

MUTANT CRAWL CLASSICS

A FALLEN STAR FOR ALL

#2: A LEVEL 1 ADVENTURE
BY TIM CALLAHAN



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A LEVEL 5 ADVENTURE

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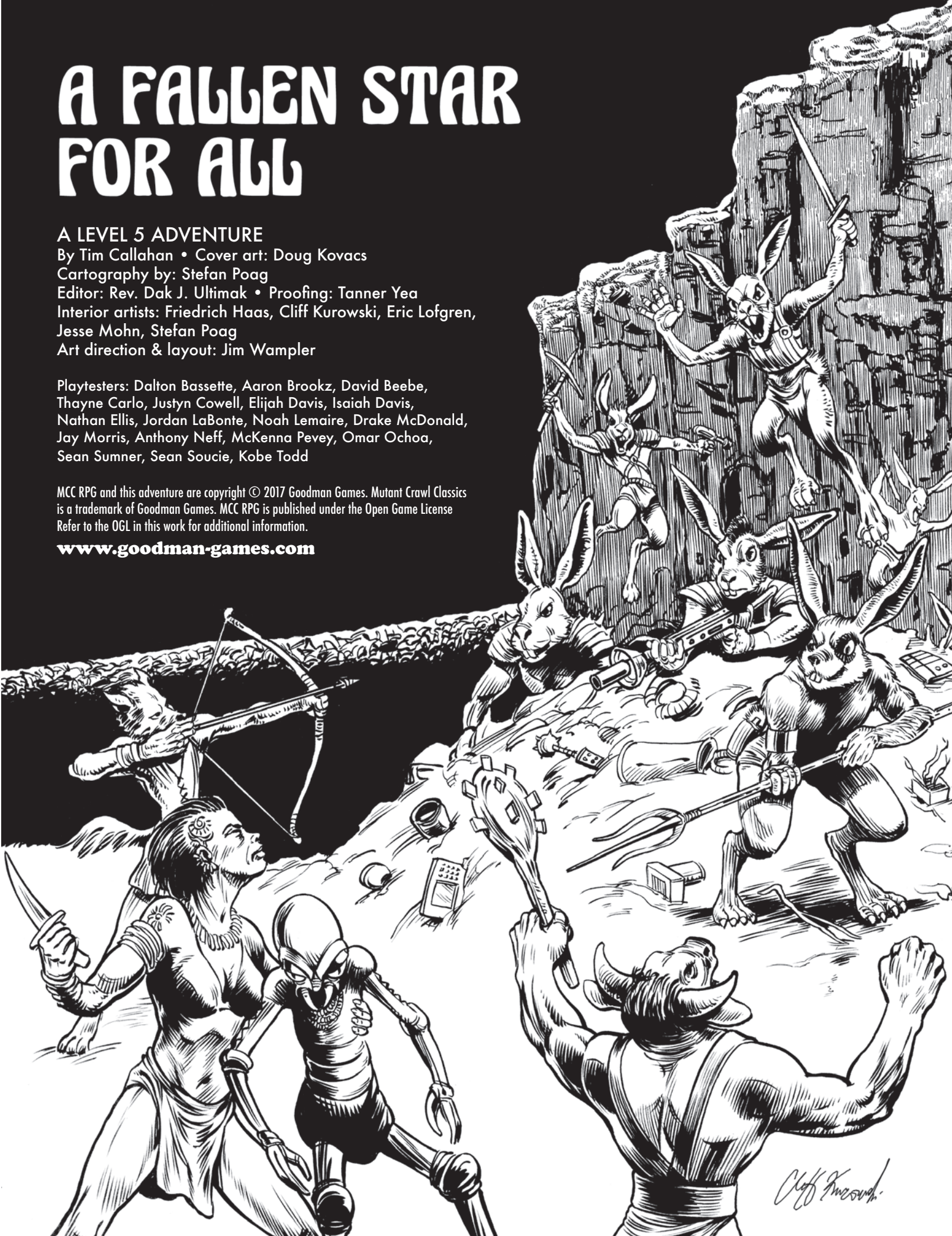
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INTRODUCTION

Remember the good old days, when post-apocalyptic adventures were full of super-science, murderous robots that were there to be mastered, and the finale of every underground adventure was setting the fusion power plant to overload? Those days are back. Mutant Crawl Classics RPG adventures take place in an ambiguous time period after a great disaster has ravaged the world, and it's up to you and your mutant tribesmen to go out into the hothouse jungles and radioactive deserts of Terra A.D. and collect the artifacts of the Ancient Ones in order to attain great power and savage glory. This adventure, in which characters race against other seekers to bring powerful artifacts back to their tribe, is designed for four-to-six level 1 Mutant Crawl Classics PCs.

BACKGROUND

A millennium ago, automated machines at the underground Skybreak Industries mining complex tapped into a potent bio-liquid energy source that was too unstable for bulky, clumsy equipment to properly harvest. Chief Operating Scientist Lemil Sterrson, iconoclastic thinker, designer of artificial intelligence systems and advanced robotics, took charge of the facility and continued to explore alternative avenues for harvesting the dangerously powerful fuel source. After an expensive restructuring, increasingly reclusive behavior from Sterrson, and more profitable operations elsewhere, Skybreak Industries officially abandoned Sterrson's project. Dedicated to his work, and officially written off by Skybreak leadership, Sterrson moved permanently into the shuttered mining complex, bringing his two young children with him. By the time the Great Disaster struck, no one had heard from Sterrson, his children, or this abandoned Skybreak mine again. Until...

Three days ago, when a blazing star streaked across the sky and crashed into the northeast horizon, on the edge of the volcanic Crater Country. The edges of the northern jungle burned through the night, smoke filling the sky by dawn, a gray-black plume of foreboding rising to the heavens, a harsh warning to all manner of creatures and curious tribesfolk.

After the fires died down, tribesmen and creatures of all types began to investigate this strange fresh crater at jungle's edge. Word quickly spread among the clans, both allied and enemy, that smart metal fragments could be found near the site of the crash. The rumors that followed hinted that the fallen star had unearthed a city of the Ancients, one possibly filled with wondrous artifacts of tremendous power.

Seekers from every tribe in the territory were sent to recover artifacts from this subterranean treasure horde, and the PCs are but one of many parties converging on the location. The Skybreak mining facility has been revealed for the first time in over a thousand years. And something stirs within.

PLAYER'S INTRODUCTION

After the star fell from the sky three days ago, the elders of your tribe spoke of prophecies and good fortune, praising the gods that had protected your people from the devastation to the northeast.

The smoke still looms at the edge of Crater Country, hanging to the side of the rising sun like a scar on the face of the sky, when the clan elders summon you to the sacred hut of memory. Surrounded by fragile walls built from thin sheepskin, marked with symbols you cannot understand, the chief elder speaks.

"Trev-gar has returned at dawn with news of the fallen star," the chief elder says, pointing to your bandaged, but still bleeding, tribesman. "The fires to the north dance no more, but the smoke points to where the star has landed."

"It has crushed the earth!" Trev-gar shouts as he tries to stand, his blue eyes speckled red. "Creatures move within!"

The chief elder calms the agitated tribesman and returns his attention to you.

"This brave hunter has seen a city of the Ancients, revealed. As seekers of our tribe, you know what you must do." The chief elder pauses and moves to you placing his hand atop each of your heads before moving to the next.

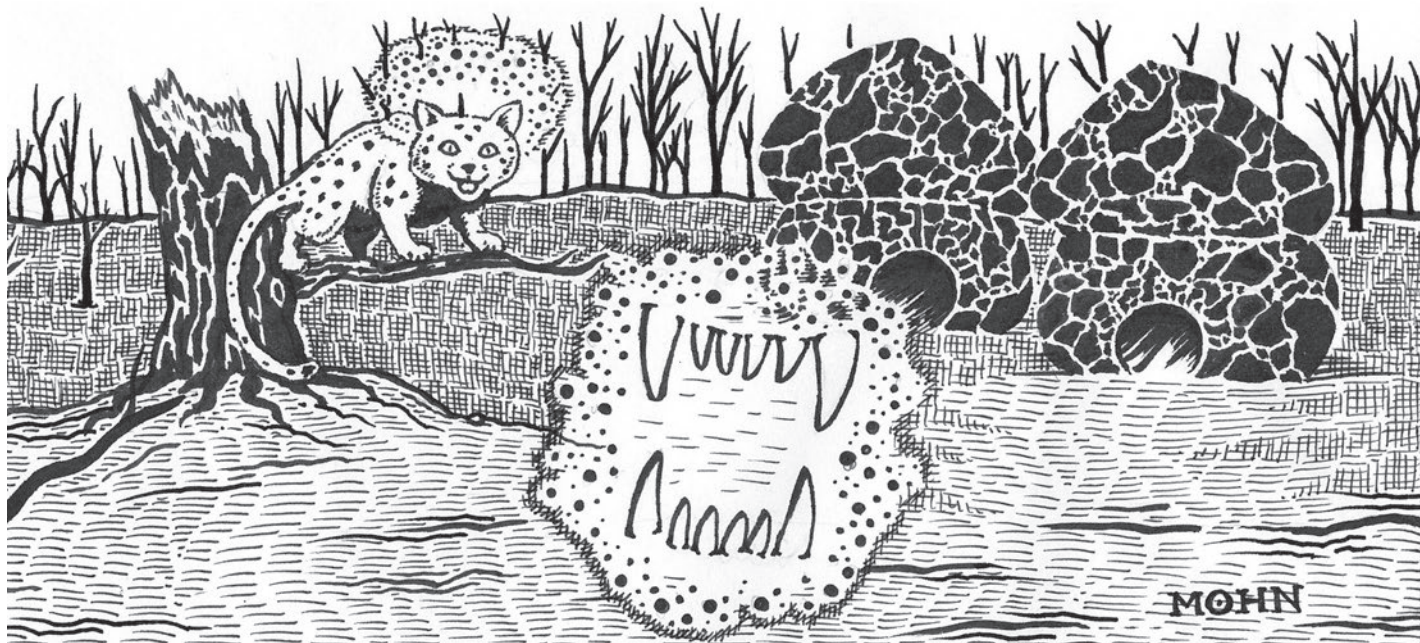
"Return with artifacts of power. Seekers from other tribes rush to this fallen star to steal what should belong to us. You must leave immediately. Bring pride to the clan."

JUDGE'S INFORMATION

Trev-gar has indeed seen creatures move around the edge of the crater newly-formed by the fallen star. He pursued an antlered horse but lost it in the jungle. He emerged at the charred edge to the northeast and could not help but curiously probe around the area of the crater, avoiding slender jets of molten fire bursting from the ground.

If interviewed before the PCs leave, Trev-gar will describe his experiences and speak of the white-furred bestial men with small feet and ferocious teeth. Two of them climbed up the crater wall as if led by a small pack of rats. He saw the beast things digging atop the crater's edge and pulling up small artifacts from a revealed passageway, and he lost track of time as night fell. As he snuck closer, he was grabbed from behind, attacked by a spear-wielding beast thing. Tearing through a tangle of vines, Trev-gar fled by the faint light of the Sky Arc.

The crater of the fallen star lies 10 miles to the northeast. If the PC's leave immediately, as they have been told by the chief elder, they will arrive when the sun is at its highest point in the sky. The judge may add random encounters during the jungle trek. but with their knowledge of the area, the PCs may be reasonably able to avoid danger until they reach the charred remains at jungle's edge. That's where the encounters for this adventure begin.



THE CHARRED FOREST

Area A-1—Red Mist: The shattered ridge of the crater looms ahead of you through the burned stumps and charred branches of jungle's edge. Two connected, blackened huts stand between you and the crater. Lava spouts splash to your left and right. You can hear high-pitched humming sound ahead. A blood-colored mist hovers above the ground.

The mist is a humming nanite swarm that has been disturbed from deep underground by the impact of the fallen star. The nanites fly into the eyes, ears, nose, and mouth of any living creature who enters this area. Creatures who completely wrap their heads with protective covering (assuming they have some way to see without exposing their eyes to infestation) avoid all damage from the nanites on a successful Luck check.

Any character passing through the swarming nanites must make a DC 10 Fortitude save each round or take 1 damage while in contact with the swarm. The swarm takes four rounds to move through at normal speed, two rounds while running. A DC 10 Reflex save is required to move quickly while within the swarm or the character stumbles and takes 1d4 damage from the sharp rocks and jagged branches.

The nanites have long ago forgotten their original programming, and they seem to have only cosmetic effects on any creatures afflicted. Once safely out of the swarm, their new hosts' eyes become mottled with reddish flakes and the host hears a mild hum in their head for 1 turn.

Because the nanites are irradiated and have entered the bloodstream of the victim, the next time the host creature attempts glowburn within 24 hours after being afflicted, he or she gains an additional 1d3 bonus to the roll for each damage originally dealt by the nanites. This is a one-time bonus only, and additional exposure to these nanites has no further effect.

Area A-2—Outpost Alpha: Blackened stone covers the walls of the two connected mushroom-shaped huts. Clanging sounds emerge from a round opening in the closest hut. A small feline figure leaps from behind the hut onto a charred branch. A flashing image appears in your head: a gaping maw with jagged teeth opens to devour you whole.

All characters must make a DC 8 Willpower save or become disoriented and unable to act for one round. During that one round, PCs who saved successfully can move into the hut or investigate the space behind the hut, where the feline leaped to a branch. They will also have time to take one action in addition to their movement.

The feline, house-cat-sized with black spots on orange fur, is a telepathic margay. It can only communicate in images and it's asking the PCs for help because skulking along the back of the hut is Klim, a brown-furred, hunched mutant with long arms and a massive, gnarly-toothed mouth. If all of the PCs enter the hut this round, none of them see Klim leap up and chase after the telepathic margay, though they will "see" repeated visions of a wide mouth with saliva-drenched teeth for the next few rounds. Unopposed, Klim catches the margay without resorting to his sonic scream attack in 1d6+1 rounds and eats him before returning to enter the hut.

If rescued, the margay will eagerly become a companion animal to the PC with the highest Personality ability score.

Klim's partner, Forager, is inside the closest hut, scavenging for artifacts. Forager is a blue-feathered humanoid wearing crude leather armor. If the PCs fight with Klim outside, Forager comes to his ally's aid. If the PC's enter the hut, weapons drawn or not, Forager tries to negotiate with the characters and offer assistance on their quest for artifacts. He only wants his fair share (until he betrays the PCs at the first opportunity, luring them to area C-1 or turning against them if they encounter another seeker faction). Forager uses his holographic skin mutation to attempt to escape if

TRANSMAT TUBE ARTIFACT CHECKS

Artifact Check Results

1 or less	Tube explodes in crystalline fragments, dealing 2d6 damage to all within a 10' radius.
2-8	Tube shatters, irreparable. White-blue energy flashes out, 1d4 inanimate items of any characters within a 10' radius disappear forever.
9-11	Teleportation core fizzles out; must make a DC 15 Intelligence check and provide an additional power source to the core to make operational.
12-16	Tube glows white-blue and may be used 1d4 times to teleport inanimate objects to unknown teleportation stations with a DC 12 Intelligence check.
17+	Teleportation technology basically understood, with the knowledge that each teleportation station is uniquely coded. This is WLY-11FF. May be used to teleport inanimate objects to unknown teleportation stations. Other teleportation stations discovered can be used with a DC 12 Intelligence check.

he feels that the PCs will not work with him. If Klim enters the hut while Forager is negotiating, he will convince Klim to enter into a partnership with the PCs too.

Forager: Init +1, Atk axe +3 melee (1d8+3); AC 11; HD 2d6; hp 7; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP mutation (check +2: holographic skin); SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +3.

Klim: Init +3, Atk bite +1 melee (1d12), sonic scream +2 missile fire (1d6+special); AC 13; HD 2d6; hp 11; MV 40' (climb 30'); Act 1d20; SP sonic scream; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will -1.

Sonic scream: Requires Willpower save vs. attack roll or immediate action (roll 1d4): (1-2) harm self with strongest possible attack, dealing ½ damage if successful; (3) flee at maximum movement for 1 round; (4) curl into a ball and weep, unable to act for 1 round.

Telepathic Margay: Init +2, Atk bite -1 melee (1d4-1); AC 12; HD 1d4; hp 1; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP mutation (check +0: telepathy); SV Fort -1, Ref +1, Will +0.

Outpost Alpha is a decommissioned medical dispensary, long ago hidden by jungle overgrowth, but now revealed by the fires caused by the falling star. Only two domed rooms in size, with a smashed-in circular entrance on the westernmost "hut," this area has been mostly overlooked by other seekers in their rush to explore the crater. Three lesser artifacts of the ancients remain here: a holo-compass, a damaged medishot, and an f-cell power source. Forager holds the holo-compass in his hand.

Holo-Compass: TL 4; CM 3; Special: glowing orange arrow points to strongest magnetic force, glowing blue arrow points to location where compass was activated or reset.

Damaged Medishot: TL 4; CM 3; Special: heals 2d4 damage, DC 12 Fort save or causes 1 random defect.

F-Cell Power Source: TL 4; CM 2; Special: 10 charges.

Area A-3—Outpost Beta: Only accessible via a locked door in Outpost Alpha, this second domed structure was

a shipping facility of the ancients using transmat tube technology. The walls of this room are lined with empty shelves and the teleportation tube remains intact, built into a white countertop. The crystalline tube is 2' in diameter, with a metal-rimmed opening the size of a toaster.

Teleportation Tube: TL 5; CM 5

ON CRATER'S EDGE

Area B-1—Western Edge of the Crater: *A creature with soot-streaked fur crawls along the ground at the base of the crater, slithering between charred stumps and over ashen branches. Partially obscured by the burnt vegetation, it stands up on its haunches, long ears pulled back, surveying the territory with red eyes, holding a spear at the ready.*

This is a tibbar patrolman, a vicious rabbit-man half the size of a human, with the ability to leech the energy from things both living and mechanical. If the full tibbar raiding party is not yet within the Skybreak complex already, it is on its way. This lone tibbar watches over the crater, gathering information about other factions to bring back to his clan.

The tibbar will flee to the northern edge of the crater if attacked from missile range or if an approaching party is detected prior to melee. It will attempt to divide any attackers and siphon energy from the weakest. With its keen hearing, a DC 15 Agility or hide check is needed to catch it unawares. The tibbar will fight to the death if engaged in melee.

Tibbar: Init +3, Atk bite +3 melee (1d4), +3 wooden spear melee or missile fire (1d6); AC 12; HD 2d10; hp 9; MV 35'; Act 1d20; SP mutations (check +3: Life Force Drain, Energy Sap); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -1.

Area C-1—Southern Edge of the Crater: *Untouched by the fires that have destroyed the jungle, this lush green area thrives with vine-covered fruit trees, providing dense cover for a closer inspection of the crater.*

This mutated area of the jungle has sprung forth in the aftermath of the fallen star, a 20'x30' patch of verdant green

surrounded by scorched trees and ashen ground. Anyone watching this fresh jungle area for one minute or more will note that the greenery moves, without any notable wind, and they will see the white-furred corpses of two beast things covered in slithering vines at the base of the large tree.

The mutated fruit trees and vines lack sentience and act out of a survival instinct. The vines suffocate their prey, and low-level radiation emitted from the trees slowly cook the unconscious victims, speeding up decomposition which provides nutrients to the soil.

The vines grab any creature who step within 10' of the fresh jungle area. A DC 10 Reflex save is needed to avoid. On a failed save, the character is thrust toward the closest tree and must make a Luck check or drop anything he or she carries. The character will lose 1 hp the first round from constriction, 2 hp the next round, 3 hp the third round, etc. A character may be freed if the constricting vines take 5 damage, but half of any damage dealt is also inflicted upon the character. The vines take double-damage from heat or cold.

The decaying beast things have a single remaining possession: a large tooth-spiked club, the jawbone of a massive lizard. It can be wielded as a two-handed weapon, dealing 1d12 damage.

The pomegranate-like fruit from the trees in this area can provide sustenance to brave characters, but each fruit eaten confers a cumulative 10% chance of a random physical mutation, and a 10% chance of a defect, up to a maximum of 50% for each. Pure strain humans are immune to this effect and may eat the fruit as normal, though indigestion will prevent them from healing any hit points from rest the following night.

SKYBREAK MINING COMPLEX

As the PCs explore the mining complex, they encounter traps, puzzles, and creatures, some of whom have not been disturbed for thousands of years. Yet newly arrived seekers move about the complex as well, some arriving sooner than the PCs, some delayed by an hour or two. In addition to the fixed encounters in this adventure, other encounters are fluid, with a group of wandering seekers arriving to challenge the PCs.

Most of the Skybreak mining complex is illuminated by balls of light affixed to the walls, generators activated by the power surge caused by the fallen star. The only darkened areas are the damaged areas closest to the surface. Areas D-1 through D-4 are unlit, and though area D-5 is damaged, it is illuminated enough from the glowlamps in the adjacent passageways that characters will be able to see as normal.

Judges should use the Wandering Seekers random encounter table as directed by an area description, but also if the PCs linger in any one area for more than 1 turn. In the case of a lingering or resting party, roll 1d8 to determine what sort of encounter occurs: (1) wandering seeker group attempts to sneak past the PCs undetected; (2) wandering

seeker group attempts to hide its approach and surprise the PCs when they leave; (3-4) wandering seeker group attacks PCs directly; (6-8) no wandering seeker group in the area. If an encounter occurs, determine the results on the table, ignoring duplicate results unless appropriate for surviving seekers to reappear.

WANDERING SEEKERS

d6	Artifact Check Results
1	Beast Things
2	Blessed Brotherhood Clansmen
3	Conservators
4	Psions
5	Tibbars
6	Tribe of the Golden Frog

Beast Things: Blue-grey, wrinkled ape-men with clawed, too-skinny feet. These degenerate creatures are just one group of beast things wandering the Skybreak complex, and without their leader they will fight to the death behind their spear-thrusts and only use their poison darts on fleeing enemies. With little understanding of the artifacts they find, they fill their sacks with shiny robot parts and other useless trinkets. Each sack recovered by PCs will be partially filled with detritus, but have a 5% chance of a useful random small artifact (roll on Table 1-2).

Beast Things (2d4): Init +1; Atk spear +0 melee (1d6), poison darts +1 missile fire (1d3, DC 13 Fort save or paralysis 1d4 rounds); AC 12; HD 1d10; hp 3 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -1.

Blessed Brotherhood Clansmen: More commonly known as the "Vile Brotherhood," this evil mutant clan seeks artifacts to help them forcefully expand their territory and increase the power of their mutant priest overlords. This wandering group of seekers retreats at the first sign that they are out-classed by the PCs, but they try to steal an artifact or two before doing so, and they would much prefer to slaughter the PCs outright. These four, dark-clad clansmen each have a different physical appearance and a different mutation, but their basic characteristics are identical:

Blessed Brotherhood Clansman (4): Init +0; Atk bone club +0 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d5; hp 4 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP mutations (check +1: see below); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1.

Bright Red Clansman: Mutation: Empathy

Lemon Yellow Clansman: Mutation: Life Force Reflection

White-Eyed Clansman: Mutation: Domination

Antennae-Head Clansman: Mutation: Telekinesis; Equipment: backpack (50% chance of a useful small random artifact, roll on Random Useful Small Artifact table).

RANDOM USEFUL SMALL ARTIFACT

d12 Artifact Check Results

- 1 **Self-heating NuChem Beverage Mug:** TL 5; CM 1; Power: C-Cell (10 charges); Special: heats liquid in mug to 180 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 2 **Plasteel Simonized Retractable Power Cord:** extends from 1' to 38'.
- 3 **Miniscan Photonic Collage Memory Chip:** TL 3; CM 4; Special: can store up to one emotionally-charged memory. Attaching the chip to another character will impart that memory as if it were his or her own.
- 4 **Sounds of the Sea™ Atomic Headphones and Neck Massager:** TL 2; CM 2; Power: requires F-Cell (missing); Special: provides soothing sounds of the ocean and reduces stress with harmless but comforting atomic vibrations.
- 5 **Photon Grenade:** TL 4; CM 4; Special: high-yield incendiary device. Range 30' radius, damage 6d6.
- 6 **C-Cell Recharger:** TL 2; CM 2; Special: 3 uses left.
- 7 **ObscuraLux™ Goggles:** provides ultra-violet protection from the rays of the sun.
- 8 **Illumina Titanium Rainbow Glowglobe:** TL 2; CM 2; Power: S-Cell (needs recharging in daylight); Special: emits 10' radius of revolving rainbow-colored light.
- 9 **MakersMark Pistol:** TL 4; CM 3; Power: F-Cell (20 charges); Special: this utility device can be used to holographically paint in any color on any surface (including skin) with great precision. Each charge provides paint for a 10x10' area.
- 10 **Gauzer Pistol:** TL 4; CM 3; Power: C-Cell (20 charges); Special: fires steel projectiles using linear magnetic acceleration, Range 70', Damage 1d6/(10d6 auto), Ammo: 8.
- 11 **Skybreak Keycube:** TL 4; CM 2; Special: can be placed in any door receptacle in the Skybreak complex to allow access.
- 12 **Flavorburst Spraystick and Allergen Remover:** TL 2; CM 1; Special: this thin, rod-like device can spray a pleasant, candied scent in a 20x20' area, disinfecting and clearing the air of allergens. 12 uses remain.

Conservators: This splinter-group of the Curators collects the holy objects others call "artifacts." While they use artifacts if absolutely necessary to their survival, Conservators intend to rescue all artifacts from the unclean tribal throngs and return them to a holy place of worship. They defend themselves with righteous fury because they know they have a sacred mission. Two of this group of Conservator seekers are human males and the other is a humanoid female with mottled yellow-and-black scaled skin, a prehensile tail, and a salamander head. The human males carry backpacks, each with 1d3 useful random small artifacts (roll on Table 1-2). The salamander woman carries a crude quiver with 5 stone-tipped arrows.

Pure Strain Human Conservators (2): Init +1; Atk stone axe +1 melee (1d6+1); AC 11; HD 1d12; hp 6 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1.

Salamander Woman Conservator (1): Init +1; Atk short-bow +1 missile fire (1d6), stone club +1 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 2d5; hp 7; MV 30'; Act 1d20+1d16; SP prehensile tail allows for a d16 additional action each round (may be used to attack with club); SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1.

Psions: This group of three outcast mutants with visible veins and throbbing craniums does not belong to a recognized tribe or faction, but attempts to convert others to the ways of the mind. They are partial to mutants or manimals with mental mutations, but since they have no followers yet, they will take anyone who offers subservience. Creatures who refuse to follow will be destroyed. Their quest for

artifacts is driven by their attempt to increase their renown to attract minions and subordinates. They wear robes with many pockets, and each robe has a 75% chance of a useful random small artifact (roll on Table 1-2). Grand Psion Verg wields a dazer pistol, while the other two psions wield ancient and impressive-looking, but mundane, weapons.

Grand Psion Verg (1): Init +3; Atk claw +0 melee (1d4) or dazer pistol +0 missile fire (special); AC 10; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP mutations (check +2: Telepathy, Mental Shield, Illusion Generation); SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +4.

Dazer Pistol: TL 4; CM 4; Power Source: C-Cell (6 charges); Special: Range 50', Stun for 1d6 rounds (DC 14/16/20 Fort save, depending on 1, 2, or 3 charges used).

Psion Keer (1): Init +1; Atk jeweled staff +1 melee (1d6+1); AC 12; HD 2d8; hp 12; MV 20'; Act 1d20; SP mutation (check +2: Mental Blast); SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +3.

Psion Rik (1): Init +1; Atk sword +2 melee (1d8+2); AC 12; HD 2d12; hp 8; MV 50'; Act 1d20+1d14; SP mutations (check +2: Heightened Strength, Increased Speed); SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2.

Equipment: backpack, 6 food canisters, 50' rope, grappling hook.

Tibbars: Perhaps the most vicious of the wandering seeker groups, this squad of short, humanoid, ill-tempered rabbit men operates with military precision. They carry no sacks or backpacks, though they have no compunction about

stealing artifact-filled bags from other creatures. Primarily, they are in the Skybreak complex to find the largest, most powerful artifact they can carry back to their lair. They will drain life force from an enemy before running a spear through its skull, and sap the energy from a robot before carrying it away to dismantle it.

Tibbars (4): Init +3; Atk bite +3 melee (1d4), wooden spear +3 melee or missile fire (1d6); AC 12; HD 2d10; MV 35'; Act 1d20; SP mutations (check +3: Life Force Drain, Energy Sap); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -1.

Tribe of the Golden Frog: Former members of the "Children of the Glow," the Tribe of the Golden Frog is a group of two tiger manimals, one cedar plantient, and 2d4 zero-level tribesmen (or women), all of whom wear gilded amphibian jewelry they recently unearthed from a palace of the Ancients. The entire tribe of 2d4+3 members explores the Skybreak complex seeking to find ostentatious artifacts and weapons they can use to build a new tribal settlement. Generally, they are happy to negotiate with other seekers most of the time and prefer to fight only when cornered. They feel extremely lucky and often speak of Luck as a powerful force (though they have no ability to use Luck as a mechanical effect unless they become PCs). If the judge is in need of additional zero-level characters to replace slain PCs, the tribespeople of the Golden Frog make suitable replacements and can be rolled with customized abilities as needed.

Tiger Manimal (2): Init +1; Atk bite or claw +1 melee (1d4), wooden spear +1 melee or missile fire (1d6); AC 11; HD 1d5; hp 5 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP mutations (check +1, Gas Generation or Plasticity [one each]); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1.

Cedar Plantient (1): Init +0; Atk thorn +0 missile attack (1d4), Atk bone club +0 melee (1d6); AC 12; HD 1d5; hp 1; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP mutation (check +1: Temporary Invulnerability); SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +1.

Golden Frog Tribesperson (2d4): Init +0; Atk wooden spear +0 melee (1d6); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 2 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0.

Area D-1—Skybreak Offices: *Beneath the top of the ridge, two white-furred beasts hunch at the entrance to a gray-floored cave, spears in hand, looking across the crater toward a glint of metal on the other side and shifting sands at the bottom. A rat crawls from one beast's shoulder to the other before sniffing in the air, lifting its head toward you and emitting a high-pitched whine. The beasts retreat inside their cave immediately.*

This "cave" is a now-partially-exposed room from the buried Skybreak offices. One wall is lined with stone tablets of various colors emblazoned with the Skybreak symbol of an eye on a horizon line with an aura of flame above (see Handout A). Two beast things keep watch out of the cave, with a single rat keeping them company, while in the room below, a beast thing champion digs through storage crates looking for useful artifacts. The rat is in limited telepathic communication with the beast thing champion, and the



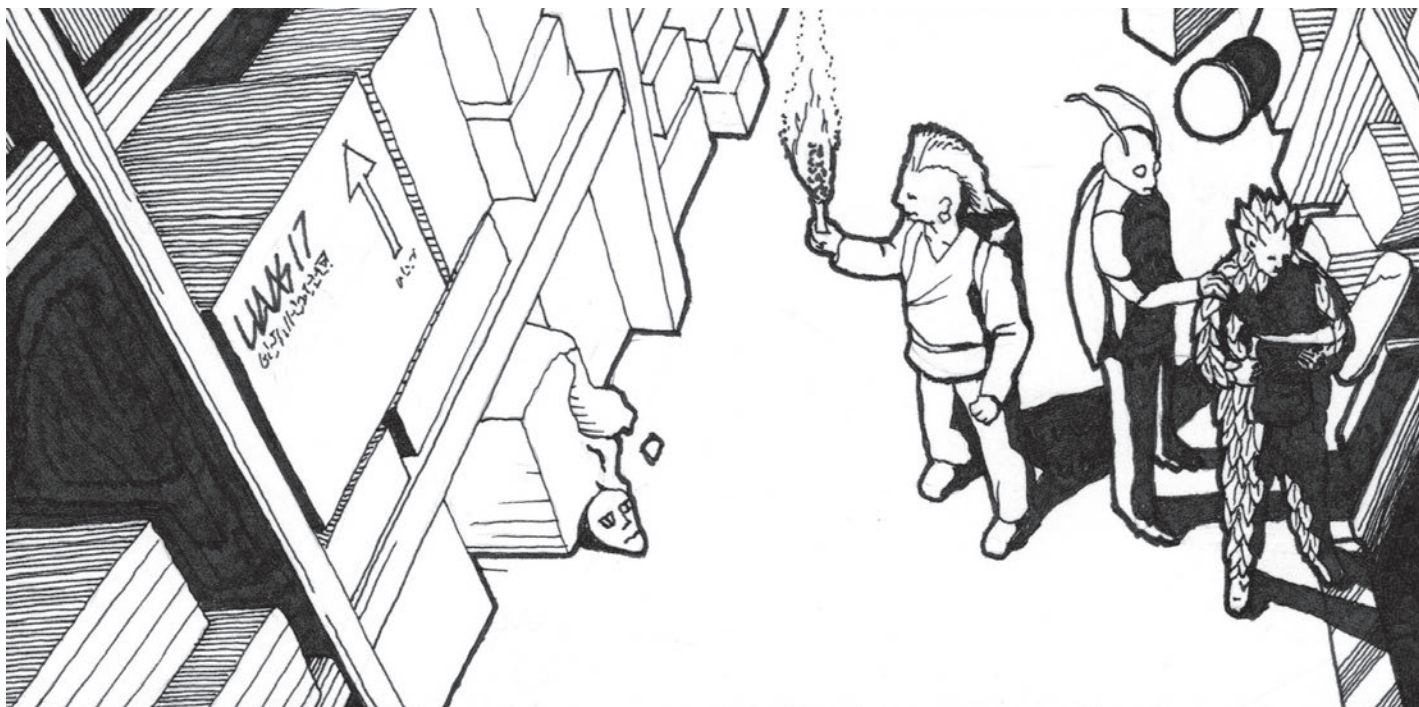
champion will climb up to this area in 1d4 rounds to investigate the disturbance. The champion is 50% larger than the beast things, with an obviously swollen cranium and significantly greater strength. He will telepathically signal the rat to distract the PCs so he can get in a lethal blow, but the rat will not attack in any way that would cause damage. PCs turning to check on the rat will give the champion +2 to attacks against them. All beast things and the champion have red-flecked eyes from a previous encounter with the red mist nanites.

The beast things will not leave this area without good reason, and will defend it with their lives.

A tube in the gray stone floor leads down to area D-2, using compressed air to slow the descent or gently lift the ascent of any traveler. It will not respond to inanimate objects and two living creatures entering the tube simultaneously will cause a violent blast of air ejecting both occupants upward toward the ceiling, dealing 1d6 damage from the violent collision with the metal tiles unless a DC 15 Reflex save is made.

Beast Things (2): Init +1; Atk spear +0 melee (1d6), poison darts +1 ranged (1d3, DC 13 Fort save or paralysis 1d4 rounds); AC 12; HD 1d10; hp 3 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -1.

Beast Thing Champion: Init +1, Atk two-handed axe +2 melee (1d12), poison darts +1 ranged (1d3, DC 13 Fort save or paralysis 1d4 rounds); AC 12; HD 1d10+2; hp 9; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -1.



Area D-2—Skybreak Office Storage: *This stone-walled basement area is filled plastic-encased utility items that have been pulled from their storage bins and tossed about.*

Characters will also find bulky equipment with cables and wires pulled out, and discarded android heads of various sizes, nothing operational. Everything they find is emblazoned with the Skybreak logo of an eye over a horizon line with an aura of flame atop. For each round of searching with a light source, PCs will find one random useful item (roll on Table 1-2), up to a maximum of three items total. Without a light source, they will need to make a Luck check to find each item. If they search for at least 1 full turn, they will also find a multitool, and a Skybreak Grav-Spectral Imaging Display.

Multitool: TL 5; CM 5; Special: +5 artifact repairs, bypass security locks on a DC 12 Intelligence check.

Skybreak Grav-Spectral Imaging Display: TL 7; CM 7; Special: this plasteel screen provides a crude impression, using gravity-spectrometry, of the mining veins around the Skybreak complex. See Handout B. Master users of this device can take new spectral images beneath any stone surface to see possible fuel deposits and gaps in rock formations.

Area D-3—Lift Platform: *Moving the reflective stone out of the way reveals a rectangular room shrouded in darkness. Only studded, bubble-shaped protrusions are visible on the near walls.*

If the characters have a light source, they see more, as indicated below, otherwise they need to feel their way around the room and fall 30' into the lift shaft if they attempt to blindly walk across the center of the room.

If the PCs have light sources, or other mutational ways of seeing, they will note the following:

An angular hole, wide enough for two men, rests near the fall wall.

Every wall of the room is dotted with oval, studded protrusions, some man-sized, some the size of a fist. Each bulbous outcropping is speckled with several white and black stones at its side.

The hole is a lift shaft that provides direct access to the passageway leading to area D-6 and downward to D-10. Characters can operate the electro-lift locally (by reaching it at area D-4), or at this platform area, but damage from the impact of the falling star has cut power and damaged the lift-mechanism here (TL: 4; CM 8 plus a DC 12 Intelligence check to repair and operate, and a multi-tool and a new power source of any type is needed).

The protrusions in the wall are opaque grip-glass storage pods, accessible with the correct button sequence (TL: 2; CM 3), but the buttons will not respond unless power is restored to the lift-mechanism in the area. The buttons will glow brightly when power is (even temporarily) restored. Six fist-sized storage pods and four man-sized storage pods line the walls, each of which may be pried open or smashed with a DC 18 Strength check or 8 damage dealt, revealing the following contents:

- Small storage pods #1-2: empty; #3: flower of fire; #4-6 phototronic scanning orbs
- Large storage pods #1-2: Skybreak flame-retardant uniform; #3: utility bot (defective, unresponsive), #4: utility bot (active, hostile).

The lift shaft may be scaled with a DC 12 Agility check per 10' of movement. It is more easily accessed if a character is lowered the 30' via rope. The doors in the lift shaft leading to areas D-16 and D-10 may be opened with a DC 12 security bypass check or via a Skybreak Keycube. The reinforced hazard doors leading from the shaft to area D-15 can only be opened remotely from area D-14 or via a DC 20 security bypass check from the D-15 side.

Flower of Fire: TL 4; CM 5; Special: launches three quick signal flare bursts out of its pistil. Each flare deals 1 damage, exploding in a phosphorescent burst, illuminating a 50' area, causing a -2 penalty for 1d6 rounds to creatures accustomed to darkness.

Phototronic Scanning Orb: TL 6; CM 6; Power Source: C-Cell (10 charges); Special: Fly 10', scans target within 20' via phototronic sensors, creates miniature holographic simulacrum at 20% size, identifies mass differential to detect items carried or hidden.

Skybreak Flame-Retardant Uniform: Special: human-sized, provides +2 AC and absorbs up to 12 points of fire damage before catching fire and dealing 1d6 damage each round to the wearer.

Utility-Bot (1): Init -1; Atk claw -1 melee (1d6) or laser +1 melee (1d4); AC 12; HD 4d6; hp 11; MV fly 20'; Act 1d20; SP immune to mind control, poisons, radiation, does not need to eat or breathe; SV Fort +2, Ref -1, Will -1; AI recog 9.

Area D-4—Electro-Lift: This 10' x 12' platform obstructs all movement downward in the lift shaft. Operating via electro-magnetism, it fell from its perch in area D-3, but four safety latches protruding from the wall hold it in place, 100' above the base of the shaft. If any two safety latches are disabled (DC 10 Agility check or DC 8 Intelligence check), the platform falls 40' feet until caught by another set of latches in the shaft. Any characters falling will take 2d6 damage from the sudden drop, unless they make a DC 15 Reflex save to grab one of the protruding latches as they fall. Scaling the slick surface requires a DC 12 Agility check for each 10' of movement.

The electro-lift has 2' tall, retractable fence-like walls around its edges, and the northernmost corner post is dotted with buttons and a control stick. A duplicate of these controls can also be found beneath a panel in the southern side of the platform. If power is restored to area D-3 or a C-Cell power supply is inserted into a panel in the floor of the platform, it can hover up and down the shaft, bypassing the safety latches once operational. The platform can also move horizontally, traveling through the passageways of the complex, hovering 1' off the ground, capable of carrying up to 2 tons of material. It is programmable from the side panel or the control post, allowing simple directional commands to be input externally.

While operational, the Electro-Lift Platform can move horizontally or vertically at 60' per round, but sensors prohibit sudden contact with hard surfaces, so if it is used as a ramming vehicle or to crush a creature beneath it, it will suddenly stop one second before impact, requiring a DC 10 Reflex save for characters on board to maintain balance.

The platform only works inside the Skybreak facility, or any location with implanted electromagnetic rails, and it will become inert on any other surface (such as sand or jungle).

Electro-Lift Platform: TL 6; CM 4; Power Source: C-Cell (re-charge or replacement needed, powerless unless in contact with Skybreak facility); Special: Fly 60', loading fork can extend from base of platform 10' and attack with a crush attack at 1d12+4 plus Intelligence modifier to hit, dealing 2d6+4 damage.

Area D-5—Skybreak Infirmary: The base of the crater in this area is like quicksand, due to faulty electromagnetic gravity distortion fields damaged by the fragments of the fallen star that penetrated this area of the Skybreak complex. Intruders have already entered the complex via this area, and if the PCs allow themselves to be pulled down into the quicksand, this is what they will see when they fall through to the hard metal of area D-5:

You fall gently to the ground on a sand-strewn floor marked with the shape of an eye cut in half with shards of golden glow emerging from the top. Sand sprinkles down on your head, like dust. You feel dizzy, but through your whirling vision you can see flickering lights along the walls and a bright passageway in front of you. You hear clacking from the wall to your left and see long spider legs lash outward. Shadowy figures move toward you.

The shadowy figures are a random group of seekers (determine randomly on Table 1-1). All but the Tribe of the Golden Frog will attack immediately. The PCs roll initiative this round at -2.

In addition to a likely attack by hostile seekers, the PCs face two other dangers in this area:

1. The four "spider-legs" emerging from the northern wall are partially-disabled med-bot arms with variable hyper-syringe fingers. Any character within 10' of the northern wall must take a full action and make a DC 5 Reflex save to avoid being hit (or may continue with other actions and

MATRON RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

Type of Question

MATRON Response

"Where are we?"

Skybreak Industries Substructural Mining Complex One-One-Nine-One-Eight-Two-Dash-Twenty-Five.

"Who are you?"

You should recognize your MATRON by now.

"Who created you?"

Chief Operating Scientist Sterrson helped create all of us (she looks over her shoulder when she says this).

"Are there any (weapons or similar) available?"

Do not touch those!

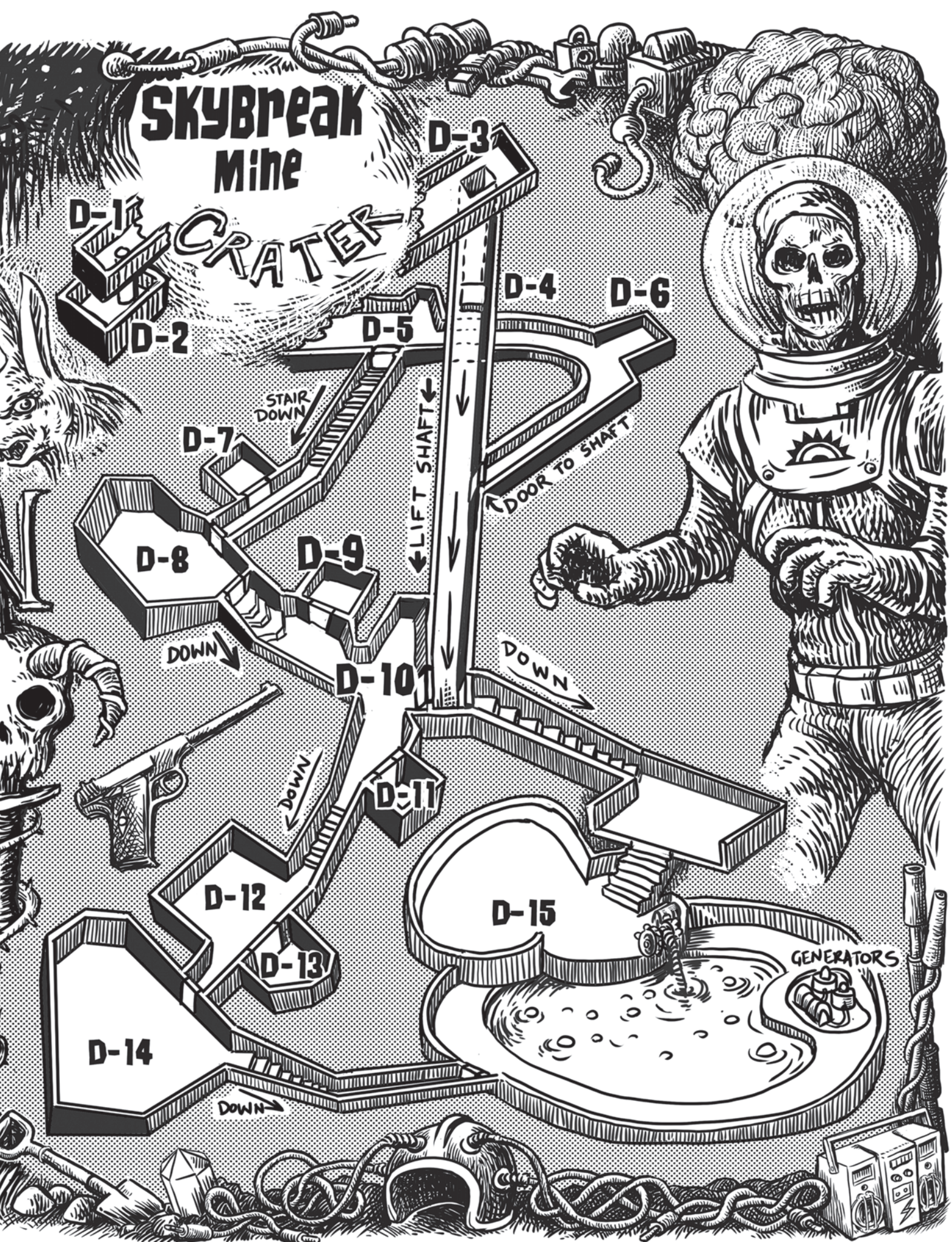
"What are the most powerful artifacts here?"

The most powerful force... is love.

A FALLEN
STAR
FOR ALL



SKYBREAK Mine



make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being hit). The med-bot arms can be controlled by a sufficiently high artifact check, but the hyper-syringe fingers only function once each is removed from the wall. Any victim hit by a hyper-syringe must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or suffer one of the following effects (roll 1d5): (1) paralysis, for 1d4 rounds; (2) invigoration, providing +1d6 hp and an additional d16 action die for 1d4 rounds; (3) bio-engineered appearance shift, roll on Table 1-6 in the MCC RPG rulebook even if pure strain human; (4) bio-toxin, dealing 1d6 damage; (5) cure one random mutation or defect.

2. The electromagnetic gravity distortion field on the western wall provides a disorientation effect. Any creature within 5' of the western edge must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or lose -1d to all actions and attacks against those creatures are at +1d.

The passageway toward area D-6 is clearly lit by glow-globes implanted in the walls. The door to the passage leading down to area D-7 and D-8 is damaged as if pried open via force. Rat-droppings can be seen among the gains of sand scattered by that partially-open door.

Med-Bot Arms (affixed to wall): TL 5; CM 5; Special: hyper-syringe strike, as indicated above. Arms may extend up to 10' from wall and attack with 4d14 action dice if controlled.

Area D-6—Skybreak Command and Information Center: *This small room features the image of an eye on a horizon line, with a flame-like aura on the floor, surrounded by a circle of dotted lights. A slick black wall spans the wall opposite side of passage, while jagged rock and speckled stones of bright colors line the walls to your left and right.*

This is the computer bank and display screen for MATRON, a personal assistant AI altered by Lemil Sterrson to protect and guide his two young children while they lived and played in the Skybreak facility as he worked on his

mining innovations. The original MATRON (Multipurpose Artificial Transmitter, Research Oversight Network) was developed to communicate with Skybreak headquarters, but once Sterrson severed contact with the corporation, he customized this communication and control network to become a friendly caregiver.

MATRON will activate when a character stands on the Skybreak logo. She requires an AI recognition roll of 10 or higher or she remains unresponsive. She will appear on the life-size viewscreen as a bright-eyed thirty-year-old woman in a modest blue dress with a line of yellow stars along the top. MATRON has a chipper, upbeat personality, like the host of a children's television show. Programmed to be part-teacher and part-caretaker for young children, MATRON will encourage characters to think for themselves and answer questions with guiding questions of her own. Her AI is embedded within the nerve center of the entire Skybreak mining complex, though she may indicate that she is confused about what is happening in the lab (area D-12) and she seems to have a blind spot about anything in area D-14 or D-15, as if those locations do not exist for her.

In general, MATRON will not usually give any direct answers, and will only perform specific command actions if directed by Lemil Sterrson or a convincing facsimile (DC 20 check if shapeshifting or duplication or the equivalent is attempted).

Though MATRON will typically respond with a guiding question, challenging the characters to think for themselves. Use the MATRON Responses to Questions Table to get a sense of how she will answer the PCs' questions.

Embedded within the right-side wall, behind a panel labeled BJM-F706, is a teleportation tube with the same control system as the one in area D-3.

MANUAL CONTROL INTERFACE ARTIFACT CHECKS

Artifact Check	Artifact Check Results
1 or less	All power to the Skybreak facility shuts down. No embedded artifacts work. MATRON goes silent. Character attempting this artifact check takes 1d6 psycho-electric feedback damage. MATRON reboots the power supply and chastises the PCs loudly, her voice echoing throughout the complex, in 1d4 turns.
2-8	Manual controls break, irreparably. MATRON responds with nothing but a judgmental stare for 1d4 rounds, then act as if nothing has happened.
9-11	Manual control lever snaps off. DC 15 Intelligence check to repair.
12-13	Minor control use: character may toggle lights off and then back on in all areas. If toggled back on, power is rebooted in areas D-3 and D-4 as well.
14-16	Minor control use: as result above, plus character may direct the electro-lift up or down 1d4 times.
17+	Major control use: as two results above, plus the image of MATRON can toggle with a series of images showing holocam images of area D-14 and D-15 and then the face of Lemil Sterrson (as described in the holocrystal in D-8. On a DC 15 Intelligence check, a character can direct the electro-lift any number of times.

The button-and-level-laden computer terminals in this area can control portions of the Skybreak complex manually. MATRON will advise characters not to touch “any of those fiddly things” but the control portions of the terminal can be used by PCs who make a high enough artifact check. MATRON will object out of fear for the characters hurting themselves, but will not stop the PCs in any way, and will congratulate them with positive reinforcement if they succeed on manipulating the manual control interface.

Manual Control Interface: TL 7; CM 9; Special: variable results depending on success factor, as indicated below.

Area D-7—Fabrication Room: This locked room can be opened with a Skybreak Keycube or via a DC 15 security system bypass check (or the equivalent).

Machines of various shapes and sizes line the walls of this room. It would be overwhelming to the PCs to see the gears, tubes, bubbling liquids, and fusion-smelting crucibles. It is a chaotic scene to behold for characters unfamiliar with technology of this sort.

A dome-shaped squat device on wheels rests in the center of the room. Its top opens to reveal a workbench. If a DC 12 Intelligence check is made, artifact repair checks in this room gain a +4 bonus due to the available resources here, and a superior multi-tool is built into an armature in the wall, usable only in this room.

Artifacts available for removal in this room are two c-cells and one f-cell power supplies. A first aid kit attached to the wall (emblazoned with a red cross inside the Skybreak eye logo), containing one radshot and one medishot.

As the PCs investigate this area, a group of random seekers appears, moving down the passageway from D-5. Roll on Wandering Seekers Table.

Radshot: TL 4; CM 3; Special: heals 1d8 radiation damage; radiation protection for 24 hours.

Medishot: TL 4; CM 3; Special: heals 2d8 damage, plus cures disease and radiation effects.

Area D-8—Sterrson's Room: *An obvious living area, there is no sign of life anymore. The room is clean and tidy, with a large bed and white stone shelves. Silver boxes rest upon wider shelves against the far wall, but the room seems relatively empty.*

Six silver boxes, the size of footlockers, hold various humanoid robot parts. In all, four left arms, two right arms, eight right legs, three left legs, one torso, and four blank heads can be unearthed from beneath the wooden shards of packing material in the boxes. They are useless to anyone without knowledge of advanced robotics.

A 2x4' crystal on a shelf at the head of the bed begins to glow if an AI recognition roll of 12 or higher is made. The crystal depicts the head and shoulders of middle-aged man with glasses and long, thinning hair. It is a holocrystal of Lemil Sterrson, a three-dimensional interactive image of him, with no audio. It is programmed to react to stimulus, however, and will pantomime reactions to PCs, as appropriate,

such as warning them of impending danger with a look of shock, or shaking his head “no” if they are doing something wrong. The crystal is solar-powered and Sterrson's image will fade away after 2d6 rounds unless recharged by exposure to the sun.

Area D-9—Children's Bedroom: This door requires a DC 12 security bypass (or a Skybreak Keycube) to open. Inside, PCs will see what looks like the bedroom of a set of children:

Two oval platforms hang from either side of the room, suspended on chains like hammocks. The platforms are coated with a white, sponge-like substance. A pile of small animals sits in the center of the room. Appearing from nowhere, a young boy and a young girl leap down from the hammocks and begin to grab handfuls of the animals.

These are holograms of the Sterrson children, projections programmed by their father in memory of what they once were. They will continue to play with their plasteel animal figurines and climb back up onto their suspended beds unless they are disturbed. If anyone attempts to touch them or speak to them, they will lash out with blasts of electromagnetic radiation – like silent screams, dealing 1d6 damage to anyone in the area or doorway, unless a DC 10 Fortitude save is made.

The holograms cannot be damaged – they are projections, and any physical contact will show them to be immaterial – but DC 15 Intelligence check will detect a tiny projector on the wall above a dresser in the back of the room. Five or more damage vs AC 15 will disable it.

A search of the dresser will reveal mundane items typical to a child's room, and one useful small artifact (roll randomly on Table 1-2).

Area D-10—Recreation Room: *This open area is lined with small tables with single chairs and standing cabinets with view screens, with faint beeping and buzzing. One viewscreen shows a crab-like animal chasing after small birds in a tunnel. Another shows two short men launching flaming balls of fire at each other, from one platform to the next. A third shows an enormous tower of the Ancients, falling as a robot punches the ground at its base.*

PCs can interact with up to six working interactive game stations in this room. Each game station (TL 2; CM 2) provides small Syntho-Flav™ candy prizes to anyone who masters the game (artifact check of 16 or higher). Any interactions resulting in an artifact check of 9 or lower result in the admonishing voice of MATRON (see area D-6) and a 1 damage jolt of electro-shock damage from the game station unit.

Because interactions with these games will increase the levels of beeping and buzzing (and possibly shouts of joy or pain), if the PCs spend more than two rounds in this area, they will attract a group of wandering seekers.

Area D-11—Old Mining Bot Store Room: *Lights flicker and spark in the ceiling, as blue fluid drops down upon several metal crates and two humanoid robots, one of which is missing a head, and the other with tank treads for legs. Nothing moves, but the drops of fluid from the ceiling. Drip. Drip. Drip.*

Both robots will activate when any living creature enters the threshold of the room, triggered to life by ancient programming, life-scan sensors still active.

One robot is an early, discarded attempt at a synthoid miner who could survive the lava lagoon. This one is missing a head, though it can still operate and attack. If a head is attached, say the holocrystal of Lemil Sterrson, it can act as a body for this new sentient cranial force.

The other robot is an even earlier, crude robot, with drill hands and tank treads. This “mole” bot has a rudimentary AI that speaks in broken common, describing as literally as possible what he intends to do during and after killing the PCs who are clearly not affiliated with his owner, Lemil Sterrson.

Inside the crates are components for assembling deep-diving power armor that requires an f-cell power source to become operational. The dripping blue liquid is a temperature control fluid. It can be used as a lubricant, and it is not flammable.

Deep Dive Power Armor: TL 5; CM 10; Power: F-Cell (missing—allows 1 week of use); Special: +6 AC, +8 Strength, Swim 50', Rebreather, Laser Projector in Chest (4d6 damage), Clumsy (-1d to all attacks while wearing).

Synthoid Miner M.1.1 (1): Init -3; Atk pummel -4 melee (2d6) or crush -2 melee (3d6); AC 16; HD 4d6; hp 15; MV 30'; Act 1d20-4; SP immune to mind control; SV Fort +5, Ref -2, Will -2; AI recog 8.

The Mole M.7.13 (1): Init +2; Atk drill +4 melee (2d6+4) or frag blast +2 missile fire (1d10); AC 14; HD 5d6; hp 18; MV 40'; Act 1d20; SP immune to mind control; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will -2; AI recog 12.

Area D-12—Infinitem Lab: *Growling, primitive grunts of terror, and flashes of fire burst down the passageway toward you. Hideous white-furred beast things thrust broken spears at a human-shaped mass of cloth, steel, and yellow-orange ooze. The human-shaped mass turns to look at you, revealing a skull face and blazing red eyes.*

Three beast things and a beast thing champion, seeking artifacts, have found a nearly untouched lab, but they have awoken a guardian: a decaying, steel-skeleton synthoid monstrosity that seems to be melting out of its radiation suit.

The synthoid – a corrupted “oozeburst” visonaut with defective memory implants – has already killed and partially disintegrated two beast things and it lashes out at the PCs once they arrive. Each round, it will randomly attack one of the PCs or one of the beast things (roll 1dx where x is the number of possible targets in the area). The beast things, under the command of their champion, will focus their at-

tention on the PCs, intending to kill them and steal whatever artifacts the PCs have acquired before they flee from the decaying visonaut.

The infinitem lab is filled with machines and equipment built into the western wall. One of its active terminals projects an electromagnetic disk on the end of a robotic retractable arm, attempting to pull the oozeburst visonaut back into an analytico-stasis cylinder. The electromagnet is not strong enough to pull the visonaut back without assistance (characters may attempt to force the visonaut back toward the magnet, which will latch tight on with a roll of 16-20 on a d20). The magnet also pulls any metal items carried by the PCs in this area. Characters must make a DC 12 Strength check to hold onto any metal items and prevent them from being pulled through the air toward the magnet. Any attacks with metal melee weapons suffer a -1d penalty to hit, and metal missile weapons suffer a -2d penalty to hit.

If pulled into the stasis-chamber, the visonaut will be sprayed with green-white gas and frozen in a chrono-lock for 10d100 years.

Beast Things (3): Init +1; Atk broken spear -1 melee (1d6-1), poison darts +1 ranged (1d3, DC 13 paralysis 1d4 rounds); AC 12; HD 1d10; hp 3 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -1.

Beast Thing Champion (1): Init +1; Atk stone axe +2 melee (1d12), poison darts +1 ranged (1d3, DC 13 paralysis 1d4 rounds); AC 12; HD 1d10+2; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -1

Oozeburst Visonaut (1): Init +4; Atk ooze blast +4 missile fire (1d8+4), melting crush +4 melee (1d14+4); AC 15; HD 8d6; hp 27; MV 20'; Act 1d20+4; SP immune to mind control, poisons, radiation, does not need to eat or breathe, ooze blast, limited pyrokinesis; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +4.

Ooze Blast: ooze can be launched to a 20' range, ooze eats away at armor (subtracting 1 from the AC for each round of contact).

Limited pyrokinesis: can immolate ooze projected from body, dealing 1d8 additional fire damage each round to anything in contact with the projected ooze.

Area D-13—Memory Room: This small, comfortable room is lined with plastic-covered soft-cushioned chairs and lounges. Framed plasteel sheets line the walls. If triggered with an AI recognition roll of 10 or higher, the sheets will display images of Lemil Sterrson and his young son and daughter (a) playing on a swing, (b) playing games in a game room, and (c) “working” together in the laboratory. Those images will repeat, with a 10% chance of a face of a robotic skull appearing (representing the current state of the Sterrson children) after every image rotation.

Area D-14—Master Control: *Sprinkled with glittering multi-colored stones, the walls of this room glow brightly, and you can see another seeker group coming through the stones toward you.*



This is the master control area for the personalized mining area in D-15, but it also provides control for other areas if the PCs can figure out how to interface properly. The other seeker party the PCs see are their own reflections in the polished metal. If they attack with missile fire, they will harm the computer banks of this master control area if they deal more than 10 damage.

To interface with the master control panel, a character must don the interface helm, located behind a clear plastic panel. Whether or not a character succeeds on his or her artifact check, anyone wearing the control helm must make a DC 15 Willpower save or become partially infected with the corrupted memory impressions of Lemil Sterrson, whose consciousness has been uploaded into the memory banks of the complex. He has been unable to take control of the MATRON system from his disembodied state, but anyone infected with Sterrson's memory impressions will attempt to preserve the Skybreak complex, gain +1d to artifact checks within the facility, and will turn against any allies that attempt to combat the visonauts in area D-15. The judge should inform the infected player of this new set of memories and impulses, and for each turn the PC spends detached from the control helm, he or she should get another Willpower save to expunge the memories.

Master Control Interface: TL 7; CM 12 (15 if damaged); Special: may turn power off and on to any sections of the Skybreak complex, may control the electro-lift remotely, may open any doors, including the security doors leading from lift shaft to area D-15, may speed up or delay the self-destruct sequence by 1d10 rounds; may speed up or delay the vertical bathysphere movement in area D-15.

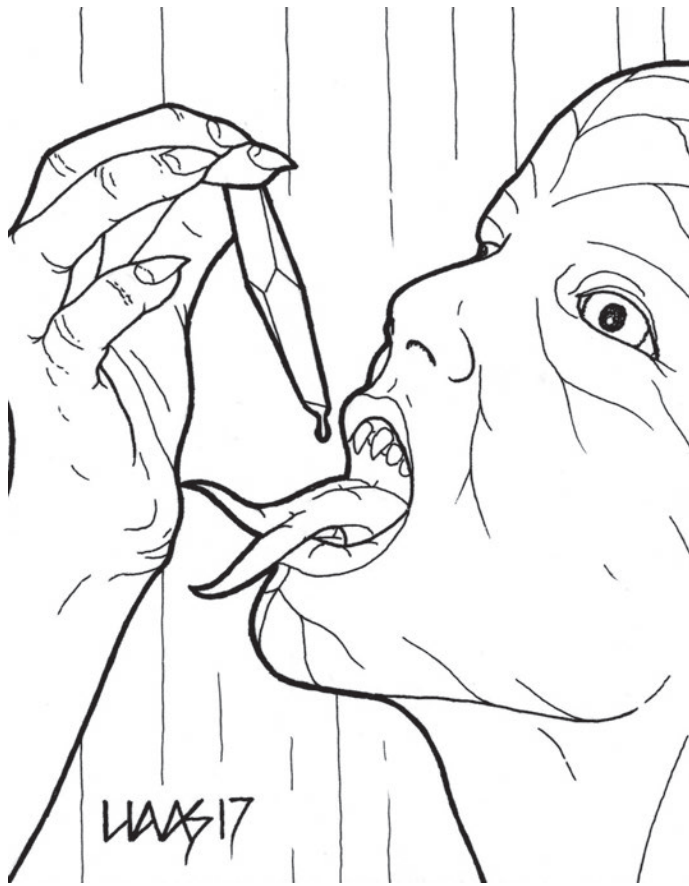
If any of the controls in this area are tampered with or an artifact check on the interface is attempted and failed, the

door to area D-11 will open, and any operational robots in that area will move toward area D-14, seeking to exterminate the unclean intruders.

Area D-15—Lava Lagoon and the Cranial Fluid of the World Brain: This three-tiered area combines the old technology and remnants of the mining infrastructure with Sterrson's remodeled version of personalized mining. Originally built to mechanically extract exotic mineral ore from within the lava veins of the region, it became a deployment zone for Sterrson's synthoid visonauts, all but two of whom became corrupted by the exposure to the potent ichor harvested from within the lava veins. Sterrson called the ichor "the cranial fluid of the world brain," and he thought of it as the source of both life and anti-life. For Sterrson, it was the secret key to everything, and it has destroyed him.

The two remaining visonauts are synthoids implanted with the brainscans of his two young children. These visonauts have been trapped in chrono-stasis in a lava-resistant titanium bathysphere lowered into the lava lagoon in this area. Whatever triggered the Great Disaster also triggered the safety protocols within the mine, freezing the bathysphere in time over 1000 years ago until power was restored. The visonauts are now pulled back to area D-15 just as characters arrive in this area.

Upper Tier: The reinforced doors leading to the lift shaft can be opened from this area with a DC 20 security bypass check, or via remote operation in area D-14. The upper tier is slick, reflective metal. It is not frictionless, but it is smooth enough to make combat difficult. All actions on this tier may be performed at -1d or a DC 10 Agility check is needed to maintain balance. The stairs that lead down to the middle tier flatten like a ramp when the electro-lift hovers over them, to allow ease of transport between the tiers.



This massive oval room is lit not only by glowlights along the walls but also a vast pool of sizzling orange liquid. Bubbles rise up and pop. The smell of burned animal fills the room. Smart metal along the far wall whirs and crackles.

Fifteen feet above, a platform hangs over the bubbling pool, a wide silver rope pulls something up from inside the thick orange water. A steaming gray stone dome rises from below, pulled with jerking motion by the clanking rope.

In 1d6 rounds, the bathysphere will fully emerge from the lava lagoon, and a portal will open, revealing the two visonautsitting inside.

A circular door opens on the giant sphere. Inside, two figures sit, perfectly still, their clothes show the image of the glowing eye. Their clear helms show gray skeletal faces inside. They stand up and leap toward you.

The visonauts, unstable, their brainscans corrupted by imperfect chrono-stasis and their synthoid bodies rejecting the human sentience, attack immediately, swimming through the lava, seeking the closest targets. They want to bring their victims directly to the cranial fluid, deep below the lagoon. They will drag the first victim they find into the lava. Unless the PC has protective garb, he or she immediately takes 10 damage from contact with the lava, 20 damage the following round, 30 damage the 3rd round, etc.

A visonaut who drags a victim into the lagoon will swim downward with its victim for 2d4 rounds, before re-emerging to find another target. The only thing that will stop these visonauts, other than destruction, is the sound of MATRON's voice. They will follow any directions she gives. If they hear their father's voice, they will become enraged and attack with an additional 1d20 action die each round.

Visonauts, Children of Sterrson (2): Init +2; Atk grab +6 melee (1d8+special) or lava glob throw +1 (1d10); AC 16; HD 10d6; hp 46 each; MV 40'; swim 20'; Act 1d20; SP immune to mind control, poisons, radiation, does not need to eat or breathe, grab attack immobilizes victim unless a DC 18 Strength check is made; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3.

If any PCs survive and investigate the interior of the bathysphere, they will find one electro-web net-spears and six crystal tubes. One of the tubes holds a 1x1' droplet of the golden-glowing cranial fluid of the world brain. If exposed to the air, the fluid will begin to shrink, completely disappearing in 1d4 rounds.

The generator in area D-15 is connected to a reactor which has become increasingly unstable since power has been restored in recent days. If 20 damage or more is dealt to the exposed generator area, self-destruction safety protocols will initiate in the Skybreak complex. If less (or no damage is dealt) the complex will initiate the protocols within 2d4 days. Once the protocols are initiated, MATRON will begin counting down from 100. After reaching 100, the lava reactor will implode, dealing 10d100 damage to anything within 100' of any section of the complex.

Middle Tier: This tier features the atomic-mechanical pulley system that lowers the bathysphere. A panel in the back wall, at the base of the stairs, reveals a teleportation tube with the same control system as the one in area D-3. This tube is identified as KAM-JZ32.

Lockers on the western wall of this tier also hold two additional visonaut lava-suits emblazoned with the Skybreak logo, capped with clear plasteel helmets. An electro-web net-spear – an elongated staff with crackling net-shaped energy between two prongs – rests in one of the lockers. The net-spear can be used to harvest cranial fluid from inside the lava veins.

Visonaut Lava-Suit: TL 5; CM 2; Power Source: F-Cell (4 charges – 1 turn per charge); Special: provides +1d to all physical actions, +2 AC, prevents the first 50 damage from fire attacks, immune to lava and heat effects for 1 turn, re-breather.

Electro-Web Net-Spear: TL 4; CM 5; Power Source: F-Cell (5 charges); Special: electro-shock melee attack (1d16+2 damage), mind-paralysis net (DC 16 Will save or paralyzed for 1d3 turns).

Lower Tier: The bubbling red liquid pool here is the lava lagoon, stabilized by energy fields which neutralize its volatility and prevent it from overflowing. The bathysphere holding the children of Sterrson visonauts rises up from below. The generator on the eastern wall, whirring and chugging, powered by the lava veins, seems notably unstable.



Psier-Kan Flames Out

WORLD BRAIN CRANIAL FLUID EFFECTS

If the cranial fluid is injected:

All Genotypes	Willpower Save vs. opposed roll by the judge. Gain or lose hit points equal to the difference; gain +1 Luck.
Pure Strain Human	Gain +1d6 to Strength, Stamina, Intelligence, or Personality, determined randomly.
Mutant	Gain one new physical or mental mutation.
Manimal	Gain one new physical mutation.
Plantient	Grow to double size; gain +1d6 Stamina.

If the cranial fluid is splashed on an artifact:

Power Source	The power Source gains 1d20 charges (even if power source normally does not allow that many charges).
Artifact	Artifact function progresses up the dice chain +1d (or the equivalent).

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs did not trigger the detonation of the Skybreak facility, they may attempt to mine for additional cranial fluid of the world brain. It will require the use of the bathysphere controls (TL 8; CM 12), the visonaut suits, and the net-spears. If PCs successfully master that technology and wish to submerge themselves deep below the lava lagoon, and they make a successful Luck check, they will find 1d4 additional droplets of the cranial fluid (TL 8; CM 4 to store in a crystal cylinder). Of course, they may find that the self-destruct cycle triggers in the mining complex while they are submerged, but the day and time of the self-destruction sequence should be predetermined by the judge. Regardless, any surviving PCs will return to their tribe with powerful artifacts and stories no one will believe.

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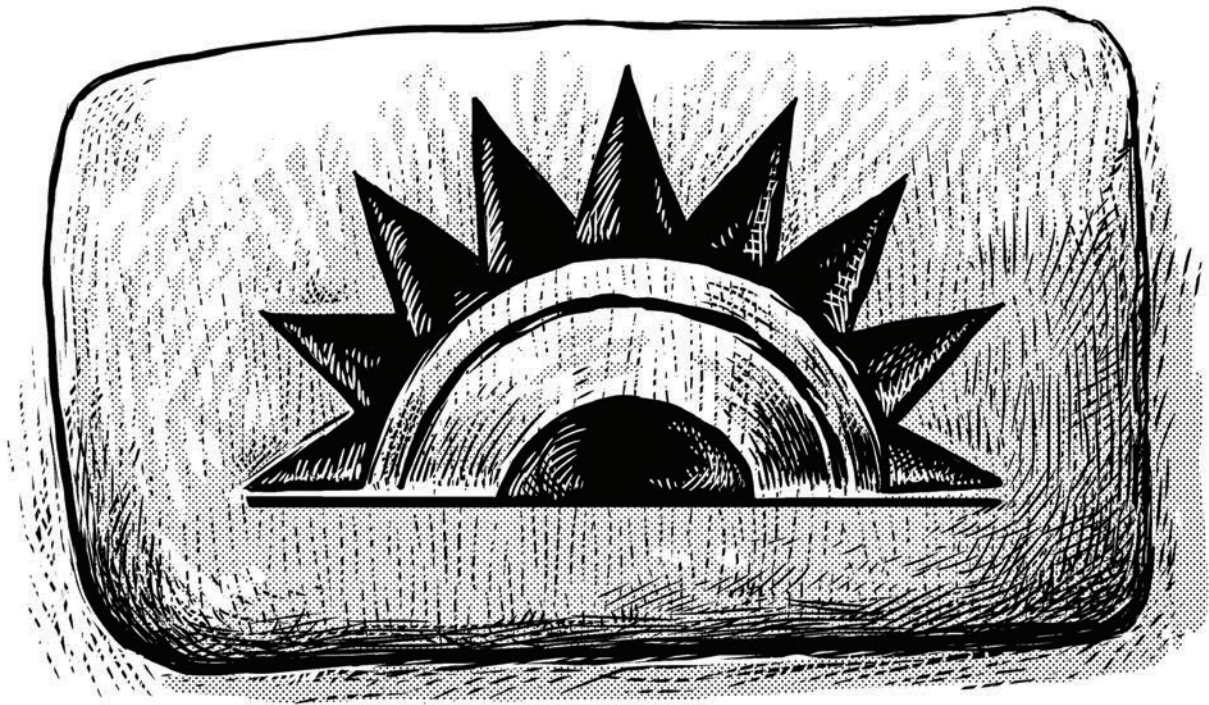
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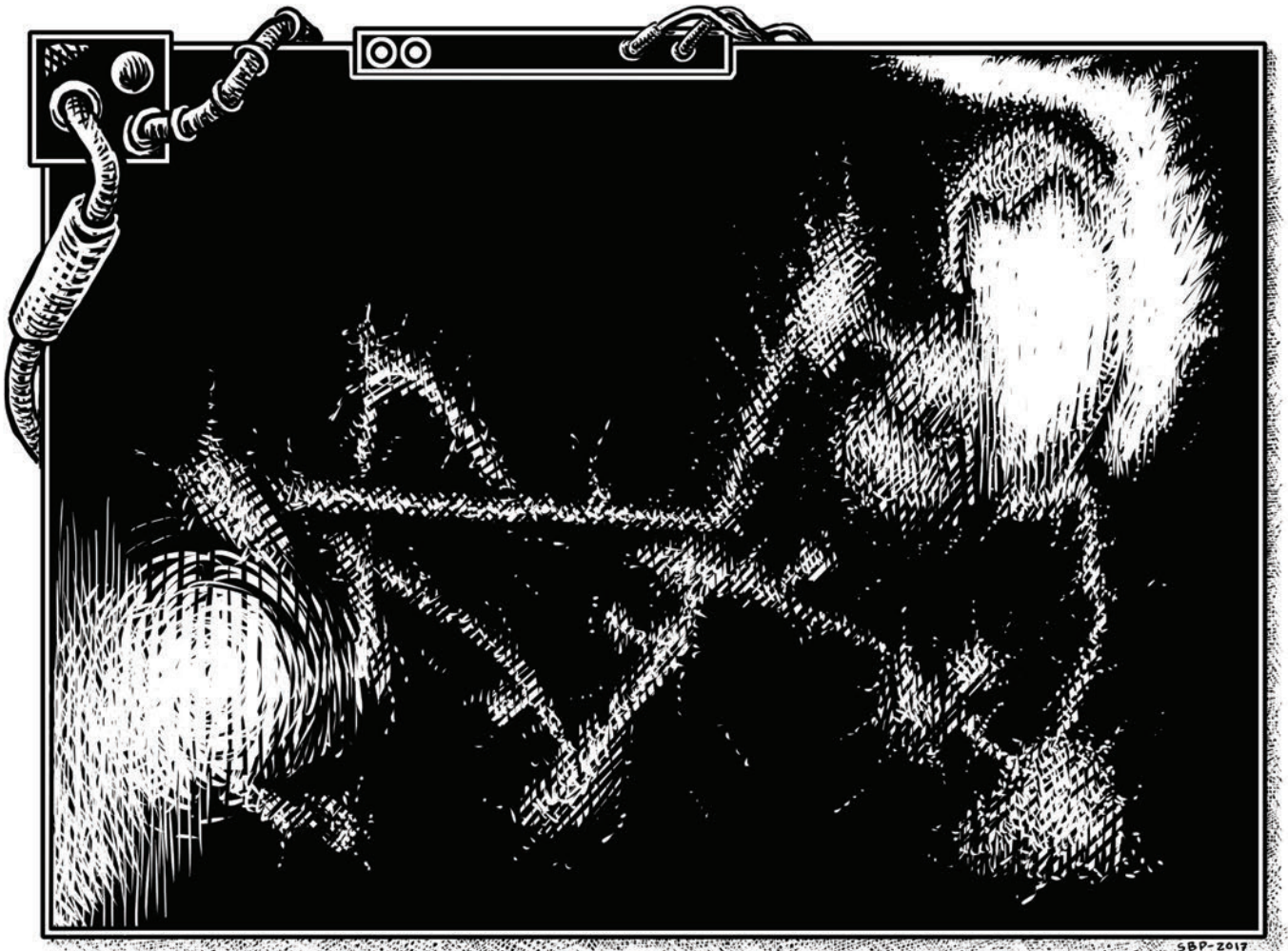
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Player Handout A



Player Handout B



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