the Negative Material Plane, or the Plane of Shadows.
8	Planar misdirection: caster becomes disoriented during casting, then arrives at a randomly chosen (or judge chosen) location where another high level, plane traveling spell caster is attempting planar travel, spoiling the 'other' caster's spell. Roll for initiative!
9	Planar tinge: spellcasting PC (or traveling PC) picks up, or takes on, a tinge of the destination plane, whereupon a permanent alteration is caused by the specific planar tinge. As determined exclusively by the game's Judge, the planar tinge should reflect the nature and flavor of the destination plane. Although potentially horrific sounding, the actual effect of the planar tinge should be minor in their game mechanical effect. For instance, a PC traveling to Limbo might gain a -2 penalty to saves against mind-affecting encounters to reflect their mind being shaken by exposure to the raw essence of the raw chaos of Limbo.
10	Planar 'black hole' appears: 50% of the time it will draw PCs (or their magical gear) into the void and 50% of the time it will project planar debris across the planar expanse. PCs sucked into the void suffer damage of 10d6 and end up on another plane. Debris disgorged from the planar void has a 5% chance of striking a PC, doing 3d6 of damage. 5% of the debris disgorged is a valuable or magical item.[6]
11	Temporal, planar, energy or magical displacement affects the traveler(s). Temporal displacement alters the timeline with regard to the planar travel (forward or backward in time). Planar displacement alters the destination plane for the traveler(s). Energy displacement drains (or recharges) magic items with charges and tech items if possessed. Items fully drained crumble to dust while overcharged items detonate causing 10d6 damage. Magical displacement causes magical properties of items possessed to become altered, potentially permanently.[7]

TABLE B-2: PLANAR MISHAPS (CONTINUED)

12	Planar fatigue: too much planar travel causes the caster/traveler to become fatigued from over use. Rest of 1d4 days required.8 If the spellcaster or traveler desires to continue to adventure or to continue on his or her planar journey, in spite of planar fatigue setting in, the spellcaster should be required to spellburn for each day of required rest that is foregone. The rate of spellburn required to 'push through' the planar fatigue and forgo the requisite rest period is 3 points of physical attribute burn per day of rest foregone. Thus, a wizard that becomes subject to planar fatigue and that is required to rest for 4 days would be required to burn 12 points of temporary physical attribute loss to push through the fatigue and forgo resting.
13	A tear in the planar fabric is caused, drawing really nasty creatures to location of the caster. Refer to **Table B-1 Planar Encounters**.[9]
14	A dud: the spell cast simply lacks sufficient magical energy to function, leaving the caster at his location at the time of the failed casting.
15	Planar trait: spellcaster (or traveling PC) picks up, or takes on, planar traits reflective of the destination plane, based on a relatively simple yet escalating table of effects, to be stipulated and determined exclusively by the game's Judge.
	The lesser effects of the planar trait table should be mild and cosmetic in nature, and easy to mask or conceal. These effects could be loosely modeled after the results on **Table 5-3 Minor Corruption**.[10]
	The middle-level planar traits should be more serious than the lesser effects above, and should involve physical corruption, representing the harsness of the Outer Planes, along the lines of the **Minor Corruption** and **Major Corruption**, **Tables 5-3** and **5-4**, respectively.[11]
	The most extreme planar traits should involve incredibly dangerous psychic, moral, or magical coruption, making this outcome one to be avoided when possible. For sample effects upon which to model extreme planar traits, refer to **Table 5-5 Greater Corruption**.[12]
16	Death to the caster and anyone traveling with him! Fate can be cruel at times, and this is one of those times. Due to trans-planar dynamics and/or physical stresses placed upon the caster at the time of casting, the spell caster dies unceremoniously (saving throw optional).

[Author's note: This article is an adaptation of a previous article I wrote several years ago for Knockspell magazine. Originally titled "The Planes: Playgrounds of the Rich and Powerful", the original article appeared in *Knockspell* No. 3, from the summer 2009.]

Article Footnotes:
1 Gary Gygax, Official Advanced Dungeons & Dragons® *Dungeon Masters Guide*, rev. ed. (U.S.A.: TSR, Inc., 1979), 181.

Table Footnotes:
1. Gary Gygax, Official Advanced Dungeons & Dragons® *Dungeon Masters Guide*, rev. ed. (U.S.A.: TSR, Inc., 1979), 181.
2. Larry Granato, *Dragon* Magazine #213, "Plenty of Planar-encounter Possibilities", 43-48.
3. Joseph Goodman, Dungeon Crawl Classic Role-Playing Game®, (U.S.A.: Goodman Games, Inc., 2012), 116.
4. Gygax, *Dungeon Masters Guide*, 181.
5. ibid.
6. Granto, 45.
7. ibid.
8. ibid.
9. ibid.
10. Goodman, Dungeon Crawl Classics Role-Playing Game, 116.
11. Goodman, Dungeon Crawl Classics Role-Playing Game, 116 and 118.
12. Goodman, Dungeon Crawl Classics Role-Playing Game, 118.

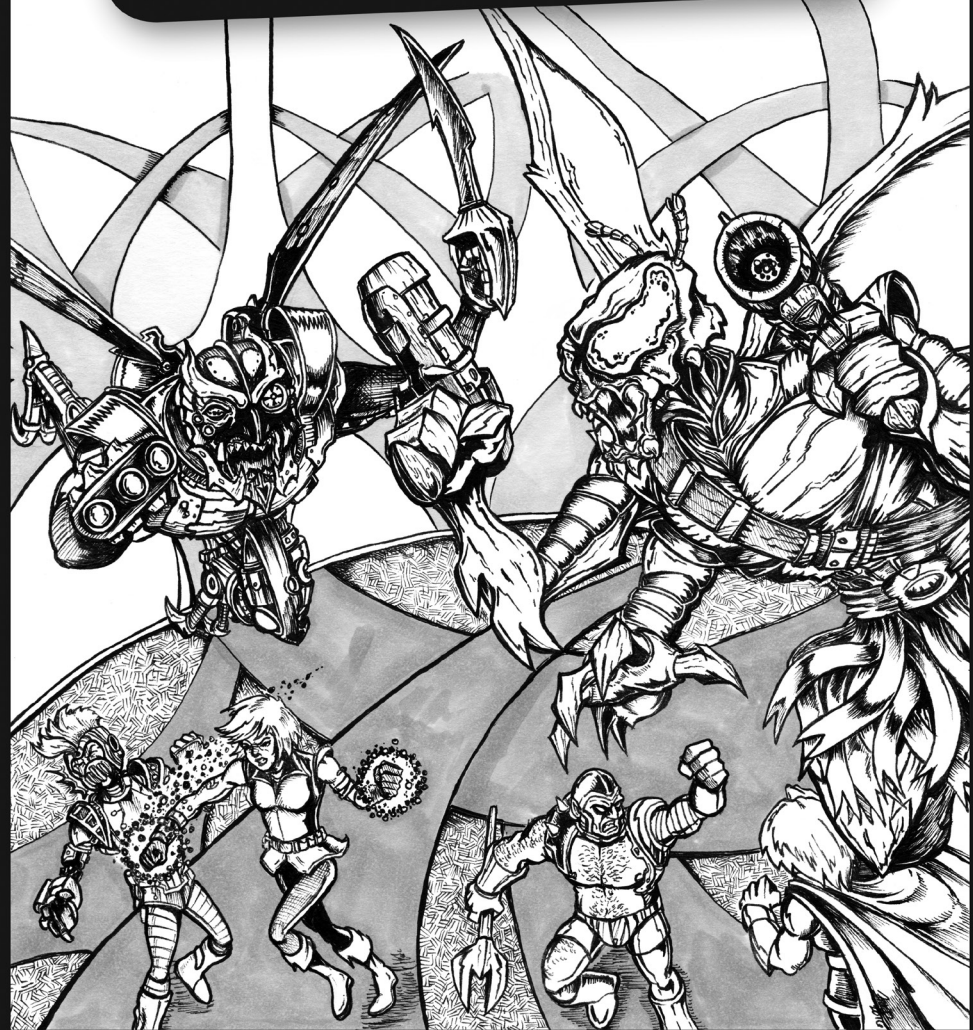# THE OBLIVION SYNDICATE AND THE MILLENNIAL MEAD

A CRAWLJAMMER ADVENTURE FOR 4TH-LEVEL CHARACTERS

by Julian Bernick.
Special thanks to playtesters: Clint Bohaty, Jon Carnes,
John Dahlstrom, Trevor Hartman, Brett Slocum.

INTRODUCTION

Set firmly in the "Crawljammer-verse", this adventure assumes the judge and players have a passing familiarity with Crawljammer and the science fiction conceit of parallel universes and evil counterparts. It's a perfect way to have Earthbound characters change it up and enter the worlds of Crawljamming! Having said that, this adventure can be easily adapted to any Crawljammer or standard DCC RPG campaign! (For much more information about the Perilous League and the Crawlajmmer canon, read *Crawljammer* #3, "The Secret History of the Perilous League.")

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Beyond the dimensional walls of time and space are countless worlds much like our own, some vastly different, some nearly identical. But in one wayward parallel universe, the founders of the Perilous League, Kyria Sunstone and Lord Levanox, were ambushed psychically on their deathbeds by a monstrous Black Pearl—brought to them by an unsuspecting adventurer who had no idea what he was doing.

The Black Pearl psychically assaulted the Perilous Couple, using their fear of death to fuel its necrotic energies and reinvigorating them with its raw chaos energy. At their urging, they reconstituted the Perilous League as the death cult known as the Oblivion Syndicate, which fanned out over the Solar System in search of magical objects needed to increase the Black Pearl's power. They were dreadfully successful. Under the Pearl's influence, the Perilous Couple performed the Anomalous Rite, sacrificing one artifact from each world, thereby turning the Black Pearl into an entropic anti-sun at the heart of a mutated solar system.

Now, the undying Perilous Couple rule from their mausoleum, treating the system's denizens as pawns and reaching out across time and space to try to make more and more dimensions like their own! At the direction of the corrupted Perilous Couple, the Perilous League, now re-born as the Oblivion Syndicate, pursues its ultimate goal—the destruction of every living soul on the nine planets!

Now, the Oblivion Syndicate has breached the cosmic gates and entered your world... Slowly, the Syndicate's agents have gathered the artifacts of eight worlds and now only one remains! Can your players stop their task force from attaining the last artifact and enacting the Anomalous Rite?

ADVENTURE SETUP

The adventure starts when the PCs are approached by a stranger who wishes to hire them for a very lucrative and unique adventure. The stranger is the lizard man, H'Grunth H'Grungthorr, Captain of the Perilous League! (If lizard men would be exotic in the PCs' home setting, he is cowled and careful not to reveal his face.) He tells the PCs how a group of adventurers from far away have journeyed to the PCs' home system in order to steal the Millennial Mead of Galasha, an Elven vintage that matures once a millennium. Their purpose is to use this precious beverage in a heinous rite.

Very soon, the finally matured mead of Galasha will be opened for a party of diplomats, royalty, and wizards. H'Grungthorr wants to hire the PCs to accompany him, infiltrate the celebration, and thwart the interlopers' plan. The catch? The thieves are evil counterparts of the PCs themselves from the parallel world of System 3—and the Elven vineyards of Galasha are on Neith, a moon of Venus!

H'Grungthorr can introduce the adventurers to crawljamming and proposes to get them membership in the Perilous League of their home system if they help out!

H'Grunth H'Grungthorr: Init+1; Atk TH Sword +d5 melee (1d10+d5) and/ or Laser Pistol +d5 ranged (1d8+d5); AC 16; HD 6d12; hp 55; MV 30'; Act 1d20+1d16; SP Lizard Man Mercenary in CJ #1, Ref +3, Fort +6, Will +2; AL N.

ENCOUNTERS

1. Transit to Neith
2. The Honey-Hives of Galasha
3. Impostor Setup
4. The Necrosaur
5. PCs from System 3!
6. Ending the Adventure

1. TRANSIT TO NEITH

H'Grungthorr has his battlecraft, the *Vanquisher*, floating in a nearby bay. Obviously, unless on a world where crawljamming is well-known, the ship will need to sail to the open sea, far away from civilization and then lift off and make for space!

The Vanquisher
Battlecraft: Init +5; Atk Ballista +4 ranged (1d8+2) plus catapult +1 ranged (1d12); AC 15; HD 4d8; HP 28; MV 50'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; Crit d10; Fumble d10; Composition: wood; Luck pool: 4.

OPTIONAL ADVENTURE DURING TRANSIT

As you approach the cloud-covered planet of Venus, you enter a cloud of silver gas. Visibility is cut to only a hundred yards in any direction, and H'Grungthorr gives the order to slow the ship, mentioning that this sort of cloud is sometimes used by wily pirates to set an ambush. Sure enough, three longships emerge from aft, lee, and starboard. On the deck of each is a savage minotaur waving a battle axe and bellowing at his pirate gang, waiting to use their grapples to board the Vanquisher!

Three minotaur brothers, Kragar, Grakar, and Hemley, have taken up a life of piracy between Terra and Venus. Each minotaur captain commands a Floating Longship and has a crew of 10 able-bodied pirates (besides the crew dedicated to sailing the vessels). These three pirate ships, the *Axer*, the *Grinder*, and the *Masher*, prey on larger ships by using their numbers to surround and board opponents, then mercilessly put them to the axe.

The Floating Longships are outfitted with ballistae. The minotaurs whip their troops into a frenzy before boarding, so they are on deck and vulnerable to distance attacks once in range. If any of the minotaurs are reduced to 25% of hit points, they will run below decks. In that scenario, or if any of the three minotaurs are killed, the slain captain's ship will break off its attack and retreat. If two ships retreat, the third will also retreat.

The Axe, the Grinder, the Masher
3 Floating Longships: Init +0; Atk Ballista +2 ranged (1d8+1); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 10; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP personal ranged weapons may be fired on deck at +2 to hit vs. enemy craft; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +2; Composition: wood; Luck pool: 4.

Minotaurs (3): Init +3; Atk axe+4 melee (2d6+3); AC 15; HD 4d8; hp 16; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP charge (Minotaur may charge and gore with horns for 2d6 damage. Opponents failing Ref save vs. attack roll are pushed up to 10' back); SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will -1; AL N.

Pirates (30): Init +0; Atk short cutlass (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d8; hp 4; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0 Ref +1, Will -1; AL N.

If the adventurers manage to board any or all of the minotaurs' ships, the characters will find plenty of alien coins, bizarre gems, baffling star charts, and two vials of green and pink fluid respectively:

1. A Potion of Wondrous Things (Pink)—Whatever the user imagines is true for d7+1 rounds.

2. A Potion of Woundrous Things (Green with floating solids)—User must make a DC 10 Fort save or take 2d5 points of damage. If check is made, he heals 3d7 points of damage.

For more information on Crawljammer ships and battles, see *Crawljammer* #1; for Advanced Crawljamming rules, see *Crawljammer* #6!

2. THE HONEY-HIVES OF GALASHA

After surviving a tense space battle with three minotaur-captained ships, you find yourself slowly sinking through the pale green clouds of Neith before gently landing in a vast lake of lavender "water" amongst many other vessels, some resembling classic seagoing ships, others fish- or even insect-shaped.

H'Grungthorr intends to remain on the ship to keep the crew ready for a quick take off and to ensure that the Vanquisher is not sabotaged. As you leave the ship and its crew, H'Grungthorr gives you a writ of invitation for the events at hand, and he sends you toward a large cluster of buildings that appear to be made out of yellow, honey-colored crystal. Outside of the buildings is a large pavilion in which well-dressed creatures from nine planets mingle and chat, each whispering in hushed tones about the chance to finally sip the Millennial Mead.

Moving amongst the crowd are your hosts: tall, placid blue Elves, looking like the fey of your homeworld except for the bulging, multi-faceted organs they have in place of their eyes. The high officials, wearing striped robes of black and gold, are guarded by serious-looking soldiers in chitin armor and carrying rapiers and crossbows.

The Bee-Elves of Galasha

The blue "Bee-Elves" of Galasha are unique amongst Elf-kind. Though appearing mostly like normal Elves with the usual Elven grace and wit, they live in vast hives of crystal and ambergris and brew the highest quality mead in the Multiverse. The Bee-Elves have insect eyes, which are split into bulging, multi-faceted organs where their eyes should be. They also sport diaphanous wings that help lightly armored Elves move faster than regular land-bound Elves (MV 40'). Lastly, their blood is poisonous and is used in their weaponry.

The Counterfeit Party

When the PCs arrive, their counterparts have already used forged documents
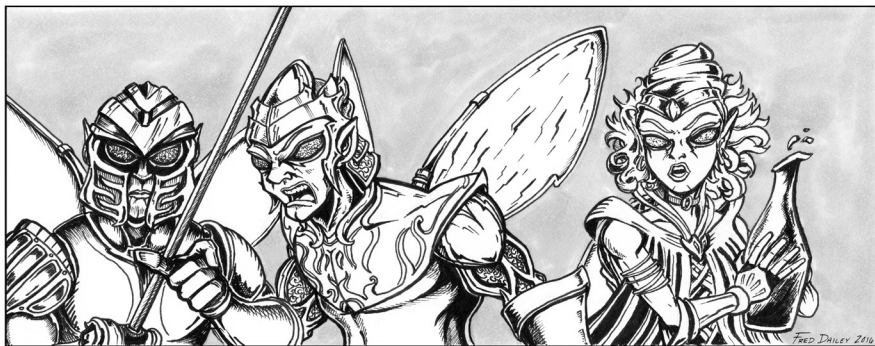
to join the celebration. Their ship, the *Violator*, is anchored in the lavender bay with the rest. Since the Necrosaur has joined the counterfeit PCs at the celebration, thoughtful PCs may be able to take advantage of this and cut off their means of escape.

The Celebration of the Millennial Mead

Events at the Honey-Hives should follow the timeline described unless disrupted by the PCs. If the PCs choose to ignore their counterparts or the theft, the Judge should improvise the response of the Bee-Elves. (Given their similarity to the thieves, they would have a tough time explaining their resemblance and/or why they did not act to prevent the theft!) Of course, many other adventures can come out of such a gathering; after all, there are beautiful people, jewelry, plots, and intrigues and perhaps more than one group of thieves in the crowd.

Just about any encounter is possible in this gathering, but five ideas are presented here for fun interactions and possible plot hooks.

- A bipedal beetle artist (painter) is looking for the world's most beautiful man to paint.
- A beautiful Zanist woman from Venus (See *Crawljammer* #1) picks the highest Personality character of the party to flirt with, trying to make her partner (a Zanist warlord) jealous.
- A wild-eyed purple-skinned dwarf from Neptune (or perhaps "Neptune") raves that he knows the location of an ancient treasure on Mars. This perfectly shaped diamond skull rests in a black pyramid the size of a city and is full of screaming zombies.
- A prim and proper war-nun of the church of Ganymede has journeyed here in hope of sipping the one taste of alcohol she may experience in her life according to her religion.
- A dapper human slaver dressed in crimson is not even interested in the mead but rather wishes to sell his wares to the rich and powerful gathered here.
- … And many more!

The Millennial Mead

Not only is the mead the subtlest, sweetest, and smoothest alcoholic beverage that any mortal has ever tasted, it also has one property that is highly esteemed—it will permanently raise any PC attribute by 1 (player choice). Drinking multiple servings of mead does not result in more raising of attributes. The drink is potent! Drinking more than three servings results in a permanent loss of one point from a randomly determined attribute.

The Lottery

Because many guests are in attendance and the demand for the mead is high, the Bee-Elves have run a lottery system. Upon showing their writ of invitation, guests receive a ticket and winning numbers are pulled before the mead is served. The Syndicate PCs are neither patient nor circumspect enough to wait to find out if they have a winning ticket, preferring to act with certainty to win the mead.

3. IMPOSTOR SETUP

It's entirely possible that the characters won't need any prodding to locate their doubles and attack, apprehend, or otherwise thwart them. If they are slow to act on this, the counterfeit PCs will make the first move, assuming that the PCs are hostile.

As you mingle with the crowd, lovely bee-girls pass amongst the mingling guests, distributing nectar-wine and newer vintage mead (as a preliminary). Small insect snacks are passed out as well, some of them quite tasty! Suddenly, there's a hush in the crowd, and you see the guests parting in one direction to reveal a squad of Elf-drones armed with rapiers and hand crossbows. A bright yellow-skinned woman in a tight gown of swirling rainbow colors points at you, "There they are, the ones who took my necklace!"

With this, the 10 Elf-drones begin to surround you. "Put down your weapons and come with us," says one of the Elf-drones, stepping forward. As they say this, you see in the other direction one of your own counterparts just as H'Grungthorr described—identical save for some superficial marks and accompanied by a black-scaled counterfeit of H'Grungthorr himself! When your eyes meet, the counterparts start moving toward the crystal hive-buildings while the black-scaled lizard man appears to be covering their retreat.

Elf-drones (10): Init+2; Atk rapier +1 melee (1d7+1) and/or hand crossbow +1 ranged (1d4 + Galashan blood poison); AC 13 (hide/chitin armor); HD 1d8; hp 6; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP Galashan blood poison (DC 15 Fort save or 1d4 damage); SV Ref +3, Fort +0, Will +2; AL N.

Due to their hive-oriented nature, the blue Elves of Galasha are less independent-minded than most of their kin. These guards take their duty to the hive seriously and will fight to the death. Twenty more Elf-drones will

arrive in 10 rounds. If the PCs surrender, they will be taken alive, and the details will be sorted out by wise Elven "Buzz Wizards", the leaders of day-to-day matters for the hive. In assessing the crimes of the PCs, the lives of the Elf-drones are not held in high esteem; the Millennial Mead on the other hand is precious beyond measure, and its theft or destruction would be punished with something literally worse than simple, mundane death.

Danga Mitrzash, the Venusian woman who was robbed by the PCs' counterparts, quickly fades into the crowd if the PCs easily dispatch the Elf-drones. She wants no part of combat with dangerous robbers. However, if the counterfeits are not fully exposed as the true culprits in the following events, she may very well hire bounty hunters to seek her necklace or her revenge as the necklace was a family heirloom, and its loss will prevent her from claiming her hereditary palace on Venus. (Danga's further actions are left to the Judge's discretion.)

The next encounter assumes that the PCs overcome the Elf-drones; the rest of the crowd is either too weak, too scared, or too jaded to interfere.

4. THE NECROSAUR

As you turn away from the Elf-drones, the crowd gives way and you see your counterparts disappearing through a large arched entrance into the Honey-Hive structure.

Blocking your way is a fierce-looking counterpart to H'Grunth H'Grungthorr himself. But this interloper's scales are dyed black, and his eyes burn with an unearthly blue energy. His voice carries a hollow tone as he readies for your approach, drawing his two-handed sword. "Stay out of this business and you may live, fools—for as long as your spit-ball solar system endures anyway. Live out the rest of your meaningless little lives in peace, or find your death now at the hands of the Oblivion Syndicate!"

H'Grunth H'Grungthorr's System 3 counterpart is quite different from those the PCs have met. As one of the Oblivion Syndicate's greatest warriors, this H'Grungthorr was chosen by the evil Perilous Couple to receive the most profane blessings of their death-cult. Now, H'Grungthorr has been transformed into a ferocious, thanatos-powered, life-hating warrior known as *THE NECROSAUR*.

The Necrosaur (he only dimly remembers and will not answer to his old name) is wholly committed to the cause of the Oblivion Syndicate, and he will quite willingly embrace oblivion by laying down what remains of his twisted, corrupted life by covering his squad's theft of the Millennial Mead.

Since each opponent's death makes him stronger, he will attack the weakest-looking targets first (particularly wizards, halflings, and elves). He will fire his laser pistol when he is rushed, then draw his two-handed sword to deal death close-up.

The Necrosaur: Init +1; Atk TH Sword +d5 melee (1d10+d5+special) and/or Laser Pistol +d5 ranged (1d8+d5); AC 16; HD 6d12; hp 55; MV 30'; Act 1d20+1d16; SP Thanatos power, Crit die d24 on Table V, Lizard Man Mercenary in CJ #1; SV Ref +3, Fort +6, Will +2, AL C.

Thanatos-powered special abilities:
- Each blow that hits an opponent will strengthen the Necrosaur by one hit point.
- If the Necrosaur drops an opponent (reduces to zero hit points or less), the Necrosaur immediately receives d12 hit points. This power manifests as sparks (or bolts) of sickly blue light and an intense ozone smell.
- When/if destroyed, the Necrosaur explodes in a cascade of necrotic energy—everyone within 15 feet must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or lose d4 Stamina until such time as they are fully able to get one night's rest and recuperation.
- Vulnerability—As a being imbued with unholy energies, the Necrosaur can be turned as an undead creature.

5. PCS FROM SYSTEM 3!

Depending on the battle with the Necrosaur and whether Elf-drone reinforcements arrive, the PCs will either follow their counterparts into the Honey-Hive building or encounter them leaving the Honey-Hive. As a rule, if the Necrosaur is dispatched within 2 rounds, the PCs may catch their counterparts trying to defeat the various traps detailed below. If it takes longer than 3 rounds to deal with the Necrosaur, the PCs will encounter their counterparts in the process of escaping with the mead. The Necrosaur will do everything he can to cover their escape completely, including sacrificing himself.

The PCs' counterparts should be considered armed and equipped with basically the same gear. The judge should use their optimal attacks and tactics

to fight the PCs, but remember that their goal is to escape with the Mead and return to System 3 (to do this, they need to take off in their battlecraft, the Violator, and make their getaway). Thus, they will favor attacks that disable, distract, and occupy the PCs (and any Elf-drones who arrive on the scene).

This is potentially a very difficult encounter; if the judge wishes to be merciful (!), the judge may rule that some of the counterparts were injured by the various traps guard the Millennial Mead.

Counterfeit Statistics

Get your players' character sheets ahead of time and consult Table 5-1 to determine how the counterfeit PCs differ from the player characters. If the characters hit upon the idea that they should be able to anticipate their alter egos' moves, give the PCs a Luck check to try to guess what they will do for a +4 initiative and +2 attack bonus.

If facing other familiar counterparts (of their companions and well-known friends), give them a +2 initiative and a +1 attack bonus.

TABLE 5-1: DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF SYSTEM 3 PC COUNTERPARTS	
Random Roll	**Mark/Characteristic**
1	Hideous scar on face
2	Different signature weapon
3	Different skin color
4	Different hair color
5	Walks with limp
6	Missing limb/hand
7	Unique gear/armor — flashy bright color
8	Different gender
9	Different age (10 years older/younger)
10	No difference — character's body and gear are 100% identical

The Honey-Hive and the Millennial Mead

Inside the nearest small hive building is a low depression, around 30-foot diameter, filled with opalescent clumpy liquid. In the center is a raised dais on which is a shelf with five big (magnum-sized) bottles covered with various labels and marks in what appears to be the Bee-Elf language.

The honey-wine is stored at the most sacred hive, the egg pit. Wading to the mead rack is at ¼ movement, and PCs attempting any fast movements such as running, dodging, or combat must make a DC 10 Reflex save not to fall into the pearlescent elf-egg goo. Any Elf-drones will not attack PCs while they are in the egg-pit, patiently biding their time outside the hive and seeking to apprehend them afterward.

Once at the honeycombed mead-shelf, identifying the correct bottle is no easy task. Any character will need to make a DC 20 check to identify the bottle. Elves receive a +5 to their checks, and relevant backgrounds receive a +4. Thieves may use their Read Languages bonus to attempt the check against the DC 20.

Five nearly identical bottles are stored in the center of the mead-shelf, but only one is the Millennial Mead. (Counting from left to right, the Millennial Mead is in the #2 position, whereas the wasp bottles are #3 and #5).

Trap #1: (DC 15 Find Traps to detect the gummy substance on all four of the other bottles.) The decoy bottles are covered with a mostly clear stringent glue. If characters handle one of these bottles, their hands will be covered in the glue, and they will have to make a DC 20 Strength check to remove the bottle from any hand it's touched (gloves may be removed). Any removal causes 1 hp of damage from exposed skin, and if glue (or glass!) still covers the hand, the character should get any appropriate -2 to -8 penalty for fighting and spellcasting.

Trap #2: (DC 20 Find Traps to detect the faint buzzing and vibrating of the trapped bottles.) Additionally, two of the five bottles are actually stoppers that cap a nest of carnivorous wasps held within the mead-shelf itself. If either of these bottles is pulled, the wasps fly out in a murderous mass and will sting (and gnaw) everyone in a 10-foot radius for 3d6 points of damage, Fort Save DC 15 for half. If a body is left unattended for more than 2 rounds, the wasps will consume it (the body cannot be flipped). The wasps will not leave their 10-foot radius centered on the mead shelf.

Trap #3: (DC 20 Find Traps to detect the obscure Elf-magic markings on the bottle.) In order to discourage thieves and other agents of Chaos, the true bottle is cursed so that any non-Elf who pulls the bottle off the shelf will be affected by a Reverse Alignment spell. If the character does not pass a DC 15 Will save, the PC's alignment is reversed. (Chaos to Law, Law to Chaos; no effect on Neutrals.) Lawful characters will quickly reconsider whether they wish to abscond with such a precious artifact, thereby gaining the enmity of the Elves of Galasha.

6. ENDING THE ADVENTURE

This scenario can spin off in many different ways. The judge should let the characters' actions and choices dictate the final scene and the aftermath.

If the characters have defeated the Necrosaur and their counterparts and prevented the theft of the Millennial Mead, the Bee-Elves forgive and forget just about any other injury or indignity. In fact, the PCs will be feted like guests of honor, each rewarded with a jar of Buzz-Wizard nectar. This potent restorative mixture can be ingested to immediately cancel poison effects, heal ability damage, regenerate one lost limb, or heal 3 hit dice of damage. (The nectar will always address the most severe condition.) The Bee-Elves have all sorts of goals to address on Neith and Venus, and they would be happy to hire the adventurers for future work.

Obviously, if the characters have performed competently, H'Grungthorr will also seek to recruit them into Perilous League, a gateway to many cosmic adventures throughout the system. If they prefer to return to their home planet, he will reluctantly return them there by means of the *Vanquisher*.

Should the PCs agree to join the Perilous League, it is very likely they will be assigned to thwart any further plans of the Oblivion Syndicate, perhaps even venturing into System 3 itself!

If the characters have failed to prevent the theft, they can choose to pursue their counterparts by means of the *Vanquisher*. This should be a satisfying space battle in which the survivors of each group face off over Neith. (Treat the *Violator*'s statistics has identical to the *Vanquisher*.) If the Violator has a substantial lead on the *Vanquisher*, the pursuers may follow them through the worm-hole beside Mercury that takes them back to System 3, and may, in fact, decide to pursue them—after all, the fate of their home system may hang in the balance!

Note: In either of the above scenarios, the Bee-Elves and/or H'Grungthorr will be happy to award the counterfeit PCs' ship, the Violator, to the PCs as the spoils of war.

If the characters decide to steal the Millennial Mead themselves, H'Grungthorr will fight relentlessly for its destruction, seeing that as the only way to safeguard their home system (and prevent future Oblivion Syndicate incursions from gaining it). If they evade or destroy H'Grungthorr, the PCs will have many avenues to sell or trade the precious Millennial Mead, but they will gain the enmity of the Perilous League and the Bee-Elves forever.

This amoral outcome may be the most natural one of all, since, after all, they're no heroes...

THE END

big bald matt '16

INTER-DIMENSIONAL PORTAL WEIRDNESS DIE-DROP TABLE

To generate unexpected elements for magic doorways, teleportation gates, and inter-dimensional portals, pick up some funky dice (any of them!) and lay this spread into the lid of your Chained Coffin boxed set. Drop the dice and where they land are your portal's special features — the numbers on the dice affect the results they land on.

Side-Effects of Travel: Two random senses shut down for d# minutes: 1) sight, 2) hearing, 3) taste/smell, 4) touch, 5) balance, 6) other [treasure sense, echolocation, proprioception, and so on as appropriate to the subject]

The portal is d# x20 feet in the air, over the largest city on the continent or hemisphere

The portal exists once activated or has an active/inert cycle of d# x24 hours.

It takes a sentient sacrifice to create or to activate this portal

Portal Guardian:

d# Planar Anti-bodies that attack mid-transfer in *the Nowhere*

The portal exists once activated or has an active/inert cycle of d# x16 seconds.

Anyone that does not already know the secret pose or hand gesture needed to enter the portal can gain access by making a 10+d# DC Luck check or Int check (d# minutes per check)

The portal also leads to 16th Century France

It takes the energy of a 4th Level Spell or higher, cast at Midnight to create or activate this portal

Side Effect of Travel: Travelers can fly (at a Speed of 10+d# feet per action) for d# minutes after travel

The portal is at sea level d# miles off the coast

The portal exists once activated or has an active/inert cycle of d# x1d8 years

Portal Guardian:

d# Ghosts of future Portal users, blocking exit

The portal also leads to the inside of a distant pyramid or tomb

Anyone is worthy to use this portal.

Only the Lawfully Aligned are worthy to activate or use this portal

It takes d# hour's chanting by 7 halflings to create or to activate this portal

Side-Effects of Travel:

Half movement and half the Action Dice (1/2 AD = 1 AD every other round) for 1d6 Turns after travel

Portal Guardians: d# Ghosts of past Portal users, blocking entry

Portal Guardian: d#HD Dragon, vetting those who wish to use the portal

The portal also leads to a d# HD dragon and her hoard in an incredibly deep, unknown location

It takes severing the finger of anyone wishing to use it, to create or to activate this portal

The portal is found d# x20 feet underground, beneath a famous set of standing stones or giant carved heads

Side Effects of Travel:

Travelers' Luck is adjusted by +/- 1d6 for d# Turns. An excess can be spent as normal; unspent points vanish if not used

The portal cannot be used by anyone who has not been blessed by the High Kalphremmapharb of Pooti

Destination Vague:

Actual arrival point is off from expectations by 1d30² miles

The portal exists once activated, or has an active/inert cycle of d# x100 minutes

The portal is located in a painting, in a rich family's gallery. DC 10+d# INT check to spot it (assuming you know it's in the gallery) & figure out how to use it
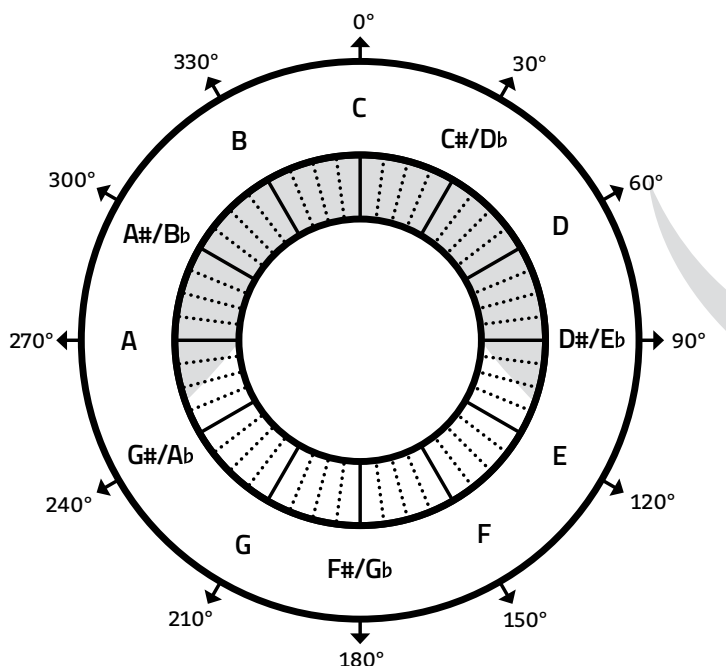
THE OCULUS

A SPACEFARING ARTIFACT FOR CRAWLJAMMER
by Marc Bruner

The *Oculus* is a floating longship created by an ophthalmically-obsessed wizard for the interstellar trade of creatures used in his unique experiments. It has been modified to the wizard's meticulous specifications, including the addition of a mechanical iris porthole that opens to reveal a giant eye and a pipe organ, used to navigate the ship as well as provide entertainment in the evenings.

As with other crawljammer ships, the *Oculus* flies through the Phlogiston flux of space via enchantment placed on it by the wizard. The hull has been raised to support the the addition of a large hold and crew quarters, and much of the interior is decorated to exotic standards of luxury: expensive paintings grace the corridors, the library boasts a collection of rare books, including several well-admired ophthalmological tomes, and the wizard's personal study holds boxed displays of valuable specimens of hundreds of eyes, many of which are from creatures unknown to the world the PCs come from.

Organ Navigation

The Oculus is steered via a pipe organ located in the wizard's quarters below decks. Operators playing the right combination of keys can control both the course and speed of the ship. The destination can also be pre-set by playing a specific refrain that the ship is programmed to respond to. The wizard has programmed dozens of locations that he has previously visited to trade slaves, including all of the known planets of the solar system.

The organ works as follows:

- To activate, the organist plays the introduction to a fugue the wizard grew fond of while one of his many-dimensional travels, one of which was to 18th century Earth. Starting with a flourish in the upper ranges of the keyboard, the organist then spirals toward the bottom, playing a diminished seventh chord, built one note at a time until resolving into a D major chord. Thereafter, the organist can attempt to either manually navigate the ship or enter one of the pre-set destinations.

- Manual navigation is performed by playing scales and chords. The course of the ship is controlled via steps in the chromatic scale (C representing 0° and F# 180°), with changes in pitch angling the ship up or down. Speed is increased or decreased via major chords, with C major indicating full reverse and B major full ahead.

- Refrains for pre-set destinations must be known to the organist and played after the activating fugue. Once a destination is set, the ship is on autopilot until it reaches that destination and it can only be turned off by playing the introductory flourish again. Once programmed, any attempts at manual navigation result in the ship moving slightly in the direction indicated, but always drifting gently back to the currently programmed course.

PCs unfamiliar with the instrument attempting to operate it must make a DC12 Intelligence check for each attempted change in course or speed. PCs with music-related backgrounds treat the skill as trained and use d20 die, all others treat the skill roll as untrained and use a d10. Failure indicates that the ship is unintentionally placed off-course, or with a fumble, worse.

The Mechanical Iris

The iris is a scrying device created by the wizard to search potential dangers in the Phlogiston flux. It is covered by a mechanical diaphragm controlled from inside the ship that opens to reveal the magically-enchanted eye of a colossal squid peering out from the hull into deep space. Operating the iris allows the user to cast Wizard Sense once/day as the 4th level wizard spell (+6 spell check, non-spellcasters use a d10 die).

Ramming Prow and Electric Field

The *Oculus* has minimal in the way of offensive and defensive weaponry, though it includes both a ram and a built-in deterrence for boarding parties. A reinforced beam of *Lignum Vitae* spiked with razor-sharp teeth is attached to the prow, and can be used in ramming attacks against other ships for 2d6+4 damage. Upon a successful attack, there is a 25% chance that the Oculus gets stuck in the hull of the ship, requiring a DC 15 navigation check to break free.

As an additional defence against boarding actions, the *Oculus*' hull has also been enchanted by the wizard to send an electrical shock through any creatures standing on the deck. Upon activation, all living targets on the surface of the ship, including allies, take 2d6 damage (DC 22 Ref save for none).

The Oculus, floating longship: Init +0; Atk ramming prow +4 melee (2d6+4), electric field (special); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 14; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP ramming prow, electric field, personal ranged weapons may be fired on deck at +2 to hit vs. enemy craft; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +2; Composition: wood, eyes, and teeth; Luck pool: 4.

Similar to other longships, the *Oculus* features a broad deck from which its crew can easily attack with ranged weapons or spells. From stem to stern the Oculus is 140' long, and its maximum breadth is 20'.

Credits

Contributing Authors – VOLUME 6
Julian Bernick, Marc Bruner, bygrinstow,
Tim Callahan, Jon Hershberger, James V. West

Cover Illustrator – VOLUME 6
Doug Kovacs

Title Page Illustrator – VOLUME 6
Marc Radle

Contributing Illustrators – VOLUME 6
Fred Dailey, Matt Hildebrand, Stefan Poag, Aileen Snyder

Editors
Forrest Aguirre, Steven Bean, Daniel Bishop, Jon Carnes,
Keith Garrett, Jason Hobbs, Tony Hogard, Michael Jones,
Duncan McLastName, Jonathan Nichol, James Pozenel,
Jim Skach, Tim Snider, Noah Stevens, Doyle Tavener,
David VC, Laura Rose Williams, Paul Wolfe

Proofreaders
Reece Carter, Samuel Dester, Jason Hobbs, Tony Hogard,
Aaron Koelman, Ryan Moore, Jonathan Nichol, Jim Skach

Printing Offset Contributors
Forrest Aguirre, Steven Bean, Julian Bernick,
Eric Fields, Laura Rose Williams, and the
patrons of the G+ GFA community

Creative Vision & Direction, Layout and Graphic Design
Doug Kovacs, Harley Stroh, Jon Hershberger
Marc Bruner, Matt Hildebrand, Michael Jones