



BX MARS

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B4 MARS

**TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS
MICHAEL GIBBONS**

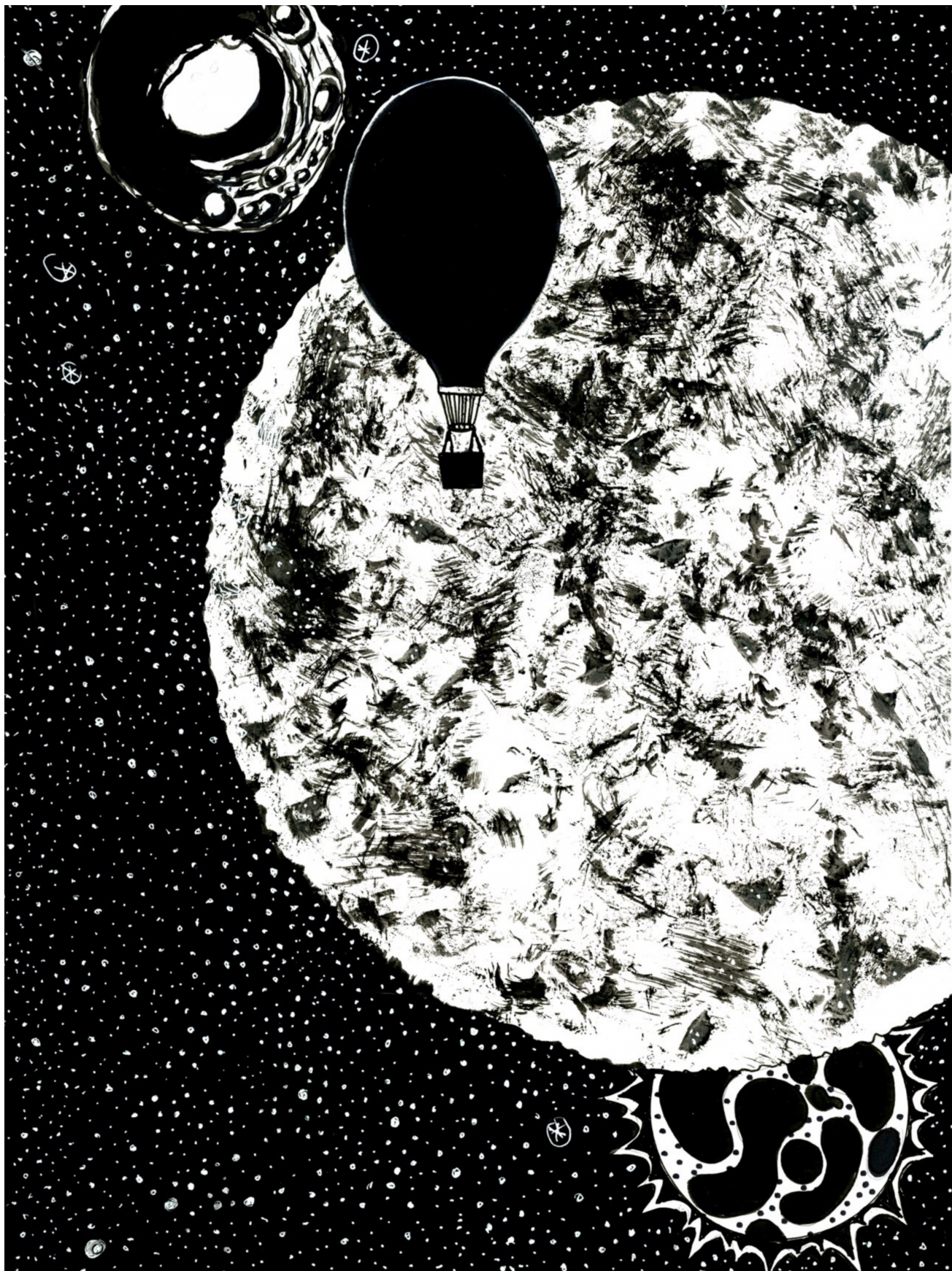
**EDITED BY SANDOR GEBEI
ADDITIONAL EDITING
JACK SHEAR**

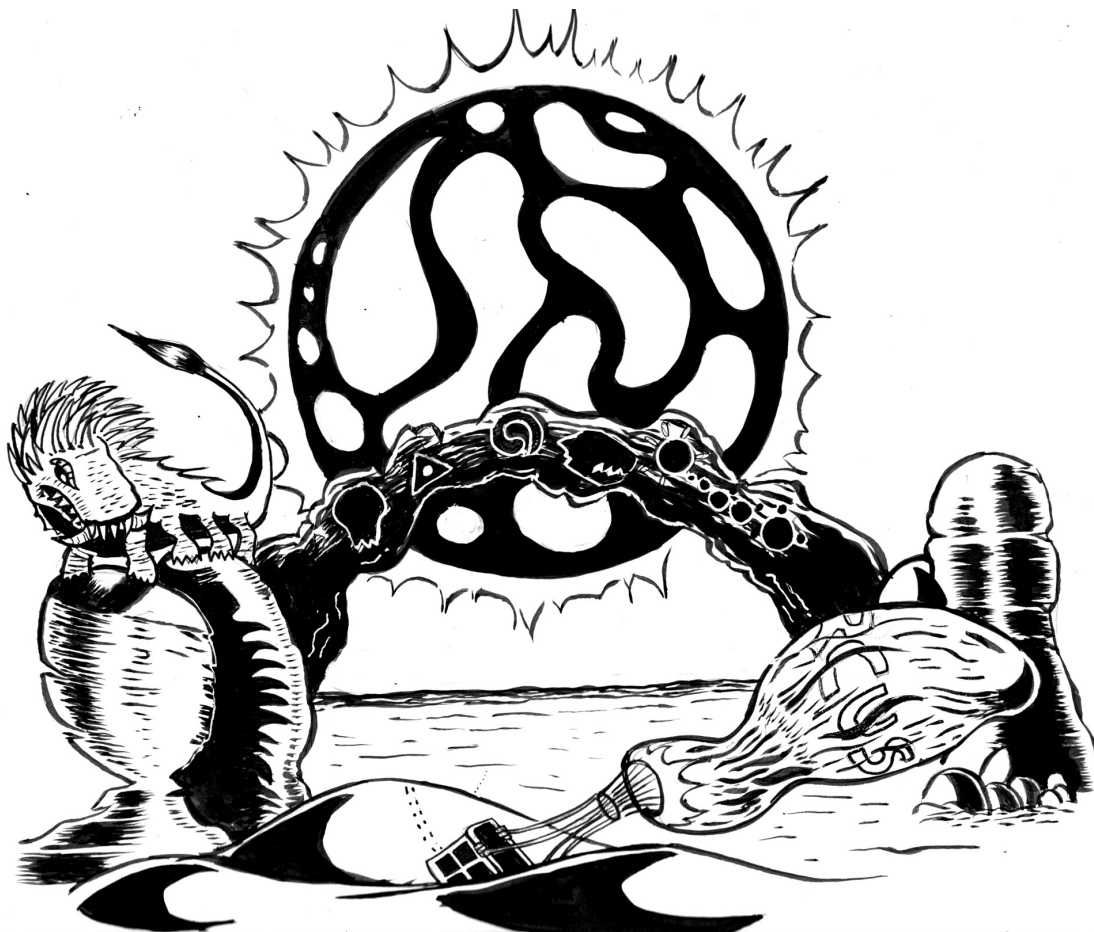
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PART 1

FINAL DAYS OF THE RED PLANET

The sun's gone weird and sullen. Broken monuments to forgotten glory lay strewn across and buried beneath the ever-changing face of the endless desert. Savage and desperate, merciless predators stalk sand and shade. Ancient now, the newest cities crumble; time laughs; indifferent, extinction continues.

FORWARD

Intended for use with the rules of B/X or similar games.

The setting and rules presented herein may be utilized as a whole or mined for ideas; slight alterations may, of course, be necessary to facilitate the use of some elements in settings designed with different assumptions.

Although a number of influences and antecedents will be obvious, B/X Mars is not meant to emulate any specific fictional setting. For the convenience and edification of the curious reader, an incomplete list of influences can be found at the end of this section.

MARS FACTS OF LIFE

THE END IS NEAR

Mars is not dying; Mars is dead. Nothing endures forever. Mars lingers, ages now, past its time. The Great Atmosphere Engines exist as the sole barrier between Martian life in all its myriad forms and mass extinction. When will they fail? None can say. Life on Mars may have a million more years- two million or an hour.

MARS IS A DESERT PLANET

A weird sun rolls across the sky, larger and hotter than it should be, but crackling with unwholesome dark fire, too. Days of unbearable heat give way to nights of terrible cold. Water is scarce. Everything hides from the sun. Everything eats everything else. Exceptions exist, of course, near the poles and in scattered microclimate pockets found elsewhere, but rocky badlands, ergs, salt flats, scrub step and other forms of wasteland cover most of the world's surface. A surprisingly wide variety of species, some products of natural evolution, others of planned design, thrive in these environments.

THINGS WERE BETTER ONCE

Folk of the present day understand the long and varied history of the Red Planet as a blurry and indecipherable palimpsest. However, irrefutable evidence, found in both living settlements and ancient, long-abandon ruins, suggests that for a very long time, a very long time ago, Mars was, quite literally, paradise, perhaps on more than one occasion. Many also believe that the lost wonders, knowledge and bounty of that past lie buried just below the surface of the sand, awaiting rediscovery.

SCIENCE AND PSIENCE COEXIST

Psionic powers, called *warp*, or *mind warp*, and technology work alongside of one another in this bleak broken world. Sometimes, the difference between the two blurs.

PSI ACTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Buttons and switches vanished from Mars long before the oceans turned to dust. Touch augmented with a psionic impulse activates most devices, vehicles and machines.

Guns have no triggers, for example and swords no usable edge. Too many psi-active devices exist to list here. The referee should assume that unless obviously otherwise, all technological devices, regardless of size or provenience are psi active.

Use of more complex technology requires a Menton.

MONSTERS, ALIENS, AND UNWHOLESOME AB-GODS RULE THE WORLD

Mars no longer belongs to the Red Martians. This is the age of the aberration. Driven by perverse appetites and unnatural desires, unclean demigods and alien tyrants, the Ab-gods, exercise dominion over all the settled places. The desert offers the only true liberation this side of death.

INSPIRATIONAL MEDIA

Fiction

Leigh Bracket: *Black Amazon of Mars*

Edgar Rice Burroughs: *A Princess of Mars* and the first two sequels.

Frank Herbert: *Dune*

Jack Vance: *Planet of Adventure*; *Slaves of the Klau*.

H.G. Wells: *The Time Machine*; *The War of the Worlds*.

Steven Erikson: *Deadhouse Gates*

Roger Zelazny: *A Rose for Ecclesiastes*.

Comics

Richard Corben: *Den*, *Neverwhere*; *Den Muvovum*; *Sinbad*.

Brandom Graham et al: *Prophet*

Hayao Miyazakii: *Nausicaa*

John Buscema and Roy Thomas: *Conan*

Jack Kirby: *Devil Dinosaur*; *The Eternals*; *Kamandi*

Film

The Golden Voyage of Sinbad

Lawrence of Arabia

Heavy Metal



*Princess Zurru, Jag Jaggar
and Jake Samson caught up
in a dust devil and swept away
into the unknown...*

PART 2

CHARACTER GENERATION

You will need: 4d6; pencil, blank paper or device.

ATTRIBUTES

The following randomly generated attributes: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Warp, and Charisma, define player characters in the abstract, as represented on the list below.

STRENGTH: Raw physical power (Warrior).

DEXTERITY: Physical coordination (Menton).

CONSTITUTION: Physical endurance; acuity of five traditional senses (Thark!).

INTELLIGENCE: Practical cognitive power (Princess)

WARP: ESP power (Menton).

CHARISMA: Personal charm (Princess)

ATTRIBUTE GENERATION

Roll 4d6; drop the lowest result; add the remaining three dice. The total (ranging between 3-18) represents the numeric value for an attribute. Record this number. Repeat the process five more times, for a total of six values, each of which the player then assigns to an attribute.

ATTRIBUTE MODIFICATION TABLE

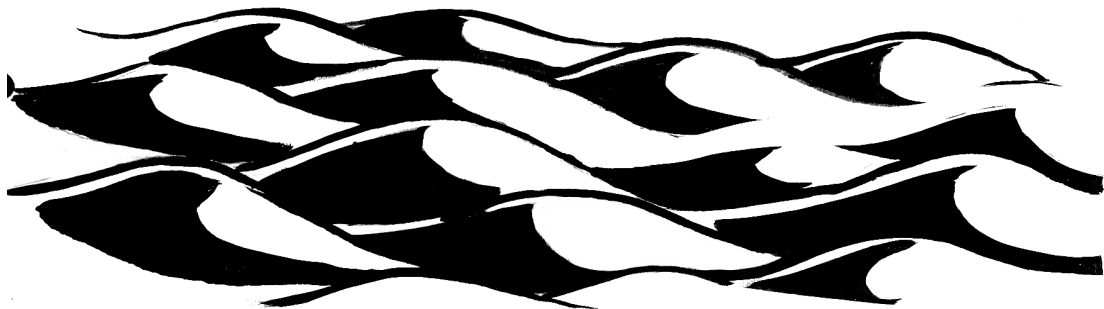
ATTRIBUTE VALUE	MODIFICATION
3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9-12	N/A
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18	+3
19-20	+4

STARTING LEVEL

As new arrivals on Mars, Terrans begin the game at first level; Martians (all other classes) begin at third level.

ALIGNMENT

Alignment represents the character's moral interface with the world. Existence on Mars is harsh and uncompromising- players must chose from one of only two alignments.



BASICS OF CHARACTER GENERATION

Life: Life aligned characters believe the good of the many outweighs the good of the few.

Death: Death aligned characters act out of self-concern and with their own survival or that of only their own folk in mind. Other creatures exist only as a means to an end.

Note: Robots and beasts may sometimes have a 'neutral' alignment.

ARMOR CLASS (AC)

Nobody wears much of anything on Mars and armor is unknown. Class and level determine AC, and as such, can be found on the class specific experience tables.

SAVING THROW

Mars requires a slightly different set of saving throws: Death Ray, Mind Warp, Entangle, Fear, and Rods. See the end of this section for details.

INITIAL HIT POINTS

Starting hit points are assigned based upon a specific attribute, determined by character class.

DICE CONVENTIONS

Throughout the game the letter "X" appears behind the die to be rolled: 1d6X, for example. The X indicates an exploding die. When the unmodified die roll comes out at maximum, e.g. 6 on a d6, it is rolled again and the new result added to the previous. If another maximum number is produced, the die is rolled yet again- and so on, without limit.

AT FIRST LEVEL ALL MARTIANS CAN

Grok Artifact 1-2/D8 (+PSI MODIFIER)

Decipher Text 1-2/D12 (INT words/minute)

Detect Trap 1-2/D6 (Range = DEX in yards)

Find Water 1/D4 (Range = CON in yards)

One attempt per character/ per hour; adjust according to situation/difficulty.

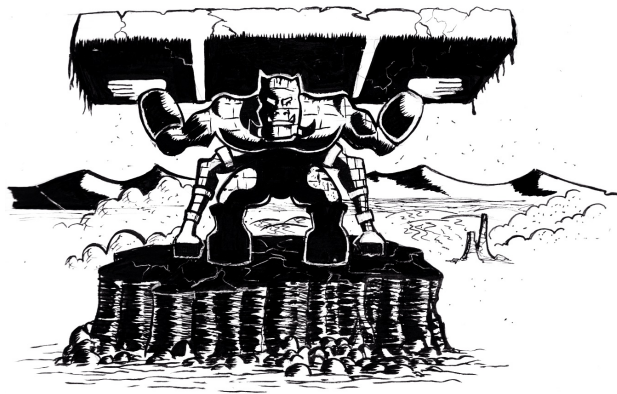
Terrans gain access to these skills at Fourth Level.

Whenever a new experience level is achieved, the character may increase the chance of success in one of these skills by 1- if they have made use of it during the course of that level.

NOTE A 1-6/D6 chance can still fail. If a 6 is rolled; roll again; 1-5 indicate success a second 6 indicates failure. Further, water must be present to be found.

CHARACTER CLASSES

Princess; Warrior, Menton, Terran and Thark! replace the standard classes, but Mars is a broad setting, with the room and flexibility to contain all manner of elements; as such, the classes presented in the following section are best viewed as a starting point. Each Red Martian emerges from the egg as a Princess, Menton, or Warrior. The last of which comprise the majority of the Red Martian population- by a wide margin.



BASICS OF CHARACTER GENERATION

SAVING THROW TABLE

PRINCESS

LEVEL	DEATH RAY	WARP	ENTANGLE	FEAR	RODS/CROWNS
1-3	13	14	15	14	18
4-6	11	12	13	12	16
7-10	09	10	11	10	14

WARRIOR

LEVEL	DEATH RAY	WARP	ENTANGLE	FEAR	RODS/CROWNS
1-3	13	16	15	14	18
4-6	11	14	13	12	16
7-10	09	12	11	10	14

THARK!

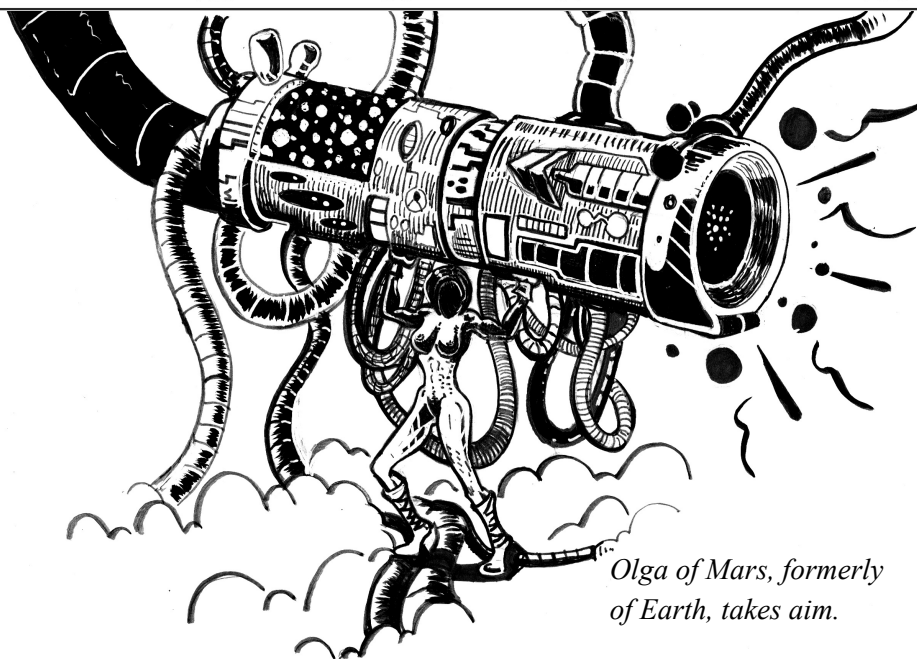
LEVEL	DEATH RAY	WARP	ENTANGLE	FEAR	RODS/CROWNS
1-3	13	16	14	12	18
4-6	11	14	12	10	16
7-10	09	12	10	08	14

MENTON

LEVEL	DEATH RAY	WARP	ENTANGLE	FEAR	RODS/CROWNS
1-3	13	12	15	12	14
4-6	11	10	13	10	12
7-10	09	8	11	8	10

TERRAN

LEVEL	DEATH RAY	WARP	ENTANGLE	FEAR	RODS/CROWNS
1-3	13	14	14	10	12
4-6	11	12	12	08	10
7-10	09	10	10	06	08



*Olga of Mars, formerly
of Earth, takes aim.*

CHARACTER CLASSES

PRINCESS

XP	LEVEL	AC
0	1	5
2000	2	5
4000	3	4
8000	4	4
16000	5	3
32000	6	3
64000	7	2
128000	8	2
256000	9	1
512000	10	1

A Red Martian of high status, the Princess is trained in the ancient, all but forgotten ways of scholarship, combat and diplomacy.

Restrictions: This class is only open to Red Martian woman.

Prerequisites: Intelligence and Charisma of 9.

Prime Attributes: Intelligence, Charisma. A princess with a 13+ in Charisma or Intelligence receives a +10% bonus to all experience awards.

Hit Dice: D8

Starting hit points = Intelligence

At First Level:

Access Knowledge: The princess knows where to go and how to look for data concerning a wide variety of subjects. In her home city, the Princess will have access to libraries, other stores of data and the custodians of these troves as contacts.

Secret Strike: Well trained in diplomacy, the princess receives a +4 to hit and double damage when attacking an opponent unaware of her presence.

Beginning at level 2 and every other level thereafter, the princess may select one Mastery.

The princess fights as a Cleric.



Ever wary of the Great Erg's Many Danger's Princess Lornu examines and artifact exposed in the wake of a violent sandstorm.



CHARACTER CLASSES

WARRIOR

XP	LEVEL	AC
0	1	6
2000	2	6
4000	3	5
8000	4	5
16000	5	4
32000	6	4
64000	7	3
128000	8	3
256000	9	2
512000	10	2

A Red Martian trained as a soldier, the warrior usually serves in a city's military.

Restrictions: Red Martian only

Prime Attributes: Strength and Constitution. A warrior with a 13+ in Constitution or Strength receives a +10% bonus to all experience awards

Hit Dice: D8

Starting hit points= Constitution



At First Level:

Grievous Blow: Whenever an attack results in maximum damage (e.g., an 8 as the result of a cast of D8) a second damage die is rolled and the result added to the total damage. If the result is again maximum, the warrior may roll yet another die- up to a total of the warrior's level +1.

Crew: Trained to fight in groups, two or more warriors battling together each receive a +1 bonus to hit and damage. Five or more warriors fighting together receive +2 to hit and damage. 10 or more warriors fighting together under a recognized leader receive a +3 to hit and damage.

Beginning at level 2 and every other level thereafter, the warrior may select one **Mastery**. The warrior fights as a fighter.



CHARACTER CLASSES

THARK!

XP	LEVEL	AC
0	1	6
2200	2	6
4400	3	5
8800	4	5
17000	5	4
35000	6	4
70000	7	3
140000	8	3
280000	9	2
560000	10	2

Unwilling to abandon his lost friends, Jag Jagger makes an ill advised sojourn. into Ruined Xumos after dark.



A deadly Green Martian raider, associated with one of the great hordes. Eight feet tall, Thark! possess six limbs: four arms and two legs.

Prime Attribute: Constitution. A Thark! with a 13+ in Constitution receives a +10% bonus to all experience awards

Hit Dice: D10

Starting hit points = Constitution



At First Level:

Intimidate:

If the Thark! gains surprise in combat, he may frighten unwary opponents- even other Thark! Surprised opponents must make a Saving Throw vs. Fear. A failed save results in a moral roll, a failed moral roll results in flight for 1d3 rounds or a -1 in to hit for the duration of the combat.

Double Strike:

Thark! have four arms and may strike twice every other combat round.

Beginning at level 2 and every other level thereafter, the Thark! may select one Mastery
The Thark! fights as fighter.

CHARACTER CLASSES

TERRAN

XP	LEVEL	AC
0	1	5
3000	2	5
6000	3	4
12000	4	4
24000	5	3
48000	6	3
96000	7	2
192000	8	1
384000	9	1
768000	10	0

Transported to the fourth planet in any number of unlikely ways, the Terran adventurer comes to Mars with the advantage of matchless physical strength and the disadvantage of unsurpassed ignorance.

Hit Dice: D12

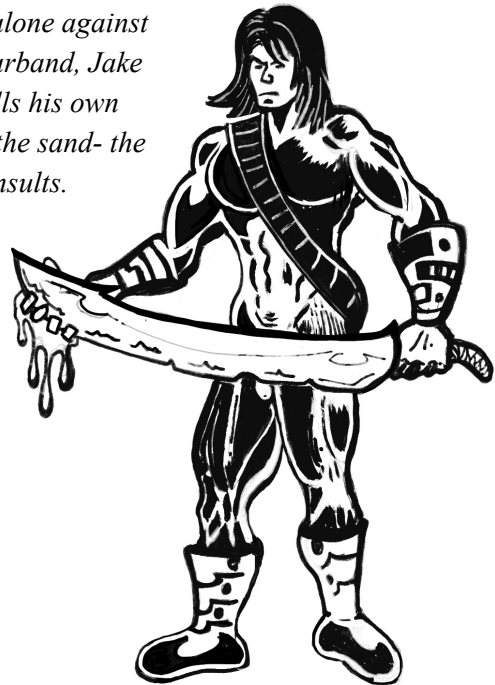
First level hit points = 18

At first Level:

Great Strength: Any player who chooses to play a Terran must assign their highest attribute roll to strength. This value is immediately increased to 19. Terrans deal 1d8 (+4 STR modifier) lethal hand-to-hand damage.



Facing off alone against a Shoum warband, Jake Samson spills his own blood onto the sand- the gravest of insults.



Leap: 15' vertical/30' horizontal.

Warp Immunity: Terrans take ½ damage from *Mind Blast* and are immune to *Cloud*. A Terran cannot use psi-active devices, such as ray guns, until he earns 500 experience points.

Ignorance: Terrans will suffer a temporary -3 to Charisma due to social awkwardness. They will lose this penalty at a rate of 1pt per level. The Terran new to the red planet will have difficulty with communication in critical situations and will require a die check until she earns 500 XP. D6 1-4 incomprehensible; 5-6 understanding.

Beginning at level 4 and every other level thereafter, the Terran may select one Mastery. The Terran fights as a fighter.

CHARACTER CLASSES

MENTON

XP	LEVEL	AC
0	1	7
1800	2	7
3600	3	6
7200	4	6
14400	5	6
30000	6	5
60000	7	5
90000	8	4
180000	9	4
360000	10	3

Mentons are Red Martians bred and trained to use the eldritch mind powers of the deep past. Other Red Martians regard mentons as wily and unpredictable. However, their strange powers make them an asset to any community.

Initial HP= Warp

Hit Dice: D8

Prime Requisite: Warp. A menton with 14+ Intelligence receives a +10% bonus to all experience point awards.

At first level:

Interface: Act as human component necessary for operations of airships and other ancient technologies.

Mind Blast

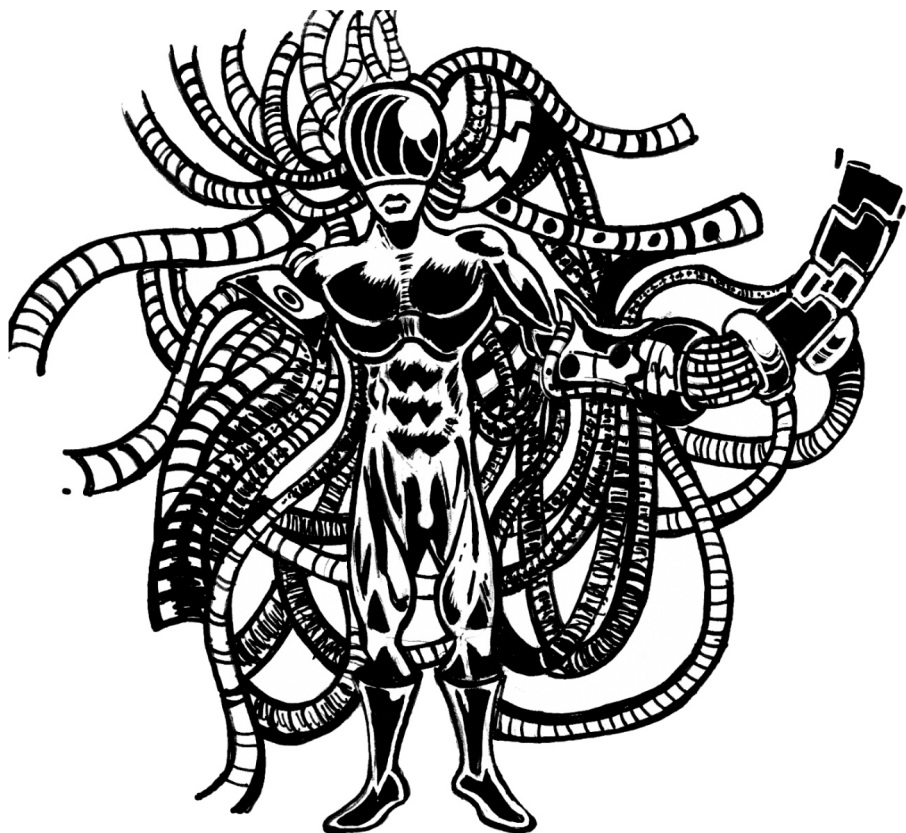
2 +1/2 level times a day

2D6X+ Warp modifier damage, automatic, no save, on any target in visual range.

At first, fourth, seventh and tenth level select one Mastery.

A menton also has access to powers of MIND WARP from level one.

The menton fights as a cleric.



MIND WARP

COMBAT

Only one warp action may be executed per combat round

COST

Something cannot come from nothing, the power expenditure of Mind Warp is represented by a corresponding loss of the Menton's Hit Points (HP).

TIERS

Three tiers of Warp exist:

Alpha Warp is gained at first level.

Beta Warp at third level.

Gamma Warp at seventh level.

ALPHA WARP

Fixed Cost

TELESEND: 1HP

Transmit a short telepathic message to one sentient or semi-sentient target within visual range.

VANISH: 1HP

This stunt allows the Menton to blend into the environment while remaining stationary.

The Menton may hide up to four companions at the cost of 1HP each).

Success against unwitting targets, with the exception of another Menton, is automatic.

Active searchers (and other Mentons) must make a successful Saving Throw vs Warp to locate the hidden Menton.

Terrans can see right through the illusion.

BETA WARP:

Random cost: 1d4+1 HP

CLOUD

Deceive or befuddle sentient or semi-sentient adversary for one turn.

Player must have something appropriate in mind, and the target is due a Saving Throw.

If the first save is a success, the target suffers no effect.

If the save is failed the target can be easily fooled, bypassed or befuddled. Sentient creatures receive a *second* save at the end of the turn.

Success indicates a clearing of the mind. The subject will know they have been tricked. Failure indicates loss of all memory regarding the event, and a possible headache.

Appropriate behavior will follow.

FIND PERSON/ANIMAL

Locate any individual within 1km/1vl.

The menton must have a possession or biological matter from the individual in question.

FIND WATER

The menton enters a trance and walks directly to the nearest significant source of water.

Range: unlimited.

LISTEN

The menton can hear things clearly at 100 meters distance for one turn.

PSYCHOMETRIC TOUCH

Menton reads previous 72 hours of a structure or object's history. The data comes in a single rush of images, smells and sounds. Dramatic events will dominate the vision.

At the discretion of the referee, an especially vivid or terrible vision might require the Menton to make a Saving Throw or lose consciousness for 1d6 rounds.

TURN UNDEAD/ROBOTS

The Menton may focus his Warp energy to turn back robots and the restless dead. The mere existence of this ability attests to the how long both have been a menace on Mars.

MIND WARP

Menton Level		# of HD Turned Undead/Robots.
5		1d6
6-7		1d8
8-9		1d10
10		1d12

GAMMA WARP

Random cost: 1d6

BOLT

Generates a discharge of static electricity

Range 50'

Damage: 3d6 Save vs. Warp for 1/2 damage

Hits 1d4 targets

Accompanied by a very loud and startling clap of thunder.

DEMORALIZE:

Forces target to make morale roll with a -2 modifier.

Menton may effect a number of targets equal to her level.

FREEZE

Immobilizes the Menton's level in hit dice of living creatures for 2 turns. No save. Menton selects targets.

Targets are helpless for the duration of the effect. Does not effect Terrans or other mentons.

BEYOND GAMMA WARP?

Rumors and legends exist of Warp abilities such as teleportation, telekinesis realty warping and matter control; and indeed such things may be possible. The incorporation of such abilities into the individual campaign, however is left to the referee.



MASTERY

A mastery represents a skill, affinity, power, special ability or resource. As characters progress in level, they gain additional masteries. Unless otherwise specified no mastery may be taken more than once. (Class) indicates that the mastery is only available to that class. An industrious referee may wish to expand upon the list below.

ANIMAL EMPATHY +2 to all monster reaction rolls, excluding robots and the undead.

CONTACTS Underworld, elite, common, scholarly.

DECIPHER ANCIENT TEXT (PRINCESS)

Through study or experience, the princess has taken her education to the next level. D6: 1-4 the princess translates ancient glyphs. If the princess fails, she may take one hour of study and make a second attempt.

PILOT Operation and navigation of airship. Routine tasks are automatic. In a crisis, a roll of a 1-3 on a d6 indicates the pilot has successfully managed the situation.

GUNNERY Character capable of using heavy mounted guns with competency. +2 to hit.

HYPNOTIST (MENTON) If the menton wins a surprise roll, she can attempt to hypnotize an individual. The individual must save vs mind, or fall temporarily under the control of the menton as per the spell charmed person

HEALING HANDS (PRINCESS) The princess can psychically heal 2 hit pts per level, twice per day. This Princess cannot use this ability on herself.

KILLING STRIKE (PRINCESS) (Must have Stealth) If the Princess gains surprise on an opponent, and a successful to hit roll; roll 1d6: 1-3 the target is instantly slain; 4-6 normal Surprise Strike damage applies

MIGHTY THEWS (TERRAN) Terrans can leverage their great strength to do an additional 1d6x of lethal damage in melee combat. They can also destabilize smaller structures and vehicles at the referee's discretion.

RAGE (THARK!) once a day per experience level, the character is overcome with bloodlust and anger: +2 to Hit and a +d6x on damage 1d6X rounds. At the end of the fit, the character must save vs mind or pass out for 1d10 turns. If the character is successful they incur -2 to hit and on damage until they have had ten turns of rest.

RIDE Character understands the management and care of desert riding animals. Under normal conditions all related actions are automatic. Difficult actions or conditions require a die roll. 1-3/D6, usually indicates success.

STEALTH The character gains a +1 on all surprise rolls, and may move undetected in neutral conditions on a 1-3/ D6. Note- in favorable conditions stealth is automatic for a trained individual

SURVIVAL, DEEP CITY RUIN Can find safe food and shelter-if present as well as avoid the more obvious dangers of the deep city: 1-2/D6 under normal conditions

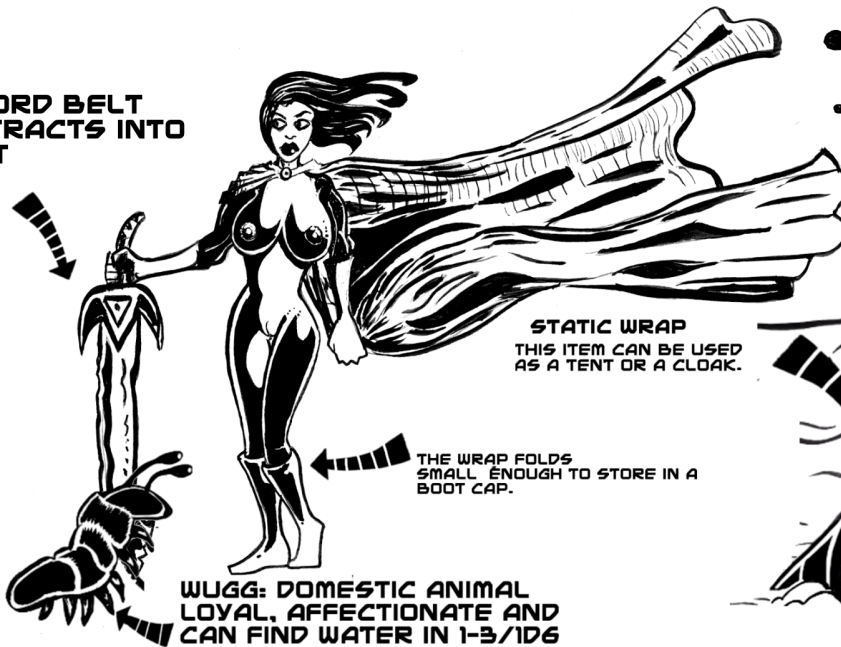
SURVIVAL, DEEP SAND Can find food and shelter- if present, in the deep desert D6: 1-3 under normal conditions.

TRACKING Character can track people, machines or animals: 1-3/D6 success in swamp/ forest lands; 1-2/D6 in scrub desert/ badlands; 1/D6 success in dune sea.

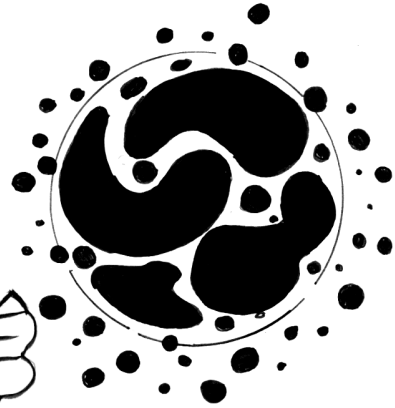
WEAPON OF CHOICE This entry represents a skill boost and may be taken more than once, but always for the same weapon. The first time it provides a +2 to hit and damage, on each successive occasion an additional +1 to hit and damage

DESERT GEAR

**SWORD BELT
RETRACTS INTO
HILT**



**WUGG: DOMESTIC ANIMAL
LOYAL, AFFECTIONATE AND
CAN FIND WATER IN 1-3/1D6**



GLOWB

**FLOATING PSI-ACTIVE
LIGHT SOURCE. UNIVERSALLY
UNPREDICTABLE. 10' RADIUS
1D4 HOURS A DAY. MUST BE
IN THE SUN FOR 6 HOURS
AFTER EACH USE. WILL
REMAIN WITHIN ARM'S
REACH OF THE USER.
DEACTIVATES IF USER IS KILLED.**



WATER BOTTLE

**CAP IS
PSI-
CONTROLLED
OPENS AND
CLOSES AT
THE WILL OF
THE BEARER**

**GRIP CAN
BE EXTENDED
AND USED
AS SHOULDER
STRAP.**

**PSEUDO-
CRYSTAL KEEPS
WATER COOL AND
PREVENTS EVAPORATIVE
LOSS.**



**SAND
BOOTS:**



**BOOT CAP:
STORAGE AREA
FOR SMALL ITEMS.**

**SMART CERMAIC
ADJUST
SIZE TO FIT ANY
FOOT.**

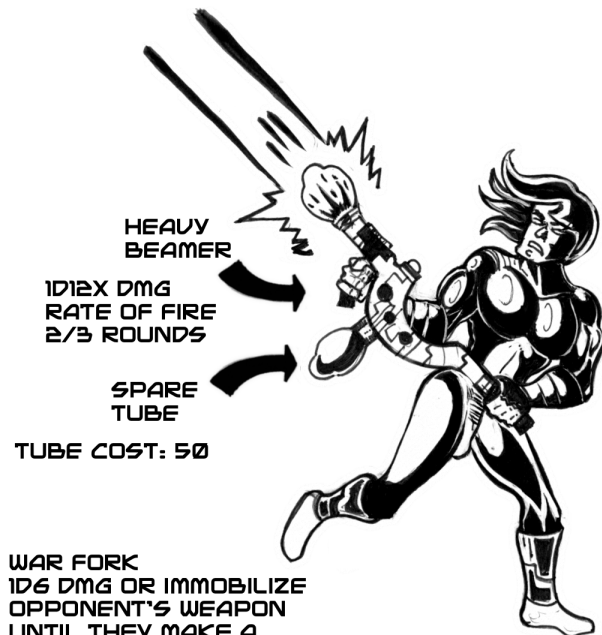
**SPECIAL
TREAD MADE OF CURED THOAT
BILE, REDUCES FATIGUE
ON SAND, ALLOWING FOR
NORMAL MOVEMENT- AND
CUSHIONS IMPACT
ON HARDER SURFACES.**



**10X SPYGLASS
COLLAPSES INTO
THIN DISK FOR
STORAGE.**

Note: With the exception of vacuum tubes, gear and weapons are easily acquired at no cost. There is more of both than people to make use of them by a very wide margin.

WEAPONS OF THE WASTELAND



HEAVY
BEAMER

1D12X DMG
RATE OF FIRE
2/3 ROUNDS

SPARE
TUBE

TUBE COST: 50

WAR FORK
1D6 DMG OR IMMOBILIZE
OPPONENT'S WEAPON
UNTIL THEY MAKE A
SAVING THROW VS ENTANGLE.
MADE OF SCAVANGED MATERIALS.
OFTEN CARRIED BY YOUNG
WARRIORS WITHOUT ACCESS
TO LOOT.

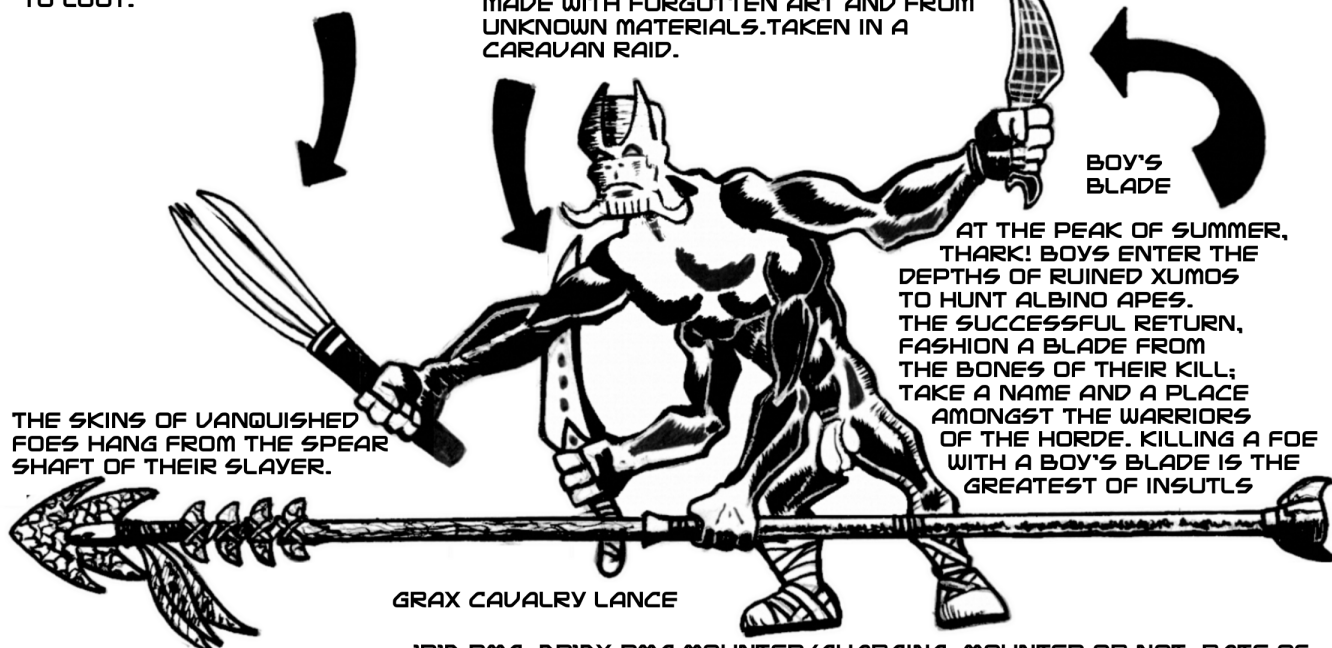
HELIUM BLADE
+1 ATTACK/DAMAGE/+2 VS. DEATH
ALIGNED 1D10 DMG. UNBREAKABLE.
MADE WITH FORGOTTEN ART AND FROM
UNKNOWN MATERIALS. TAKEN IN A
CARAVAN RAID.

PROJECTION WEAPONS DRAW POWER
FROM THE ENDLESS RESERVOIR OF
THE SUN, BUT THE TUBES USED TO FOCUS
SOLAR ENERGY INTO DEADLY FORCE ARE
FRAGILE AND FINITE. AN ATTACK ROLL OF 01
INDICATES A BLOWN OUT TUBE. THIS CHANCE
INCREASES TO 1-2 IF THE WEAPON HASN'T BEEN
EXPOSED TO THE SUN FOR THREE OUT OF THE
PREVIOUS 26 HOURS.

SUNBEAM PISTOL
1D6X DMG RATE
OF FIRE 1/1 ROUND

TUBE COST 25

SAND KNIFE 1D6 DMG
EASILY CONCEALED
BLADE COMPRISED
OF SAND HELD RIGID
BY A STATIC CHARGE.
USUALLY KEPT IN BOOT.
UNSEEMLY, BUT POPULAR
AMONGST PRINCESSES
NONETHELESS.



BOY'S
BLADE

AT THE PEAK OF SUMMER,
THARK! BOYS ENTER THE
DEPTHS OF RUINED XUMOS
TO HUNT ALBINO APES.
THE SUCCESSFUL RETURN,
FASHION A BLADE FROM
THE BONES OF THEIR KILL;
TAKE A NAME AND A PLACE
AMONGST THE WARRIORS
OF THE HORDE. KILLING A FOE
WITH A BOY'S BLADE IS THE
GREATEST OF INSUTLS

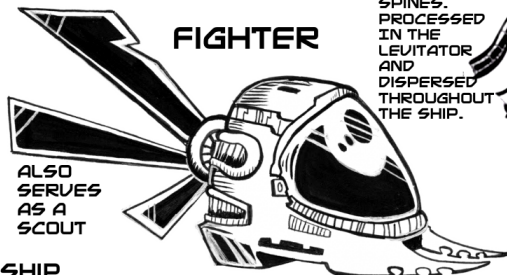
GRAX CAVALRY LANCE

THE SKINS TAKEN BY
A WARRIOR REPRESENT
HIS PROWESS AND INFORM
WARRIORS OF HOW MUCH
RESPECT TO AFFORD ONE
ANOTHER.

1D12 DMG. 2D12X DMG MOUNTED/CHARGING. MOUNTED OR NOT, RATE OF
ATTACK 1/2 ROUNDS. RAW MATERIALS USED IN MAKING THE SPEARHEAD
AND THE MICROLITH BARBS EMBEDDED IN THE SHAFT ORIGINATE IN THE
WARRIOR'S HOME RUIN. AFTER THE STONE HAS BEEN FLAKED AND SET,
THARK! SHAMANS WORK A WEIRD UPON IT. THEIRS ALONE IS THE
SECRET OF GRANTING STONE THE STRENGTH OF STEEL.

AIRSHIPS

FIGHTER



ALSO SERVES AS A SCOUT

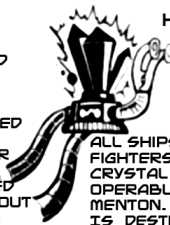
FIGHTER

SHIP BUILDING

THE REFEREE MAY DEVISE OTHER SHIP TYPES USING THOSE PRESENTED HERE AS TEMPLATES. THE CARRIER, FOR EXAMPLE, WITH A FEW SIMPLE MODIFICATIONS THE CARRIER WOULD MAKE A FINE BARGE.

LEVITATOR

POWER IS GATHERED BY THE SOLAR SPINES, PROCESSED IN THE LEVITATOR AND DISPERSED THROUGHOUT THE SHIP.



HEADPIECE

ALL SHIPS LARGER THAN FIGHTERS MUST USE A CRYSTAL LEVITATOR, OPERABLE ONLY BY A MENTON. IF THE LEVITATOR IS DESTROYED THE SHIP WILL CRASH AND THE MENTON MUST SAVE VS DEATH RAY OR TAKE 2D6X DAMAGE.

SHIPWRECK!

SAVE VS. DEATH RAY OR 2D6X DAMAGE.

WEATHER (1D6)

CHECK TWICE DAILY

- 1-2 CLEAR
- 3 TAILWIND +1D20MPD
- 4 HEADWIND -1D10MPD
- 5 SANDSTORM 1D6X HOURS
- 6 SOULSTORM 1D12 HOURS

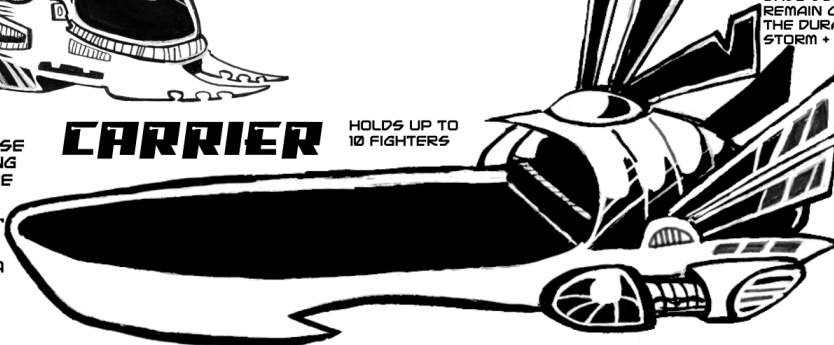
SANDSTORM: 1/4 SPEED; ZERO VISIBILITY DAMAGE TO SHIP 1D6X/HOUR.

SOULSTORM: INTENSE SANDSTORM WITH SUPERNATURAL ELEMENT SAVE VS. MIND WARP OR REMAIN CATATONIC FOR THE DURATION OF THE STORM + 1D4 HOURS

GROUNDING AIRSHIPS ARE A FAVORED PREY FOR BANTHS, CRIMSON APES AND GRAX RAIDERS.

CARRIER

HOLDS UP TO 10 FIGHTERS



SHIP	MILES A DAY	FEET A ROUND	CREW	HULL POINTS	AC	GUNS	CARGO
CARRIER	60	100	50	200	6	3-10	200 TONNES
CORVETTE	90	120	10-20	100	5	1-5	50 TONNES
FIGHTER	150	150	1-2	20	2	1	200 LBS+ PILOT

CEILING: DUE TO MARS' THIN ATMOSPHERE, LARGER SHIPS CANNOT RISE ABOVE 2000 FEET. SPECIALLY OUTFITTED FIGHTERS MAY ACHIEVE A GREATER ALTITUDE AT THE REFEREE'S DISCRETION.

GUNS: ALL GUNS ASSUMED TO BE STANDARD RAY CANNON. 2D12X DAMAGE AND ONE ATTACK EVERY OTHER COMBAT ROUND.

SOLAR COLLECTOR

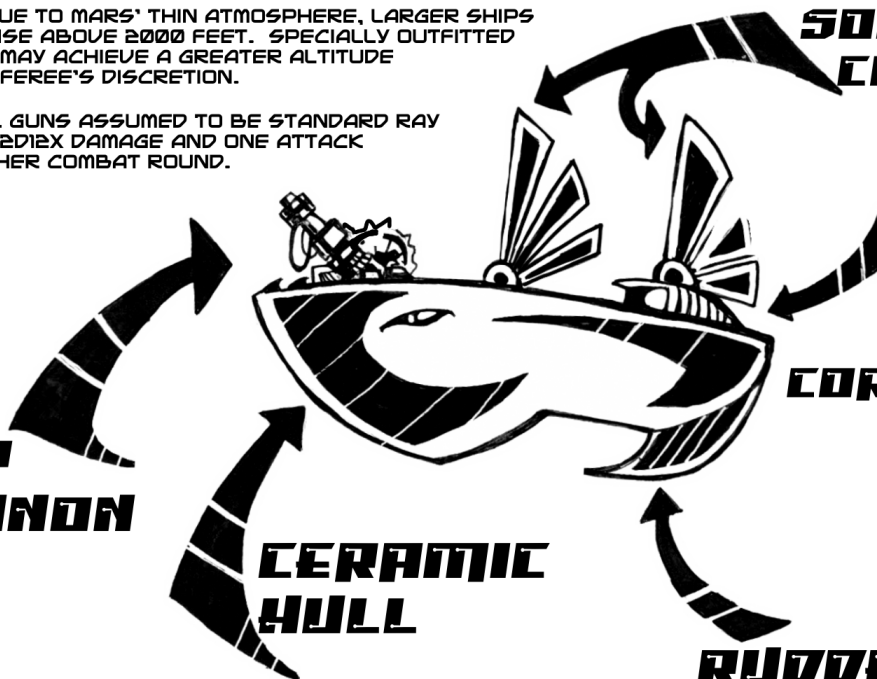
COMMAND MODULE AND CREW QUARTERS

CORVETTE

RAY CANNON

CERAMIC HULL

RUDDER/ LANDING STRUT



STRANGE SUNS



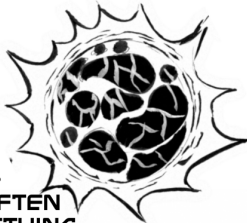
1-3
SULLEN SUN
INTENSE HEAT
1/2 HP DMG AN
HOUR FROM LATE
MORNING TO EARLY
EVENING WITHOUT
PROPER SHADE OR
SHELTER

EACH DAY
ROLL 1D12
AT DAWN

4-11
MAD SUN
MOST DAYS.
UNBEARABLE
HEAT. 1 HP DMG
AN HOUR FROM
JUST AFTER
DAWN UNTIL SUNSET
WITHOUT PROPER SHADE
OR SHELTER. GROUND TRAVEL
SPEEDS REDUCED
BY 1/3.



12
WEIRD SUN
HOTTER STILL
DIM AND STRANGE. DOUBLE
NORMAL ENCOUNTERS
-1 ON ALL DIE ROLLS
-4 ON ALL REACTION ROLLS
ANIMALS AND MONSTERS OFTEN
ATTACK ON SIGHT. IF SOMETHING
REALLY BAD IS GOING TO HAPPEN- IT WILL
GO DOWN UNDER THE WEIRD SUN.



WEATHER

ZERZURA'S CLIMATE IS HOT AND ARID
ALL YEAR LONG FOREVER.



FRIGID NIGHTS

1 HP DMG AN HOUR OUT IN THE COLD
1/2 MOVEMENT (MARTIANS ONLY)
NO NATURAL HEALING

STORMS

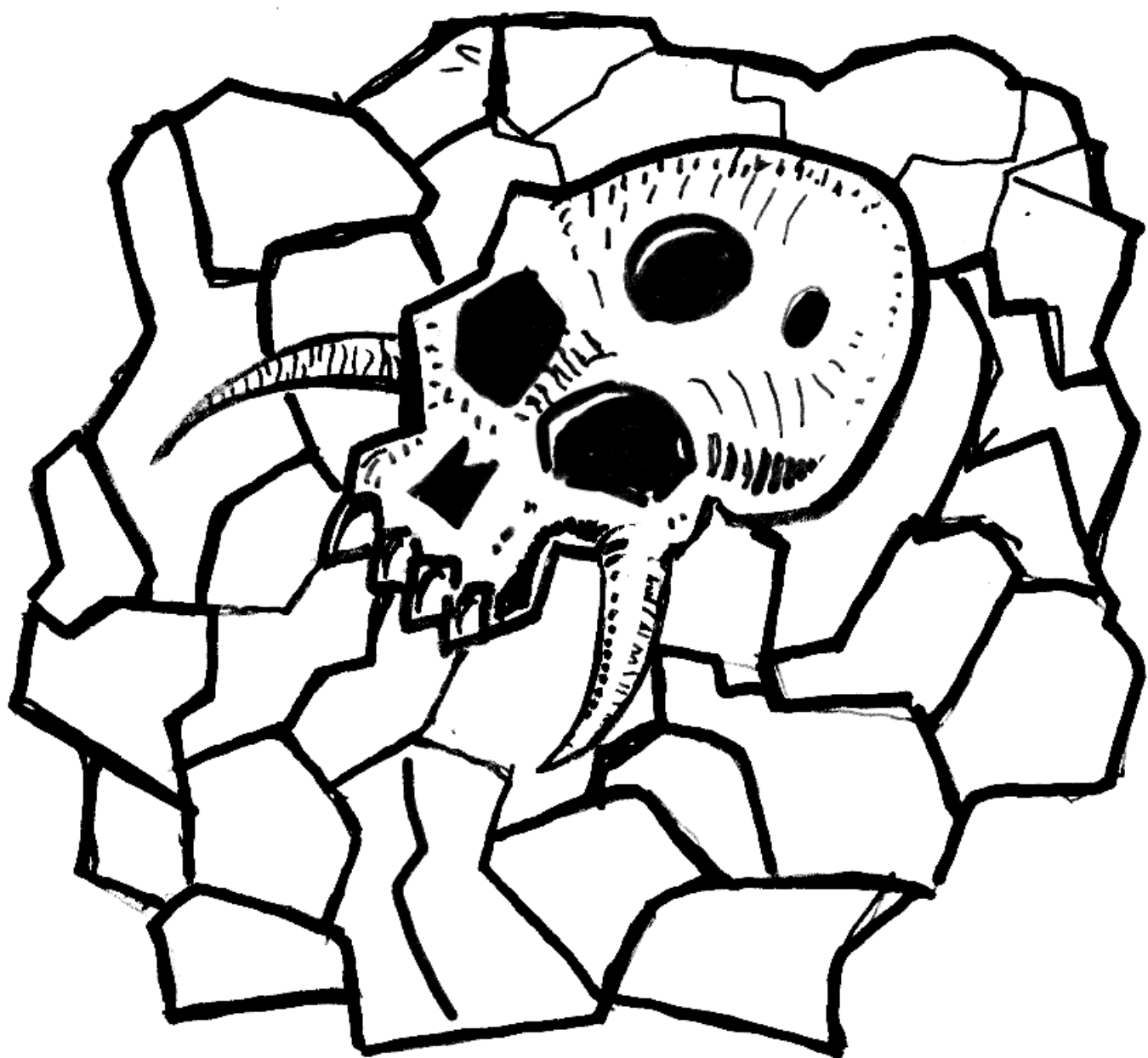
ROLL A SECOND D12
AT DAWN
1-9 NO STORM
10-11 SAND STORM
1D12X HOURS
2HP DMG AN HOUR
12 SOUL STORM 1D3 HOURS
5 HP DMG AN HOUR. SAVE VS.
FEAR FOR 1/2 DAMAGE.



A
SOUL STORM
IS A SAND
STORM INFESTED
WITH THE ANGRY
GHOSTS OF A THOUSAND
LOST AEONS

PART 3

ZERZURA, UNDER THE MAD SUN



LIFE ON MARS

THE AB-GODS

Forgotten centuries ago, in the time after the Day of Nine Dreamers, unnatural, godlike beings possessed of strange and otherworldly abilities, gained control of Zerzura. Ab-gods rule the all major settlements of the Red Martians. Only the Grax and Shoum remain free.

BLOODSPORT

Arena combat and dueling occur everywhere on Mars. Some fight for money, some fight for prestige, some fight because they must and others for the thrill or to put an end to a long and meaningless existence. Games are held weekly at the Palace of Heroes in Xards and on the Bleeding Deck of the Ark of Ages. In Ruined Xumos, blood stains the sands of the arena, Goom's Palace, nearly every day.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Ancient tradition limits criminal punishments to the arena or banishment. Amongst the Thark! slavery is also an option, but the red folk of Zerzura keep no slaves. Martian societies, however, are lax and only the most grievous offense lead to punishment.

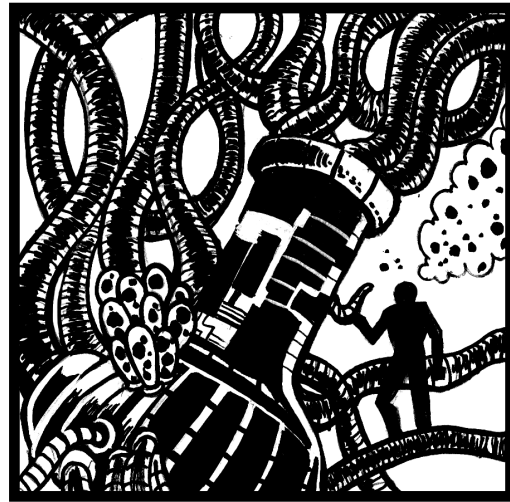
DESERT DAILY FOOD AND WATER REQUIREMENTS

Red Martians: 500 calories/ 1 liter. Thark!: 1500 calories 2 liters. Terrans: 1500 calories 5 liters, less 0.5 liters and 100 Calories per level until level 10.

If these needs are not met the character suffers 1/2 HP damage an hour and a cumulative -1 to every die roll, until death. The character cannot heal naturally until these needs are met.

DAY TO DAY LIFE

Due to genetic predisposition regulated by group psionic mood, the majority of Red Martians emerge from the egg as warriors. These Martians rarely gain the experience necessary to make war, but instead live lives of hedonistic excess, petty drama and casual violence. Those who venture outside the city call them drones. Intoxicated, libidinous indifference is the ubiquitous attitude of the drone. But all this indolence, comes not without cost.



DUELING

Most interpersonal issues can be talked out. Single combat resolves the remainder. Such fights, of course, must take place in a public venue, as prescribed by law.

EGG BANKS AND INCUBATORS

Although Martians potentially live extremely long lives, death on both large scale and small comes often. As a shield against extinction, Martians keep eggs in reserve, sometimes in the thousands, stored in secure egg banks, to use at need. Martian women make one or more donations to the egg bank every year.

Every settlement has an incubator. Once placed in the incubator Thark! eggs mature in one year. Red Martian eggs mature in two years.

FOOD, WATER, SHELTER

Scarcity of basic human needs, banished from the face of Mars long ago, still remains largely unknown. Red Martians harvest calories from automats, meat vats, phototron machines, hunting and food trees. Amongst the Shoum and Grax, the products of horticulture and the great herds, supplement the above sources and together provide more than enough sustenance to meet the demand. Martians look at food and water no differently than air. In the cities, everyone eats free as often and as well as they like. Along with its food production system, a water source is every settlement's most precious resource. Both remain under heavy guard at all times.

LIFE ON MARS

Settlements universally possess far more shelter than necessary to accommodate the need of residents

MONEY

Despite the ubiquity of life's necessities and the ease of their procurement, Martians still like money. They use it for exotic food items, gambling, objects d'art, weapons; gear, sexual favors, mercenaries and other luxuries

NUDITY

Martians utilize photosynthesis and derive the majority of their nutrition from the sun and as such, can thrive on 500 calories a day or less. Terrans absorb the necessary intestinal and epidermal microfauna over time and also gain this benefit (at 2cnd level).

As result of this characteristic, or at least in part, Martians wear very little clothing. Most wear nothing, beyond the occasional cape, jewelry, body paint or the near ubiquitous trappings of war.

PROMISCUITY

Everywhere, all the time. Powerful reproductive compulsion keeps the precious egg banks full for Red Martian and Thark! alike. Sexual favors are often exchanged for money or small gifts with no shame or censure.

SOMA

Martian politics and biology are intrinsically, but not inseparably, intertwined. Genetic alterations, wrought long ago, render Martians predisposed to loyalty in regards to their birth group or settlement.

This loyalty exists at a subconscious level and rarely comes into active play. Very few Martians even know bio-loyalty exists; but it pacifies the rank and file of citizens, making them more pliable and prone to suggestion and unquestioning loyalty. Shoum make and trade a drug known as *Soma*. This elixir either kills the recipient, or voids their genetic predilection for loyalty. Secret societies and cults make use of *Soma* to free prospective members from biologically determined loyalty. Terrans of course, possess no such genetic predisposition, and the effect of *Soma* ingestion upon them is unknown. The individual referee must decide what importance genetic loyalty will play in her campaign- if any.

FORBIDDEN LANDS.

Tradition proscribes entry into the allegedly irradiated areas of the Great Erg, southwest of Xards; as well as the enigmatic Shadow Canyon, where one of great Atmosphere Engines lies dark and silent.

WATER LAWS

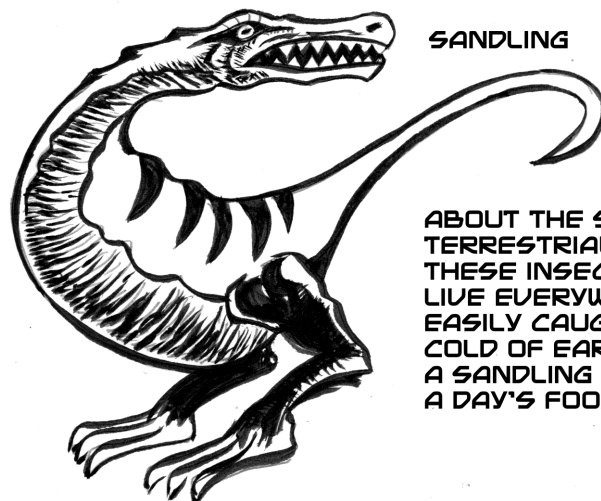
Away from the settlements, the so called Water Laws govern interactions.

Murder is fine out on the sand, but it is unacceptable to allow another to die of hunger or thirst.

The water of the defeated belongs to the victor.

The flesh of the dead is consumed at need, without shame.

Nothing is wasted.



ABOUT THE SIZE OF A
TERRESTRIAL CHICKEN
THESE INSECTIVORES
LIVE EVERYWHERE.
EASILY CAUGHT IN THE
COLD OF EARLY MORNING
A SANDLING PROVIDES
A DAY'S FOOD FOR TWO.

FACTIONS AND POWERS

CLAWS OF ARA

A Fraternity of assassins named for the great Roc perched atop the basalt spire at the northern edge of the Salt Flat.

PLACES OF POWER Ara's Roost, a tangled network of tunnels, extends far below the great spire, various safe houses in each of the major settlements.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS The cult is comprised of both Red Martians and Thark! A secret council, called the Talons, rules the Claws. If a true relationship exists between the assassins and the roc, it is unknown to outsiders.

GOALS Amass wealth and secret power.

DEMEANOR Once they accept a contract, the Claws never stop until the target is dead. Everyone fears the Claws of Ara.

THE CHANGERS

An ab-god, resurrectionist, and committed medical experimenter, the Doll Maker controls an army of his own manufacture comprised of undead and freakish warriors produced by his experiments. Assisted by several, lesser mad scientists, the Doll Maker also controls a network of spies, and agents throughout Zerzura and beyond.

PLACES OF POWER The Black Hand, a twisted tower tree south of Xards.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS The Doll Maker employs agents of all sorts throughout Zerzura. The largest contingent of his network, however, is engaged in the occupation of procuring corpses.



GOALS The Doll Maker and his organization strive to build a powerful army. The Doll Maker wished to march on Shadow Canyon and eradicate whatever alien presence resides there.

DEMEANOR Capricious and unpredictable, the Doll Maker is as likely to help someone as harvest them for parts. He is, however, always on the lookout for able agents and, especially, recent intelligence regarding Shadow Canyon.

THE DRAGONAUTS

Stewards of the last dragon clan.

PLACES OF POWER The Dragon Tower, the Dragon Garden

THE SHAPE OF THINGS The thirteen dragons and their Dragonauts command great respect; but the fourteenth dragon, the legendary and rarely seen Dragon Empress, rules and administers the day to day affairs of the Tower through her mind-controlled warrior-priests.

The Tower controls the skies over Zerzura through the power of the thirteen adult dragons. The queen has the best spy network in the region, which is said to extend beyond the Great Rift, into the strange and savage wastes of the north.

GOALS The Empress desires nothing more than to maintain the status quo, but, even so, an opportunity to destroy the Bleeding God would not be unwelcome.

DEMEANOR. No two dragons are alike. Notoriously provincial, the general population of the tower excels at making visitors uncomfortable.

THE GRAX

Thark! horde, 10,000 strong, as of late, ruled over by Goom a huge and savage warrior of limited intelligence.

Places of Power The Grax make their camp at the edges of Ruined Xumos.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS The Horde stagnates and goes nowhere. A decade ago, the Grax defeated their traditional enemy the Huuurn, a horde to the north. At loose ends ever since and divided by continuous leadership struggles, the Grax lack all direction. Over the course of the last decade, many Thark! warriors have walked away from the horde in disgust. Recently, Goom the Gargantuan crushed all his rivals and seized control of the horde. Many within and outside the horde, believe that its dissolution remains inevitable; but in some very important ways the Grax stand well above the Red Martians.

Making good use of slave labor, pastoralists, foragers, and horticulturists, the Grax Horde takes sustenance from their herds and secret gardens in the deep city- unaware that they have reinvented food production.

GOALS Best described as the sleeping giant of Zerzura, the Grax Horde lacks both purpose and momentum.

DEMEANOR Violent and savage, the Horde takes what it wants. Paradoxically, the Grax generally meet all their own needs.

THE HERD

The Nuphal, large sentient pachyderms, operating as a collective of clans, control overland trade throughout Zurzura and beyond.

PLACE OF POWER The marketplace.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS If it is a staple of life and cannot be produced within the Ark or one of the other settlements it comes to the Dry Sea via Nuphal caravan. Famed for delivering goods intact and in a timely manner, the Nuphal clan caravans boast an excellent reputation. The Herd represents a key link in the highly illegal flesh trade. In fact, the Invisible Hand considers the Nuphal caravans the only sensible way to transport slaves. Each clan runs a caravan. Currently, ten clans, each linked to the others through a weak form of ritualized telepathy, walk the sands of Mars. Each caravan follows the same unmarked route, known as the Golden Road at unevenly spaced intervals. A new caravan arrives at a settlement without warning a month or two after the departure of the

A NUPHAL TRADER

ANTI-GRAV BARGE

THE NUPHAL CONCEPT OF WEALTH IS CENTERED ON THE CARRYING CAPACITY AND STATE OF AN INDIVIDUAL'S A-G BARGE.

HUMAN CARGO WRANGLER

HUMANS ARE BOTH THE PRIMARY CUSTOMERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE NUPHAL. THOSE HIRED TO WORK THE CARAVANS SERVE AS GUARDS, SCOUTS, ADMINISTRATORS, STEVEDORES, PROSTITUTES, INTOXICATORS AND LABORERS OF EVERY DESCRIPTION.

AC: 3; HIT DICE: 6;
MOVE: 240; ATTACKS: 2;
DAMAGE: 1D8/2D12
(STOMP/TRAMPLE);
NO. APPEARING: 100
SAVE AS: M4;
MORALE: 10; ALIGNMENT: D



last. But, occasionally, a year or more will pass between visits. Individual Nuphal act as caravan organizers, porters and guards.

Additionally, the clans employ humanoid agents to further their ends within settlements and mercenaries to guard their expeditions. Despite the Herd's use of sell swords, Nuphal warriors know few rivals in their capacity for destruction, and, although rare, there are powerful warp adepts among the ranks of the clans.

GOALS To buy and sell whatever there is to buy and sell.

DEMEANOR Herd markets and caravans entice with goods and revelry and for most provide nothing but a good time. But some who drink and dance amongst the Nuphal vanish into their midst, never to be seen again.

THE INVISIBLE HAND

Organized crime network.

PLACES OF POWER Xards, with its main guild house hidden in the city's otherwise abandon pedestal. There are safe houses in all the major settlements.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS Currently ruled by the hulking and mysterious being known only as Sackcloth, the Hand trades in black market artifacts, murder, the kidnap and sale of Red Martian slaves to the Grax, *soma*, banned intoxicants, warp-drugs and other contraband. They also facilitate the illegal gambling surrounding arena fighting in Xards.

GOALS The Invisible Hand's main goal will always be profit and expansion of illegal enterprise. However, in the short term, Sackcloth is determined to bring about the destruction of the Claws of Ara and the unwanted competition they represent.

DEMEANOR Members of the Hand kill without hesitation to further their greedy and nefarious ambitions.

THE SHOUM

A confederation of savage and fanatically loyal nomad clans. The only culture in the region that is comprised of both Red Martians and Thark! The Shoum war with all outsiders.

PLACES OF POWER The Forbidden Lands, the Great Erg and the Sea of Stones.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS Shoum live in tightly integrated warbands comprised of up to three hundred individuals. Each band has representatives from the seven tribes. Tribes are comprised of Red Martians and Thark! Tribal groups sponsor and adopt new members of the band.

A council of three, consisting of a princess, a Thark! and a warrior, leads each band. Council members gain the torc of leadership by slaying their predecessor in hand to hand combat.

Every Shoum wears a multicolored scarf. The scarf relates their personal narrative and identifies their warband and tribe. The longer the scarf the greater the renown. These scarves serve as identification and symbols of status and belonging.

GOALS The Shoum make war on Xards. They consider the Bleeding God to be an unholy horror in need of killing. So far the attacks have been confined to the open desert, but escalation remains constant.

In the long term the Shoum wish to kill all of the ab-gods- and, in the very long term, to expand and endure until they can seize control of the planet.

DEMEANOR Shoum are grim, unyielding and savage. They waste nothing and kill or leave behind any of their own who cannot keep up. They grant outsiders no mercy at all.

The Secret of *Soma*: Many believe that *Soma* is the ancient navigator's elixir that once made Mars a power all across space. Some desire a return to that former glory; some, of course, do not.

SLAVES OF THE MAD SUN/ THE UNCLEAN

Death worshiping cult with secret members at all levels of Red Martian and Thark! society. Slaves of the Mad Sun believe that the gates of paradise are locked until total extinction of all life on Mars is achieved.

PLACES OF POWER The slaves have no permanent headquarters, but keep safe houses and boltholes everywhere people live and in some more remote places as well.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS Organized as a collection of largely unaffiliated secret cells, the slaves operate as terrorists and saboteurs. Most Martians consider the Slaves of the Mad Sun, or *the Unclean*, as they are often called, little more than a rumor.

GOALS To hasten the extinction of life on Mars and bring about the endless peace of total death.

DEMEANOR Capable of nearly any atrocity in pursuit of their insane goal, the Slaves of the Mad Sun, nevertheless, endeavor to protect the secret of their existence and act mostly in the shadows. Sabotage, arson and assassination are their tools.

XARDS

The most populous and powerful settlement in Zertzura.

PLACES OF POWER Xards, Crater one

THE SHAPE OF THINGS The vast majority of Xards' residents are extremely pleasant to look upon, but indolent and without any perceptible skills beyond those related to the artful arrangement of flowers, erotic play, the creation of intoxicants or swordplay. These citizens spend their days watching the games, hunting in the park, dueling, drinking too much, eating too much, and fornicating. This large and seemingly useless population actually provides a continual supply of fresh conscripts for the large standing army maintained by the absolute ruler of Xards, the Bleeding God. The need for such troops has increased due to a protracted conflict with the Shoum.

GOALS The Bleeding God wishes to expand his territory and wipe out the Shoum.

DEMEANOR Militant, potentially expansionist.

HOUSE ZOLO

The individuals and organizations under the control of the Crimson Queen, ruler of the Ark of Ages.

PLACES OF POWER The Ark of Ages.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS The incomparably lovely Crimson Queen, Zenia Zolo, closeted ab-god, rules the Ark of Ages and House Zolo.

Zenia has held her position for an impossibly long time. Everyone ultimately answers to her. Despite the lies and propaganda that surround her, no one believes she is human.

House Zolo has a long-time and profitable relationship with the Herd..

The Crimson Blades, chief operatives of the House Zolo comport themselves with arrogance and aggression. They rarely interact with outsiders, but when they do it usually ends badly.

Many of the officers and rank and file members of the Crimson Guard and the queen's spy network are blood relations to the Queen- or so it is said.

GOALS The Queen wishes to further The Ark's dominance of trade.

DEMEANOR Rapacious and somewhat out of control, not unlike its leader, House Zolo threatens all who enter its sphere of influence.



PART 4
ATLAS OF ZERZURA



MARTIAN LANDFORMS AND ENVIRONMENTS.

SHIFTING SANDS, SHIFTING LANDSCAPE

The desert exists as patchwork of different environments. One land form may dominate a large region, but even then, small areas of varied sorts will exist within the matrix of the dominant environment. Stumbling across a large section of heretofore unknown deep city ruins in the center of the Great Erg is an unusual, but hardly impossible, or unprecedented, event.

BADLANDS

Areas characterized by loose, rounded formations of packed sand, boulders and rocky ravines. Difficult to navigate and occasionally impassable for mounted travelers, badlands provide a habitat for many of Mars' more dangerous creatures.

DEEP CITY RUINS

Remains of the great cities of Mars. Sometimes a ruin will be just one or two buildings, others it will be a huge sprawling weed tangled expanse of streets and crumbling structures.

DESERT PAVEMENT

Hard flatlands with a surface layer comprised of cemented, closely packed pebbles and other fragments of stone. The ground surface retains and reflects heat; this, combined with the lack of cover, makes these areas among the most arduous to cross.

ERG

A great expanse of wind shaped dunes. The Great Erg dominates central Zerzura, and smaller scattered dune fields exist everywhere. Loose sand slows all conventional forms of ground travel to 2/3 normal speed.

SALT FLATS

Large, flat expanse, with a surface layer of cemented salt. Salt flats retain and radiate an alarming amount of heat. This scorching heat, more intense even than in areas of desert pavement, prohibits daytime crossing.

ARCHES

Features of eroded sandstone, usually graven with ancient ruins, often with visible fossiliferous inclusions eroding out of the stone's surface. Arches make good landmarks in unfamiliar country. Many legends exist of lost travelers finding unexpected provisions or treasure in the shadows of an arch. These stories intertwine with ancient martian legends of the *malu*, capricious spirits; sometimes helpful, sometimes murderous.

MESA, SPIRES AND BUTTES

Sandstone features formed by erosion of the surrounding landscape. Scattered throughout the region, such formations exist in their greatest concentration to the west, where Zerzura gives way to the Sea of Stones.

ZERZURA

SCALE
= 50 MILES



GAZETTEER

**ARK OF AGES**

Once an ocean going vessel of gargantuan proportions, now an enormous hulk of petrified wood and innumerable ceramic patches, the Ark, or rather the settlement within and around it, by virtue of diplomacy, and connection with the Herd, dominates trade across Zerzura.

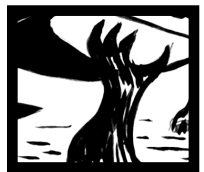
Zenia Zolo The Crimson Queen rules the Ark.

**ARA'S ROOST**

Immobile for centuries, gazing down over the dry sea as if it were some vast hunting ground, the great roc, Ara, has lent its name to the space-scraping spire of black basalt atop which it resides. Four centuries ago, Ara stirred and rooted around in the feathers beneath its left wing for five days and five nights. Scholars continue to debate the significance of this event.

The Roost is an eroded basalt spire, 1500 feet at summit and possibly an ancient volcanic neck. Caves and tunnels honeycomb the interior of the spire.

The Claws of Ara, an order of assassins keeps their stronghold therein.

**THE BLACK HAND**

Large, tree-like and odiferous, the disgusting fibrous growth called the Black Hand reaches, at its apex, more than 300 feet above the sand of southern Zerzura.

The Hand exhibits both vegetable and animal characteristics. For example, although the main mass, or trunk, remains stationary, the outer surface, roughly analogous to bark, squirms without surcease.

The Black Hand marks the location of the region's traditional, but now long unused, necropolis. One of the Ab-gods, the Doll Maker, has his stronghold in the dungeons beneath the Black Hand. The Black Hand bleeds, always, and taints the desert for miles around with its charnel stink.

Further, it emanates an unpleasant psychic radiation. Anyone coming within visual range of the hand for the first time must save vs. warp or vomit uncontrollably for 1d6 rounds.

All die checks are automatically made at -1 while within visual range of the Black Hand.

Many scholars believe the hand is meant to keep tomb robbers at bay. If this is indeed the case, the presence of the Doll Maker, cozy within its roots, surely represents a testament to its failed design.

**CACTUS ROCKS**

A region just to the south of the great rift crowded with huge rounded boulders, time worn spires of rock and innumerable cactus.

Numerous small water sources and plentiful shade create the ideal environment for cactus and other desert life.

Large patches of cactus indicate water nearby.

Grakkon dominate the region, tend it like a garden, and make endless war upon one another.



CRATER ONE

The south most of two large craters at Zerzura's eastern edge, Crater One is controlled by Xards. The crater contains the barracks and practice fields for the Bleeding God's army and airship crews. A dense and cool conifer forest covers three fifths of the crater floor.



DRAGON'S GLADE

The north most of two large craters at Zerzura's eastern edge, controlled by the Dragon Tower. A well watered rain-forest like environment covers the floor of the crater. Aside from the canal, access to the crater is restricted to dragonauts and other notables. The Last Canal runs through the center of the crater and drops beneath the surface at its edge.



DRAGON TOWER

A settlement located within a vast and crumbling monolith of indeterminate origin. The Dragon Tower provides a home for the last known dragons on Mars. The Dragon Empress rules the Tower. Little is know of near identical Shattered Spire, which stands dark and quiet nearby.

DREAMERS

In these latter days, their true purpose long since forgotten, the huge sculpted heads east of Xards, serve as a divinatory device for superstitious travelers.

The number of Dreamers above the dunes varies from day to day.

The more visible Dreamers, the more likely misfortune. It is rare for more than four of the Dreamers to clear the sand at a time. Nine Dreamers above the dunes is the most ever recorded. The so called *Morning of Nine*, a thousand years or more in the past, may be nothing more than legend. An immediately subsequent gap in the local records, representing two and half centuries of lost history, makes the event difficult to confirm.



FORBIDDEN LANDS

Dangerous and unstable, infested with monster and the Shoum, the Forbidden Lands welcome those who hunger for death.

Grit laden wind howls through the labyrinthine canyons and grottos, making it difficult to see and easy to get lost. 2/1d4 chance of getting lost/hour without a guide.

The Shoum claim ownership over the badlands and anything or anyone they find within it. According to (specious) rumor, they indulge in casual cannibalism.



THE GREAT ERG

Vast dune sea. See the beginning of this section for more detail



THE GREAT RIFT

A vast rent in the land. The rift's true depth and what can be found at its bottom are unknown



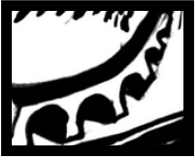
HORRIBLE VALLEY

The alien, telepathic mind control fungus, called Omm, guides the actions of nearly all organism residing with Horrible Valley. Nobody enters the valley of their own free will; nobody comes out of the valley at all.

Omm, festers, safe in some deep dark cave, far below the surface; whilst above, its spores drive

countless minions to work its obscene will.

Omm's range does not extend beyond the valley, and the organism has displayed no expansionist tendencies; nevertheless, every other polity in the region views the fungus and its minions as a threat.



THE LAST CANAL

A watercourse that runs (partially above ground, partially below) between the Dragon Tower and Xards. The folk of the canal exist in a world all their own. They move goods and people between the Dragon Tower and Xards, but remain independent, outside the control of either. To Martian outsiders, canal culture seems strange and exotic. "Imagine getting your fish from the water and not from a tree!" From the perspective of a Terran, however, the distinction might well be lost, leaving, in its absence, only the impression of a slightly more industrious flavor of libidinous wastrel.



MUD LAKE

A vast and stinking expanse of boiling slime; unfit for bathing, drinking, or even looking at, Mud Lake nevertheless provides a habitat for many living things

Tsgorath and his followers forage around the shores of the lake and far beyond, as well.

The acid of the lake destroys most materials in short order. Ceramic is an exception.

A mysterious island resides at the center of the lake, forever hidden by the swirling steam.



THE PIT

A lake of boiling tar.

The tar is used as an adhesive and sealant throughout Zerzura.

The Thark! keep a huge slave camp at the pit.



PYRAMIDS OF MARS

Glyph and rune covered monuments to the glory of a forgotten age, the Pyramids abide, looming over the western desert, their true purpose lost in time's shifting sands.

Pyramids on Mars are, without exception covered with unknown glyphs and unreadable text.

According to scholars these marking have changed over time, and continue to change. Some believe these changes represent a countdown.



ROBOT GRAVEYARD

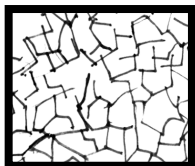
Gathered by unknown means, the vast collection of broken automatons, gears, parts and metal scraps known as the Robot Graveyard, yields the occasional wonder to the lucky prospector.

More end up in the belly of some beasts or a cook pot.

Several small bands of outcasts make their home in the graveyard. Some are benign and potentially friendly, others less so.

Prospectors frequently come from the Ark, looking for salvage and treasure.

A huge and venerable Banth has claimed the area as its hunting ground



SALT FLATS

The huge glaring expanse of salt, north of the Great Rift, exists as evidence of the region's oceanic past.

The flat is too hot to travel in the daytime.

There is no refuge or shelter from the sun anywhere on the flat, except Ara's Roost.

Travelers caught out on the flat for more than four hours must save vs death or suffer 3 hp/hr damage in addition to normal sun damage. This damage cannot be healed by any means until the character finds shelter or the sun goes down.

The Claws of Ara are said to have a tunnel that runs between Ara's Roost and the edge of the flats; its entrance is well hidden and secret.



SEA OF STONES

A seemingly endless expanse rocky badlands, the Sea of Stones vanishes to the west, its limits extend beyond those of local knowledge. Only the Shoum venture so far to the west.

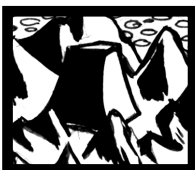
Ziturr, a lost city at the core of many of Zerzura's myths, actually exists, and can be found out on the sea stones...somewhere.

The legendary breeding place of the great dune worms resides at the Sea of Stones' center



SECRET SAUCER

A huge spacecraft hovers immobile, twenty feet above the desert of northern Zerzura- as it has for the last century. Occasionally, muffled screams of terror and pain escape the saucer and drift out across the desert.



SHADOW CANYON

No one goes in. No one comes out. The Dead Pump, a dark and inoperative atmosphere engine sits at Shadow Canyon's center. Without exception, dragons and airships that fly over or too close to the canyon, vanish. The continued existence of life on Mars depends on the atmosphere engines.



XARDS

The dominant settlement in Zerzura. Ruled by the Bleeding God, Xards has a large military, several airships and a wealth of natural resources at its disposal.



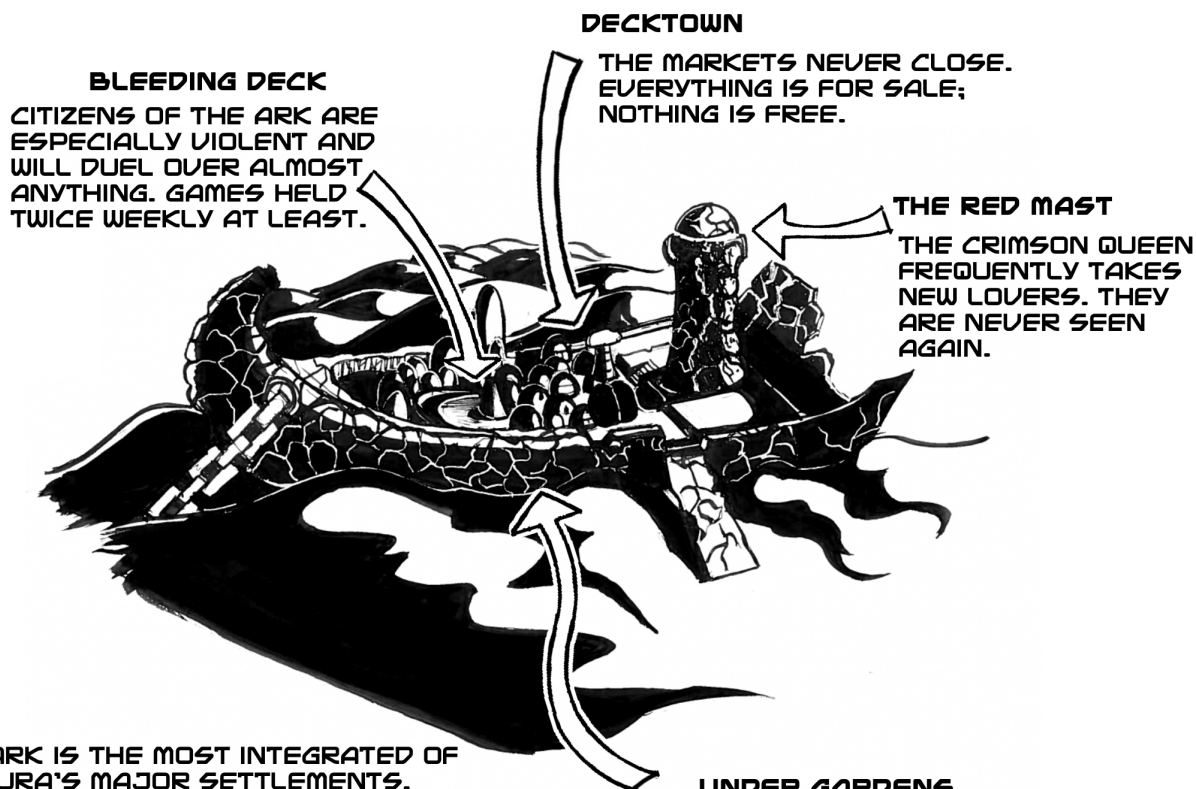
XUMOS (AKA: RUINED XUMOS)

A huge expanse of ruins, rising out of the sands north of the Great Rift, characterized by interconnected deep city ruins, shafts of hard sunlight and deep shadow. Thark! hunt, forage and farm in this dangerous, but surprisingly productive environment.

PART 5
CITIES IN THE SAND



ARK OF AGES



THE ARK IS THE MOST INTEGRATED OF ZERZURA'S MAJOR SETTLEMENTS.

OPERATING IN COLLUSION WITH THE CRIMSON BLADES THE INVISIBLE HAND EFFECTIVELY CONTROLS THE DAY TO DAY GOVERNANCE OF THE ARK.

WELL FED AND ENTERTAINED, THE POPULACE, BY AND LARGE, IGNORES ALL BUT THE WORST OF THE HAND'S EXCESSES.

HOWEVER, DESPITE THE LIVELY BUSTLE OF THE MARKET, THE DRAMA OF THE GAMES, AND THE EASY INDOLENCE OF EXISTENCE, A VISITOR CAN'T BUT SUSPECT SOMETHING SINISTER LURKS JUST BENEATH THE COMPLACENT SURFACE.

SOME BELIEVE GREAT BODIES OF WATER ONCE COVERED THE GLOBE AND THE ARK SAILED ACROSS THEM, LIKE A SHIP SAILS ACROSS THE SKY. SCHOLARS GENERALLY AGREE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS STORY IS A PRIMITIVE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE AFTERLIFE.

DRAGON TOWER

ARIE - RESERVED FOR
DRAGONS, DRAGON PRIESTS
AND DRAGON RIDERS. THE
EMPRESS NEVER LEAVES
THIS PART OF THE TOWER.

GREENSHAFT. VERTICLE
FOREST/GARDEN. OCCASIONAL
PROBLEMS WITH MONSTER
INFESTATION.

GRAUTUBE AT CENTER OF
GREENSHAFT UNRELIABLE;
MOST VERTICLE TRAVEL DONE
WITH LADDERS AND MAKESHIFT
LIFTS.

TOWER WALLS 20-25 METERS
THICK. DOMICLES HEWN INTO
THE INNER FACE.

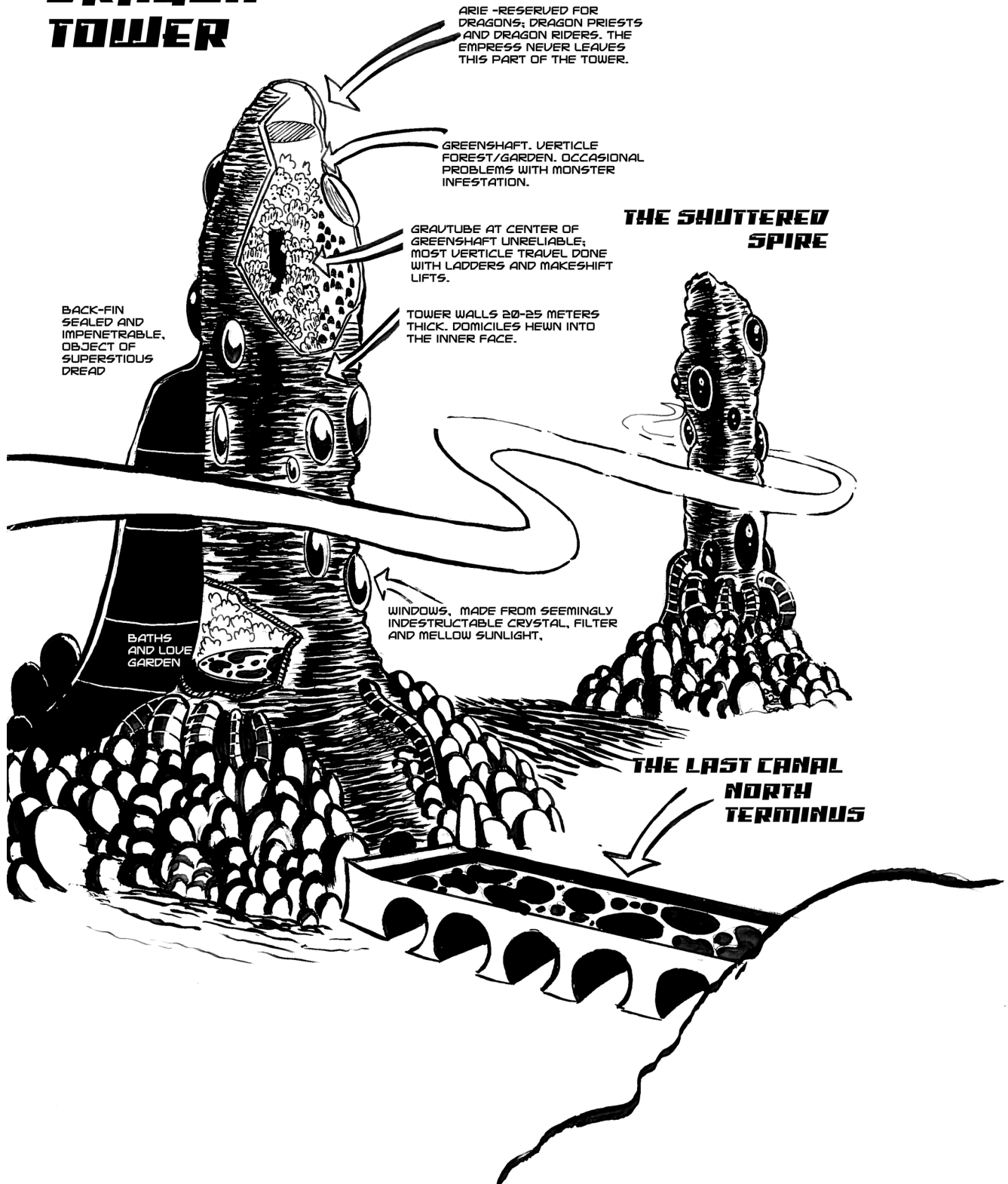
BACK-FIN
SEALED AND
IMPENETRABLE.
OBJECT OF
SUPERSTIOUS
DREAD

THE SHUTTERED SPIRE

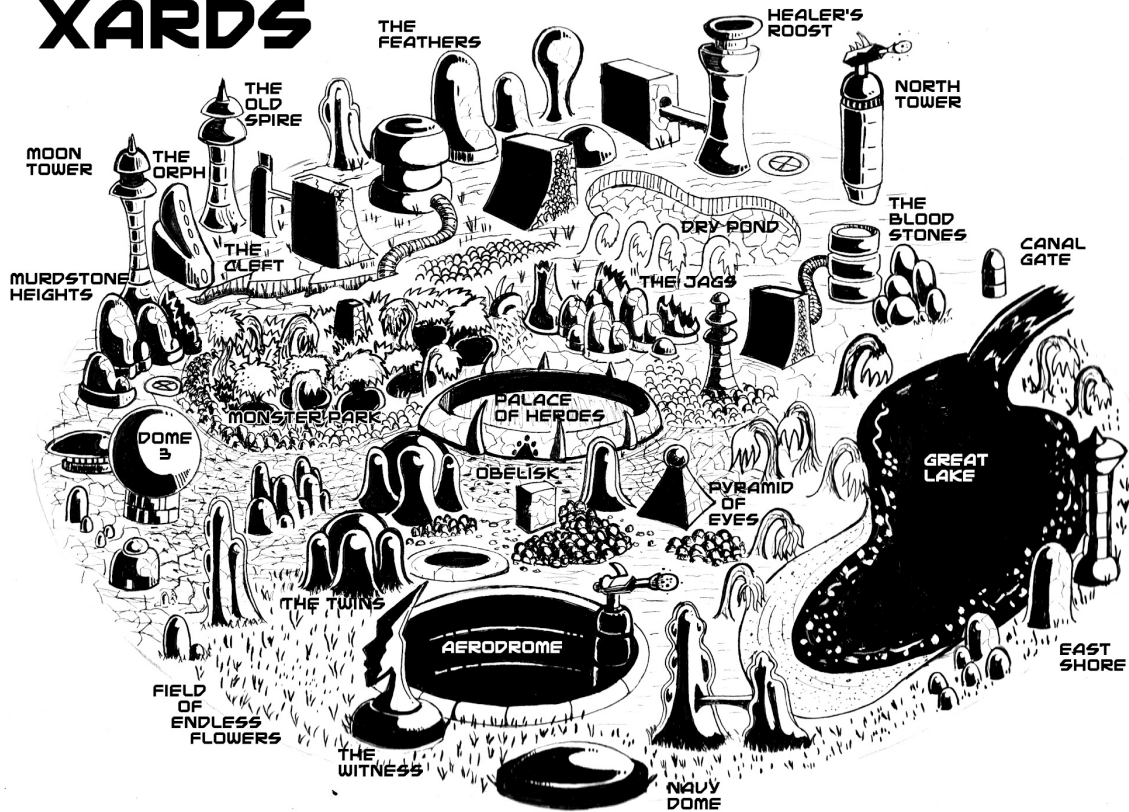
WINDOWS. MADE FROM SEEMINGLY
INDESTRUCTABLE CRYSTAL. FILTER
AND MELLOW SUNLIGHT.

BATHS
AND LOVE
GARDEN

THE LAST CANAL NORTH TERMINUS



XARDS



SITUATED ATOP A VAST
PILLAR, XARDS RESIDES
NEARLY A 100 YARDS
ABOVE THE SANDS

DOME SHARDS

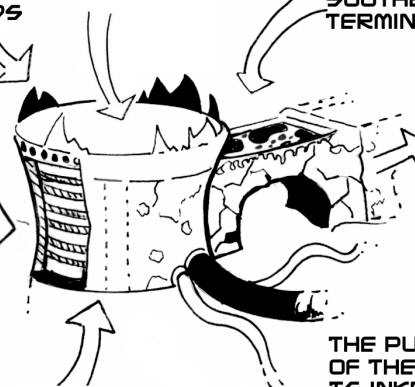
LAST CANAL
SOUTHERN
TERMINUS

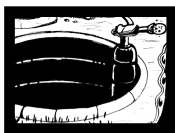
UNDER CITY
(CROSS SECTION)
MACHINE ROOMS,
BURIAL CHAMBERS
MONSTER HABITATS
AND WHO KNOWS
WHAT MORE?

TO CRATER ONE
AND BEYOND

THE PURPOSE
OF THE CONDUITS
IS UNKNOWN

A CENTRAL SHAFT
PROVIDES ACCESS
TO THE FORGOTTEN
MAGNORAIL STATION
FAR BELOW GROUND
LEVEL.





AERODROME

The Aerodrome consists of several levels of understructure adjacent to the shipway at the city's southern edge. Under constant guard and well maintained, it serves as a dry dock and headquarters for the Bleeding God's navy.



THE BLACK ROCK

A crumbled basalt ziggurat situated at the center of Monster Park, the Black Rock rises well above the surrounding foliage. Visible throughout the forest (from the treetops at least) the Black Rock serves as an ideal landmark for anyone foolish enough to venture abroad within the park's confines. A ring of gnawed and bleached bones encircles the Black Rock's base- a testament to the monument's ease of access.



THE BLOOD STONES

A great pile of time-rounded stone, the Blood Stones are the daily a gathering place for many wine clubs and other xardian societies. A loose guild of smiths, artisans and fabricators meets at the stones once a week or so, and sometimes offer items for sale. Outside of market day this is about the only time to purchase gear.



CANAL GATE

Everyone and everything enters and leaves Xards by the canal gate. Canal barges unload on the northwest shore of the great lake. A hot-air balloon ferries people and goods from the pedestal's base up to Xards; it unloads between North Tower and Canal Gate. Under the watchful eye of the mummy-priests, the Bleeding God's soldiers screen everyone entering the city.



THE CLEFT

A jagged, long fissure with crumbling edges, the cleft plummets deep into Xards' under-structure. At times, horrific noises echo up out of the darkness, or weird lights shine in the depths. The sheer sides of the rift serve as a mostly adequate barrier between the city and the things that hunt in the tangled under-spaces, but occasionally, something makes its way to the surface.



DOME 3

Contemplation of the mysterious Dome 3 is a favorite activity amongst the philosophers of Xards. Smooth and gleaming, the structure exhibits no doors or windows. Some believe the point of entry lies in the lost under-city, and that the dome contains an automat or some other lost wonder of ages past. In recent centuries, the more reckless of the city's wine clubs have taken up the custom of congregating at Dome 3's base during the day.



DRY POND

Overgrown with weeds and scrub, infested with saurn, cousin of the sandling, the floor of Dry Pond is hardly recognizable as a pond bed. Twice yearly, the citizens of Xards come together to hunt the saurn and consume their mildly hallucinogenic flesh. A festival of unspecified length and especial excess surrounds each hunt.

Secret Thousands of intact monxx eggs reside in the desiccated soil beneath the pond's bed.



EAST SHORE

The followers of the Restoration philosophy largely reside amongst the domes and towers of East Shore. A dour judgmental lot, Restorationists limit interaction with other Xardians. This self-imposed isolation has made the movement an ideal point of insertion for Toady infiltrators. Several cells of Tsgorath's followers lie hidden within the East Shore community.



THE FEATHERS

Elegant and in passably good repair, the cluster of structures known as the Feathers finds use as both the dwelling and gathering place of the prestigious unmarried and young adults of Xards. **Secret** The Slaves of the Mad Sun have a very well organized cell in the Feathers.



FIELD OF ENDLESS FLOWERS

An open meadow of breathtaking beauty, the Field of Endless Flowers sees fewer visitors than might be expected. The lack of cover over so wide a space creates an ideal hunting ground for krawx and other aerial predators. More than a few children and even the odd adult have gone missing this way. Many of the weeds, fungi and herbs necessary for the intoxicator's craft can only be found amongst the flowers and grasses of the great field.



GREAT LAKE

The Last Canal comes to its end at the Great Lake, the largest freely accessible body of standing water in the region and a wonder in its own right. A good deal of the city's seemingly endless debauchery is centered on the beach on the southwest shore.

Although wading is common, swimming is unknown, as there are things in the lake, some of which come ashore after dark.



HEALER'S ROOST

This mostly empty and not entirely stable structure contains the last functioning auto-physicians in Xards. Many of Xards eldest folk (500 years or older) live in the adjacent tenement, which is joined to the tower by a bridge of crumbling stone.



THE JAGS

Situated between Monster Park and the Blood Stones, this former residential area exist now as a collapsing, overgrown, monster-ridden maze of death. Common knowledge places a food machine somewhere within the tangle of structure and vegetation. Recently, several platoons of soldiers entered the neighborhood looking for the machine. None returned.

Secret The Bleeding God wants to verify the existence of the food machine, find out what killed his soldiers and neutralize it.



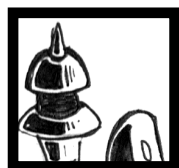
MONSTER PARK

Bounded by a makeshift wall to the southwest; the Cleft to the north; the Palace of Heroes and the Jags to the east, and existing entirely outside the control of the Bleeding God, his soldiers and his citizens, Monster Park adequately fits its name. The thick and fully grown forest includes examples of most of the planet's surviving vegetation and all manner of savage beasts.

The only fish trees in the city grow within the park, and occasionally foolhardy, or drunk, warriors will plunge into the brush, hopeful for a meal of treefood. A few make it out alive again, occasionally with fish.

Every few decades, the idea of clearing out the park and making it safe will become a popular topic amongst the warriors of Xards; less the occasional bloody tragedy, nothing ever comes of it.

Secret Three clans of albino apes occupy the top of the forest's food chain. The albino apes keep egg nurseries within in the Jags.



MOON TOWER

Moon Tower provides residence for the city's three oldest and most distinguished families: Zom, Hum and Ala, known collectively as the Triumvirate. Although these families have no actual political power, they have great prestige and the folk of Xards often look to the Triumvirate for guidance.

Secret House Zom spies for the Crimson queen.



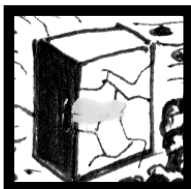
MURDSTONE HEIGHTS

Several lineages of respectable, but not unassailable prestige reside within the many structures of Murdstone Heights. Stewardship of the rubble wall bounding Monster Park falls to the folk of Murdstone.



NAVY DOME

HQ of the Bleeding God's war machine, the Navy Dome contains offices, war rooms and data stores of Xards' military apparatus.



OBELISK

Everyone in Xards hates the huge and crumbling, but otherwise unmarked, stone known as the obelisk. Many have seen the black stone, slick with blood, in their dreams. According to rumor others have gone missing in its proximity. What is its secret?



THE ORPH

Guildhall of the intoxicators, the Orph contains many laboratories and storage areas. During most of the year, only guild members may enter the Orph.

The guild throws a great and highly prestigious party on the eve of the New Year. Only one thousand invitations are extended. An unknown, but oft speculated upon, system of logic determines who receives an invitation and who does not.



PALACE OF HEROES

Most days the Palace of Heroes hosts games of skill, athletic competitions and duels. These give way to the occasional stage play or choral performance. Many Xardians spend nearly every day at the Palace, drinking wine and making bets on the competitions.

One day a month the market replaces the games. Any purchase involving goods other than food or intoxicants must be made on market day. Alternately, prospective customers must track down individual, potentially disinterested merchants to fulfill their wants.

Two further days of the month, the Bleeding God attends the games and gifts the people with great spectacle.



PYRAMID OF EYES

Also known as the Museum of Mars, the Pyramid of Eyes contains countless screens, sculptures paintings and displays. Mummy-priests and soldiers guard the entrances, however, restricting access to all but the Bleeding God's chosen inner circle.



THE TWINS

These two identical structures provide homes for military personnel and their families. The Twins exist in a far better state of repair than most of the city.



THE WITNESS

A large stone head, sculpted in the same style as the Dreamers in the Sand, the Witness also looks to the west. The base of the Witness is a popular site for poetry readings, duels and illicit love-play.

Secret The witness is a spacecraft

A SECTION OF RUINED XUMOS



A SECTION OF RUINED XUMOS

3 TOWER FOREST

A thick tangle of beast infested, quicksand pocked with fungus and vegetation.

CRATER POND

Freshwater pool, sourced from below.

DOMES

Ancient tenement, currently in use as a Xardian spy outpost.

THE DRONE

Crumbling structure fronted by a giant screen projector. Weird music and mesmerizing animations capture the wits of the unwary. Saving Throw vs. Fear or immobile for 1d8 rounds. After four rounds, a robotoid will emerge from a previously hidden door and take anyone standing before the screen inside.

THE FARM

A food production facility. Occasionally robotoids emerge and dump huge piles of food stuffs outside the structure. Chaos ensues.

GOOM'S PALACE

Crumbling basalt arena. The palace hosts the games and Lord Goom's court. Look elsewhere for mercy.

HALLS OF DEATH

None return.

HOUSE OF APES

Albino ape egg bank.

LIGHTNING TOWER

Automatically shoots down any airship that comes within 20 miles.

LYSSTRA

Giant granite statue untouched by time, believed to be a tomb or an oracle.

THE MACHINE

Unknown.

THE OLD HULK

Wrecked astrospace. The ship almost certainly contains items of wonder and value. Bones litter the sand all around it.

OLD WALL

Made from the bones of gods and dragons long ago, just after the end of the world.

THE RIFT

Plunges into the sea at Mars' core, or maybe into an older ruin overrun by giant arthropods. Nobody knows for sure.

SAND TRAP

Small basin, inhabited by a very large and brazen lurking sslarg.

SQUAT

One of many grax communal residences scattered around the city's edge. Hatchlings and woman live here. Warriors sleep where they find themselves.

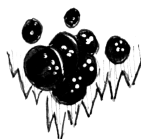
STAR STONE

Accurately displays the arrangement of the heavens at all times.

STATION 6

Underground magnorail and matter transport station.

PLANT GUIDE



UMBER FRUIT

EDIBLE, DELICIOUS. GROWS WILD ANYWHERE WITH WATER- EVEN UNDERGROUND. 1 IN 100 CONTAINS A POWERFUL HALLUCINOGEN



RUIN TREE

NUT TREE WITH HOLLOW LOWER TRUNK AND REMARKABLY WORKABLE WOOD. INTERIOR MAKES EXCELLENT SHELTER. GLOWS IN DARK. 1 IN 50 CARNIVOROUS LOOKALIKE



GLARCH

VAMPIRIC, GRASS-LIKE GROUND COVER. 1 PT DMG/RND OF DIRECT CONTACT WITH SKIN. ONE OF THE MANY REASONS EVERYONE WEARS BOOTS ALL THE TIME.



FISH TREE

TREE-LIKE PLANT WITH A STRANGE MARINE ECOSYSTEM WITHIN ITS TRUNK. GOOD FORAGE BUT PROTECTED BY HUGE CLUB LIKE BRANCHES.



PLINTH

LOVELY MULTICOLORED LAND CORAL. INFESTED WITH EDIBLE GRUBS. NEAR CATS OFTEN LAIR IN STANDS OF PLINTH.



MUNGG

ROUGH SURFACED FUNGUS GROWS UP TO 100' HIGH. THICK STANDS CAN BE DIFFICULT TO PASS THROUGH. EDIBLE, BUT MUST BE BOILED FOR 8 HOURS TO REMOVE TOXINS.

PART 6
INhabitants OF THE
DRY SEA





ALBINO APE

AC: 4 Hit Dice: 4 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d8 (smash) 1d4(grapple) No.
Appearing: 1-6 Save As: W1 Morale: 8 Alignment: D

The most ancient and hated enemy of the Thark! albino apes can stand up to 15' tall and stalk the shadows of Mars' innumerable ruined cities. Albino apes mate for life, forming tight knit family groups comprised of 2-5 individuals. Albino apes keep incubators in the deepest part of the city.

Albino apes attack three times every two rounds. Usually with a close fisted blow, but they can also grapple. A character hit by a grapple must save vs entanglement (factor in the character's STR modifier) to get free. The ape may only make one attack a round while holding an opponent. Additionally other attackers gain a +2 against any ape so engaged.

ARCHEOPTRON

AC: 4 Hit Dice: 2 Move: 60 (20)/ 300

(100) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d6 (spear) 1d12
(static gun)

No. Appearing: 2-12 Save As: W1 Morale: 8

Alignment: L

Extremely secretive, these mysterious, blue feathered, semi-humanoid bird folk make their hidden, multi-terraced cities in the mountains, high above the tree line. Capable of speaking the common tongue, archeoptrons, nevertheless, use a secret language to communicate amongst themselves.

Encountered only on the rarest of occasions, and alleged to be affiliated with the Great Atmosphere Engines in some fashion, archeoptrons figure prominently in many old myths and legends. Rumor places one of their cities high in the mountains above Shadow Canyon.

Archeoptrons avoid combat whenever possible. When compelled however, they prove fearless and savage.

SPECIAL Archeoptrons possesses perfect Warp invisibility and cannot be detected, damaged or otherwise influenced by direct Warp means.

Solar powered, the static gun can be fired three times daily; **unmodified** these weapons cannot be used by anyone but archeoptrons. Attempts will result in 1d4 damage and a mass of useless slag.

ADVENTURE Characters found within, or in proximity to, an Atmosphere Engine might be abducted by archeoptrons and imprisoned in one of their nearly inaccessible cities.

From time to time, archeoptrons might seek out the aid of adventurers in an effort to further their own mysterious goals.



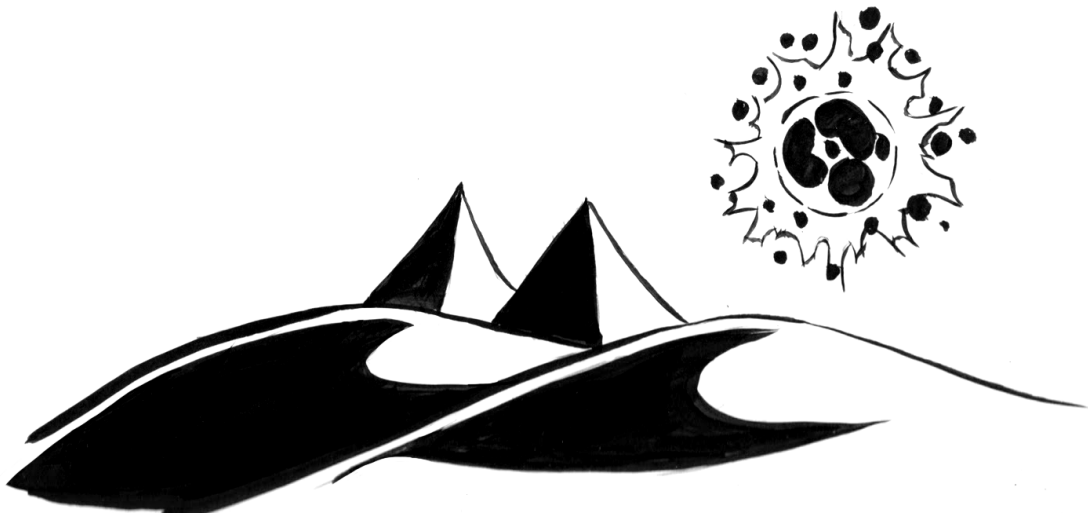
AZURE MARTIAN

AC: 0 Hit Dice: 6 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 2 Damage: 2d6 (mind blast) No. Appearing: 1-20
Save As: T10 Morale: 10 Alignment: L

Long extinct race of four-armed, reptilian blue giants credited with many of the wonders and cities that lie now in ruins. Great scientists and warriors in their time, Azure Martins remain now only as the works they left behind.

Some scholars dispute their existence and credit their accomplishments to a forgotten group of Red Martians.

ADVENTURE A small population of Azure Martians survives in the present, hiding away in a secret city in the verdant regions near the south pole. Working through a web of secret agents, they monitor the landscape and folk of Zerzura. Eventually, the Azure Martians plan to enact a catastrophic reconfiguration of the entire region.





BANTH

AC: 3 Hit Dice: 6 Move: 240 (80) Attacks: 3 Damage: 1d6/1d6/1d12 (claw/claw/ bite) No. Appearing: 1-2 Save As: W1 Morale: 8 Alignment: N/A

The apex predator almost wherever it roams; the banth combines the threats of stealth, speed, bulk, fang and ferocity. The banth stands 12-15' tall at the shoulder and 30' from nose to tail. Banths tend to hunt and live alone; although sibling pairs are not unknown. The banth prefers ambush, but will attack prey head on without hesitation.

The banth receives a +1 surprise modifier.

Hoping to make a quick kill, the banth usually focuses its attacks on one opponent.

ADVENTURE Banth hunting is dangerous, but tusks bring status and mating opportunities amongst the Red Martians and Thark! alike.



BONE ANGEL

AC: 1 Hit Dice: 3 Move: 300 (100) Attacks: 1
Damage: 1d6 (ghost claw) No. Appearing: 1-8
Save As: W10 Morale: N/A Alignment: D

Flying undead, bone angels haunt ruins and tombs. Legends often portray bone angels as the malevolent spirits of evil folk escaped from the world of the dead.

The touch of the bone angel freezes the victim's spirit. Upon first contact, save vs Fear- or remain insensate, immobile, muttering and trembling, for 1d3 rounds. No matter how many bone angels attack, the fear-touch can only be attempted once per opponent per encounter. Bone angels take no damage from energy weapons, ½ half damage from edged weapons and full damage from blunt weapons.

ADVENTURE Newly arrived in the region, an evil menton has moved into the hulk of an ancient starship in the deep desert. He is an avid vivisectionist. Three bone angels, called the Sisters, serve the Menton. The isters range far and wide and set upon the unwary at every opportunity. Bundled away into the sky, these unfortunates then become raw material for their master's hobby.

CRIMSON APE

AC: 5 Hit Dice: 6 Move: 180 (60)

Attacks: 2 Damage: 1d8/1d8 (smash/
smash) No. Appearing: 1 Save As: M4

Morale: N/A Alignment: D

12' at The shoulder, these nightmare creatures hunt by telepathy. Within an effective range of roughly one mile, the crimson ape, which takes its name from the unsettling hue of its face and hands, can detect the presence of human level intelligence- the best indication regarding the proximity of its favorite food: People. The ape uses its third eye to follow thoughts like other animals follow a scent. The crimson ape generally targets isolated groups out upon the open desert. But these horrific creatures have been known to gather into bands and attack smaller settlements as well.

The ape terrorizes its prey by allowing itself to be seen from a distance and projecting its hideous hyena-like laugh into their dreams. After an initial burst of violence, the ape withdraws, only to attack again and again- often just seizing hold of someone and running off into the night.



DEATHSPORE

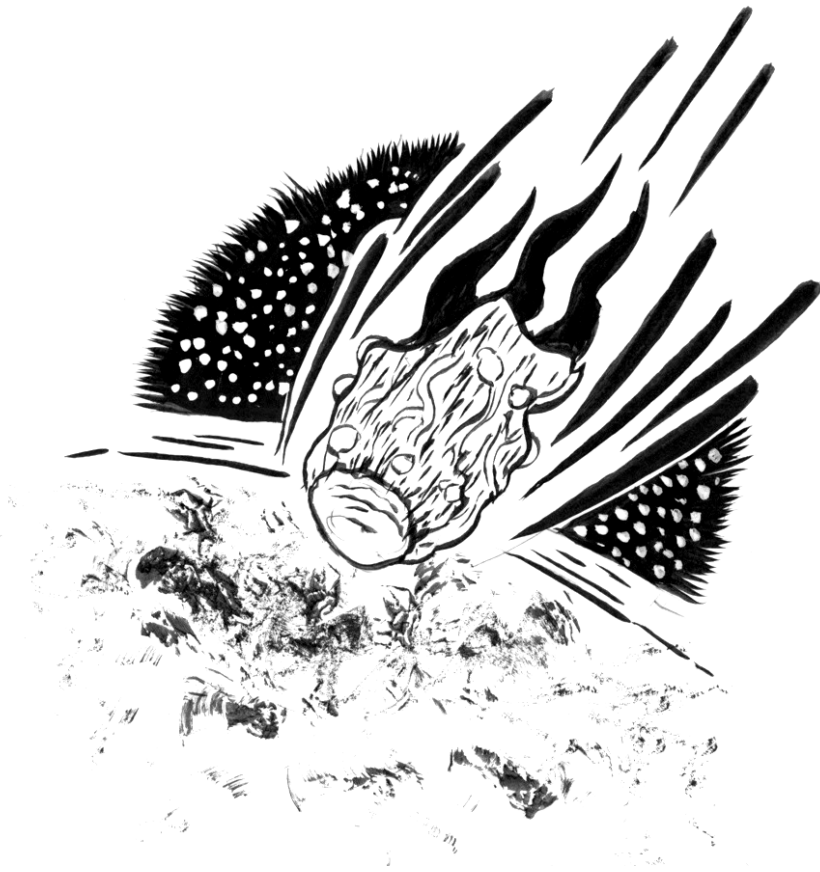
AC: 0 Hit Dice: 12 Move: 0

Attacks: 1 Damage: Death (death ray. Save vs. Death for 3d6 damage)

No. Appearing: 1 Save As: M 10

Morale: N/A Alignment: D

Bio-weapons left over from the war that drove the Azure Martins to extinction, the remaining death spores circle Mars, borne on solar powered wings, riding high in the atmosphere. It is unknown how many are left; but sometimes, one comes down. After impact, the spore appears as a smooth orb movement is reduced to zero, but it can fire its death ray at any target within 240'.



SPORE ZOMBIE

AC: 7 Hit Dice: 1 Move: 90 (30) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d4 (Claw) No. Appearing: 10-1000 or more Save As: F1 Morale: N/A Alignment: D

Regardless of distance, all those who bear witness to the death spores decent; vomit uncontrollably for 1d3 rounds. Everyone within a mile of a deathspore's impact must Save vs. Death. Those who succeed suffer no damage, but fall into a dark, nightmarish slumber for the next 1d4 hours. Failure results in instant death. These dead will rise as zombies, and make their way to the impact site. Once all the dead have gathered (2d6+2 hours) they will turn away from the crater, join ranks and march towards the nearest population center, bearing the green glowing sphere of the deathspore in their midst and killing everything in their path. When the next settlement is reached the spore activates once more, and so on. The only way to stop the advance of these creatures is to destroy the spore.



DRAGON (MARTIAN)

AC:2 Hit Dice: 10 Move: 240 (80) Attacks: 3 or 1 Damage: 1d8/1d8/ 1d12 (Claw/Claw/ Bite)
3d6 (Breath) No. Appearing: 1-12 Save As: W5 Morale: 10 Alignment: L

Immensely powerful flying reptiles. Dragons have two pairs of wings; an armor of heavy, natural scales and breathe either fire or ice twice daily. Some few, near legendary beasts, can do both.

Only twelve adult dragons are known to exist. As it has been for time out of mind, each dragon is paired with one specific rider, or Dragonaut.

ADVENTURE A disaster has left a number of the Dragonauts dead but their beasts still alive. Six days of arena games, open to all, will determine who next rides the dragons. The referee might also consider starting a campaign with the PCs as Dragonauts.

DRAGONOID

AC: 3 Hit Dice: 4 Move:

180 (60) Attacks: 1

Damage: 1d12x; No. Ap:

2-20 Save As: M4

Morale: 8; Alignment: D

An ancient, cruel and despised bio-mechanical species of extra-solar origin, dragonoids or space dragons, as they are sometimes called, rarely alight upon lesser worlds such as Mars unburdened with ill intent.

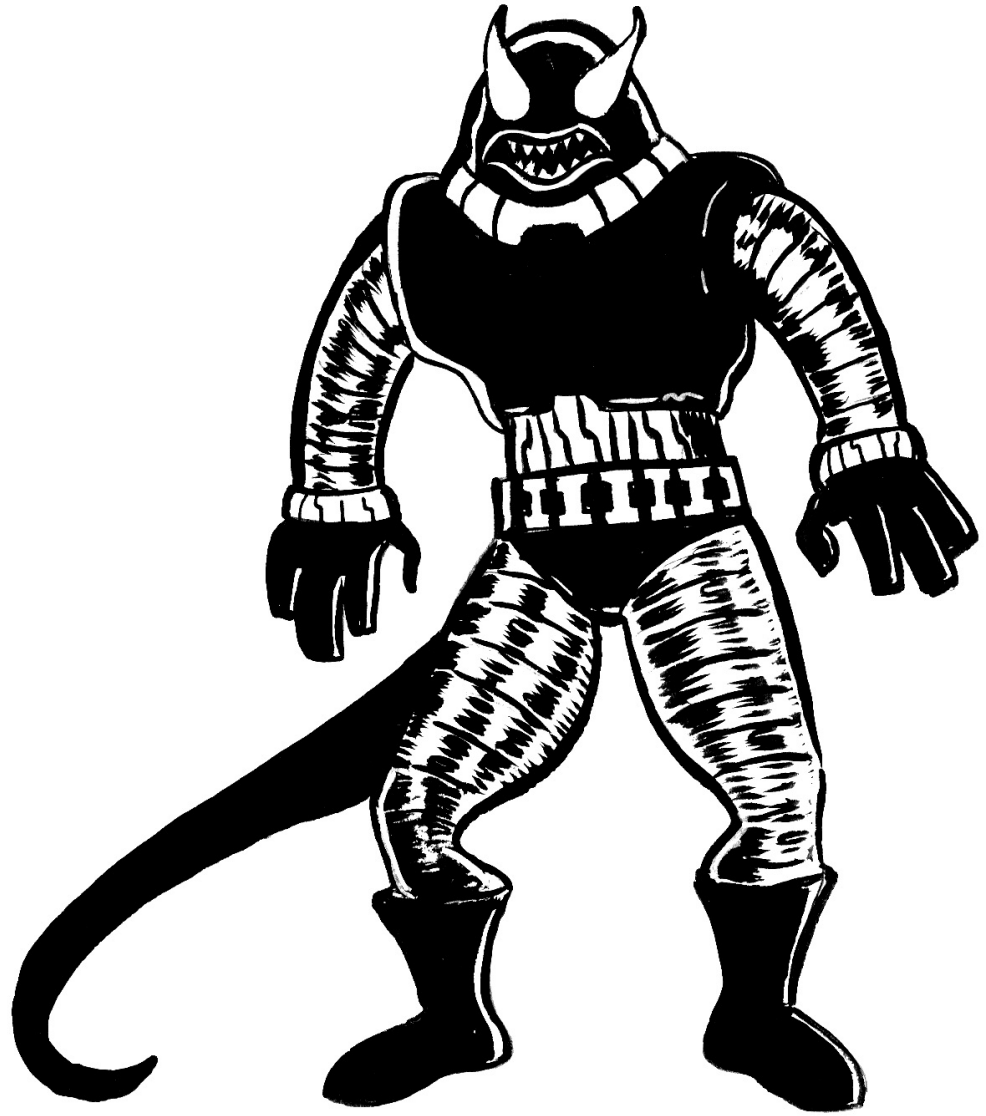
Bipedal and 12' at the shoulder, dragonoids travel the void in vast, incomprehensibly complex starcraft.

Dragonoids perceive other sentient life as either resources or vermin.

Dragonoids possess extremely advanced technology. Every few generations a large dragonoid expedition will land upon an area of Mars and conduct a series of seemingly insane and grisly experiments, allegedly designed to determine the exact threat level represented by the planet's indigenous inhabitants.

Dragonoids also collect sentient and non-sentient creatures alike for use as rations.

ADVENTURE A small settlement, located near a deep desert well, stands quiet. A huge and unidentifiably complex saucer-like starship hovers above it. Neither ship, nor settlement exhibits any signs of life.





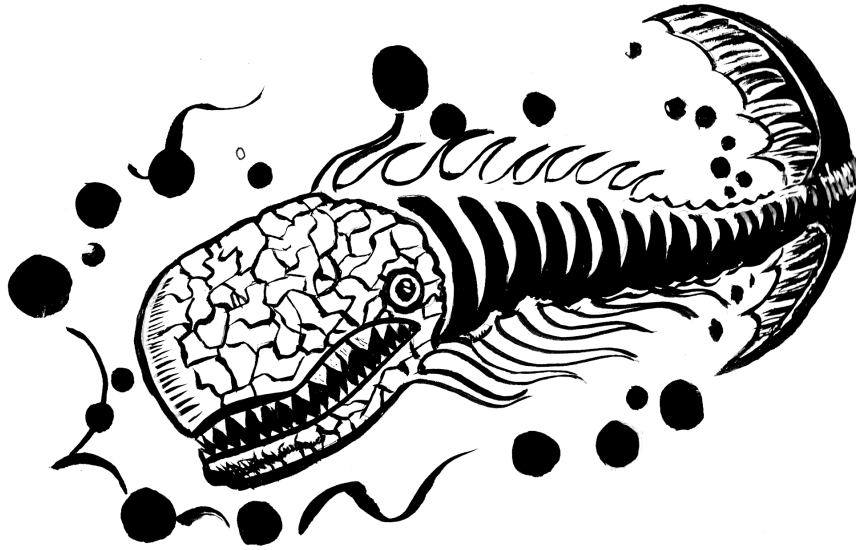
DUST DEVIL

AC: 3 Hit Dice: 2 Move:180 (60) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d6 No. Appearing: 1-4 Save As: W1
Morale: 10 Alignment: D

Synthetic electro-magnetic creatures left over from the unimaginably distant past, dust devils are sentient cyclones of varying size. Created for war and hungry for destruction, dust devil's remain dormant by default. A control unit is necessary to activate such a creature.

SPECIAL Standard melee weapons do only 1 hp of damage upon a successful hit.
Energy weapons do ½ damage.

ADVENTURE During a revel in Xards, a seemingly intoxicated man staggers around a corner and into the midst of the adventurers. He thrusts a featureless, faintly luminous sphere into a pair of random hands. Once relived of the sphere, he falls to the ground dead, of unknown and unknowable cause. Fooling with the sphere causes it to open like a flower into a sheet of flat, glowing plasteel, displaying a cryptic map detailing a section the Great Erg. A cyclone glyph marks the map's center. What can it mean? Who was the man? How did he die?



GHOST FISH

AC: 0 Hit Dice: 6 Move: 180 (50) Attacks: 1 Damage: 2d6 (bite) No. Appearing: 1-10 Save As: M4 Morale: 11 Alignment: D

The final remnant of Mars' long dead oceans, semi-corporeal, ghost fish patrol the moonless nights of the deep desert, hungry for vengeance.

SPECIAL Encountered during the night, Ghost fish suffer no damage from energy or mental attacks, and take 1/2 damage from melee.

Upon suffering a bite, victims of the ghost fish must save vs. spells, or temporarily lose one experience level. If the character reaches 0 level, they fall into a coma for 1d4 days, less than 0 level results in death. Lost levels are recovered at 1/day.

ADVENTURE Abandoned near the trading post, tools and fragments of stone scattered around its edges, a shaft drilled weeks past, in an unsuccessful attempt to find a new well, opened a huge cavern, empty of water. Unknown to anyone, the cavern is full of ghost fish.

This afternoon, the sun is high and sprits too. A caravan is in; wine flows and the guest halls overflow with tradesfolk and travelers. Later, in the deep dark- when the revelry is done, space to sleep within the walls will be hard to find.

"The air stinks of salt and no moons tonight, lads. A bad omen," says Kaln, Nuphal caravan master, "There's little sleep to be got here tonight, I'd wager."

DENIZENS OF THE DRY SEA

GIANT MUMMY

AC: 2 Hit Dice 4 Move: 140 (40) Attacks: Eye-blast/ Smash Damage: 3d6/1d12 No. Appearing: 1 Save As: W4 Morale: N/A Alignment: D

Roving one-eyed undead of unknown origin, giant mummies infest the labyrinthine world of tunnels, machines and forgotten cities hidden beneath the surface of Mars. The giant mummy can lie dormant for centuries at a time, but the flesh of the living is its sustenance. The presence of which, will, without fail, rouse the moldering, unnatural heap of flesh, bone and bandage.

SPECIAL Twice a day a giant mummy may fire a bolt of unholy energy from its great jaundiced eye for 3d6 damage. Saving Throw vs. Death Ray for 1/2 damage.

GRAKKON

AC: 4 Hit Dice: 2 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d6 No. Appearing: 2-20 Save As: W4 Morale: 6 Alignment: D

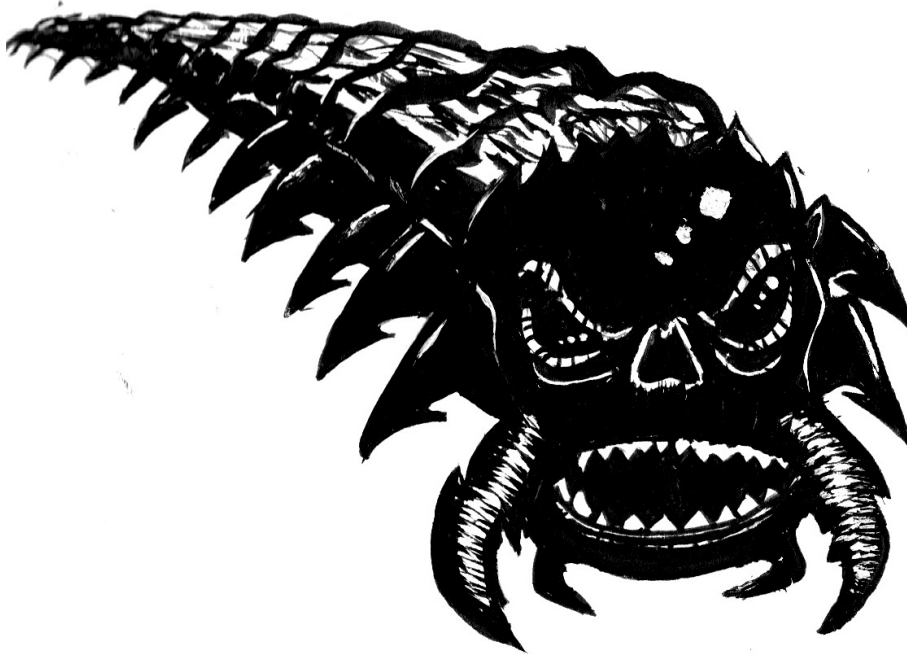
12' long intelligent centipedes, Grakkon build huge bubble-form cities in the deep desert. These immense structures are made entirely from the cured and dried mucus of insects bred just for that purpose.

Grakkon subsist on fungus and meat from ape farms. Apes are also used slave labor and a variety of other purposes.

The grakkon believe they are a new people and the future of Mars. As such, they view it as their duty to cleanse the world of other intelligent life. Grakkon breed and maintain many specialized animals, but their mechanical/industrial technology is currently in a primitive and shoddy state.

ADVENTURE A band of ape-mounted grakkon is in the area on a murder quest. In order to make the passage into adulthood the young grakkon must slay a Red Martian or Thark! Once each member of the band has done this, they will return to their settlement in the desert. How many more must die before something is done?





GRUNE

AC: 2 Hit Dice: 8 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d12 No. Appearing: 2 Save As: W4
Morale: 8 Alignment: D

Voracious carnivores, five or more meters in length, grune, largely inhabit the overgrown towers and plazas of the rarely seen deep-city ruins. The favored prey of the grune is young albino ape, but it will consume any meat whatsoever without hesitation.

Grune live and hunt in pairs.

After eating their fill, grune males lay eggs in the leftovers. Scavengers eat the remaining flesh. The eggs hatch and grune larva emerge while still in the scavenger's belly. The grizzly gestation comes to its gory conclusions as the larva eat their way out of the host's gut then consume each other until only two remain.

SPECIAL Despite their size, adult grune excel at stealth and gain a +1 on surprise. Upon winning surprise the grune gains an opportunity to mesmerize its opponents with its great, black hypno-eyes. Save vs. Warp, failure results in 1d3 rounds catatonic immobility.



JADE WASP

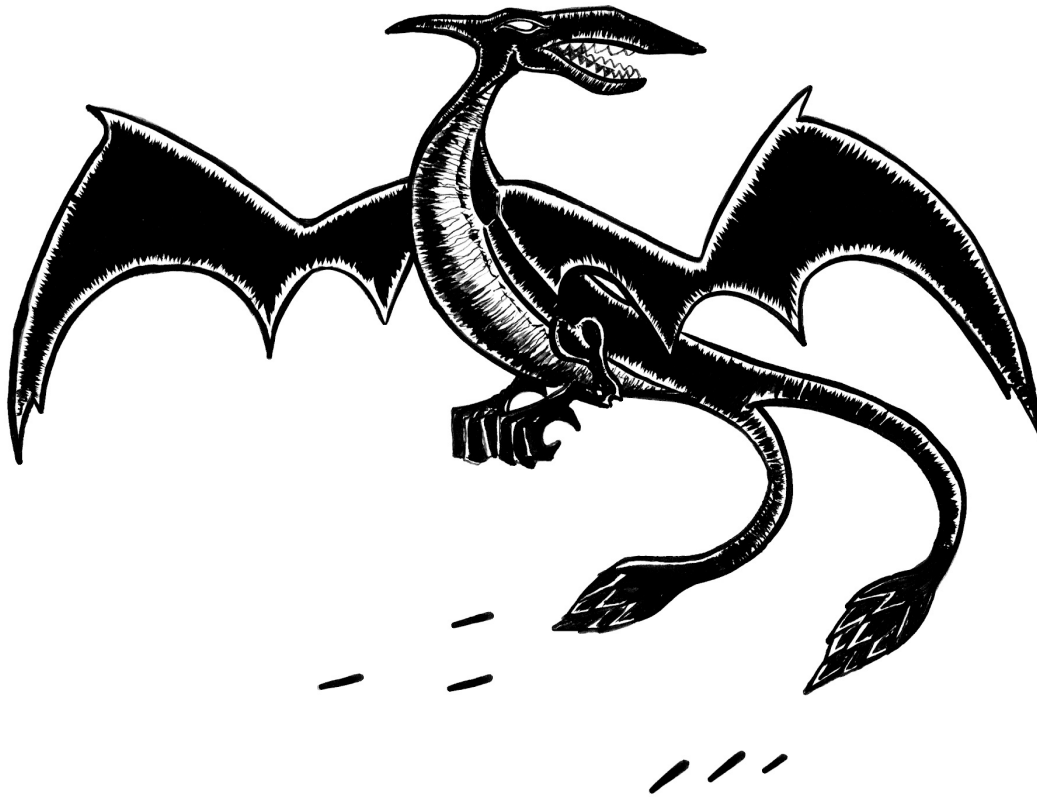
AC: 10 Hit Dice: N/A, 100 HP (swarm) Move: 150 (50) Attacks: 1 (see below) Damage: 1d3 (stings) No. Appearing: 1 Save As: W1 Morale: 6 Alignment: D

Large carnivorous insects, jade wasps stand out due to their remarkable color, disturbing size (20") and large and extremely leaf-like wings. Great swarms of jade wasps infest the forested areas of Mars. At rest, jade wasps cling to dead trees in large groups, simulating the missing foliage with near perfection. Experienced travelers, however, may notice the many bones strewn about the local forest, or the odd, sweet smell exuded by the creatures. Anyone actively observing the tree will notice the leaves occasionally take flight, flit around and settle back on a different part of the crown.

Jade Wasps attack as a swarm they dislike smoke, fire, and the discharge of energy weapons. The swarm must make a morale check every round such elements exist as active concerns. The swarm will instantly flee from any large fire.

SPECIAL: Swarms are more or less impervious to melee weapons and take ½ damage from energy weapons. Everyone within the swarm takes 1d3 HP damage a round. Flight is the customary defenses against a jade wasp attack.

ADVENTURE Abandoned, the small airship sits at the center of a clearing. Foliage shimmers in the sun. The ship appears undamaged; a litter of bones covers the grass.



KRAWX

AC: 3 Hit Dice: 6 Move: 80 (240) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d12 (Bite) 3d6 (Spines)

No. Appearing: 1d3 Save As: W1 Morale: 7 Alignment: D

Large flying reptiles, distinguished by their tough, black-scaled hides and twin tails, each tipped with a cluster of projectile spines, krawx nest in high places, but range wide in their hunting activity. Large enough to bear off a Red Martian, krawx prefer to snatch prey from the ground and carry it back to their far away nests.

SPECIAL Up to two times a day, krawx can launch a flight of spines in a 15 foot cone, 3d6 damage, Save vs Death Ray for ½ damage.

ADVENTURE Three days running, the krawx have attacked the caravan. This morning they bore off the Princess Xum. They landed atop a distant spire of rock. Even now, the mother of the Princess chants her lament. Are there no warriors among you? Will her grief go unanswered?

KRYSS

AC: 3 Hit Dice: 4 Move: 120 (40)

Attacks: 2/3 rounds Damage: 1d8
(sword) 2d6 (ice blast) No.

Appearing: 1-12; Save As: T4

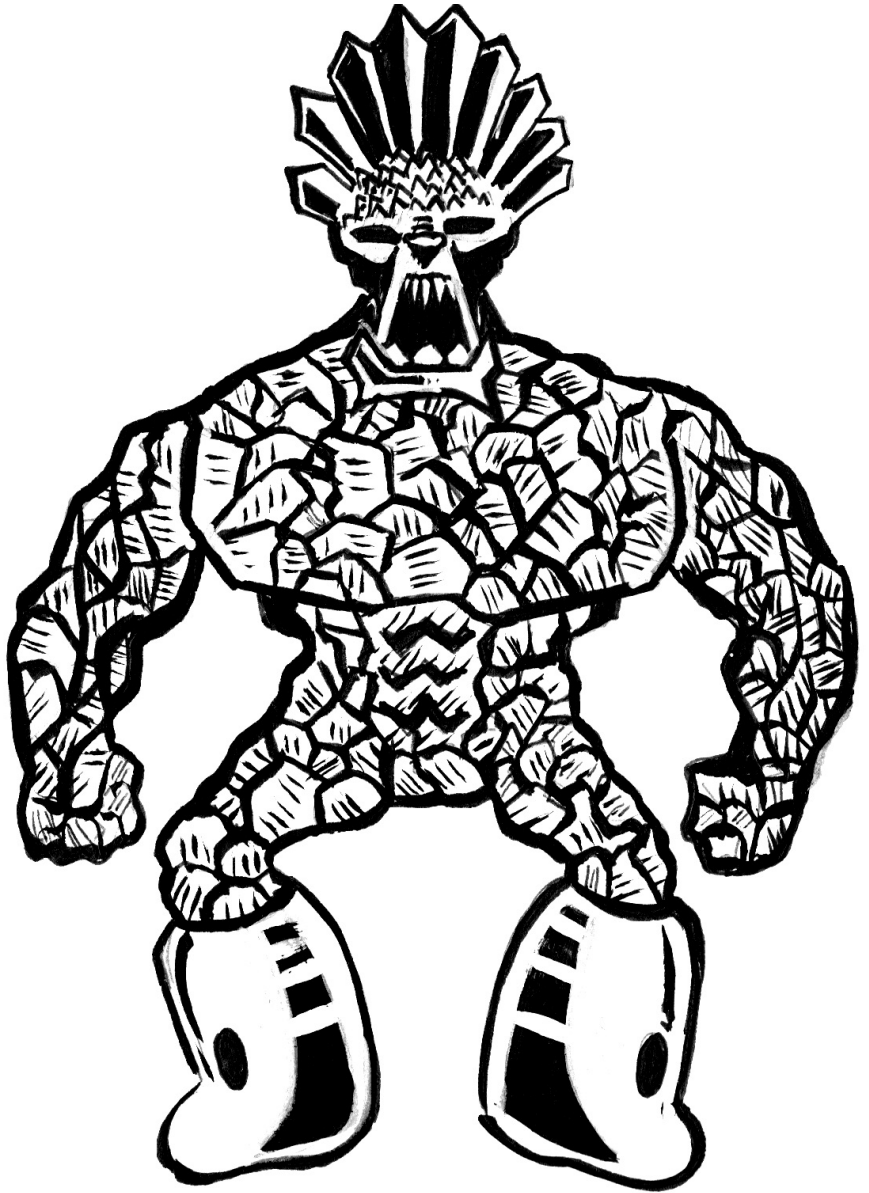
Morale: 10 Alignment: D

Crystalline, quasi- humanoid and twelve feet at the shoulder, kryss warriors desire only to murder and subjugate.

Fortunately, kryss have not walked the surface of Mars in force for lost aeons, but once, when Mars was much colder, these monstrous and tyrannical litho-forms lorded over the red planet.

Since that time, every few centuries, a lone warrior or a small troop will be found hibernating in a remote place and somehow, by chance or misguided design, reactivated.

Scheming things, kryss possess enough wisdom to temper their xenophobic bloodlust until they gain an advantage over potential adversaries. Generally, however, when operating from a position of strength, kryss prefer to solve most problems with murder. According to legend, a great army of kryss warriors slumbers, hidden away somewhere beneath the polar forest, waiting out the centuries, until the time is right for reawakening and conquest.



SPECIAL

Kryss move slowly and only attack twice every three rounds. Once a day a Kryss can ice blast for 2d6 (Saving Throw vs. Entanglement for ½ damage).

Extremely vulnerable to heat, kryss warriors caught in the full daytime heat of Mars will perish after 1d10 turns.

KRYSS DRONE

AC: 6 Hit Dice: 1-1 Move: 60 (20) Attacks: 1/2 rounds Damage: 1d4 (talons) No. Appearing: 2-20 Save As: W1 Morale: N/A Alignment: D

Kryss reproduce by injecting the crystal spores of two or more of their number into the host-corpse. The corpse reanimates- and slowly crystallizes; during the transitional period, the corpse exists as a mindless drone-thing, easily controlled by full kryss.

This process is usually reserved for the corpses of Thark! and Red Martians, but although it is more difficult, drones can be fashioned from virtually any animal species. The statistics given above represent the more common sort of drone, other larger creatures will prove more durable and do more damage in combat.

SPECIAL Kryss drones move very slowly and can only attack once every two rounds. Drones strike with their hands, which have been hardened into talons of crystal. As with kryss, drones are sensitive to heat. A drone caught in the full outside heat of daytime Mars will perish in 1d6 turns.

ADVENTURE After finding their way out of the sandstorm, the travelers are pleased to find the near-mythical lost city of Ziturr; unaware, of course, that 5000 kryss warriors hibernate in an ice cave a mile below their feet.

The Z-bomb, a horrific device, capable of returning Mars to its long ago, near frozen state, lies, armed, alongside the kryss. A century ago, one Kryss warrior awoke. Now, in a cave much closer to the surface, a cult of renegade Shoum worship this warrior as a god and prepare to return Mars to the ice.

Cultist patrols scour the area, intent on putting an end to any outside interference before it can begin. A second warband, intent on “cleansing” the cultists, is soon to arrive, as well. The travelers stand, unknowing, in the center of it all.

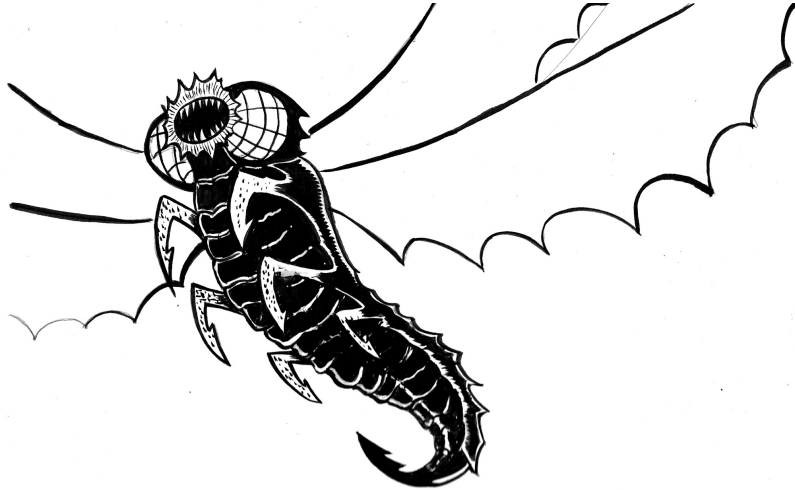


LEVIATHAN

AC: 0 Hit Dice: 20 Move: 240 (80) Attacks: 1 Damage: 3d6 (Lightning Strike) No. Appearing: 2-20 Save As: W4 Morale: 10 Alignment: L

Bio-mechanical dirigibles, leviathans travel the length and breadth of Mars. The planet's largest extant life form, leviathans take nourishment from solar radiation, and the consumption plankton-like organisms found in the upper atmosphere. Leviathans have no predators. Intelligent and long-lived creatures, leviathans possess immense stores of knowledge. Different individuals have different interests, but rarely in want, leviathans seem to enjoy sharing what they know without any need for recompense. The main difficulty in talking to these immense and magnificent creatures is achieving altitude sufficient to make contact.

ADVENTURE A week ago the well dried up; a new water source must be found. Who will ride the makeshift balloon into the upper air and ask the leviathan where best to look? What will they encounter along the way?



MONNX

Move 240 (80)

Emerging once every five hundred years, monxx swarm the landscape, stripping it of all resources. Roughly as long as a human forearm, these chitin armored, six legged arthropods hibernate beneath the surface for centuries at a time. From a distance a swarm of monxx resembles nothing so much as a roiling black cloud.

A monxx swarm can not be fought or subdued by any conventional means.

Glyphs engraved into the walls of Xumos and Xards tell the tale of a monxx swarm, but their significance is lost on the folk of the present day. Even so, these inscriptions may contain the secret to turning the swarm.

ADVENTURE Evening has settled; the wine is flowing. Music filters through layers of intoxicating smoke. A princess takes the initial seven steps of the Dance of Allurement. As her bell-clad ankle rings upon the smooth stone of the piazza, an airship careens out of the night, burning. Smashing into and through a nearby building. Screams overcome the music. A fiery explosion consumes the ship, leaving naught but crackling, snapping silence in its wake. When the flames die out, the charred bodies of the crew and more than a few unlucky revelers lay scattered everywhere. Small and unseemly insect shapes lie twitching and dying amongst the smoldering dead. One fellow, his eyes and face burned away, sits up and screams, “The swarm comes! The swarm!” Then, with a horrific mewling rattle, he collapses, dead.

MOON APE

AC: 3 Hit Dice: 3

Move: 180 (60)

Attacks: Strike/Blaster

Damage: 1d8X or 1d6X

No. Appearing: 2-12

Save As: W1; Morale:

7; Alignment: D

Piratical primates, striking from space, moon apes terrorize Mars and the rest of the solar system without mercy. Their world of origin, Ullg, lies beyond the system's Oort Cloud, in the dark between the stars, and is ruled by the mad space god, Gorgo.

Dropping out of the sky without warning, in their gleaming rocket ships, moon apes often raid isolated settlements for slaves and sacrificial victims. Cruel to the last, moon apes live in a society of constant violence and easy betrayal.

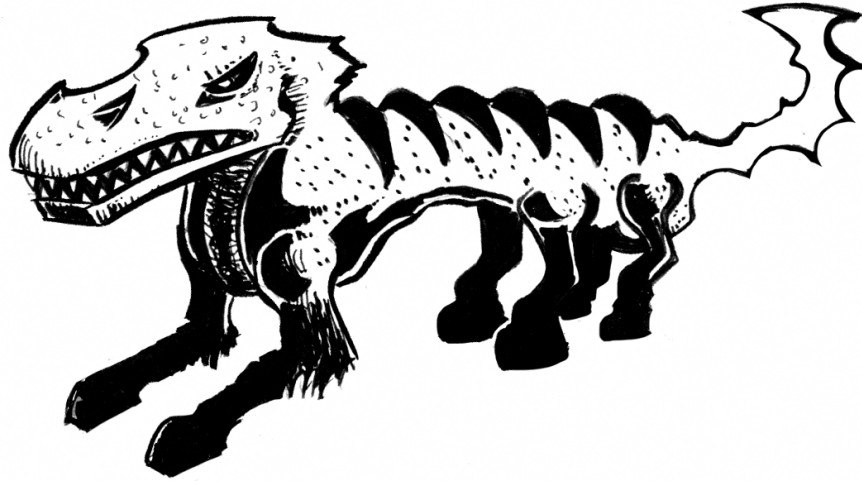


NEAR CAT

AC: 2 Hit Dice: 6 Move: 150 (50) Attacks: 2 Damage: 2d4/2d4 (tentacles) No. Appearing: 1-4
Save As: W6 Morale: 8 Alignment: D

Predator from the outer dark the near cat always appears to be three to four feet away from where it is. Players must roll 2d20 when they attack near cat. Whichever die result is lower is the 'to hit' roll.





NUEROWOLF

AC: 4 Hit Dice: 3 Move:150 (50) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d8 (tusks) 1d6 (mind blast)- automatic hit, but can use only once per engagement. No. Appearing: 2-12 Save As: W1 Morale: 7 Alignment: D

Telepathically linked canines, pack mind nuerowolves prowl the deep deserts and badlands in small close-knit family groups. Packs range from 2-12 individuals. Lone nuerowolves die in short order unless they encounter another pack. The more individual nuerowolves it contains, the more intelligent the pack.

Clever hunters, nuerowolves use a variety of evolved hunting tactics, including the use of mind blasts to herd of prey into ambush or over a cliff's edge.

ADVENTURE Somehow, a large pack of nuerowolves has made its way onto the streets of Xards. During the day the pack hides in Monster Park, but at night they hunt the city streets, clever and bold enough for any prey. The den must be found, and the nuerowolves destroyed, of course, but how did they enter the city in the first place? Could worse things be on the way?



REPTOID

AC: 4 Hit Dice: 2 Move:120 (40) Attacks: 2 Damage:1D8x (energy blade) 1D8x (energy blade)
No. Appearing: 10-100 Save As: W1 Morale: 7 Alignment: D

The exact nature of the world under the surface is unknown. What is known is that living in cities built in strangely modified caverns and tunnels, the reptoids control the spaces closest to the surface. Reptoid culture is industrial, centered around machines and strange scientific endeavors.

Interaction between reptoids and surface dwellers is rare and almost always ends in violence.



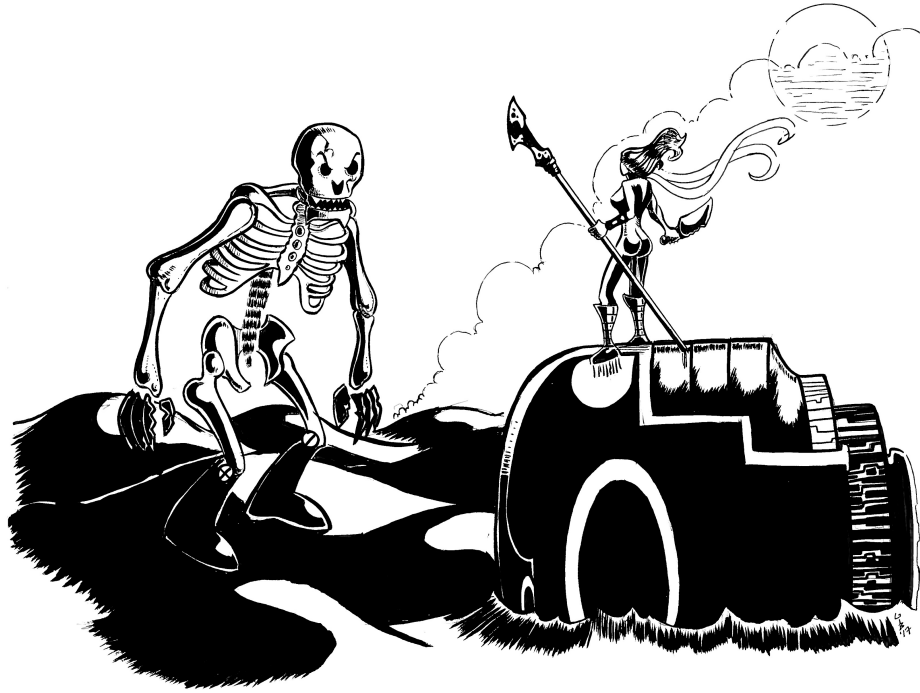
SAND CREEP

AC: 5 Hit Dice: 2 Move: 120 (40) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d6 No. Appearing: 1-10 Save As: T4
Morale: N/A Alignment: D

Four meters tall, skeletally thin, six-limbed humanoids, sand-creeps haunt the tombs, pyramids and dead sea bottoms of the deep desert. The origin of these creatures is unknown, although a few scholars contend that the sand creep is a devolved form of the long extinct Azure Martians. Sand Creeps, creatures of infinite malice and mischief, revel in killing. They prefer a period of escalating harassment, culminating in mass murder.

SPECIAL Characters encountering these creatures for the first time are required to Save vs. Fear. Failure results in flight or immobility for 1d3 rounds.

ADVENTURE While making their way through the wastes a band of Warriors has attracted the attention of a sand-creep. The creep has decided to make certain the band never arrives at its destination. The creep will slay their mounts, or cause an avalanche or some other natural seeming mishap. From there it may expose itself by running into camp and bearing off one of the adventures to a grisly fate, alone, amongst the dunes. The creep will then attempt to pick the group off one by one. “Don’t you see it will never stop until we’re all dead?!?”



SHOUM

RED

AC: 3 Hit Dice: 2 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d8 (sword) 1d4(needle gun)

No. Appearing: 2-20 Save As: T4 Morale: 11 Alignment: L

GREEN:

AC: 3 Hit Dice: 3 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 2 Damage: 1d8/1d8 (Swords) No. Appearing: 1-100

Save As: TH4 Morale: 11 Alignment: L

A mixed red and green culture of deep desert nomads, the Shoum live and travel in the least hospitable tracts of the great desert. Asides from raids of notorious savagery, Shoum warriors rarely interact with outsiders. Shoum claim descent from the First Kings, a race of mythical warlords. Further, the nomads believe all of Mars is their proper dominion and the other lesser inhabitants merely their subjects and slaves.

SPECIAL Green Shoum wield twin swords of black steel. Red Shoum bear one sword of black steel and a needle pistol. The pistol's ammunition is coated with a sleep agent, save vs entanglement or lose consciousness for 1d6 hours.

ADVENTURE Lost in the desert, the adventurers become prisoners of the Shoum. Three options exist: escape, death, or join the Shoum.

SIREN SPIDER

AC: 5 Hit Dice: 2 Move:

180 (60) Attacks:1

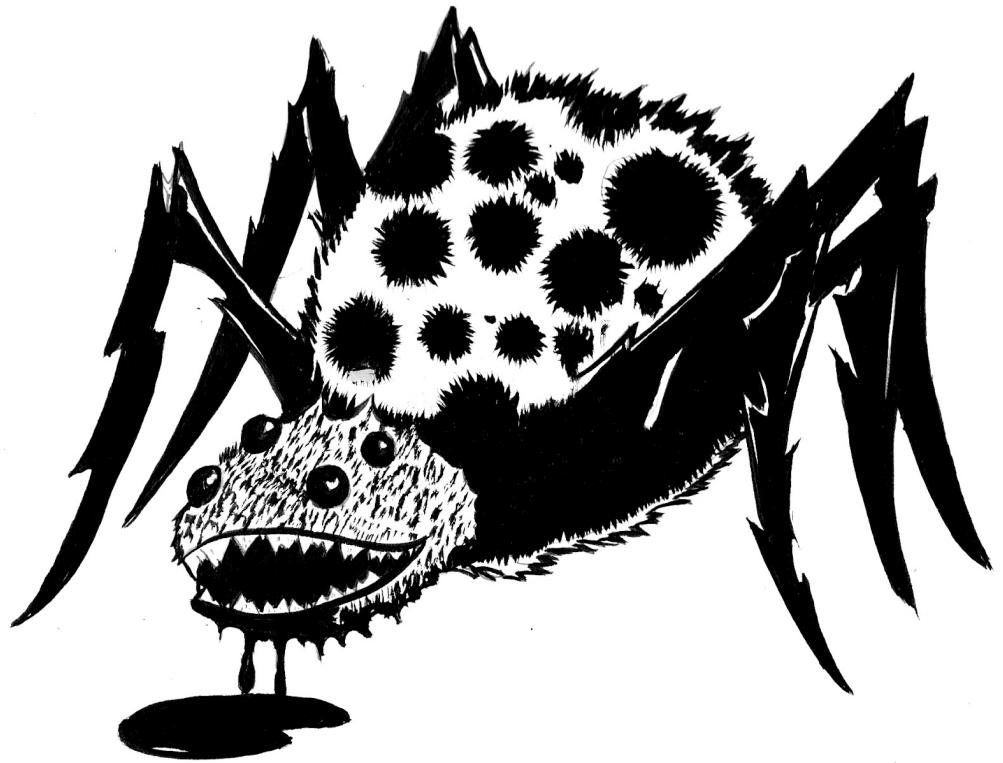
Damage: 1d8 No.

Appearing: 2-4 Save As:

T1; Morale: 6 Alignment:

D

Characterized by their immense boil ridden, slimy, bag-like bulk, sickeningly sweet smell, and especially their loathsome, debilitating song, siren-spiders coexist in clusters of 2-4. Ambush predators, these monstrosities haunt oasis, green-craters and other



water sources, such as abandon canal locks or underground aquifers. Merciless carnivores, siren spiders make ready prey of any creature unwary enough to wander into their midst.

SPECIAL When attacking, siren spiders emit a strange, warbling trance-inducing song from their ventral aerators. Foes must Save vs Fear or move at ½ speed- and lose initiative. The save is subject to the following modifiers: -1 for each (living) Siren Spider present and +3 if makeshift ear protection is used.

ADVENTURE Oglar, a three-arm, garrulous and likable Thark!, runs a trade outpost/wine garden on the open desert where Shoum and other outlaws trade with one another. The nearest convenient water source, an oasis, is a full day's ride from the hostelry. The water wagon, run by three of Oglar's wives, set out for the oasis some time ago and is now two days overdue. Oglar grows nervous (more in regards to the dwindling water supply than his absent wives). Shrewd, but not cheap, he will offer gear and a generous recompense to any willing to travel to the oasis and bring back his water-wagon and his wives too, if it seems convenient.



SKRAAYTH

AC:3 Hit Dice: 4 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d8 (beak) No. Appearing: 3 Save As: T1
Morale: 4 Alignment: D

Brightly hued birds, two meters at the shoulder, sharp-toothed and flightless, skraayth infest ruins all across mars. Skraayth hunt in packs of three. Cowardly creatures, notorious for preying on juvenile Thark! and apes, skraayth generally prefer to stalk their quarry, but will often wait until another creature has killed or at least damaged it before moving in to feed.

ADVENTURE Badly wounded from a savage fight and in search of shelter, the band staggers through the ruins beneath a blanket of shining stars. Ahead, beyond a crumbling arch something sinister glides into sight. Starlight glimmers from its black beak. Rest must wait. The others attack from behind.



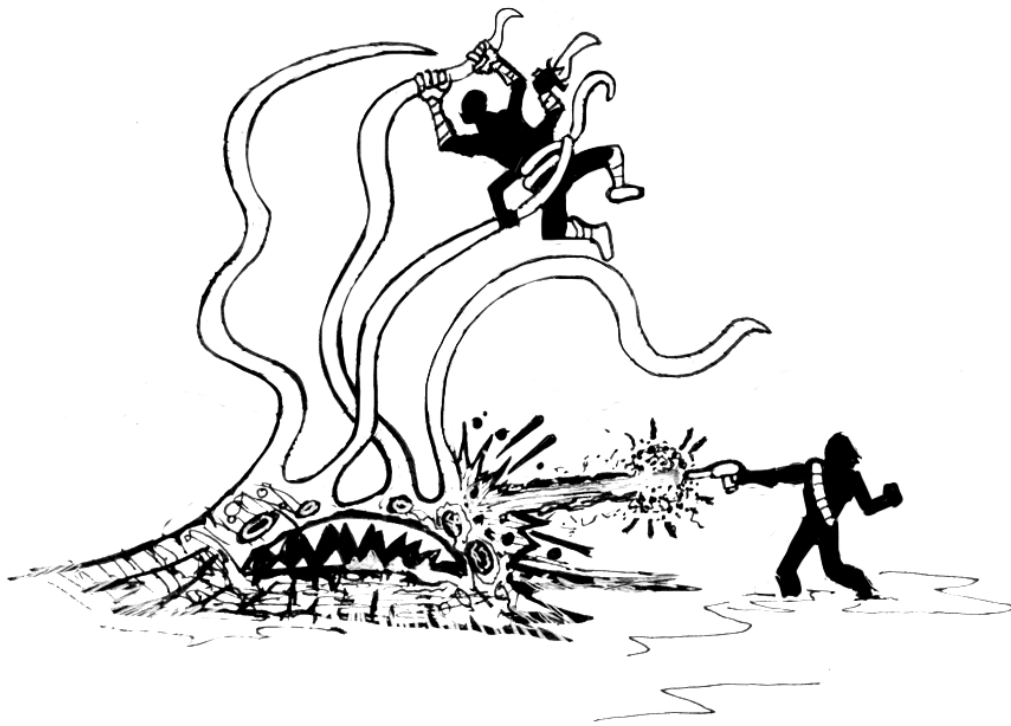
SKY DEVIL

AC: 4 Hit Dice: 10 Move: 240 (80) Attacks: 1 Damage: 2d10 No. Appearing: 1-10 Save As: T4
Morale: 8 Alignment: D

A Sky devil is a huge flying insect with a 40' wing-span and a slender, worm-like body three times as long. It is possible to ride a sky devil, in fact several individuals may do so at once, but if the creature becomes aware of the stowaways, it will attempt to dislodge and kill them. Other sky devils will attack as well, with no thought to the welfare of their fellow. Shoum witch-doctors know how to charm the sky devil and sometimes use them for long distance transportation.

Sky devils keep mainly to the South Polar Region, but occasionally one or two may wander out over the great desert.

ADVENTURE The summoned sky devil arrives. The time for talk is done; the rasping rustle of wings drowns out all other noise. It is the only way to reach the pole on time, but can you survive the trip? Can your Shoum companions be trusted?



SLLARG

AC: 4 Hit Dice: 4 Move: 0 Attacks: 2 Damage: 1d10/1d10 (tentacle/tentacle) No. Appearing: 1
Save As: W1 Morale: N/A Alignment: D

The lurking sllarg resides predominately in the deep desert. Sessile, it can endure long periods without feeding. Compared its overall mass, the lurking sllarg's oral cavity represents a full four parts out five. Cilia like growth, resembling scrub grass, covers the maw and conceals the danger. Its tentacles have 20' range of attack.

SPECIAL If hit by one of the tentacles the character must save vs entanglement or remain immobile. If the first saving throw fails, another must be made the next round; failure results in being eaten d12 dmg a round until rescued or sllarg is dead.

ADVENTURE Loage Lurgan, associate of the Invisible Hand, knows a place in the desert, called Hell's Meadow, where several lurking sllarg live alongside one another. For a price, Lurgan will gladly drop someone off at the meadow.

STICHLING

AC: 7 Hit Dice: 2+1 Move: 120 (60) Attacks: 1

Damage: 2d4 (net) 1d6 (Sword) 2d6 (Gun) No.

Appearing: 2-200 Save As: W1 Morale: 10

Alignment: N

By means of surgery and resurrectionist techniques, the Doll Maker has built a small army, literally one soldier at time. Pieced together from the remains of countless corpses, stichlings vary in construction, but most resemble humanoids, at least in a general sense. A bit dim-witted, but unquestioning, immensely strong and durable, stichlings make ideal soldiers.

SPECIAL Stichlings only require one cup of water every ten days. Stichlings in the service of the Doll Maker bear the following arms:

Meeba net: (biotech) a jelly like living constraint, pliable, durable, stinging. The meeba has its own eye and grants the user a +2 to hit, 2d4 damage.

Pulse gun: 2d6 damage, 3 shots a day, requires solar recharge. Short swords: 1d6.

ADVENTURE Four days past, a pair of banth found a previously unknown way into the great cavern and savaged the folk of the settlement. Before the locals drove them off, the beasts killed a score or more. Blood remains smeared across the cavern walls. This morning, the bodies of the beloved dead were to be taken into the desert and burned. However, unthinkable, the corpses and the men set to guard them vanished in the night. A chaotic jumble of misshapen footprints, and a (very heavy) wagon track lead from the cavern threshold off into the deep desert. The wind will erase the trail in a few hours.

A troop of stichlings slew the guards and took the dead for their master, the Doll Maker, who will use them as raw material to make more soldiers. The locals are poor but will gather a collection of goods and money which they will gladly give to anyone who can stop their loved ones from becoming turned into undead.





THOAT

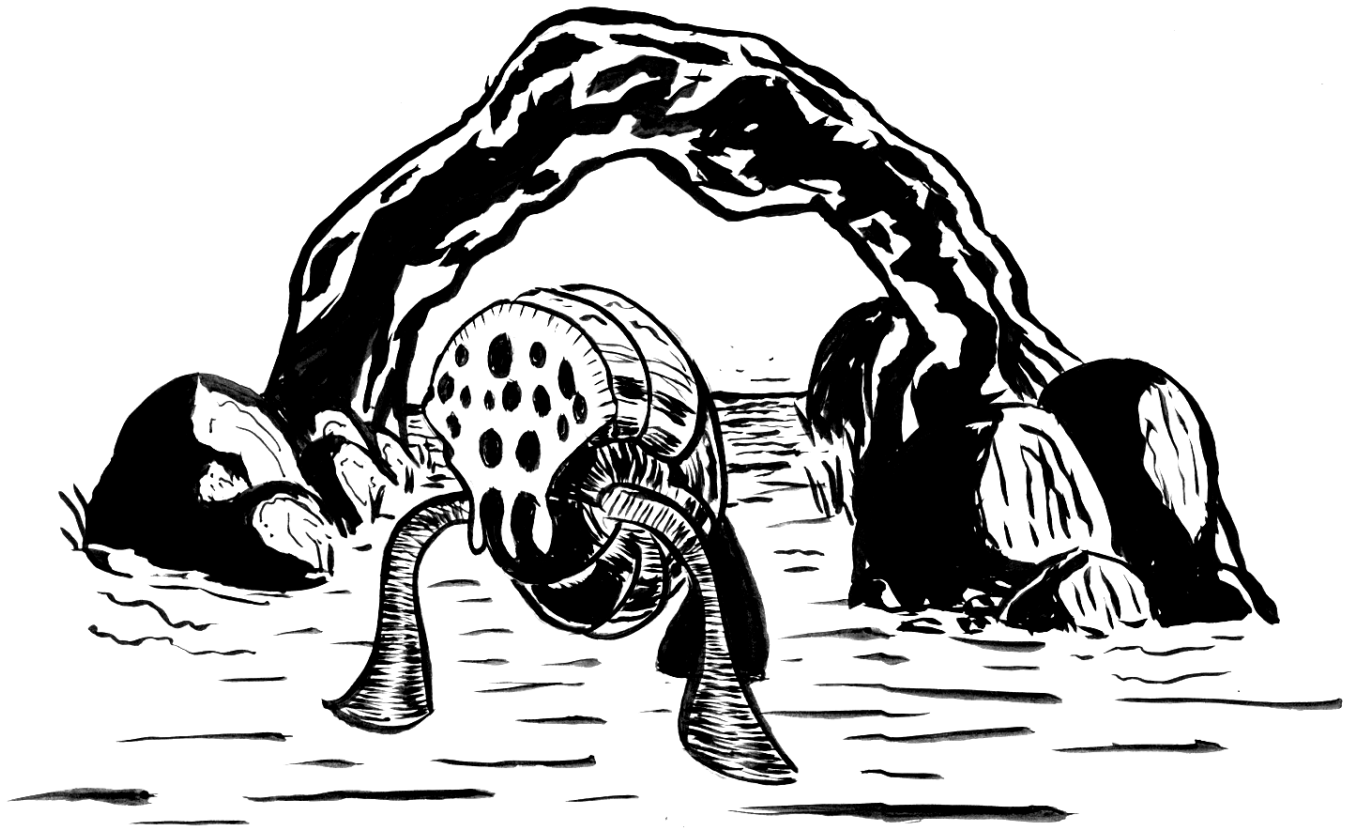
AC: 5 Hit Dice: 6 Move: 240 (80); Attacks: 1 Damage: 1d8 (Gore) 2d6 (Trample) No.
Appearing: 1-100 Save As: W1 Morale: 6 Alignment: N

Domesticated and wild, thoats can be found everywhere on mars. The thoat is a large bodied, ill temped omnivorous octoped.

Surly at best and often murderous, a thoat will snap at anyone who ventures too close to its maw.

If a thoat fails a morale role during combat it will attempt to trample or gore its rider before fleeing. Princesses are exempt from this behavior- unless they have been very, very naughty. Thoats eat anything and everything.

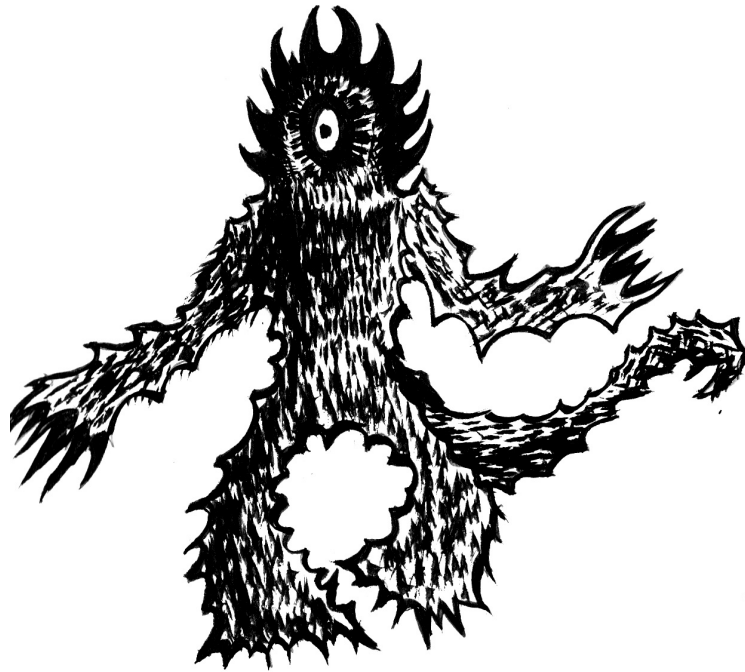
Attempts to win over an individual thoat should be dealt with by the referee on a case by case basis.



TRIPOD

AC: 0 Hit Dice: 10 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 1 Damage: 2d6 (Roll Over) 6d6 (Ray Blast) Save vs death for ½ damage No. Appearing: 1-6 Save As: T10 Morale: 8 Alignment: L

Known mostly as protectors of the Atmosphere Engines, tripods often act as guardians to oases, sections of canal or small territories. Tripods move with a slow, ungainly, three legged walk similar to someone on crutches. For longer distances, however, the tripod retracts its head and limbs into its carapace and rolls. This form of locomotion allows the tripod to move at three times its normal speed. Tripods can achieve up to 30' in height, but most are a half that size.



VEGATOID

AC: 0 Hit Dice: 2 Move: 90 (30) Attacks: 2 Damage: 1d10/1d10 No. Appearing: 1-1000 Save As: M4 Morale: n/a Alignment: D

Vegatoids are mindless plant creatures that infest the poles of Mars. Insatiable and unstoppable vegatoids will not give up prey until long after it's beyond their reach. Vegatoids would be a much greater threat if they could move faster.

ADVENTURE Servants of the Mad Sun have obtained a mentocrown which grants them power over vegatoids. Commanding an army of the creatures, they have taken control of the South Pole and a lost city of the Azure Martians. According to rumor the cultists are building a doomsday weapon. They must be stopped!

VAT GOON

AC: 3 Hit Dice: 4 Move:

180 (60) Attacks: 1

Damage: 3d6 No.

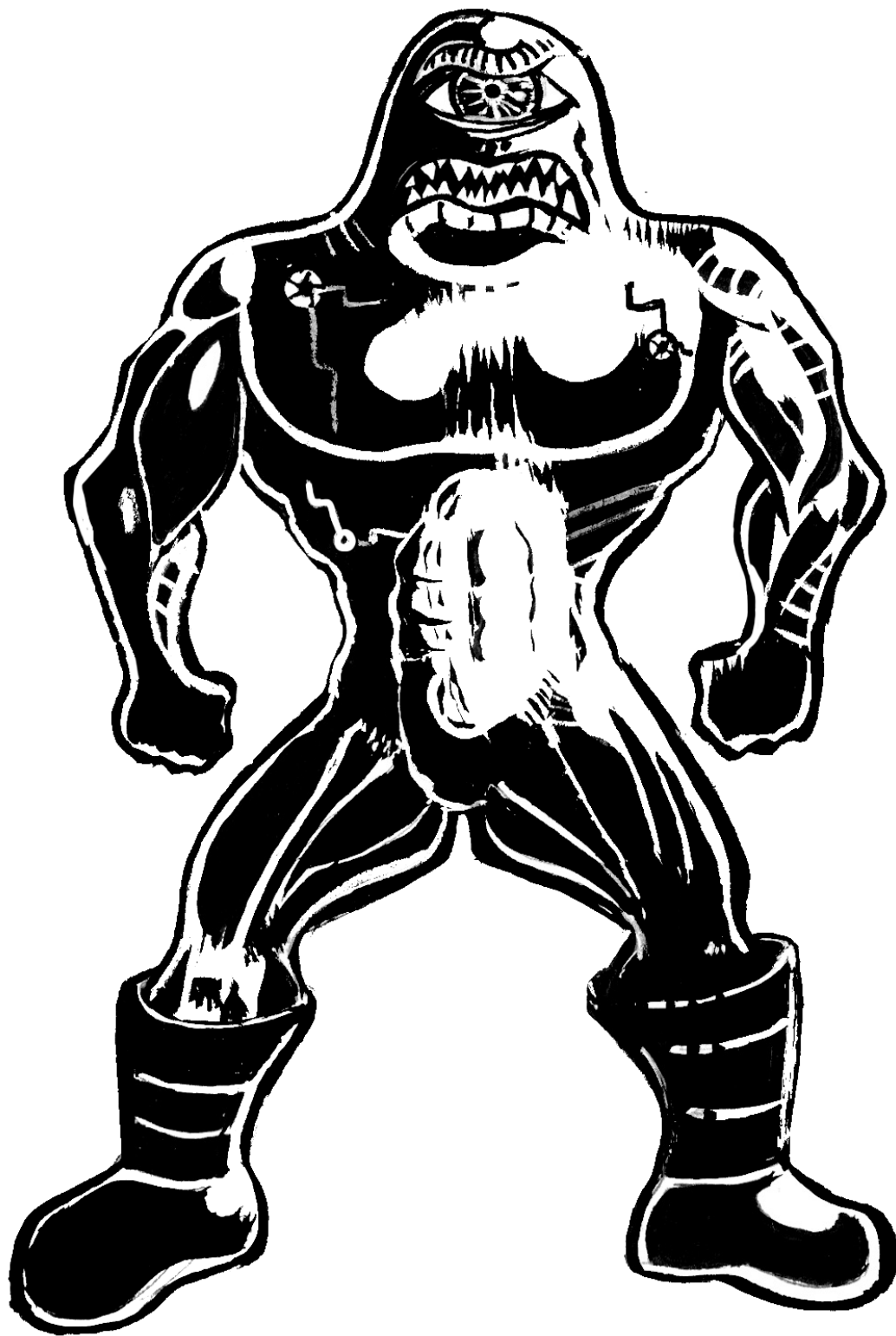
Appearing: 2-10

Save As: T1 Morale: 10

Alignment: N

Simple minded, immensely strong four-meter tall vat-grown giants, goons represent the most dangerous component of the Doll Maker's nascent war machine. Aside from hurled boulders and the like, goons use no weapons. They fear nothing. Goons have milky-green, rubbery looking hides. Unable to speak they communicate mostly through mewling and pointing.

ADVENTURE While flying overhead in his private airship, the Doll Maker notices the travelers in the desert. He's long thought his most recent creations require more combat testing, and decides to avail himself of this opportunity.



THE BLEEDING GOD

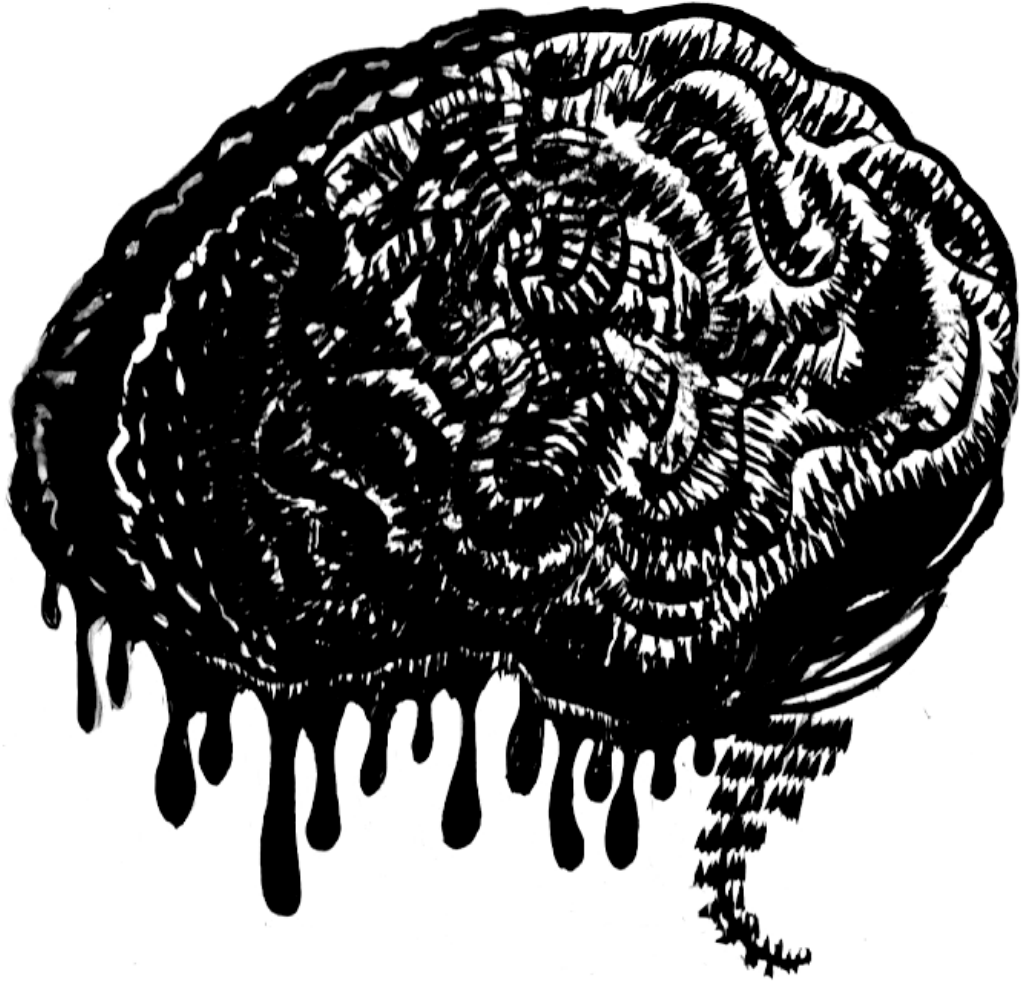
AC: 0 Hit Dice: 20 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 2 Damage: 4d6/4d6 (Mind Blast)

No. Appearing: 1 Save As: T10 Morale: 8 Alignment: D

Despite centuries of scholarly interest, the origins of the so-called Bleeding God remain obscure. Five hundred years ago, a huge, freely floating purple brain, arrived in Xards and seized power. Further detail remains elusive.

The rate seemingly varies according to mood, but the Bleeding God *bleeds without surcease*. Attendants lay out never ending sheets gauze to catch the drops. The strange priests of the god's cult

wear vestments cut from the bloodstained wrappings. Citizens purchase strips of the stuff to hang out windows at festival time.



SPECIAL The Bleeding God drains the life force of anyone within 10' at the rate of 1 HP an hour, and must consume at least 10 HP a day in such a fashion to survive. Seeping bloody sores open all over the flesh of anyone so afflicted The Bleeding God can use any warp, drawing the HP cost from the bank of 10 priests that accompany him everywhere. The cadre of priests rotate regularly, but occasionally, in times of great need, the citizenry bleeds as well.



THE CRIMSON QUEEN

AC: 1; Hit Dice: 21; Move: 120 (40); Attacks: 2 (Talons); Damage: 1d12/1d12; Save As: M7; Morale: 10; Alignment:D

The incomparably alluring Zenia Zolo, the Crimson Queen, is a vampire, the twisted offspring of mad science and the Weird Sun, birthed an aeon ago. The Crimson Queen rules the Ark of Ages. The Crimson queen has always ruled the Ark of Ages.

The Queen takes her power from the blistering abnormal radiance of the Weird Sun. But her sustenance, comes from the life force of her lovers. She feeds during erotic play. Customarily, Zenia keeps twenty or more lovers, nursing those who please her, consuming those who do not.

A formidable combatant, the Crimson Queen possess the form of a goddess, the ugly grace of a spider and the strength of a Terran. She can walk on walls, use any form warp and is immune to any and all forms of mind control or suggestion. A hit with her claws causes *Life Drain*, removing 1 level of experience from the victim. With the exception of Terrans, any sentient being entering the presence of the Crimson Queen must save vs fear or be frozen for 1d4 rounds consumed by hot, paralytic lust. Any being who, willingly or otherwise, engages in congress with the queen will fall immediately under her complete mental control.



THE DOLL MAKER

AC: 0 Hit Dice: 10 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 2 (cleaver, smash) Damage: 1d12, 1d8 Save As: T10 Morale: 12 Alignment: L

Bearing no other name, the capricious and monstrous Doll Maker resides south of Xards, beneath the giant unholy tree called the Black Hand. There, with a troop of lesser mad scientist to do his bidding, he performs vivisections and resurrections. He melts down the flesh of the dead and pours it into a new and savage mold and stitches disparate parts into loathsome, misshapen unlife.

The Doll Maker usually appears as an albino ape, but has many shapes.

Dealing with the Doll Maker is easier than one might expect. Most times he is open to negotiation. He will, in the main, accept service or merchandise in exchange for supervised library access. The merchandise of most interests to the the Doll Maker is generally corpses. He will, of course, most likely accept wondrous items. However, at times, the Doll Maker will only accept service as payment. He rarely requires anything but the most arduous of tasks performed.

SPECIAL The Doll Maker has many powers and devices.

His library is second to none, and visited by any who are able to pay the price.

The Doll Maker is also building an army of vat goons and stichlings, possibly for an expedition to Shadow Canyon.

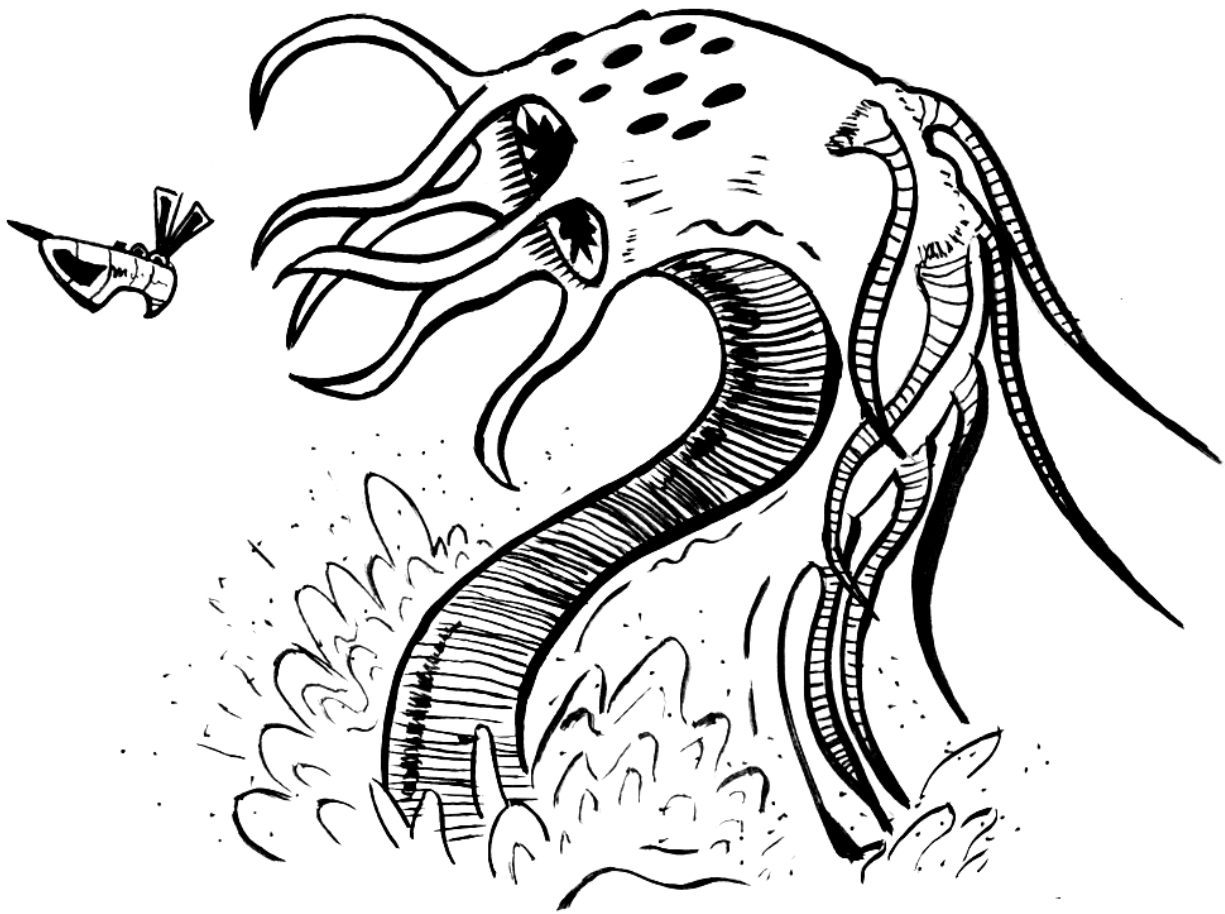


THE DRAGON EMPRESS

No one has seen the Dragon Empress in a very long time. In fact, no has ever seen the Dragon Empress. Its true nature is the great secret of the Dragon Tower.

The Empress is a highly advanced mechanical brain. This vast, intelligent machine, or logic circuit (LC) governs and controls the everyday affairs of the tower. It designs new dragons and grows their eggs in tanks, incubating them at need. It selects priests to execute its will and dragon riders to offer individual opinions and ideas to augment its purpose. Its purpose is to protect and nurture the citizens of the Dragon Tower forever

The LC is immune to mind warp, although it is a powerful telepath.



DUNE WORM:

Terror of the sandy wastes, the dune worm can attain gargantuan proportions. Very few who see a dune worm survive the experience. The dune worm can engulf and crush virtually anything, even small landforms.

Every round spent in the proximity of a dune worm requires a Saving Throw vs Death Ray. Failure results in being swallowed or crushed- player's choice.

The approach of a dune worm can be seen up to five miles away on a clear day. The sands usually begins to tremble and quake 1-3 turns before the creature's arrival.

Exudations from the skin of the worm create a dream like state of precognition, said to be useful in space travel- the secrets of which have long been lost to Martians.

JADE MAZU, THE GIANT APE

AC: 2 Hit Dice: 15 Move: 200 Attacks: 1 Damage: 3d6 (Smash) No. Appearing: 1

Save As: T4 Morale: 11

Alignment: L

16 feet tall and seemingly immortal, Jade Mazu, the giant ape, guards the savage island at the center of boiling Mud Lake. Immensely ancient, Mazu was born amongst the guardians of the Shadow Canyon Atmosphere Engine.

The undisputed king of his island, Mazu is an extremely formidable combatant. He will attack with his fists, a makeshift club or engage in grappling depending upon the opponent.

Mazu is immune to mind warp. Impatient and quick to anger, often with catastrophic results, Mazu distrusts all strangers.





THE MINDSHROOM, GREAT OMM, IMPERIAL FUNGUS

To the north of the Sea of Stones, somewhere deep in the Caverns of Fear, within a nasty dark hole known as the Awful Cave resides Omm, an immense and powerful psionic fungus.

Omm spores have spread across Horrible Valley, and it exercises control over nearly every living thing in the region- all of which work to carry out its alien and incomprehensible goals.

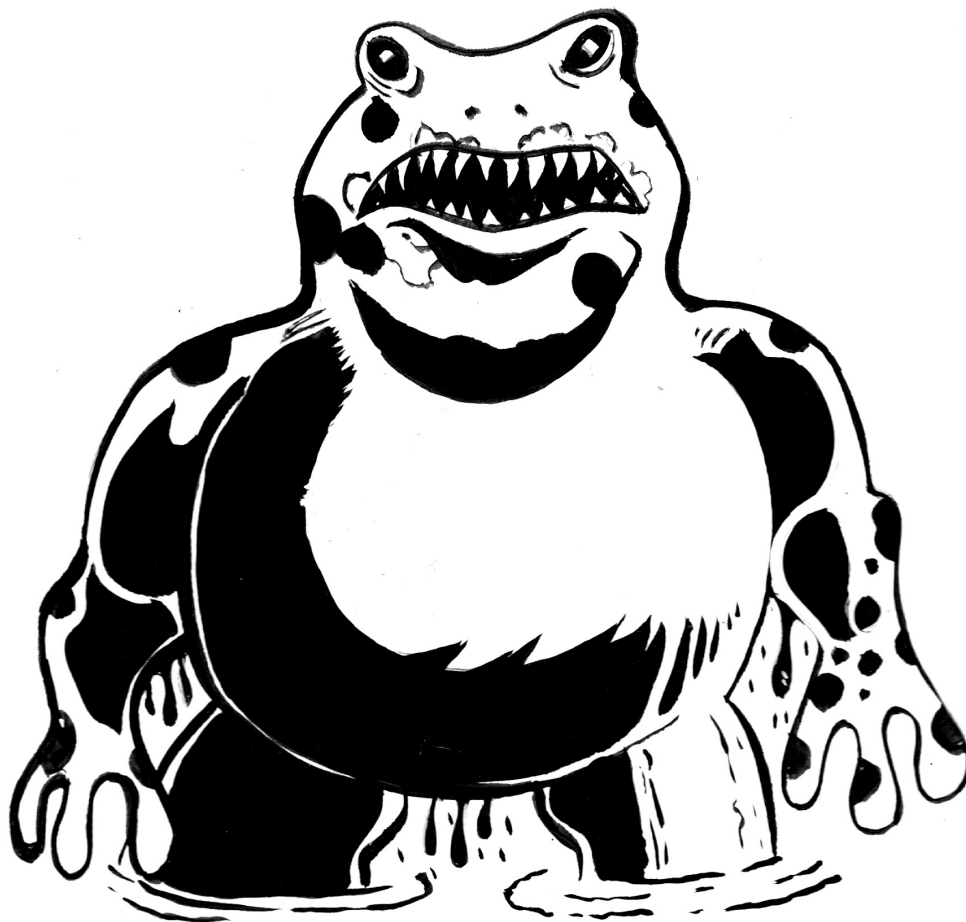
Thralls of Omm have glassy eyes and a waxy, malnourished look. In certain cases, a ring of fungus can be seen, usually located near the victim's brain.

Horrible Valley is, as one might imagine, a strange and unsettling place, filled with creatures of all sorts, curiously organized and engaged in a wide range of activities- none of which make

much sense from the perspective of an outsider, but serve the Mindshroom's strange purpose, nevertheless.

Omm, is possessed of more power than knowledge. It desires to understand animal life, particularly intelligent creatures; such is the intent behind all the odd, creepy and pointless seeming activity it commands throughout Horrible Valley

Beyond Horrible Valley, Omm is worshiped by a small, fanatical cult, but exerts no psychic influence. The Mindshroom's very existence troubles the regional powers.



TSGORATH, THE TOAD KING

AC: 1 Hit Dice: 20 Move: 180 (60) Attacks: 2 smash/smash Damage: 1d12/1d12

No. Appearing: 1 Save As: M10 Morale: 10 Alignment: D

Despite his roughly humanoid appearance, the idiot god of Mud Lake, Tsgorath, the Toad King, has no apparent sentience or self-awareness. Nevertheless the abomination is worshiped as a god by a cult: The Toadies, a depraved group who hunt in the deep desert eager for sacrificial victims to feed to their abominable god.

APPENDIX

WONDERS OF THE ANCIENTS

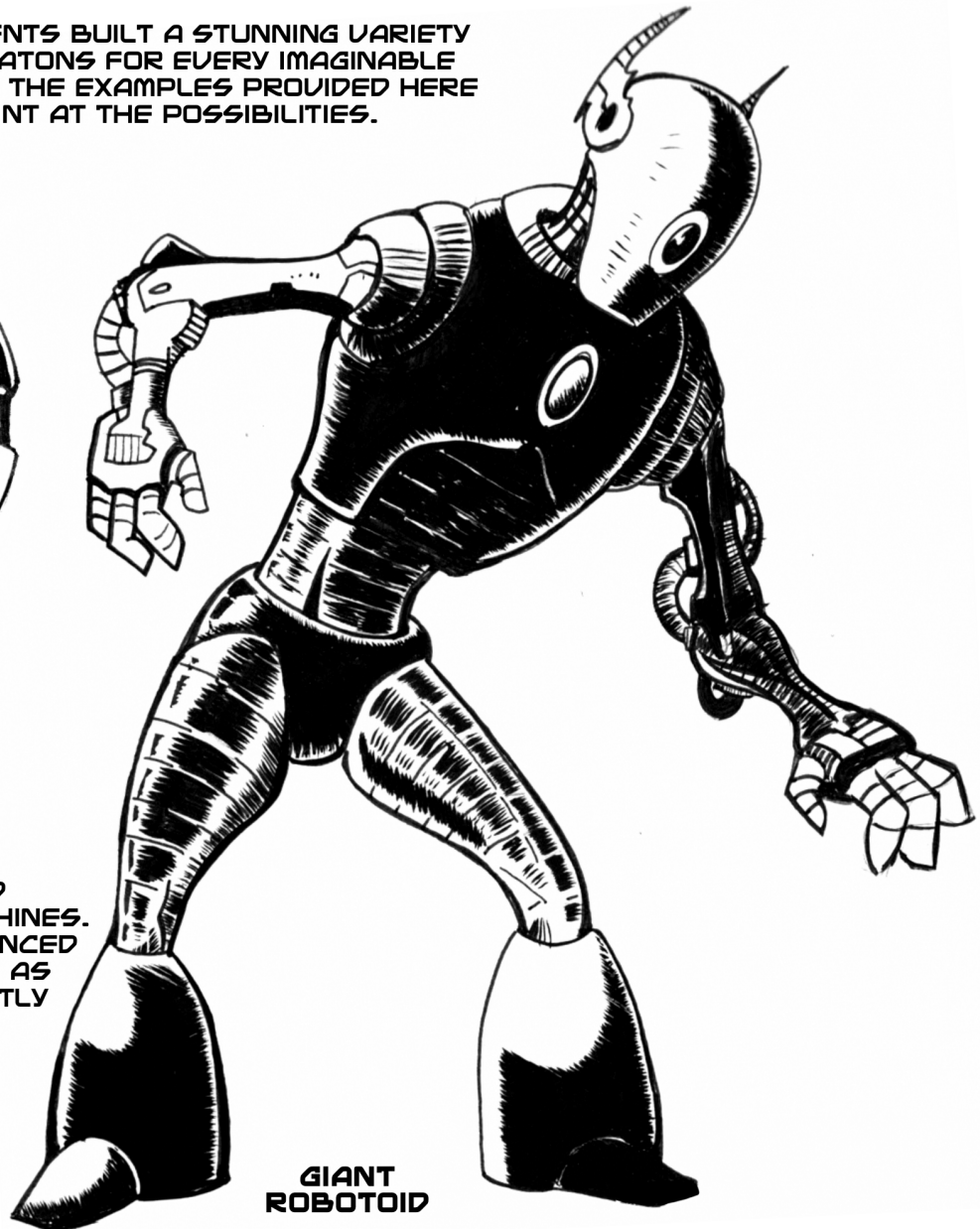
AUTOMATONS

THE ANCIENTS BUILT A STUNNING VARIETY OF AUTOMATONS FOR EVERY IMAGINABLE PURPOSE. THE EXAMPLES PROVIDED HERE BARELY HINT AT THE POSSIBILITIES.

REPAIR DRONE



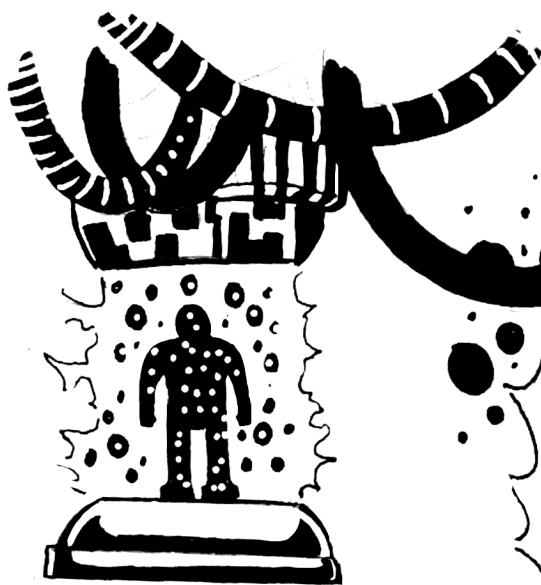
THESE ROBOTS FIX AND MONITOR ANCIENT MACHINES. THEY ALSO HAVE ADVANCED MEDICAL CAPABILITIES, AS HUMANS ARE FREQUENTLY IN NEED OF REPAIR.



GIANT
ROBOTOID

AC:2 HD:6 MOVE 120 ATTACKS: SMASH/DISINTEGRATE/CAPTURE
DAMAGE: 1D12/2D10/1D3 SAVE VS ENTANGLE TO AVOID/ESCAPE.

MECHANICAL NIGHTMARE STANDING OVER 20' TALL, GIANT ROBOTOIDS OFTEN SERVE AS GUARDIANS OVER IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTALLY RELATED FEATURES AND MACHINES. ROBOTOIDS ARE OFTEN SENTIENT AND POSSESS FREE WILL



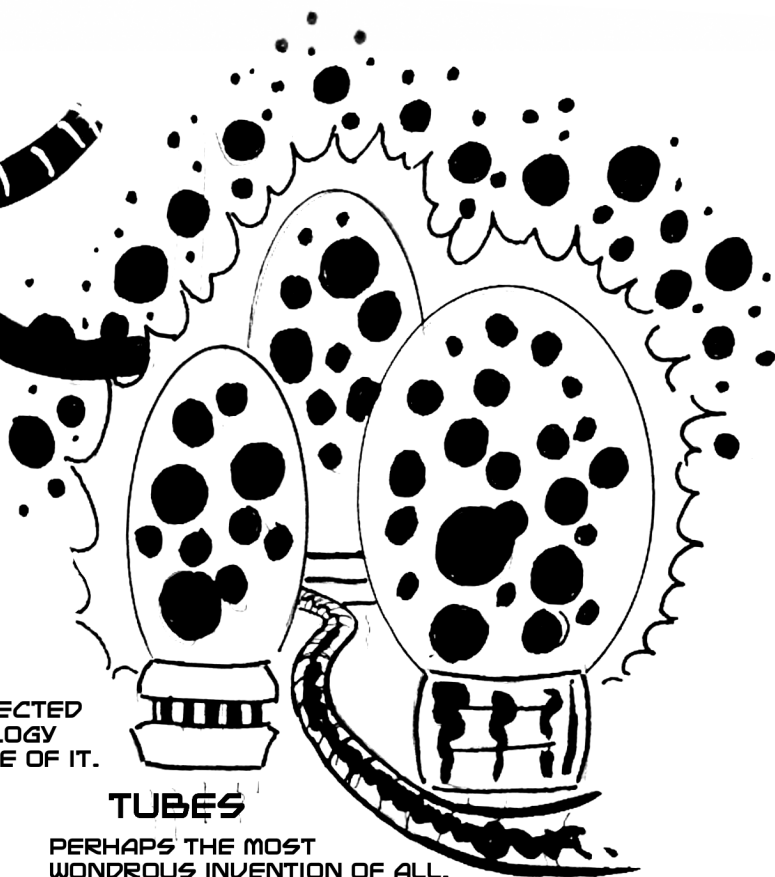
TRANSMAT

ANCIENT MARTIANS PERFECTED TELEPORTATION TECHNOLOGY AND MADE EVERY DAY USE OF IT.



SHIELD BELT

+2 AC VS. ENERGY WEAPONS



TUBES

PERHAPS THE MOST WONDROUS INVENTION OF ALL, VACUUM TUBES LIE AT THE FOUNDATION OF ANCIENT MARTIAN MIRACLE TECHNOLOGY.

ATMOSPHERE ENGINE

THE DEAD PUMP

DARK AND SILENT FOR TEN THOUSAND YEARS, ZERZURA'S ATMOSPHERE ENGINE CROUCHES AT SHADOW CANYON'S CENTER, PULSING WITH EVIL PSYCHIC FORCE.

LUSH GARDENS GROW AMONGST THE SILENT AND ETERNALLY STILL MECHANISMS OF THE DEAD PUMP'S ROOF.

LAIR OF THE GUARDIAN

THUNDER SAND

LOOKS LIKE CRACKED MUD BUT EACH STEP CREATES MORE NOISE THAN THE LAST. THE NOISE WILL SUMMON THE GUARDIAN.



SOUL STORM

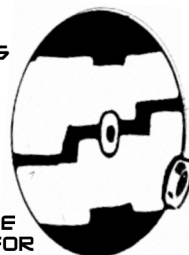
CAVE OF INEXPLICABLE SCREAMS

INTENTIONALLY BLOCKED ENTRANCE

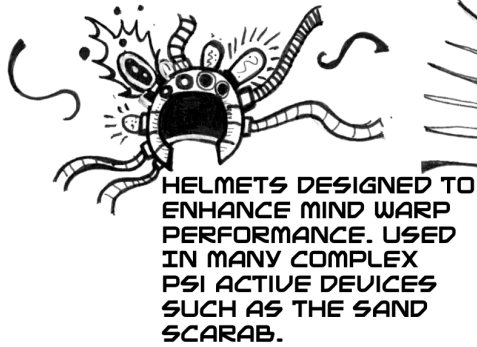
THE HUGE SCULPTED HEAD OF KROLG, FORGOTTEN GOD OF THE ABSURD AND CANNIBAL MURDER, DOMINATES THE BARRIER OF RUBBLE.

WARP HEALER

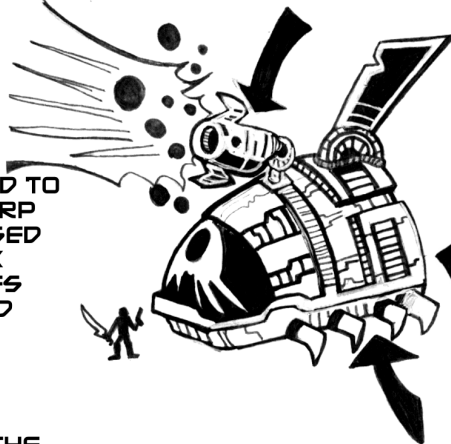
HEALS TEN HP PER USE. MUST BE LEFT IN THE SUN FOR 3 DAYS BETWEEN USES.



MENTOCROWN



SAND SCARAB



SOLAR SAIL
IN THE ABSENCE OF SUNLIGHT THE SCARAB CAN SKIM FOR 6 TURNS OR FIRE ITS CANNON 5 TIMES

FIELD PROPULSORS

THE SCARAB CAN MOVE UP TO 40 MILES/DAY OVER THE OPEN DESERT. LESS OVER MORE VARIED GROUND.

MAGNORAIL

A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE OLD MAGNORAIL NETWORK REMAINS INTACT BENEATH MARS' SURFACE. FUNCTIONAL CARS ALSO EXIST. BUT NAVIGATION IS UNCERTAIN.

VISA-PLATES
DISPLAY IMAGES AND DATA. USUALLY UNSETTLING AND ALMOST ALWAYS WRONG

SHOCK CHAIRS

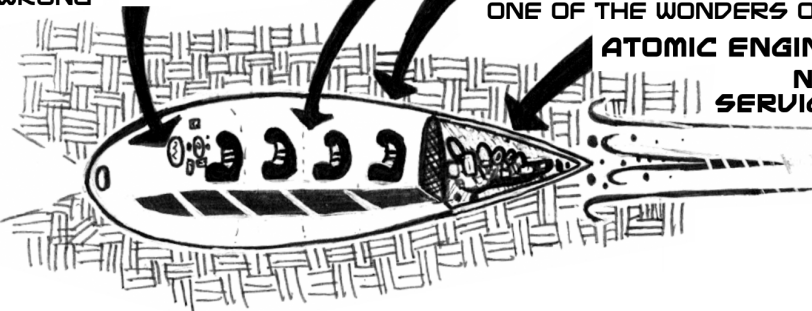
SHAPE-CHANGING, FLOATING ACCELATION CHAIRS. MORPH INTO SPHERES WHEN NOT IN USE.

TRANSPARENT HULL
SEEMINGLY INDISTRICTABLE. ONE OF THE WONDERS OF MARS.

ATOMIC ENGINE

NO USER SERVICEABLE PARTS

THARK! BELIEVE THE MAGNORAIL NETWORK IS POSSESSED BY AN EVIL SPIRIT.

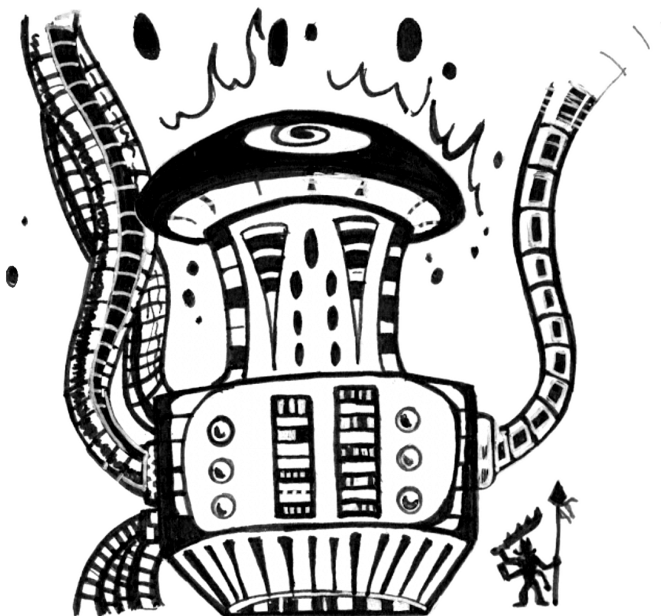


AUTOMAT

THESE MIRACLE MACHINES PRODUCE FOOD FROM SUNLIGHT, WATER AND WASTE MATERIAL. THE QUALITY AND VARIETY OF FOOD VARIES FROM MACHINE TO MACHINE. FEW MACHINES REMAIN, CONTROLLED, ONE AND ALL, BY THE AB-GODS.

DISCOVERY OF A NEW AUTOMAT WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY SPARK A WAR.

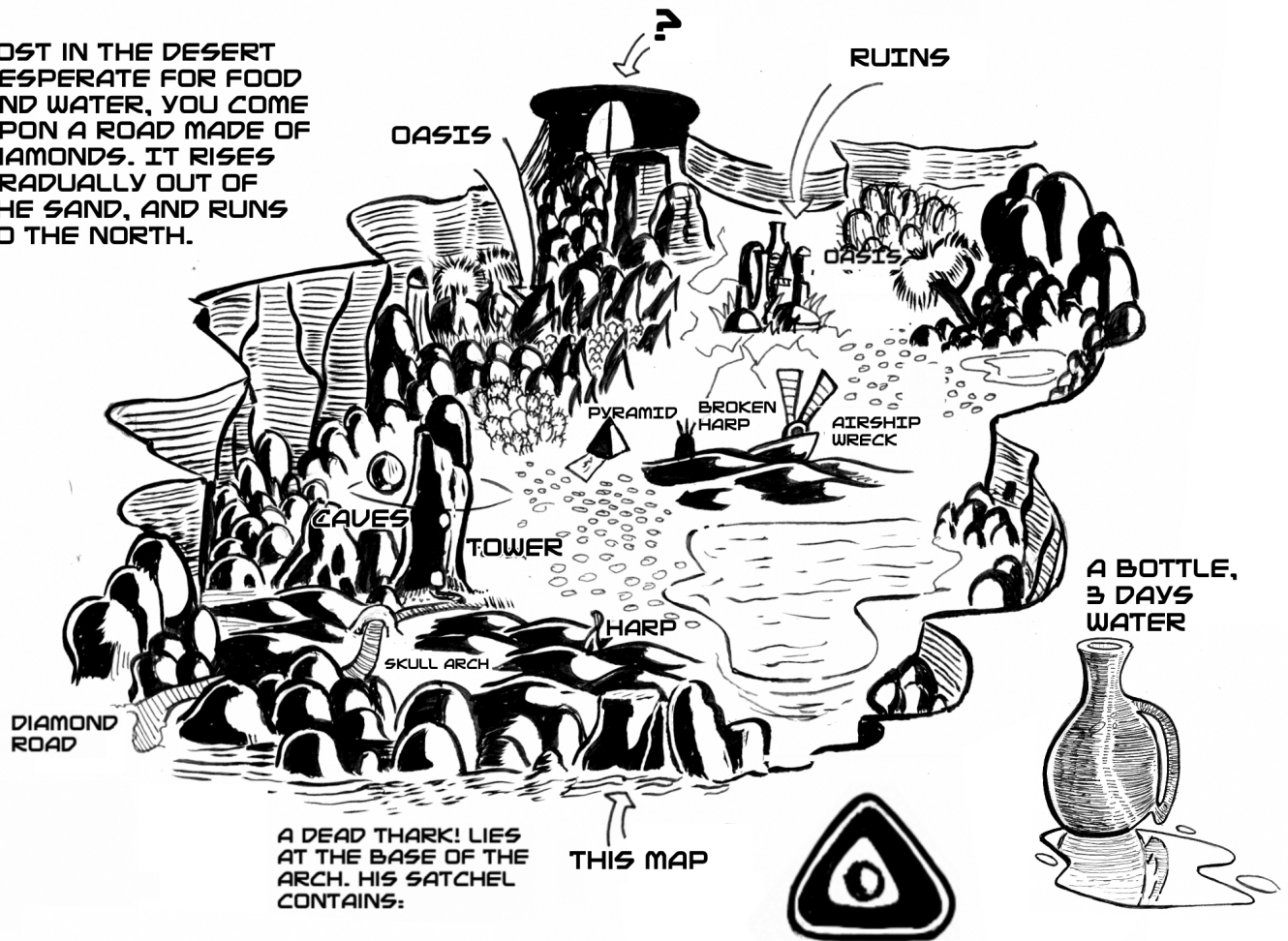
STATUS IN XARDS IS BASED AROUND AT WHICH OF THE THREE AUTOMATS ONE EATS. DUELS HAVE BEEN FOUGHT OVER PERCEIVED IMPROPRIETY.



MAPPENDIX

MAPS FROM THE FINAL PLAY TEST

LOST IN THE DESERT
DESPERATE FOR FOOD
AND WATER, YOU COME
UPON A ROAD MADE OF
DIAMONDS. IT RISES
GRADUALLY OUT OF
THE SAND, AND RUNS
TO THE NORTH.

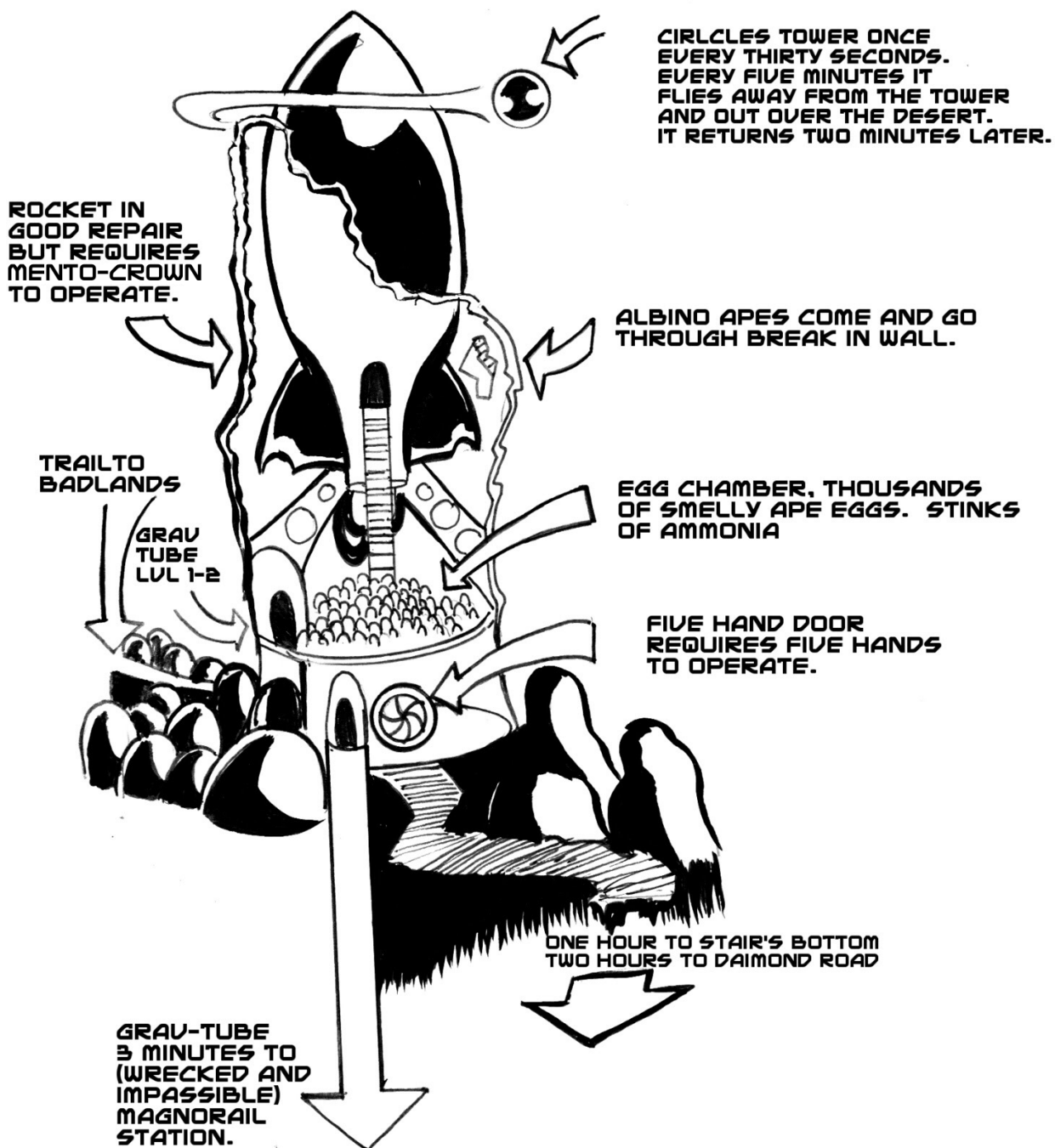


3 TRIANGULAR OBJECTS
MADE OF SOMETHING LIKE
METAL OR CERAMIC. ABOUT
AN INCH THICK, A LITTLE TOO
BIG TO HOLD COMFORTABLY
IN ONE HAND.
EACH HAS A DIFFERNT COLOR,
(RED, GOLD, BLACK)
STONE SET INTO IT'S CENTER.

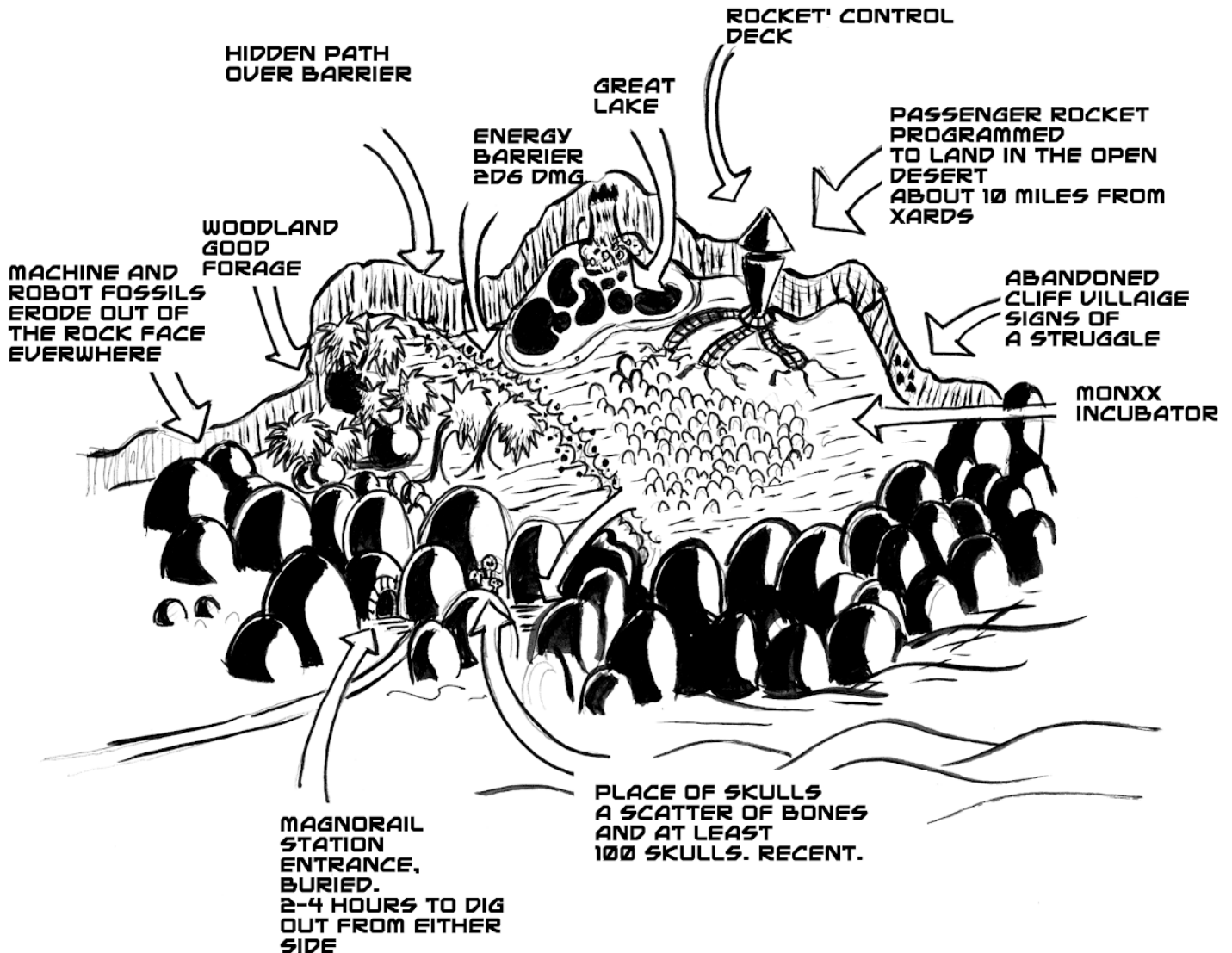
BAD CANYON PLAYER'S MAP

CRUMBLING TOWER

SECURITY SPHERE



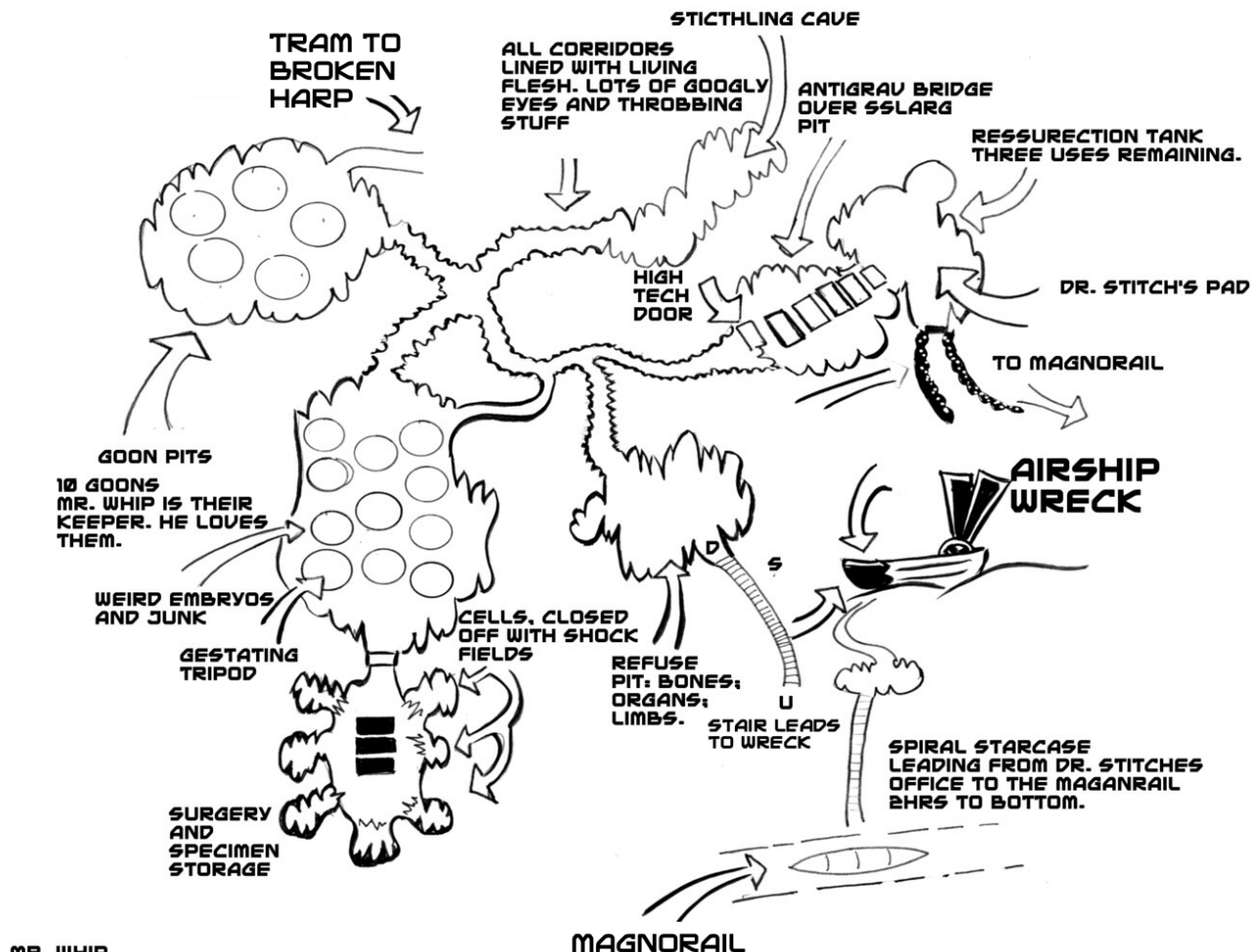
THE OASIS



MONTHS AGO, MEMBERS OF THE UNCLEAR INVADDED THE OASIS IN THE NIGHT AND SLEW THE RESIDENTS: A SHOUM WAR BAND. AFTER EATING THE DEFEATED; THE UNCLEAR TOSSED THEIR BONES INTO A PIT OUTSIDE THE OASIS. THE UNCLEAR AGENTS THEN TOOK STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THEIR PLAN. THEY'VE HARNESTED THE POWER OF THE ROCKET. THEY PLAN TO CHANNEL THIS POWER INTO THE INCUBATION FIELD AND PROVOKE THOUSAND OF MONNX TO HATCH. A MONNX SWARM WOULD CONSUME EVERY LIVING THING IN THE VALLEY- INCLUDING THE UNCLEAR. THEY GLORY IN DEATH AND MURDER AND EVERY TINY STEP TOWARDS FINAL EXTINCTION.

DR. STITCH'S HOSPITAL

DR. STITCH WOULD RATHER TAKE PRISONERS
THAN KILL PERFECTLY GOOD SPECIMENS.



MR. WHIP
GOON KEEPER
AC2 HD7 HP28 MV 120
ATTACK 2 DAMAGE 1012/1012
WHIP-FINGERS
MORAL & ALIGNMENT D
WEIRD, SINEWY BEING.
NEVER SPEAKS, RHYTHMIC.
UNDULATING, MOONWALKS
EVERYWHERE. FINGERS EXTEND
INTO WHIPS.

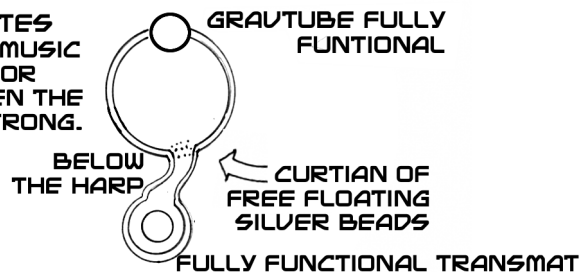
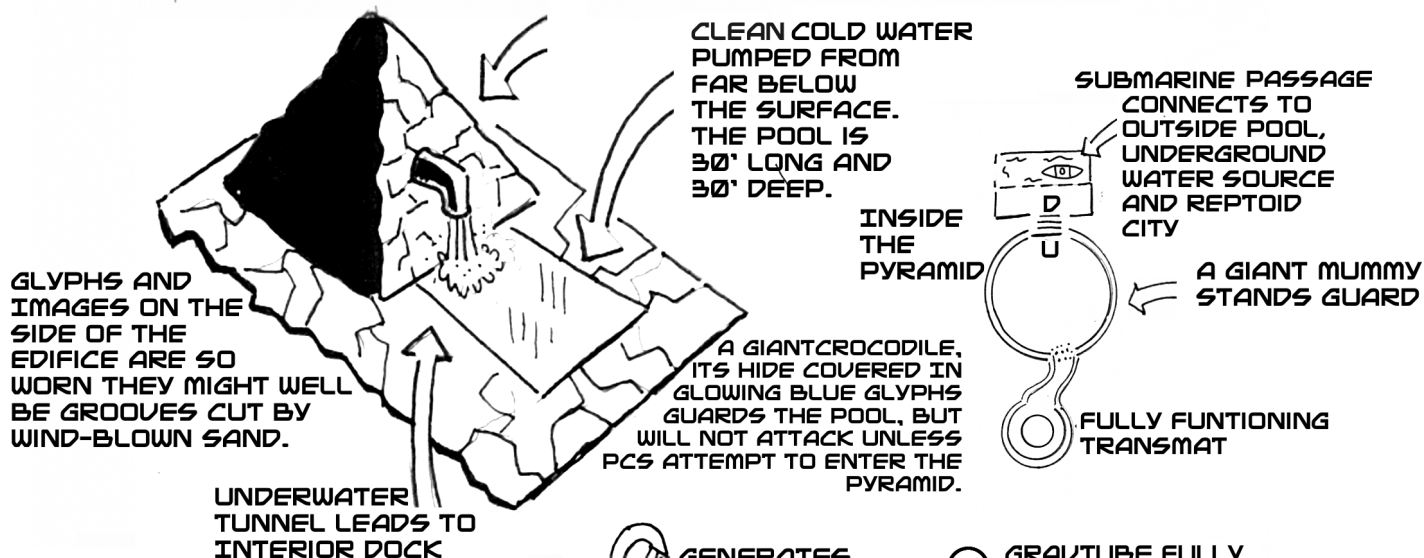
DR. STITCH

AC1 (4) HD6 HP 36 MV120
ATTACK PRONG X 2 DAMAGE 2D8/2D8
MIND BLAST TWENTY FOOT RADIUS;
ONCE A DAY: 2D6 DAMAGE SAVE VS WARP
FOR 1/2 DAMAGE.
FORMERLY AN UNDERLING OF THE DOLLMAKER,
DR. STITCH HAS MOVED OUT ON HIS OWN.
HE'S BEEN DOING ALL SORTS OF WONDERFUL
THINGS.
HE WEARS AN ANCIENT SHIELD BELT WHICH GRANTS HIM
A +2 TO ARMOR CLASS AGAINST ENERGY WEAPONS.
THE DOCTOR HAS TWO GIANT SPIDER ARMS,
GRAFTED TO HIS BACK, EACH ENDING IN A NEEDLE
SHARP PRONG. DISTENDED BRAIN MATTER ESCAPES FROM HIS
MISHAPEN SKULL.
HE JITTERS AND SHUFFLES AND TALKS
ALL THE TIME.

MISCELLANEOUS

ITS FEATURES NEARLY WORN AWAY,
THE GIANT STONE SPIGOT WAS FASHIONED TO
RESEMBLE SOME NOW UNRECOGNIZABLE BEAST.

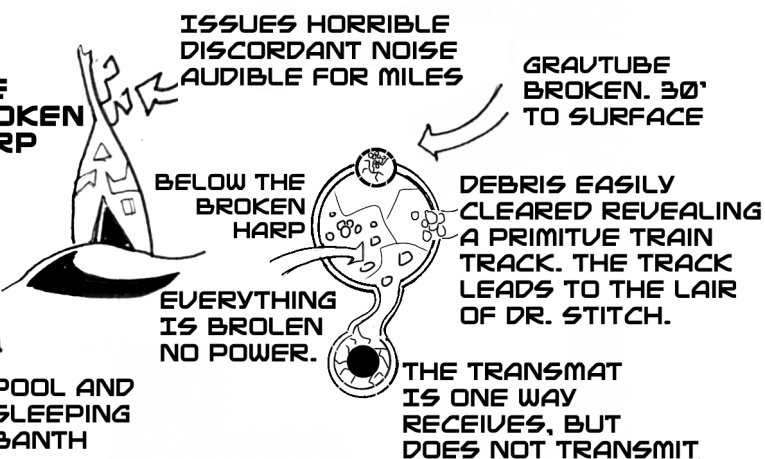
THE PYRAMID



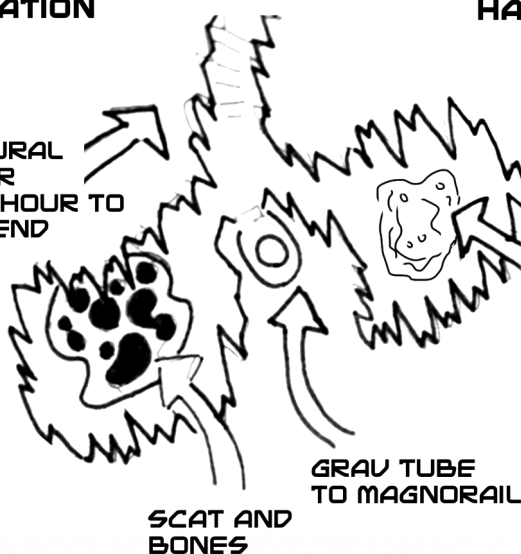
BANTH LAIR AND MAGNORAIL STATION

TWO HOURS TO CRUMBLING TOWER

THE BROKEN HARP



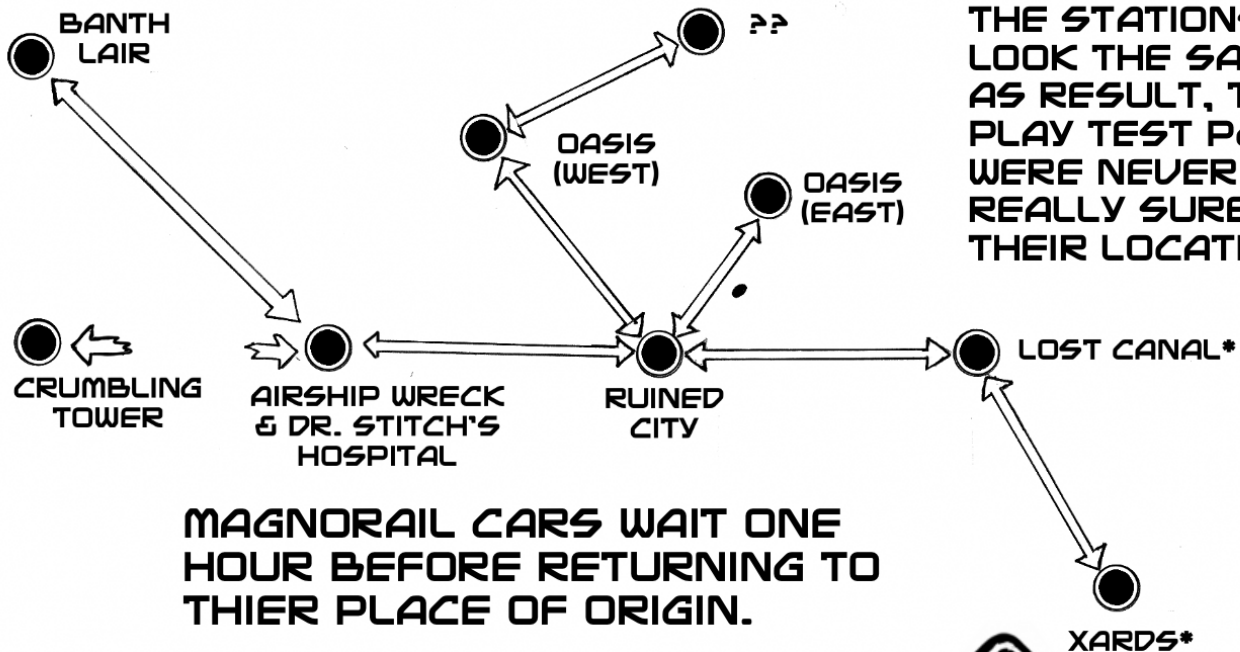
NATURAL STAIR ONE HOUR TO ASCEND



FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING
THE TRANSMAT AND MAGNORAIL
SEE THE TRANSIT MAP.

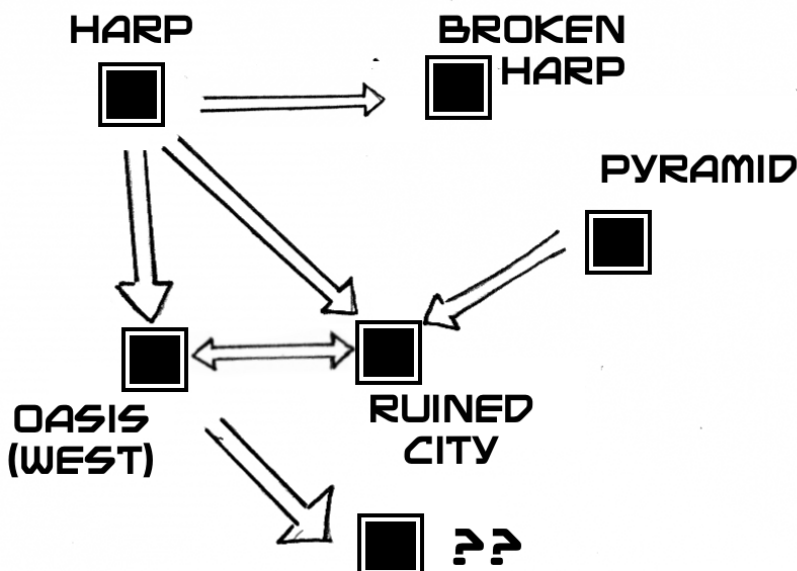
BAD CANYON MASS TRANSIT

MAGNORAIL



TRANSMAT

MYSTERY TRIANGLES



THE TRIANGLES WORK LIKE COINS. ALL TRANSMAT TERMINALS AND MAGNORAIL CARS HAVE AN INDENTATION PERFECTLY SHAPED TO RECEIVE A TRIANGLE. EACH USE REDUCES THE TRIANGLE'S COLOR RANK BY ONE. GOLD TO GREEN TO RED TO BLACK (DEAD). ANY NUMBER OF PEOPLE CAN RIDE ON ONE TRIANGLE.

* NOT PICTURED ON MAP OF BAD CANYON

PLAY TESTERS

SCOTT BARKER

PAUL VERMINEN

CHRIS VERMINEN

BRETT WOODS

JACK SHEAR

JACK GIBBONS

NICK GIBBONS

[HTTP://THEMETALEARTH.BLOGSPOT.COM/](http://themetalearth.blogspot.com/)

