

SPACE OPERA **INCEDUS III**



AN ESPIONAGE MISSION

Kenneth C. Campbell



Fantasy Games Unlimited, Inc.

Scanned By:



INCEDUS III

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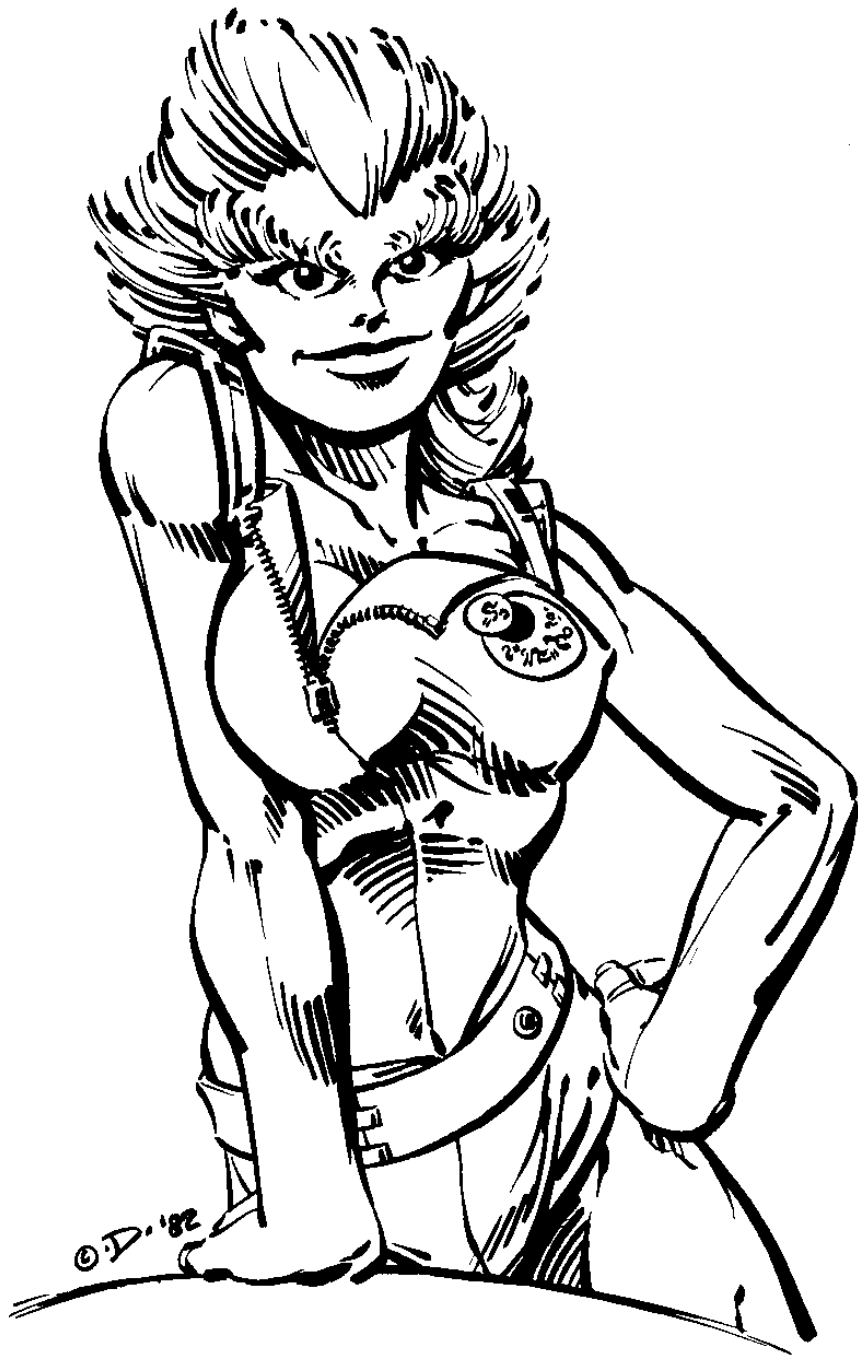
THANK to Rikter, Michael, Simon, Steve, and Gameway's Ark for the generous use of their Facilities.

SPECIAL THANK YOU to Les Grey (and, of course, Paula)

I DEDICATE THIS TRIP TO MY DEOXYRIBONUCLEIC ACID—
WITHOUT WHOM THIS WOULD NO HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE.....

CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Definitions	4
Incedus System	4
Agent Briefing	4
Abrice: Interstellar Survey Evaluation	5
Abrice: Contacts Service Evaluation	6
Abrice: Bureau of Intelligence Evaluation	7
Abrician Time Line	8
Abrician Wildlife	9
Religion	11
Fathers of Truth	12
Playing an Abrician NPC	12
Getting onto the Planet	13
The Edentians	14
The Museum Tour	15
An Evening on the Town	15
The Library	15
The Continents	15
Delta Continent	15
Project 12	17
The Origins of Project 12	21
The Gate	22
The Claarions	22
The Mission Team	23



INTRODUCTION:

Although initially designed for use as a DOVE mission, this adventure can be adopted for use with almost any organization. The party could be employed by a private business from any world, BRINT, BOSS, AZ-ZIE, or GPR. agents, etc; whatever fits into the Star Masters Campaign.

What you are holding is really two-fold in use. There is a major plot (which can and should last many sessions). But, after this is completed, you have a detailed planetary account in which to create further action.

Incedus 3 (pronounced In-say-dus) is on the verge of planetwide change, and this is easily the source of many exciting adventures. A political upheaval could make certain governmental structures herein obsolete, but all else would still be very pertinent. (The political information should still be very useful, for underground movements are usually based on past ideologies and movements).

Suggested future adventures:

1)-Prince Aearth will attempt to murder his father and brother, initiating a civil war (or vice versa, initiating a revolution by Aearth followers).

2)-Operatives miss rendezvous to get off the planet and must continue to survive through whatever may come up until the next rendezvous.

3)-SERPENT is eventually going to get wind of what is happening on Abrice and will, needless to say, send out agents.

4)-The union of Independent Worlds could intervene in favor of the Abricians in the name of freedom to natural revolution without interference by Imperialist-exploiters. What intervene means, though is another story entirely.

5)-The Empire, once it has learned of the true nature of Abrice's secret, will likely take some sort of action; this could be an all out act, but would require a plausible excuse- DOVE would have to master mind one. Inevitably, the HCE and the Claarion Worlds are going to conflict over the Incedus system. (For greater detail concerning the development of relations with the Claarions, see HCE Atlas).

6)-The operatives could be taken prisoners by the Claarions and back to the homeworld.

DEFINITIONS:

All terms and pertinent information concerning the Holy Catholic Empire will be had in the Star Atlas. But for those who do not have it, presented here are very basic definitions of the terms that will appear herein.

DOVE: Department of Observation and Verification: The HCE equivalent to BRINT. Much more ruthless, in that the Empire does not have to placate allies.

UIW: Union of Independent Worlds; oppose religious oppression and central domination.

SERPENT: The major anti-HCE terrorist organization.

HCE: The Holy Catholic Empire is a collection of lost colonies of the Catholic Church of Earth, existing between 2067 and 2136. It has only recently declared itself an Empire.

INCEDUS SYSTEM:

The type G3 star, with its 7 major satellites is tucked in a corner of the Terra Nova sector of the Holy Catholic Empire.

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
Diameter	7000	13000	10000	100000	10000	54000	21000
Satellites	0	2	2	7	1	4	1
Gravity	0.4	1.3	0.6	1.6	0.35	1.1	1.3
Day	30h	25h	28h	10h	14h	11h	4h
Year	103d	290d	335d	25y	46y	128y	320y
Temp. Range	500	90	22	-150	-180	-200	-260
Climate Type	15	13	1	20	16	17	18

DISTANCE BETWEEN PLANETS AND PRIMARY: in LS

Primary	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
200	I	.110	.250	.1990	.7600	.15150	.16780
310	II	.110	.140	.1880	.7490	.15040	.16670
450	III	.250	.140	.1740	.7350	.14900	.16530
2190	IV	.1990	.1880	.1740	.5610	.13160	.14790
7800	V	.7600	.7490	.7350	.5610	.7550	.9180
15350	VI	.15150	.15040	.14800	.13160	.7550	.1630
16980	VII	.16780	.16670	.16530	.14790	.9180	.1630

AGENT BRIEFING

(To be read to operatives before the scenario begins). All agents have been trained in Abrician customs and language (100%- those that were not did not make it this far) and have been surgically altered.

DOVE Knows little of Abrice's military plans and directions. The planet's tight restrictions and paranoid xenophobia severely hamper fluid intelligence operations. Agents must usually go in for the long assignment, and channels are very fragile. We have sent four agents in and all are unaccounted for. You are the first team-effort.

Abricians exhibit a 50% xenophobic reaction to otherworlders, and they suffer from many other socio-mental illnesses. Even the most skilled of our diplomats have had only partial success with the stubborn government. Since its discovery by the Contact Survey Service, twenty years ago, little advancement in friendly relations has occurred. It took fifteen years of patient negotiation to simply acquire one thousand square km. of territory to build a StarPort (though it is a monstrous structure). Technically, the starport is HCE territory, but the Abricians demanded that they maintain some security, which was permitted and which they do rigorously, often overstepping their limits. Only due to the sheer sprawlingness of the StarPort has DOVE been able to establish planetary information networks at all. Yet, we cannot discover what the planetary Government is hiding (but, they must be hiding something).

Abrice is undergoing a definite, self-induced, culture shock. Rapidly advancing technology is destroying myths and traditions; without these cohesive beliefs, violence and unrest is spreading. Imperial social scientists predict structural collapse in five to ten years if current factors are not significantly altered. The Benificent and Wise Clement, Consul to Incedus III, has studied the Abricians closely: 'While all evolution is of much the same road, and all breed of sentient creatures do seem to follow this course, still each race (as does each person within the race) gets fixed at certain points in its development-Incedus III's native populace never recovered from the trauma it underwent upon discovery of the elementary fact that they were only floating through space on a rock, about an ill-fated star in a time bound universe that stretches forever. Their primitive gods died a bloody death when it was realized that perhaps other races evolved on other planets about other stars. There was an actual rejection of space migration. Only now is the race changing, but, for reasons I suspect are less than noble. At this critical time in Abrice history, the government has purchased eight SSC/250s from an independant industrial world'.

Just what the Abricians intend to do with these ships is clearly not known. The government nearly crippled itself financially to purchase them, and lost much popular support to the Central Parliamentarians. The independant neighboring world Rowsion has reported incidents with pirating ships in its asteroid belt- the Rowsion government claims these ships to be Abrician, though they have no definite proof. The



**UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS
DEPARTMENT OF INTERSTELLAR SURVEY**

Form 217/DIS.8JE

SURVEY EVALUATION, PLANET Abrice (Incedus III)

STAR SYSTEM DESIGNATION Incedus

BEARING FROM MARKER STAR _____

STELLAR PRIMARY TYPE G3v

DISTANCE FROM MARKER STAR 186.6 LY

PLANETS IN STAR SYSTEM 7

VERTICAL COORDINATE -150

PLANETARY TYPE Standard Terran (2 moons: Klef, Aerut)

ORBITAL DISTANCE 415

LS

PLANETARY DIAMETER 10,000

km

LENGTH OF YEAR 335

days

SURFACE GRAVITY FIELD 0.6

G

LENGTH OF DAY 28 hours, 22 min.

hours

HYDROSPHERIC RATING 80

%

TEMPERATURE RANGE _____

ATMOSPHERIC TYPE Terran (675 mm)

COMMENTS ON ATMOSPHERE: Thick cloud cover & high humidity levels

COMMENTS: 4 continents and many islands and archipelagos. Only Alpha is truly settled in an industrial sense. Beta and Gamma are largely vast agricultural plains. Delta is too rugged to permit development.

Beta was once the seat of a rival power; virtually annihilated in the War of Determination. Ruins still abound. Beta is also the site of the majority of mining operations.

PLANETARY ROTATION ➤

- clear
- forest
- swamp
- mountains
- city
- sea




**UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS
CONTACTS SERVICE**

Form 550/CS.6MV

SENTIENT RACE REPORT, PLANET Abrice TECHNOLOGICAL LEVEL 7-8
 SENTIENT RACE TYPE Humanoid SOCIAL ORGANIZATION Open
 POPULATION LEVEL 500,000,000 SOCIETAL STRENGTH 3 (precarious)
 POPULATION DENSITY _____ XENO ACCEPTANCE INDEX 50%

MAJOR CITIES	POPULATION	STARPORT FACILITIES	DOCKING CHARGES
1 <u>Tak'Atin (cap.)</u>	1 <u>17,000,000</u>	1 <u>HCE A</u>	1 <u>100</u>
2 <u>Vig</u>	2 <u>10,000,000</u>	2 _____	2 _____
3 <u>Errat</u>	3 <u>7,000,000</u>	3 _____	3 _____
4 <u>Urtminor</u>	4 <u>7,000,000</u>	4 <u>Abrice D (sec)</u>	4 _____
5 <u>Jonira</u>	5 <u>2,000,000</u>	5 <u>Abrice E (sec)</u>	5 _____

GOVERNMENT:
 TYPE OF GOVERNMENT Constitutional Monarch BUREAUCRACY LEVEL Very High
 SUPPORT INDEX 33% REPRESSION INDEX 11% LAW LEVEL 15
 LOYALTY INDEX 66% (rev.18%) CORRUPTION INDEX 18% TAX RATE 30%
 TOTAL TAX MCR 337,500

POLITICAL PARTIES & SIGNIFICANT POLICIES

1. RENENT: conservative reactionaries, 'stay home monarchists'
2. ESSI: Central Parliamentarians, 'more people power'
3. ATURIAN: Neo-Monarchists, Aerth supporters, youth oriented
4. _____
5. _____

CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION:

PARTY IN GOVERNMENT	STABILITY	VOTE	%
<u>RENENT</u>	_____	<u>60</u>	_____
PARTY/PARTIES OPPOSING <u>ESSI</u>	_____	<u>20</u>	_____

CURRENT FOREIGN ALLIANCES: Nothing formal as government will not con-
 TRADE ALLIANCES: clude any agreements.

MILITARY ALLIANCES:
OTHER ALLIANCES:
PLANETARY TRADE & COMMERCE:

INDUSTRIALIZATION INDEX Average Agricultural AVERAGE INCOME CR 4500
 TECHNOLOGY & ANOMALIES increasing evidence of Tech/9 items (anomaly)

MAJOR IMPORTS

- 1 Electronic parts
- 2 Computer parts
- 3 Misc. Equipment
- 4 Misc. Tools
- 5 _____

MAJOR EXPORTS

- 1 Food
- 2 Textiles
- 3 Luxury Goods
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

IMPORT/EXPORT RESTRICTIONS & DUTIES 25% duty on non-preferred imports

TRADE ACCEPTANCE INDEX 45%

GENERAL COMMENTS: The odd trader does land at Tak'Akin, often of HCE origin. The HCE cannot get the government to lessen duties.
 The HCE is trying to push a trade agreement or, at least, purchase surplus food.



UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS
BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE

Form 357/BRINT.55R

CLASSIFIED MILITARY INTELLIGENCE REPORT' PLANET Abrice

MILITARY TECH INDEX 7 to 9 (?)

PLANETARY DEFENSE FORCES:

COMBAT READINESS INDEX Average

LOYALTY INDEX Average

CORRUPTABILITY INDEX

UNIT DESIGNATIONS & COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS

3 Armored Brigades

6 Mechanized Brigades

9 Infantry Brigades

AEROSPACE FORCES:

COMBAT READINESS INDEX High and Active

LOYALTY INDEX Moderate

CORRUPTABILITY INDEX Moderate to High

PENETRATION INDEX

1 Airwing

2 small Transport Wings

Numerous left-over nuclear war-heads in high megaton categories

SPACE MARINES/ELITE ASSAULT TROOPS

COMBAT READINESS INDEX High

LOYALTY INDEX High

CORRUPTABILITY INDEX Low

8 SSC/250 StarShips

Reserves and replacements are plentiful, if social chaos not break out.

PARAMILITARY/POLICE/RESERVES:

MILITIA COMBAT READINESS Excellent

LOYALTY INDEX Average to Poor

CORRUPTABILITY INDEX High

POLICE COMBAT READINESS Excellent

LOYALTY INDEX High

CORRUPTABILITY INDEX High

COUNTER INTELLIGENCE EVALUATION: Deep rifts between military branches could severely reduce the effectiveness of combined arms. Should the King be eliminated, social chaos is guaranteed, and riots would result. Hampered by social instability.

REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS:

LEGAL BODIES Neo-Monarchists

HCE Supporters

ILLEGAL BODIES Eden

Anti-Monarchists (anarchists)

REVOLUTION INDEX 3

REVOLUTION INDEX 2

REVOLUTION INDEX 78

REVOLUTION INDEX 17

COMMENTS: The small percentage of neo-monarchists handle that party's more nefarious activities - it is likely that they are the connection with Eden.

The terror campaigns of the Eden Front can be paralyzing at the best of times. They are the driving force behind the social discontent - however, they could be a symptom as opposed to a cause of the social condition.

ships were either able to escape, or self-destructed with such total efficiency that no traces remained.

Now, the self-destructive reaction to capture is characteristically Abriician, according to Consul Clement, but the efficiency with which it was accomplished is a technology not yet thought available. If these aggressors are from Abrice then we can draw only one conclusion; the Abriicians are receiving, illegally, advanced technology from an unidentified third party. Too long have such glaring anomalies in the Abriician technological advancement gone unexplained, and now the time has come to uncover this and the secrets that their government is hiding. The two are very likely to be related.

Make no mistake, this mission is extremely dangerous. The Abriicians are a very strange breed, and have many unique cultural patterns unlike any of their neighbors. They are quite devout in their primitive beliefs, which are harsh and unforgiving; any small slip-up can cost lives in their Social Atmosphere.

Nothing is as important in an Abriician's life as bravery and the unswerving dedication to one's ideals. Regardless of what was instilled in childhood, it seems, the social norm is to hold those beliefs to heart, never losing faith. Only the degenerates succumb to temptation that weaken one's will. When they are brought to see the light, they will be valuable members of our community.

Life itself is considered cheap, and only has value when applied to some greater goal. This is not to say that the people cannot be corrupted—not in the least, for bribery and deceit abound. Very often, one's ideals are in contradiction with one's social position or job, thus being easy targets for bribes.



King Lydor XII makes excellent use of all this in the making and maintaining of a merciless army. This force he plans to hand down to his first son, Prince Kud. But Kud is jealously challenged by his younger brother, Prince Aerth. Aerth has other plans, very strong youth support, and heads the Neo-Monarchist party. He is also Admiral of the Sky Fleet—Outward expansion is his dream. Our connections with Aerth are good, but he is brash and difficult to control; he may become a problem if he comes to power.

Suicide and murder are not such horrible crimes, often legal, even respectable. Mothers killing children is not criminal, and child abuse is common and open. Birth-control is non-existent (in form and concept),

so the population level is somewhat stable. So strong is this suicidal trait in the humanoids that those with strong constitutions can literally will themselves to death (if bravery permits) when great enough pressure is brought to bear upon them. From what information we do have, this seems to be an evolutionary hold-over and this can be demonstrated through the planets wildlife. (SM: see Zips).

This genetic trait makes for a generally low planetary empathy. There is little softness and tender caring, for there has been no room for the gentler pace of true empathic sensitivity; the Abriician evolutionary pace is truly rapid (and cruel).

The women who still bear young (called Khuntz as a group), are considered unintelligent and special citizens, in the worst sense of the word. Women have largely abandoned natural birth and pregnancy for test-tube babies. 'Why go through that sort of thing when it is a proven fact that test-tube babies are more dedicated citizens in their adult years, and less likely to succumb to psychological imbalances.' The modern woman cuts off her breasts, enlists in some government branch, and in her spare time learns violence as an art.

Violence is commonly practiced. The amount of terrorism is staggering and it is a sign of the people's strength of character that the society has not fallen apart. The chief terrorist group is translated as Eden or Paradise.

Your mission is of great importance. The Consul and Deputy Minister of Contacts have, it seems, impressed greatly on His Holiness the worth of Abriician contribution to the Empire, once they have grasped the True Faith. Thus, you must not, repeat, not jeopardize diplomatic relations—once in, you are on your own.

All in all, never let your guard down in this society. No one is to be trusted, for it is plentied with spies and counterspies. God be with you.

(The team has to have one leader. He will choose his second-in-command. These two will have the faces (after surgical alteration) of all the agents who have gone in imprinted into their memories, so they can identify such agents, and give an appropriate recognition signal.

THE PLANET

ABRICIAN TIME LINE:

The major events since the dawning of the new era are outlined here for quick reference by the StarMaster.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 106 P.H. | present year. Growing social upheavals everywhere; the military is experiencing mild purges that could soon escalate to full scale slaughter if espionage continues. |
| 105 P.H. | the government purchases 8 StarShips from an independent industrial world (SM can choose which system this is to be; the HCE will, naturally, not be too pleased with this scale); Prince Aerth begins making noise about expanding to the stars, which his father, King Lydor XII is planning, but not so vocally; he feels, quite rightly, the populace has to be slowly introduced to the idea. |
| 101-02 P.H. | the HCE builds the Great StarPort at Tak'Atin, encouraging friendship, trade and a healthier Abriician economy. |
| 87 P.H. | Lydor XII coronated. His first move is to drop the legal age to sixteen years of age. |
| 86 P.H. | first contact with HCE; anti-alien demonstrations common. |
| 85 P.H. | the massive Youth Riots; millions of credits in damage and thousands are killed in the planetwide protests against repressive government. |
| 81 P.H. | Eden founded, and their continual terror-bombing campaigns begin. |
| 73 P.H. | the economic decline increases severely; massive unemployment and rising cost of living spurs the rise of a myriad of alternative parties. |
| 70 P.H. | Servixa (Woman's anti-pregnancy league) formed. |
| 65 P.H. | test-tube babies become legal and a state-run operation. |
| 64 P.H. | the end of the years of plenty; from here on economic difficulties begin to plague Abrice. |
| 60 P.H. | PROJECT 12 complex on Delta continent completed. |

55 P.H.	Ephud Mawau discovers the Gate; PROJECT 12 initiated.
52 P.H.	King Lydor XI crowned (at age 13).
18 P.H.	a bewildered, and floundering military clamorously attempts a coup against King Kaag'Ari (a very dictatorial ruler) in the name of freedom and the greater ideals beyond the imperfect realm of the flesh; it fails miserably, and a brutal retaliation is exacted upon the populace by the government.
13 P.H.	the Fathers of Truth release their Treatise on the Evolution of the Spirit of Humanity to a shattered and confused world; though it was essentially non-political, certain groups applied it to politics (and still do), which brought a strong reaction from the crown; later this year, the scientists comprising the Fathers of Truth (a name later given them by followers) are arrested and publicly murdered, creating martyrs to a strong dream.
12 P.H.	the War of Determination ends, having escalated from a conventional conflict to a limited nuclear war; the victor (Alpha continent over Beta) forms the great planetary government and name it Abrice, after that most wilful of gods; a large genocidal policy is undertaken by the victorious Alpha continent upon Beta (which has still not recovered to this day).
10 P.H.	after years of drawing to the crisis, the final War of Determination begins.
1 P.H.	considered to be the beginning of the new era, proclaimed in 12 P.H. by King Kaag'Ari; in this year the powers of the atom were finally harnessed (Kaag'Ari was 11).

Abrice has evolved quite on its own. It has little common heritage with their neighbors, for they were an individual experiment of the Forerunners. All in all, the lifeforms of Abrice are very vicious and aggressive, as are the Abricians themselves.

The regularity of the encounters has been left up to the SM. Many factors can come to play here, and the SM should feel free to design a chart. The part should not be defeated in the wilderlands, just severely tested, if you will.

The animals listed are herein detailed. They are by no means the only creatures on the planet:

Akar:

Voracious omnivore, these are like the great army ant swarms. They are the terror of all, for they know no fear and march on incessantly, destroying all in the wake. Their approach is inevitably heralded by waves of fleeing creatures, and they are followed by masses of carrion birds feeding off the remains. They are basically limited to Delta continent now, having been eliminated by Abrician technology elsewhere. They move SLOW.

A'Ora:

Rather like bears, these large and very shaggy beasts lumber about the wilderlands stealing prey wherever they can. It is really afraid of very little, though it chooses to avoid Abricians and Rakars whenever possible; it will stand its own ground, however, if pushed or cornered, and can be extremely violent.

Size 500-700kg, DF 70-80, SF 100, SH 18, SLOW, Armor J, claws C, teeth C, but its most effective weapon is the crush or bash — it will always charge into combat when possible.

ABRICIAN WILDLIFE:

1d100	Swamps
01-10	Plants
11-20	Molds
21-25	Luvaa
26-30	Yarnok
31-60	Swamp Grazers
61-70	Nimaaz
71-90	Kark
91-00	Classic Omnivore
1d100	Forests
01-	Akar
02-21	Classic Omnivore
22-34	Ekkies
35-43	Grazers
44-53	Intermittent Grazers
54-58	A'Ora
59-63	Luvaa
64-71	Rakar
72-91	Ta
92-00	Zips
1d100	Plains
01-03	Akar
04-13	Carrion Birds
14-23	Classic Omnivore
24-28	Ekkies
29-43	Grazers
44-50	Intermittent Grazers
51-60	Severi
61-70	Loraa
71	Ta
72-90	Muffo
91-00	A'Ora
1d100	Mountains
01-05	Akar
06-25	Carrion Birds
26-45	Classic Omnivore
46-50	Ekkies
51-75	Intermittent Grazers
76-85	Severi
86-95	Sitada
96-00	A'Ora



Carrion Birds

Very much like vultures, they are usually found feeding off a badly decayed carcasses in groups of 2-12. If in groups of more than 5, they have been known to actually attack those intruding on them. They will fly away first, then swoop in after sizing the situation up. They are fragile, and any hit of more than 4 pts damage will down one, and they do no real damage to speak of, unless a critical is delivered (d6 damage)—their main threat is the fact that they are quite disease ridden and if they do hit, there is a 10% chance that some disease has been communicated.

Classic Omnivores

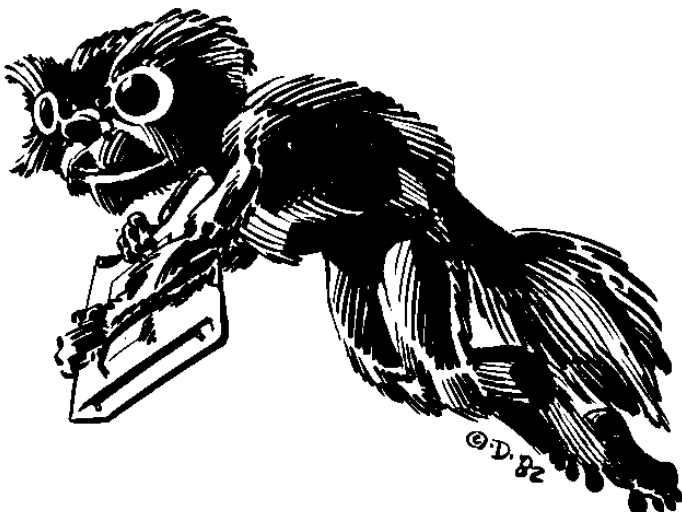
There are just so many possibilities here that it would be futile to attempt to detail them. The SM can easily play this one by ear, inventing all sorts of cute little furry guys that graze on berries and roots, perhaps

the odd little animal. Who knows, they just might have rabies, or a nasty little attack when the party is least expecting it.

Ekkies

So cute, so adorable, they could make you vomit with their darling antics. They are extremely mischevious, and love to raid camps at night, stealing things (particularly shiny things) weighing no more than 2kg; their black fur and fleetness makes them adroit at this activity. They also love to gnaw things (like hoses, sack, clothes) and like to explore sleeping bags. They know little fear really, but will scurry away from lights. Ekkies can be easily trained as pets if properly enticed. The odd stray has been known to attach itself to traveling groups (most Abricians delight in throwing them into camp fires, yet this deters them not), raiding them consistently.

Size 5kg, DF 10, SH 8, FLEET, Armor K.



Grazers

Consider this group to be played as for Classic Omnivores. Generally, all Grazers in this group will be the passive to the end types (deer, antelope, etc.); their main tactic is to flee. VERY FAST.

Intermittent Grazers

Again to be played by ear, but these creatures do more than standard Grazers (see chapter 17.0 in Space Opera).

Kark

A wolverine-of-the water, with the size of a crocodile. Out of water they are at a definite loss, but in water they are poetry in motion, swimming fast and able to freeze suddenly, hidden in the murkiness (even their breathing is imperceptible). They live alone, or with a mate (25%)—mates hunt in a well coordinated fashion.

size 150kg, DF 40, SF 58, SH 17, HH 50, Armor J, teeth B, FAST/VERY SLOW.



Loros

Wild dogs, traveling in family-hunting packs. Very patient, they can stay on a prey's trail for days, waiting for the opportune moment to strike.

Size 325kg, DF 58, SH 18, HH 70, SF 80, Armor K, fangs C, FAST.

Luvaas Sprayer

A large and wide-runnered plant. Any sudden contact with any part of it causes it to release a thick spray of spores in a 1m radius, having the effect of Drug/8 — bringing on an opium-like feeling...cloudy...distant...floating...perfect serenity...heaven...so slow... the victim will begin to hear whispers in the wind, oblivious to others around, want to climb the trees, want to run around free. As these actions can be very dangerous, the party will likely try to restrain the victim, which will bring violent and maniacal reactions, possibly injuring self or others. This will continue for a few hours, unless the victim is sedated- after 8 hours sleep, he will wake, normal though very drowsy (dexterity and agility will be down some 2-7 pts each).

Molds

Fungus, mold, wierd growths abound in the swamps, all largely infectious. They will grow on most anything very rapidly (like the hair, or tents, etc.). They also can infect open wounds. The SM can apply this as is necessary.

Muffo

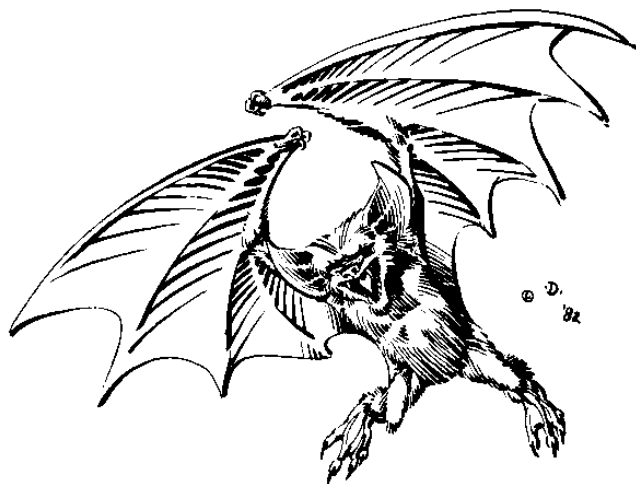
The dull-witted grazers are the primary herd of the plains, and once, the entire planet. They are killed for their hides (super tough), though the rest of the bodies are quite useless (their meat is very tough as well). Individually they can be dangerous if angered, but their attention span is limited to the surrounding 3m. Their major threat is, of course, the stampede.

Size 100-300kg, DF 25-35, SF 50-80, SH 15, HH 35, Armored I, horns D, AVERAGE.

Nimaaz

Large, bat-like mammals. They are robbers. They have the ability to sense dead meat far off in the mists; can home in on this well. They travel in groups of 5 or 6, and if their horrifying screech does not frighten away the feeding animal, they will begin swooping in from all sides (they prefer the thickest of mists) until the prey is relinquished.

Size 100kg, DF 25, SF 70, SH 11, HH 28, Armored K, claws H and once the victim is down, they proceed to rip it apart with very strong jaws.



Plants

Usually harmless, but interesting lifeforms. However, 20% of all plants are poisonous (and the rest will undoubtedly make the agents feel rather ill). There is also a 5% chance that a previously proven edible plant has a poisonous look-alike, detectable only to Abrician guides or scout/10s. Of course, a science sensor would make this all rather simple.

Rakar

This carnivorous stalker/ambusher is the most fierce mammal of them all. It is simply so massive, viscous and deafening (roar) that everything fears it, and any scout of level 4 and up will notice a very real tension in the forests when it is about. Its favorite food is Zip, but it will eat anything when hungry, and loves to kill. It is, however, not at all fond of the smell (or taste) of metal, and elder Rakars strictly avoid such things (35% it is elder).

Size 1000kg, DF 66, SH 16, SF 110, HH 60, Armor K, teeth A, claws B and if both claws hit, an extra 2d6 rending damage is done, AVERAGE.



Severi

Basically a coyote, hunting by night and scavenging by day. It is a loner, and quite crafty, never letting itself get into sticky situations.

Size 75kg, DF 27, SF 76, SH 17, HH 30, Armor K, teeth E, claws G, FAST. Though a good fighter, it will usually run before combat.

Sitada

Doglike animals with stinger ornamented tails, six legs, and strangely reflective fur (decreases laser weapons damage by 5 levels). They avoid society, thus found rarely (and only in mountains). They can smell blood and prey miles away (if winds are right, of course). The chief tactic of Sitada is to surround a prey and run it into a waiting group. They are not superior fighters, relying on their poisonous stingers and numbers.

Size 200kg, DF 35, SF 63, SH 12, HH 37, Armor K, teeth F, claws E, tail C with a type 5 poison (makes one violently ill, followed by a paralysis minutes later), FAST.

Ta

Carnivorous trapper-arachnid. It spins large, semi-transparent webs, and excretes a scent like the delicious Gawa fruit, beloved by most forest dwellers (particularly Zips). They change webs often, to keep prey off-balance; thus, 40% of all webs encountered are not occupied. When struck by any seering weapon (laser, blaster, etc.), Ta emit a foul stench that can turn the strongest of stomachs, keeping most away from them until the odor clears (10 minutes later). Webs usually stretch across forest paths, and the plains Ta uses the mouths of caves.

Size 100kg, DF 25, SF 52, SH 10, HH 47, Armor G, bite F with poison type 4, VERY SLOW. Most Ta have 1-3 webs, so there is an appropriate chance it will be checking out other webs.

Zips

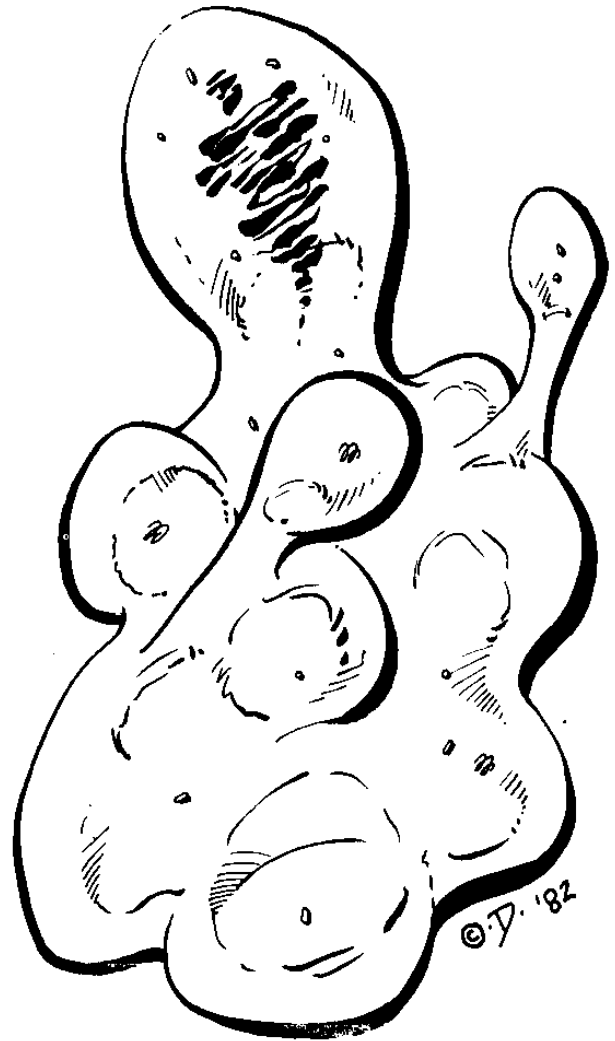
Aggressive and social omnivores, much like baboons. They are quite organized, very crafty, and loyal to their family group. Zips are territorial, and will attack (and not stop) until an intruder has left their territory. They employ something of a psychological warfare, complete with war cries, surprise raids, ambushes from the trees (they like to stone victims from there) and a stubbornness that is truly amazing. They have a very primitive society amongst themselves.

Size 150kg, DF 34, SF 80, SH 11, HH 34, Armor K, weapon H, SLOW. These statistics are for the warrior Zips, the males and certain females. The rest are non-combatants and will **never** fight— if trapped a mother will kill her children and then herself.

Yarnok

Large, amoeboid swamp dweller. It is a terrifying creature, and attempts to engulf prey that step into it, digesting it with corrosive juices. It will retreat, leaving prey, if it receives more than half damage, or a critical hit is received (assumed to have hit the nucleus).

Size 500-1000kg, DF 40-80, SF 60, SH 19, HH 20, Armor E, use silicate entry for attacks, and it does d10 damage, requiring a Shock roll after 3 consecutive attacks upon the prey. VERY SLOW.



RELIGION:

It hangs on, a relic of the past, withered in the shatter-shocked new world. The gods are being abandoned by the young intellectuals. 'we are the makers of the new future,' they like to think.

ABRICE

Leader of the pantheon of old, and leader of all creation. He is most definitely the male-principle, though physically he is portrayed as a hermaphrodite.

The faith is extremely racial, anti-Taleel (see *Star Sector Atlas 1*), and harsh to the core. All is useless, people are worthless, except in their service of Abrice. One must wisely choose when and how to die for those unworthy in dying shall never get into heaven, being condemned to eternal death. Abrice will not allow the cowardly or the aged (age 55 up) into heaven.

This has long been the widely accepted religion and does still hold considerable influence with the more conservative members of the society. The fanatics follow the Word to the letter, and form secret sects to go about helping to do Abrice's work, by murdering the cowardly or the aged.

ETTI

Renegade god of the elderly, pictured as an insane and wrinkled old man. Some legends say his son, Abrice, threw him out of his own house and Etti now wanders the wilderlands, where he can be heard moaning at night. Hence, many elders (devout ones) will leave for the wilderlands when they reach old age—once there, the harsh conditions usually finish them off.

Worshippers of Etti are often total psychotics. Some do stay in the society holding a position similar to our wino-beggars.

There are a myriad of other gods and goddesses, most of which can be further outlined by the SM. Below are a few examples:

GRENA: Sexless woman war goddess.

ARI: Male god of fertility.

URGESS: Nature.

AMPA: God who gave the Abricians and gods minds. He predates them all.

TRIOR: Extremely minor faith, but possibly important to this adventure. They are the demons of the swamps, and plague the continent of Taa'aa (Delta). Myths claim they flew about or walked on many legs, breathed fire (some stories say sheets of ice) they reached up to make the stars. So great was their power that men would sometimes die from just looking at them.

The few nomadic tribes still roaming Taa'aa worship the Trior, and sacrifice man made things to the swamps (i.e. they chuck it in the muck).

FATHERS OF TRUTH

After the War of Determination some scientists began to consider the implications of all the whirlwind advancements and discoveries being made in the new age. The greatest of them was, of course, the harnessing of the atom's power.

These scientists, the Fathers of Truth, recognized the importance of these things, and they announced a new age for all—the gods were, dead, the Kings obsolete, and the age of man had begun. (Aerth has modified this somewhat by calling for a new approach to Monarchy).

In many ways, the Fathers of Truth were nothing new, the philosophies being much as always, but they had removed the God aspect; the Mind was to replace them. They taught that the body is not a thing to put great faith in:

'The body falters, weakens, destroys the greatest of will and determination brought down from on high (i.e. the mind). The body is the seat for all that is base and rejected by the spirit. **REMEMBER**, this (the body) is only what our spirits have dragged up and out from the waters in which we evolved—it shall dissipate. Life shall not then stop; life is not a slave to the body and the material plain. The Spirit is eternal!'

'In our hour upon this world, we must continually strive to detach our body from mind. Let those who would it be otherwise, be left behind—they have damned themselves to assured misery... nowhere are the pleasures of the flesh so real as in hell itself...'

Today's youth have grown up in a culture heavily shattered by these philosophies.

Always an unstable, fast paced race, the global war likely did irreparable damage. (SM: nothing on planet Earth could demonstrate the Abrician feel; picture perhaps northern Ireland magnified on the eve of the Russian Revolution as a backdrop).

PLAYING AN ABRICIAN NPC

All this makes for a very brave breed indeed. Abricians should be played with a wintry, distant, preoccupied manner; imagine yourself obsessed with death, ceaselessly holding back a terror and pain that drives you constantly to desperate measures, never letting you relax for a moment.

Humor is rare, and very dark when it does exist. (It can also be very subtle). There is no pride in one's family line. The nuclear family is

dying, if not dead (fissioned, and empty relic). Romance is a non-existent art, and courting is little more than doing some fearless and selfless deed.

Abricians generally stand about 190 cm, but this ranges greatly. Their skin is of an almost amber richness, thick hair (usually black) and they are rather square featured. An inherent love of physical exercise makes them very muscular and healthy, though the low gravity gives them a thin appearance.

The intellectuals of society embrace the ideals laid down by the Fathers of Truth, and are arrogant about it. The less mentally capable have to find other channels to release an abundant energy—psychological disease is a common method:

CHANCE OF A MAJOR MENTAL DISEASE

Age	
to 15	65%
16-21	55%
22-40	30%
41-50	25%
51-55	35%
56+	85%

Whenever encountering Abrician natives, check to see if they suffer from any mental illnesses. If so, use the tables below.

TYPE OF ILLNESS

		AGE MODIFIER
01-10	the Suicide Trip	to 15 -20
11-18	psychopath	16-21 -10
19-35	megalomania	22-40 0
36-42	melancholia	41-50 +10
43-79	sever paranoia	551 up +20
80-00	psychosis	

Suicide Trip

Fascinating game in which the participant attempts to die before his skin develops wrinkles, or, as is often the case, before their acne clears. Nothing is too dangerous.

Psychopath

A character with empathy 0. Anyone with an empathy of 3 plus is likely to see the wisdom of avoiding this type. But, of course, there will be times when one just cannot evade such encounters. The SM can find many of these instances.

Megalomania

Such people are the most arrogant and obnoxious people, and attract trouble to themselves continually by telling everyone what to do.

Melancholia

Just short of catatonia, these guys are useless to most, but one never knows when they might just pop out of it (10%). Of course it will not be long before they are back to the depths of despair.

Paranoia

Worse than usual, these NPC's are really dangerous, suspecting a plot in everything and anything.

Psychosis

Finally gone over the rainbow, these people are not able to communicate reality. Mind you, some of these types can initially appear as ordinary citizens until pressure or duress is brought to bear.

Needless to say, all of these NPC's can be very dangerous to the agents, in many ways. Usually the party finds out their true mental state at inopportune moments.

Note: all Abricians exhibit these traits to some degree, but they have them under control. There are plenty of Empathy 1 or 2 psychopaths running about the cities, but they need a trigger to fully manifest, whereas the Empathy 0 psychopaths are constantly triggered. Remember also that 'niceness' is very uncomfortable to an Abrician; players being too friendly will find that they make more enemies than friends, and that is to say the least.

NPC REACTION TABLES:

To assist SM's in administering NPC encounters between associable beings, the following tables are presented.

All people are continually living, and an NPC has a life apart from the players. He is likely to be having his own problems, perhaps he has just started his vacation, or won the lottery, etc. All of which will have a very substantial effect on his reactions and receptivity.

Also, the NPC's own empathy will influence the manner in which he is to be played (perceived by others). The PC's empathy is also important.

After determining the NPC's empathy, on the table below, cross-index it with the PC's empathy- the number is the modifier to be used on the ReactionTable.

NPC REACTIONS

Same Race	Reaction	Other race
01-06	Oblivious/Bad Mood/Hatred!	01-07
07-14	Ignorant, Rude/Instant Dislike	08-15
15-29	Distant/Sulky/Wary & Cautious	16-38
30-67	Pre-Occupied/Uninterested	39-81
68-84	Wary but interest is shown	82-93
85-92	Interest is kept/Polite/Talkative	94-98
93-98	Helpful/Friendly/Cheerful	99-00
99-00	Great mood/a true friend!	

Just as the NPC's empathy effects the way other perceive him, so the PC's empathy has the same effect, as the table above reflects. Often over-looked by players (they tend to play their own natural empathy), the SM should encourage them to play their character's empathy properly.

NPCs of another race must always check Xeno-acceptance first, then normal reaction. If prejudice is evidenced, then subtract 50 from Reaction checks.

NPCs with empathy of 14 or higher never use the Other Race column, having transcended such superficial categorization.

Do not assume that Hatred! or Bad Mood has to mean instant assault. Everyone has a price, or perhaps a desperate necessity can dictate, and so personal feeling must be withheld. After the hated being has served its purpose, though, the NPC may not be so helpful.

Always play these things by ear.

NOTE: For purposes of this adventure, all Abriicians subtract 10 from dice rolls when checking for personality types (Empathy). This reflects their cold personalities.

GETTING ONTO THE PLANET

Security on Abrice is like the Berlin Wall at the best of times. It is a reaction the government has taken to quell a paranoid populace. This has always made Abrice a difficult area of operations.

The agents are to be smuggled in on a diplomatic mission, unbeknownst to anyone. When all of the diplomats are off, then the sweeper crew will come to scan the ship, and this is where the party will make their appearance. They will initially be dressed in sweeper uniforms, and in phony sweep equipment will be the personal gear each agent requires, which should be limited to some thirty kg. There are no buddies at the StarPort, so don't worry about 'Hey, who is youse guys?' or 'Where did Arty go?' (However, if the SM were to create some sort of incident to make the players sweat, this would be more than appropriate).

Next, they will have to enter the carry-over building and wait an hour for the plane that is going to take them to the Capitol, Tak'Atin, as no aircraft are allowed to land or leave when a sweep of an alien vessel is being carried out. The cafeteria (a mammoth place) or one of the numerous lounges will seem the obvious places to wait. The plane will be flown by a member of the underground, and he will ask nothing. He will simply take the players to Tak'atin airfield. He believes he is helping these undergrounders smuggle something past customs, and is aware that the less he knows the better off he is. He will disappear from the PC's lives when he leaves then at the Tak'Atin.

The port is going to feel like the most frigid facility ever experienced- no windows, no conversation, except whispers in the lounging areas. There are feeble signs of the True Faith about, quite lost amidst the austere and stark nature of the place. The StarPort is clearly Empire built, but Abriician peculiarities are all over it. There is a Deacon of the True Faith, to console the believers who should be here, but he has a small platoon of Imperial Marines guarding his quarters. He plans to become Bishop when a see is created here- high hopes, but as the Holy Father, the Exalted Emperor has said 'No thing is too great to withstand the True Faith—for the greater the challenge, the greater our resolution!'. Any other humans that are seen are clearly kept under maximum security escort, the security guards being walking arsenals, equipped with the latest items and plenty of them.

Take your time with all this, keeping the tension high. Let players drink in as much of the atmosphere as possible. Orchestrate it fully, with all of its deadly calm and menacing, sharp silence. That hour should be one of the longest of the player-characters lives, loaded with adrenalin raising incidents and paranoia— this calls for real role-playing.

To help illustrate this, while sitting in the lounge, drinking some substance to calm their nerves, the lowest empathy character in the group notices (or so he thinks) that one of the two guards at the door (the one with the nervous twitch on the left side of his heavily scarred face) is staring directly and incessantly at him, nervously fingering his weapon. When the psionic of the group probes the guard, he shudders at the darkness behind the dead and bottomless eyes— the guard, is obviously on the edge of psychosis. The party wants to leave quickly, but are af-



raid of alarming the Abriician, who is still staring at the party member with the lowest empathy (dice rolling here is very effective). Finally getting the nerve to unglue themselves from their seats, they, with baited breath, leave the room, and heave the deepest sigh when the guard makes no motion to stop them. Then, suddenly, another guard calls out, 'hey wait!'. He is merely returning a two-credit note they dropped (Abriicians may have a lot of problems, but they can be honest, sometimes).

Or, all hell breaks loose when Eden Terrorists are in the StarPort. They go berserk and begin shooting the place up, much to the concern of the agents, afraid of being taken hostage. They have to watch as the terrorists search quickly for off-worlders to murder before security arrives to bloodily cut them down with a massive overkill.

The agents had a heart stopping moment when they heard a siren begin blasting and a voice boom over the speakers 'FULL ALERT! FULL ALERT! SECURITY HAS BEEN BREACHED! REPEAT, SECURITY HAS BEEN BREACHED! THERE ARE INTRUDERS IN THE BASE! REPEAT, SECURITY HAS BEEN BREACHED! THERE ARE INTRUDERS IN THE BASE! SEAL OFF ALL QUADRANTS! FULL ALERT! ALL UNITS TO QUADRANT BORDERS!'. This is followed by the sight of a mass of troopers, in full armor storming toward the group, only to pass right by them. Had the party reacted incorrectly, they could have been in, too say the least, big trouble. This sort of thing can really set players on edge—and they should be. Abrice is an extremely hostile planet (socially), and is hiding some major secret.

It will take more than simply looking Abrician to survive in a place where nothing is forgiven.

THE EDENTIANS

Eden is the terrorist group of most power and largest membership. They claim they support the Neo-Monarchists and will not stop until Lydor XII is dead. Aerth and the Neo-Monarchists deny any association with the Edentians.

Eden attracts the most violent and desperate of the Abricians; this makes for a very deadly group. They are the true fanatics.

Eden has numerous cells scattered about the cities of the world, but they are very disorganized and lack the patience to follow any logical or systematic plans. All they are capable of is a string of terror bombing campaigns (see 'An Evening on the Town'). They are greatly prized by the police, who have numerous undercover agents working in all cities.

The agents may take up on this line of pursuit—it is a dead end, simply a graphic display of the social decay of modern Abrice. The agents will be drawn into the fray, and get caught up in the bloody and senseless violence between the Edentians, the people, and the police. As Edentians are very vocal, they attract constant problems, (the party will quickly find out).

But, the piecemeal nature by which the information comes in, often leads the agents deeper into this mess—for the terrorists never know what their superiors do, just propaganda, slogans, and great promises.

More agents have been lost on this line than any other.

THE MUSEUM TOUR

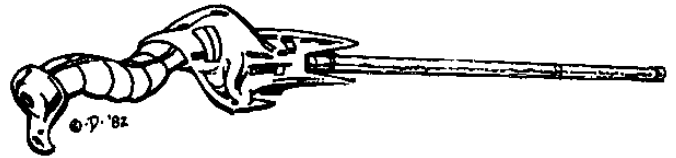
In wandering the streets in the student areas of town (breeding ground for New-Monarchists), the group will pass the city museum (any city will suffice). Here will be a crowd lined up for the next show, in some fifteen minutes. It is a guided tour with the feature attraction, 'The King's Magnificent StarShips' in gaudy lettering.

The line-up is perhaps some 30-40 people, largely students, but with low-life, a pair of businessmen, etc., as per the SM. But, there is a mother and child in the line-up. This is an excellent opportunity for the players to size up the commoners.

The students are rather cliquish, alienating and ridiculing the others. Everyone makes some sort of comment about the mother and child. The kid has large lungs and the mother a large hand, which the two are constantly using on one another, much to the humorous enjoyment of the crowd.

Nothing really interesting is in the show and the King's Magnificent StarShips! is a real let down—just some slides on a huge wall screen and plenty of propaganda about how beneficial they will be. The crowd does not seem to enjoy it, except the students, who delight in calling out slogans.

The only interesting fact comes from a different section of the tour, dealing with modern weaponry. Displayed is a device the Abricians call a Nerve-raker, and it looks like a neurotic-whip, something the Abricians have never had before (it being beyond their technology). It is described as a military weapon, and to demonstrate, a soldier uses it on a live Zip wheeled in a little cage (this is a real highlight). The guide will then suggest it be used on the kid, ha ha! and further such jocularity.



It (the neuro-whip) is apparently of an unidentifiable make. It is definitely not from any known StarCulture.

AN EVENING ON THE TOWN

Someone will eventually get the idea to have dinner out, and check things in and around town.

Regardless of where the players wish to eat, they will invariably go to Cafe Head at some point, as it offers whatever the players are looking for (the SM will see to this).

Things will proceed smoothly and enjoyably at Cafe Head. However, if the psionic is present, he will have felt somewhat uncomfortable all evening. But, then again, the whole planet is uncomfortable. As the time fast approaches, he will sense danger from a dark corner table, where sits a couple alone (apparently lovers, oblivious to their surroundings).

Little hints should string the group along, keeping them interested in why that couple should present a danger. Perhaps the male will get up and go to the washroom or make a phone call, giving leeway for action by the agents.

The danger is actually the bomb that is planted beneath the well cushioned chair. The bomb is very potent, and will destroy half the restaurant, injuring many (though not the party, unless the SM would like to build around a hospital encounter; remember, the alteration is only skin deep, and inside the agents are still human).

The police arrive very quickly—beat cops are plentiful. There is also a distinct possibility that a pair had already come into the cafe for their usual freebie meal. They will allow no one to leave before questioning and statements are taken by a detective.

THE LIBRARY

The agents may wish to use the Central City library in the Capitol. There is some information to be had here. The SM should give out bits and pieces, as the players ask, and let them put it together. But remember, certain information is simply not going to be had, particularly if it concerns the military or the new StarShips— all listings are under restriction lock. Plenty of propaganda is available.

THE CONTINENTS

Alpha is called BEL (system/clock).

Beta is called RH'TEA (home of groups/beginning of many).

Gamma is called TAA'CES (without time/forgotten place).

Delta is called TAA'AA (before time/timeless).

Alpha is the only predominantly industrialized continent. Beta and Gamma both rely mainly on farming, and mining. Beta has a large mining industry. It was once the site of the great nation that opposed Alpha continent, but it was destroyed in the War of Determination.

Delta is the most unimportant of all continents, or so, at least, the books say. It is mostly unexplored, few people ever having the patience to unravel and delve into Taa'aa. The last work done in its wilderlands was during the economic boom of the 10-20 P.H. years. This book **Castles of Mist** is a testament to the lack of interest in the continent by the Abricians—it is a dusty and forgotten work, never having been transcribed to the computer files. It deals with the ancient myths concerning Delta, about the Trior and how the castles were built by a strange race who breathed fire and had many legs like spiders. It was to this land that long, long ago kings would banish the evil and wicked. These criminals later formed along the north coast, and began backward little towns, shunning the wilderlands to the south. They are still a very odd people, very slow and emotionally dead.

The Trior et al is still considered a myth—after all, the castles were simply built by Abricians long ago and offer little, if anything to the race of the future.

DELTA CONTINENT

Deep within Delta Continent's ever misty swamps is the most secret of military complexes, which houses Project 12. It was built around a teleport gate that was found there some 60 years ago.

Getting here is the entire goal of this mission— anything less should be considered as failure by the undercover team. How they get there is the domain of the individual SM, but it should be difficult and it should be lengthy.

The complex's military forces operate 10-15 ATVs with 6 man teams patrolling given sectors of central Delta. They go out for some 2 weeks at a time, constantly monitoring the air waves and wilderness. They are rather casual about their duty, not having had trouble for a long time. (Aerth has sent spies before).

The patrols will always appear as government foresters, just helping out

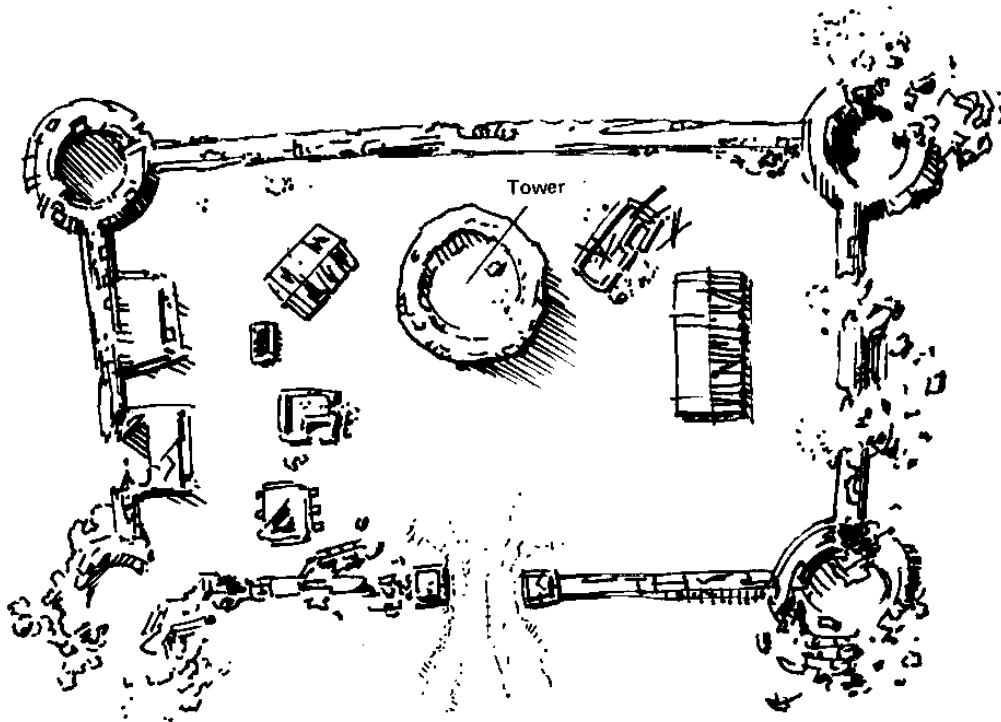
those who may be lost, or hunting. However, anyone in the swamps will be taken prisoner and escorted back to the complex for severe questioning and eventual disappearance.

Once the swamps are entered, the sun will not again be seen, though day-light can be discerned. The vegetation is thick and life is dangerous in the swamps, but not teeming (due to its very ferocity).

If the party gets through the patrols, they will see an old, old castle just before they come upon the complex. It is slightly off the regular routes, but visible.

The castle is small, overgrown and crumbling. The rain adds greatly to the effect.

The party will get a very creepy feeling from the place as they approach to check it out (and they should).



The psionic will get a register of a single life form, humanoid, in the castle; the psionic feels the being is in the tall tower, looking down at them.

A large rock will fall very close to the first one to stand near the old rusted door that allows entrance to the tower. Unless that person makes an agility roll, they will trip, falling hard, taking damage from a rock, or twisting an ankle, etc. Damage is 1d6-1.

In the tower, 4 floors before the top is reached, the party will find two recently dead Zips (in a swamp?), their innards viciously ripped out. They were apparently killed first with arrows, very crude. One has had its head bashed in— a sensor will detect Abrician blood near this one.

The tower is redolent of musty smoke, and a very weak and eerie singing can be heard from above (top floor), if the team stops and listens carefully.

The floor just before the top has a fireplace, and there are embers in it, though very low. A few bones are scattered about.

To get to the top floor, the team must enter through a hatch, and then go up some stairs. Up here lives Athin, an old Abrician, worshipper and priest of Etti. He knows about the complex, and fears the day the young soldiers will find him and kill him. He will think that the group is these soldiers.

He is extremely senile, having been out here for longer than he can remember. The psionic will detect serious mental decay, making him impossible to probe. He is also physically somewhat sick.

The group enters the top room; it is large, with the roof partially caved in, some rain drizzling in. Two thick candles are burning near the altar, which is somewhat clearer of the trash that litters the room. It is, however, loaded with lots of broken statues, and in the shadows, not detectable at first, are hidey-holes, wherein Athin awaits.

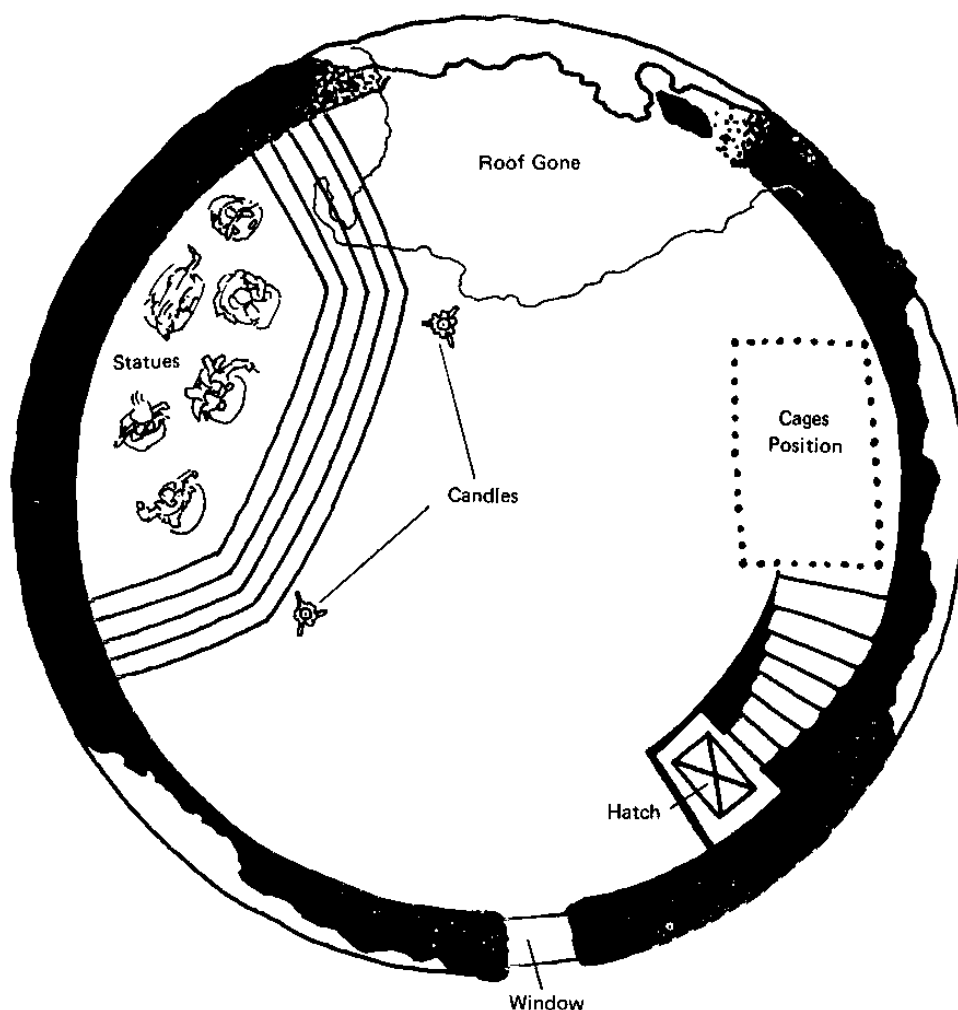
The rest of the room is totally devoid of any sense of wholeness— broken furniture, piles of bones, strange rancid mystery-piles, etc.

After just having arrived, a trap will spring and a heavy iron cage will fall on the party from its ancient place in the ceiling. The tower is so unstable, that the force with which the cage falls almost sends the entire wall crumbling. The party recognizes the seriousness of the situation— violent movement could send them all plummeting to their deaths.

But, before anything can be done, they will hear a mad cackling from the shadowy altar. Athin is about to make his grand debut. He crawls out and begins a rather eccentric performance that should run something like this:

'Now... (laughter) Now, Who Has... (laughter, again, he is really enjoying himself) Now, Who Has Who, Eh, Youngins?'

Open View



He has by now crawled out and is visible to the party. He will **never** leave the altar. If the party makes any sudden moves or attempt to draw a gun, he will warn them that he will make the cage plunge into the ground below (make the party unsure as to whether he can).

'Thought You Could Come And Kill Old Athin... Eh?... Just A Crazy Old Man... Right?... Abrice Wants His Soul... Wants Me To Rot, Right?... (laughter) Well, It Happened Different! You Underestimated Old Etti... Yes... Yess... Now You Are In Etti's Hands... (laughter) Etti Protects His Priests... Yes, He Does...

'Nothing Hurts Me... See?... See?... Etti Is More Powerful Than Abrice... Just Less Violent... Less Brash! He Has Learned Through Age The Art Of Patience!... Yes... heh heh... And A More Wicked Revenge... (he is much quieter now, very sinister) 'You Have Seen I Cannot Be Hurt... .. (then to himself)... Yes, A Dark Revenge... For All Those Years... (to the trapped party again) If You Try To Get Out Of That Cage, You Will Die... Yes, Young Ones, Die... Die Young For Etti, Not For Abrice... heh heh... (he pauses here, muttering things to himself, then acting like some bug is crawling all over him; exhausted from trying to get it off, he sits) (suddenly he stands and shouts) May Etti Throw Them Out And Fall To Death If They Try To Escape!!! (dramatic pause... then falls to the ground and lies silently for a moment; his head suddenly perks up and looks at them, the candle light glinting in his eyes) I'll Be Back, Little Ones... Right Back... Stay Put, So That I May See You... We Must Talk, So Don't Die... (to himself) My... Company... We have company... Oh Etti... And nothing to offer... (muttering he disappears behind the altar, into the shadows).

Notes: Any weapons shot at the altar have no apparent effect, seemingly absorbed. This includes the old man when on it (which is why he never leaves it). Further more, the psionic will not be able to penetrate the altar either. The group will have to coax the old man off the altar if they wish to see him, for the altar also rejects anyone else's body, giving them a very large electrical shock, and leaving them unconscious for some half-an-hour.

Exactly how the SM wants to explain this is a personal decision. Let players draw their own conclusions, which range from various technological explanations to the suggestion that it could be legitimate religion. It doesn't matter— the purpose of this encounter is entertainment, and the clue that the castles are a key to the mystery of Abrice. Athin will release the PC's when (and if) they convince him that they are not soldiers and do not support Abrice.



PROJECT 12

The source of all the technological anomalies, and the government's greatest secret is PROJECT 12. The base for PROJECT 12 (known as the Crown Complex, or simply, the Complex) is deep within the swamps of Delta continent. It is a fairly well-guarded secret, but Aerth and various other underground heads are aware of its existence, and do wonder why it was placed there.

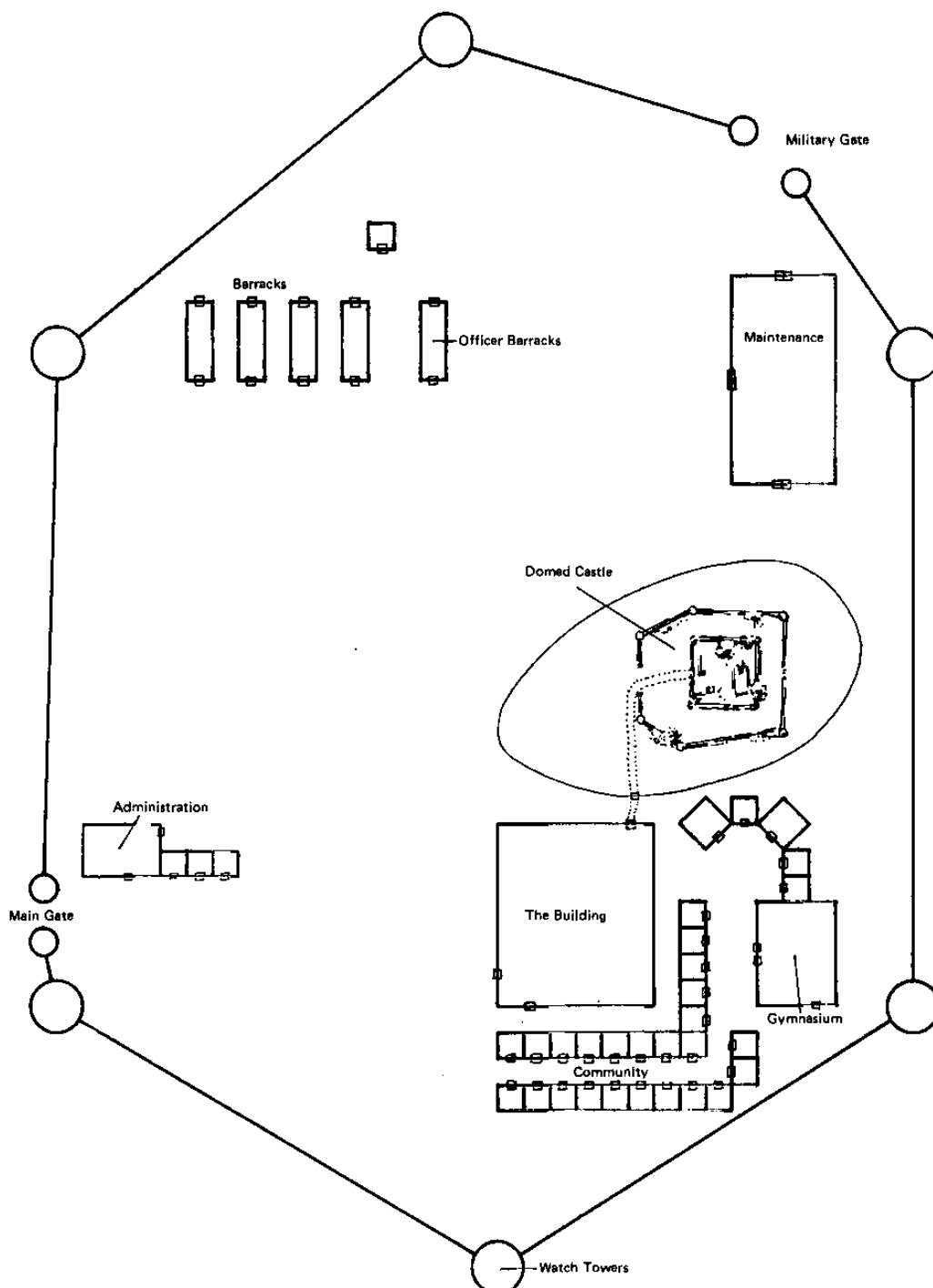
The leader of the military forces on base is Colonel Thessar, although there is often a General visiting the Project. Thessar is a very boorish and pompous figure, proud of his assignment, loyal to the government, with a loud and boisterous 'my lad' attitude toward the soldiers.

He hates Security with a passion, 'them and their infernal prying into military matters and other affairs not of their concern!' This internal power struggle (very typical of Abrician social structures) between the military and Security will have a very definite and chaotic effect in a

crisis—egos will undoubtedly clash in attempts to take control, which will bring intervention from upstairs, most likely Ara; he will quickly correct things.

Only extremely loyal soldiers are allowed to serve at the base. When signing on they have no idea what they are in for, only that it is very important, secret, and that they will serve a minimum of 2 years with no outside communications permitted. After the 2 years, the 'inappropriate' or those unwillingly to continue on are inevitable stationed on godforsaken little bases in the wilderlands of Beta continent, where they are never heard from again.

The main gate of the complex is used by all, though the military tends to use the Military Gate (restricted to all others). The main gate path leads, perhaps 2 km, to a small raised landing strip. It has no capacity to handle StarShips, but it obviously has at some time.



The landing strip consists of an automatic homing beacon, small building, loading equipment and long distance repulsor lifts. The loading equipment is standard for Abrice, being a few of their better Service Meks and some manual fork-lifts; but the repulsor lifts are clearly another technological anomaly. They are continually floating and can be pushed around with the greatest ease, regardless of the weight upon (they are gifts from the Claarions to aid supply transport, and are Tech 10).

Once every two weeks a transport craft will land supplies here, and the military spends the next 3-4 days transporting it to the complex. Slow and tedious work with the inadequate lift capacity.

Other than moving supplies and operating patrols, the military has little to do here, and this shows in the general attitude. The forces consist of one infantry battalion and a tank company (which is a joke among the soldiers, for the tanks do nothing but stay in maintenance, eternal tuning; because of this, the last drills have been a disaster, the tank troops having no coordinated training).

It is possible that a second DOVE agent has penetrated the complex and is now operating as a maintenance Tech. This can be a PC or NPC, but should be strongly considered by the SM, for this is not an easy mission and the team will need all the help they can get.

THE PERSONNEL

Dress and standard equipment issued to the personnel of the complex is outlined below. There can, of course, be deviations from this; the SM should feel free to have individual NPCs have personal arms.

Troopers: Dressed in light grey uniforms (white trim), these soldiers are given standard arms of blaster carbines (with an inferior targetscope: it only gives a +3% targeting), a small laser pistol (-1 on damage) for an all-purpose tool, and CBA/2C. Each soldier is given a single dose of expeditor to use in combat— however, this coupled with the Abrician nature brings on berserker status 15% of the time that lasts about half-an-hour (they then collapse from shock) or they are killed.

Troopers on patrol duty dresses in light green with black trim, has all the above equipment, plus IRV/2 goggles and **D clearance bracelets**.

NCO: Uniforms are dark green with blue and red trim. They are equipped as the Trooper, except they have neuro-whips as side-arms (other than lasers). They also have IRV/2 goggles, PC/2, and **C clearance bracelets**.

Officers: Dark Grey uniforms trimmed with rust and black, the officers rarely wear their CBA/2C unless there is an emergency. They always carry their blaster pistols, neuro whips, and **B clearance bracelets**.

Security: This group is very ominous, both in dress (solid black and red insignia patches) and mannerisms. Their uniforms are LBA/4, and they are equipped with sonic stunners. Officers have the same plus neuro-whips. Special forces groups can have tangle-guns, laser rifles (with targetscope), stun grenades, and tear or paralysis gas. **B clearance bracelets** are standard issue.

Maintenance Techs: A branch of the military, they dress as troopers, but are not given expeditor drugs and have only blaster pistols. Of course, there are plenty of tools that can be used as make-shift weapons. **B & C bracelets** are standard issue.

Scientists: Plain white jumpsuits with a simple rank insignia. **A to D clearance** is the norm.

THE BUILDING

The Abricians, with their inherent love of phallic symbols, had to build some tall structure at this historic project. The building here stands 30 stories high, and is lost in the low mists— it goes 7 floors underground. This building is the brain of the complex— it is also a sea of red tape and departmentalization, with everyone blindly stumbling over one another. Due to this and the Project's lack of a well defined command structure, missing personnel are often not noticed for a few days (unless the absence is glaringly obvious— use common sense).

LEVEL 30: A Clearance. Pure research on the new weapons and systems being brought in by the Claarions. Heavy security. Computer techs, not having A Clearance can get in here by having a special pass from the Security Chief AND Ara or his deputy. This is due to the fact that no one in Security has an A clearance! They can guard the entrance to the labs, but they themselves cannot go beyond that point.

LEVEL 29: Security Deck 1. Elevators always stop at Security Decks when going up, regardless of what floor was requested. Security will then demand to see proper authorization, and they do it with extreme exuberance.

LEVELS 24-28: B Clearance. Research on various fields is conducted in these veritable mazes of labs, offices, storerooms and more labs. Hyper-dimensional physics is the primary topic, as the scientists try to grasp all the new information supplied by the Claarions.

Hard information on the Claarions existence will not be had here, only theories— the scientists here know nothing of what their work's real purpose is (though they know something major was uncovered in that castle and is most likely the source of all this new data and theories coming in). One scientist has heard rumors of strange research work going on in the basement levels involving archaic languages. Some very strange and secretive biological experiments are also taking place up here, continually guarded by Security staff.

LEVEL 23: Security Deck 2.

LEVELS 16-22: C Clearance. Reams and reams of red-tape and chaotic departments of everything from accounting, personnel, quartermastering to brothel control, supervisor of department supervisors, and religious upkeep. The bulk of base personnel are employed here!

LEVELS 13-15: C Clearance, though they had better have a good reason for being here. These floors hold Security Control, all cameras are watched, prisoners are kept, paperwork is done, offices are here, etc. The weapons room is solidly packed with more equipment than even Ubo Blue could use!

LEVELS 11-12: C Clearance. Security personnel quarters and lounges, including all facilities necessary to live.

LEVELS 8-10: B Clearance. This is the military's only contribution to the bureaucratic scene. These three levels could easily be condensed into one floor; there are very many empty offices and lecture halls. From these floors air waves surveillance is kept (as well as contact with patrols), plans are drawn out (continually, continually, continually), logs and records entered, books read, sleep caught up on, boredom maximized, etc.

LEVELS 6-7: B Clearance. The military officers' lounges, dining rooms, private brothel, bar, and quarters.

LEVELS 4-5: D Clearance. Medical facilities open to all personnel, though shirkers are severely dealt with.

LEVELS 2-3: D Clearance. General lounges and cafeterias.

LEVEL 1: D Clearance. Main lobby, information, conference rooms, open offices etc. Very nice, with fountains, plants, artificial sun, birds and everything.

LEVEL -1: D Clearance, though sections are restricted to certain people. This is the base brothel. New whores are flown in every year, and an average of thirty are always present. These whores are army whores, and are paid regular wages. It is a legitimate branch of the services, and they travel about from base to base. Normally the replacement rate is faster, but this is not a typical base.

Security will destroy the memories of these females before they leave— officers may let things slip. An electrical shock program scrambles the brain rather effectively, after which they have little time-line in their recollections. In the meantime, some of the more capable girls may have some information. (Don't expect miracles, for overly intelligent females these are not, though they can be coerced into trying something).

LEVEL -2: D Clearance. Garbage, janitorial, general supplies, etc.

LEVEL -3: Security Deck 3.

LEVEL -4: B Clearance. Power sources, important stocks.

LEVEL -6: Security Deck 4.

LEVEL -7: A Clearance. Private quarters for A Clearance personnel. Here are computer labs where research is being done in translating Cla-

arion into Abrician. If the party should uncover this, it would be almost hypnotising, for the HCE has never even heard of Claarions, (at this point). It will be obvious, though, to almost anyone that the two languages are in no way related— the odd, high-pitched, sensual one is clearly alien, and unknown. A linguist will also realize it is extraordinarily complex, and the Abrician translations must be poor (their language being very blunt).

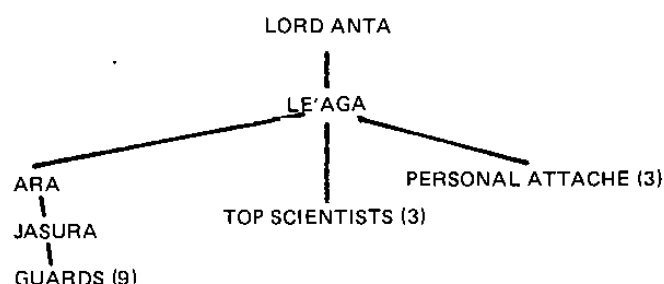
This level is devoid of Security cameras and regular base personnel ALWAYS. The only people who are ever on this level, live here. They are permanently committed to PROJECT 12.

This personnel is detailed herein. They will be but glimpsed above, usually escorting in or out some visiting VIP from the king.

Ara: psionic; unofficial leader of PROJECT 12.

Le' Aga: permanent attache to the King's own Advisor. He heads the diplomatic corps, and is always watching things to report. Nominal leader.

Jasura: She is Ara's personal deputy, and a psionic.



The nine guards are all 'exceptional'; they are loyal to the end, extremely clever, never go berserker and NEVER check morale.

They are surprisingly well equipped: neuro-whips, vibro-knives, and one very strange looking heavy weapon. It is a fusion rifle (though only with the effect of a pistol). This would only be apparent to the party if they see it in action, or upon close inspection by a knowledgeable weapons Tech. The weapon is obviously not made for anthropomorphic creatures, and even with the modifications that have been made, it is very hard to handle. These guards have mastered it, but anyone else using it would subtract 15% from their targeting.

The guards wear unmarked dark green uniforms, which are the equivalent of LBA/3.

The three scientists are elder (40), and very experienced. They are peaceful, and will not join a combat— this is why they were allowed to work here.

The three diplomats assigned to Le' Aga, are very loyal, and very cool. They really do consider their mission to be of the greatest importance, and would do nothing to jeopardize it. They wear no armor and carry only laser pistols— they have no real skill in this.

Most importantly, the general conference room on this level (which is a sensory feast), also contains the door to a passage that leads to the level below the domed castle. This is used only by permanent personnel. Visiting dignitaries use the above ground entrance to the castle.

THE SECURITY

Security's domain is technically the main building, though they operate much more extensively. Security mans the building video surveillance, security decks, administers law in the building, keeps tabs of non-military personnel (they step out of line here constantly), etc.

It is headed by Captain Oget Eri— at least nominally. If the SM wishes, a long-term DOVE agent can be assumed to have infiltrated, and, through judicious use of his psionic powers, risen to a lieutenant, second in command of security. The DOVE agent has played upon Captain Eri's degenerate and hedonic nature, giving him a firm push in the wastrel direction. He now spends more time drunk, drying out, in the brot-

hel, or in the dining rooms then manning the Security. This is fine by our DOVE agent, who covers for Eri at every turn (there has been innumerable times), for our DOVE agent prefers the less obvious position of second-in-command. Besides, this operative gets what he wants through a few well placed suggestions. However, he knows that Ara, and perhaps two others with A Clearance are psionic, and avoids them like the plague.

Having a BRINT agent in this position is a powerful influence factor. He can supply some much needed information (particularly on the complex's standard operating procedures), and can get the party out of some very tight situations, if they have not drawn too much attention to themselves. Imagine the reactions from sweaty agents (adrenalin pumping, brain racing) when they are brought before the second-in-command of Security and find out he is a DOVE agent!!

But, the operative, Lieutenant Pretaara, is not omnipotent— far from it. Security is not trusted by the 'boys upstairs' (the A clearance personnel are always referred to as this, which is misleading, as they inhabit the lowest floor). Reports are always flowing, Security personnel informing on one another— they share none of the brotherly spirit and camaraderie that the military has. If the DOVE agent pushes his power too far, the boom will come down in some manner (he will at least be noticed; it can be assumed that the Lt's record is spotless, having suggested this to superiors time and again; and Ara and Jasura know that Lt. Pretaara is psionically endowed, they consider this a benefit for security, being arrogant about their own powers).

When in the building, all personnel must wear I.D. cards (merely states department, tour of duty, etc. and a small picture) and special security bracelets. The bracelets permit passage into rooms— pressing the info-face against a receiver plate by the doors transmits the proper clearance signal, opening the door. The bracelets are not removable, unless the flexible, synthetic band is cut (this is repairable, but requires fine work if not to be obvious).

The bracelets are color coded: A Clearance is red, B Clearance is black, C Clearance is green and D Clearance is gray.

The chance of encountering personnel of various clearance randomly is as follows: Roll/d100:

01-45	D/gray
46-80	C/green
81-95	B/black
96-00	A/red

How much any of these persons will know directly about the Claarions, or the transport gate varies. After clearance level is determined, check knowledge on this table. Roll d100:

01-50	Absolutely nothing, including even interesting thoughts on the matter (D)
51-74	Nothing, but does have some ideas, or heard some rumors (D)
75-89	Nothing definite, but has heard some choice rumors, or seen something peculiar (C)
90-95	Somewhat knowledgeable about what is going on, but has no details (B)
96-00	Knows alot more then he should! Will be quite reticent to reveal this knowledge, and is somewhat frightened (B)

A Clearance personnel know the entire story and need not roll for degree of knowledge.

The bracketed letters represent the minimum security level possible for that degree of information. If it is higher than the NPC, then take it down a level until the proper clearance is obtained.

ARA:

The unofficial head of the PROJECT 12 base. The project is simply so secretive and involved that a cohesive command structure fell apart, and Ara is not the type to rule with an iron hand, as he cares not for the mundane business of managing the complex.

As long as everything is done, Lord Anta (the King's Own Advisor, and Le'Agas boss), the supervisor from the King, makes no waves. He visits once a month. Everyone just does their appointed duties— when a crisis does occur, Ara inevitably steps in and makes the necessary decisions

and corrections— it is his air of command that makes most treat him with such respect. However, he does have to answer to Le'Aga and Lord Anta; this is not common knowledge.

Ara is rarely seen, and barely even known by base regulars of C or D Clearance. Top scientists and some of the computer techs (40%) have seen him, and perhaps been ordered to some work by him. They will attest to the fact that he appears to be a smallish and very unsupposing sort, dressing in unmarked gray coveralls, and saying very little (in direct contrast to the stylish Le'Aga). He hangs back and lets Le'Aga do most talking, but is always referred to most respectfully as Colonel (nothing else), even by generals and top diplomats— only Lord Anta calls him Ara, or even Dentia, if angered.

Ara does a great deal of communicating with the Claarions and this has made great alterations to his personality, greater by far than experienced by any others. Those who knew him 12 years ago would now barely recognize him. He never wastes a word, never misses a step, and moves with an assurance and calmness that is unnerving. He considers PROJECT 12 to be the single most important event in Abrician history, and the reason for his life. He will guard it with his very life (though not foolishly; he does consider himself the single most important factor to the project— dark soul you know, self-interested).

His real name is Dentia Got'a. The great realizations he came to (his psionic awakening) 15 years ago made him realize that Dentia Got'a was dead, and that he was reborn— Ara, an ancient work that means will.

If he ever does appear in general areas, he is always escorted by one of the two psionic lieutenants, two of the permanent guards, and another two Security sergeants.

THE CASTLE

If the party could benefit from proper research and reference, they would find that the castles of Incedus III are markedly different from modern Abricians' architectural social development. They do not fit in a sociological pattern in terms of intellectual content (glyphs, etc.) These castles are limited to Delta Continent, the others disappearing as the modern Abrician culture grew.

The complex castle is even more complex, the true enigma— for it is unique unto itself, in construction and its nature.

The party will think that the castle has been renovated somewhat, but it has not. It was found in its present excellent condition, and this was, in fact, the very reason that it attracted initial interest. (It was discovered by a nobody archeologist Ephud Mawau, who is now one of the top three scientists in PROJECT 12. He was doing some work on Delta continent, went to sleep one night, the Claarions having (decided the time had come) transported him to the castle, and he awoke, to his bewilderment, outside the castle).

It is not a large castle, having a single ring-wall. The keep is large, protecting many buildings. The main housing has a very religious feel. It is a myriad of individual rooms, laden with Trior symbols (party will recognize a few if they did library research), and each holding a scaled down version of the altar in the Gate room below.

The dome that covers the castle is semi-transparent and very solid. The grounds inside are lit by electric torches that form paths, as a guide for personnel to follow.

There are always five military guards on the dome's upper entrance, five on the entrance in the ring-wall, and another five on the Keep's entrance. Never are military personnel allowed any further inward. Alarm systems are plentiful.

THE HALLS BELOW THE CASTLE

These halls are ancient, and the rooms original contents having been removed (exception: the Altar Room). Only the route marked by electric torches is in good repair. The rooms off this route are mildewy and garbage strewn, the doors all having been removed, holding nothing of importance.

Anyone entering the rooms with guards (check points) must have the proper papers with the signature of Le'Aga. They are accustomed to seeing visitors escorted by Ara, or at least Le'Aga, and will be somewhat suspicious. However, their very deep fear of authority (as man-

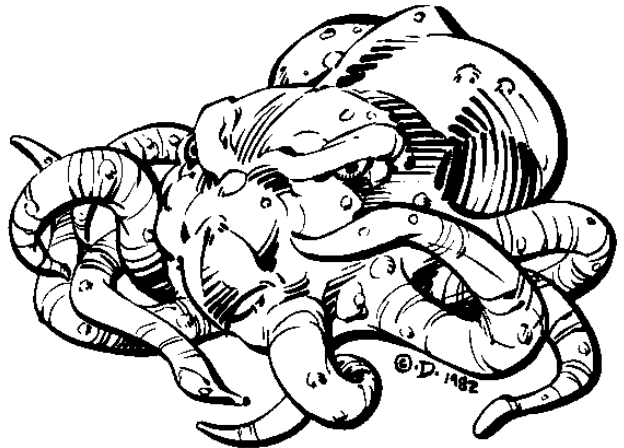
ifested in Ara's powers) makes them susceptible to suggestions that play upon weakness.

ANCIENT ALTAR ROOM: this is the only off-route room to have anything of interest in it. In the centre of the room is a round raised dais, upon which is a firmly fixed statue, which is an artist's interpretation of a Claarion in its quadruped walker. It is not very accurate.

THE GATE ROOM: this room (cavern) is absolutely awe-inspiring. Its roof disappears into the shadows (which abound) given off by the electric torches.

The cave is very damp and rather chilly. It is ancient, but does not appear to be natural. The sound of the waterfall fills the air with a hypnotic effect (not magic, only dramatic). Across the room from the stairs is the Gate itself, with the altar leading up, and torches ringing the altar. The altar is clearly alien (not Abrician), for the design and content of the arches and statues upon it are strange. Odd looking tables line the altar's edge— intuition may suggest computer panels, very complex. The back of the altar looks seared (as if by fusion weapons).

There is a thirty percent chance that a Claarion will be on the altar when the team enters, doing some sort of work at a table. It will not react adversely (unless there is an obvious tip-off), for SHe will consider them to be more officials of Lydor— SHe will simply continue his work.



If the party approaches, or calls out to him, SHe will ignore the question and ask in its squeaky metallic voice 'Where is Ara?' If SHe does not receive an adequate answer (most anything will do), SHe will ask who is in charge. If again an insufficient answer is given, SHe will calmly leave the Gate and walk to the shadowy entrance to the Claarion caves, stop for the moment (a psionic will detect SHe is communicating telepathically), then tell the party to wait there a moment. SHe is alerting the others to be prepared.

THE CLAARION CAVES: this section was recently added by the Ab-ricians to accommodate the Claarion emissaries. It is lit by some 'strange' strips that run along the ceilings and walls and give off a gentle blue light.

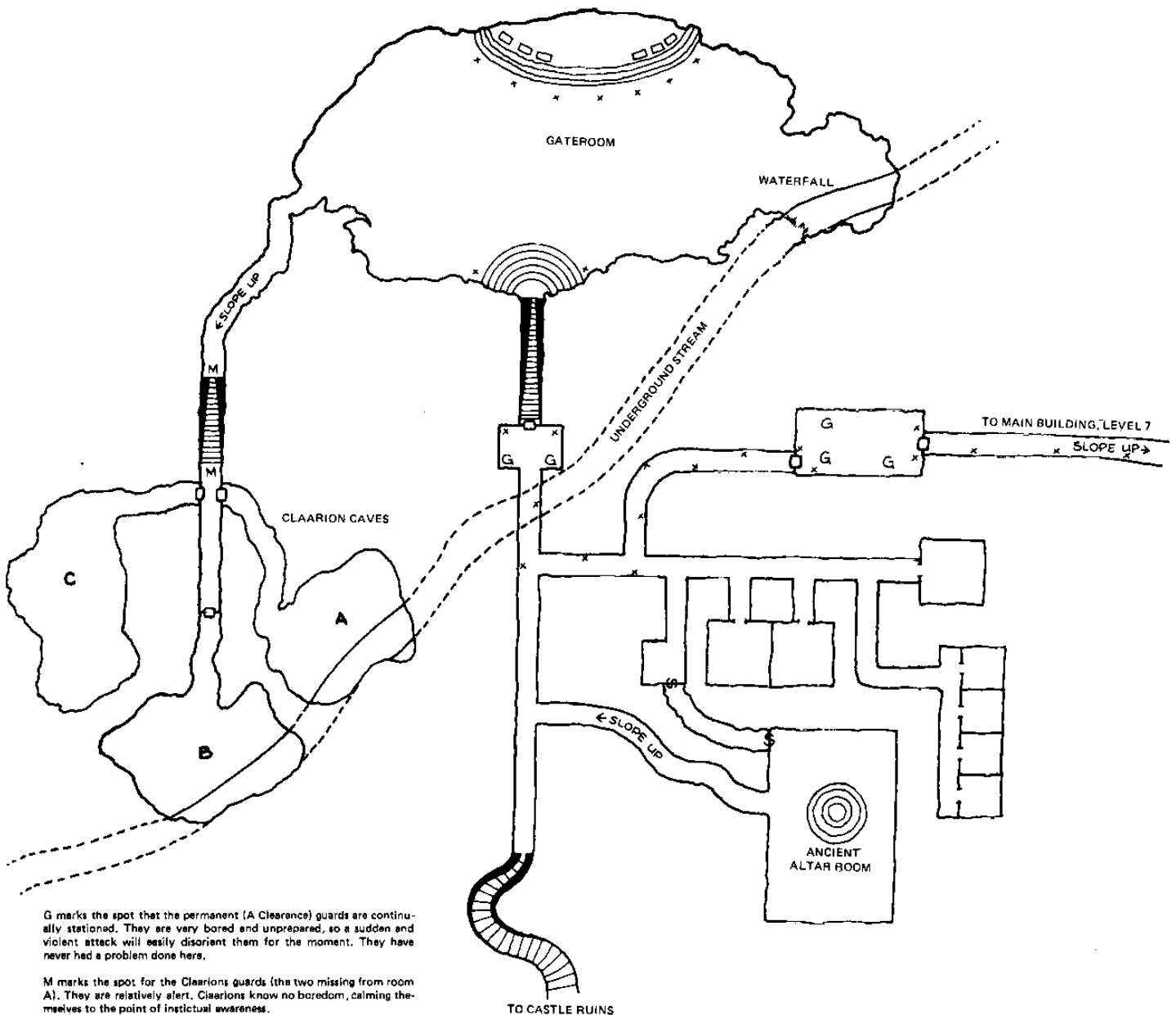
A. Here live the 'guards' (if such a specialized term can be given to Claarions)— there are five, but only three will be here initially. If surprised, one will be in uniform (relaxing), but the other two are sleeping in the waters. It will take minutes to don their walkers— they are extremely vulnerable without them. When out of walkers, Claarions use small disruptor pistols, lying with their goods. They are squid-like out of armor, though certainly more capable of land movement.

B. A Vala (Tsatiith) and two scientists are in here (the other being out at the Gate). If that Claarion is killed, there is a twenty percent chance that the Vala is not too deeply entranced to feel the sudden disconnecting of the Claarion. If SHe does notice, the Vala will alarm the others.

C. Cold and damp. Not used presently by the Claarions.

The lived in caves will contain food, supplies, and some weaponry. Most of the items will be quite puzzling as to their purposes. (They could be toiletries, utensils, etc.—remember, the Holy Catholics have never encountered the Claarions, only secondary reports).

The caves are adapted to suit the Claarions when out of their suits—



thus the room is very humid and warm, with a higher oxygen content than normal for humans. There is equipment present to sustain these conditions.

THE ORIGINS OF PROJECT 12

The Trior of the ancient legends did exist— they were the Claarions appearing periodically through the gate and analyzing the native development. They have been observing this planet for over four hundred years.

The gate was finally discovered (the Claarions intended it to be, providing their assistance), and this complex built about the castle that housed it. The most empathic Abricians were gathered by the King, who sees the possibilities and implications of this find. Only his specially selected council knows of the true purpose of PROJECT 12— and that is, to raise the technology, strengthen the military and restore the standard of living on Abrice (thus saving the Crown from planet-wide revolutions), and to initiate the expansion of the people to the stars— the King has rightly comprehended that it is the only goal that would channel all the energy of the people effectively and productively. He is however, fully aware of the culture shock the Claarions would cause, and finds their reticent nature convenient.

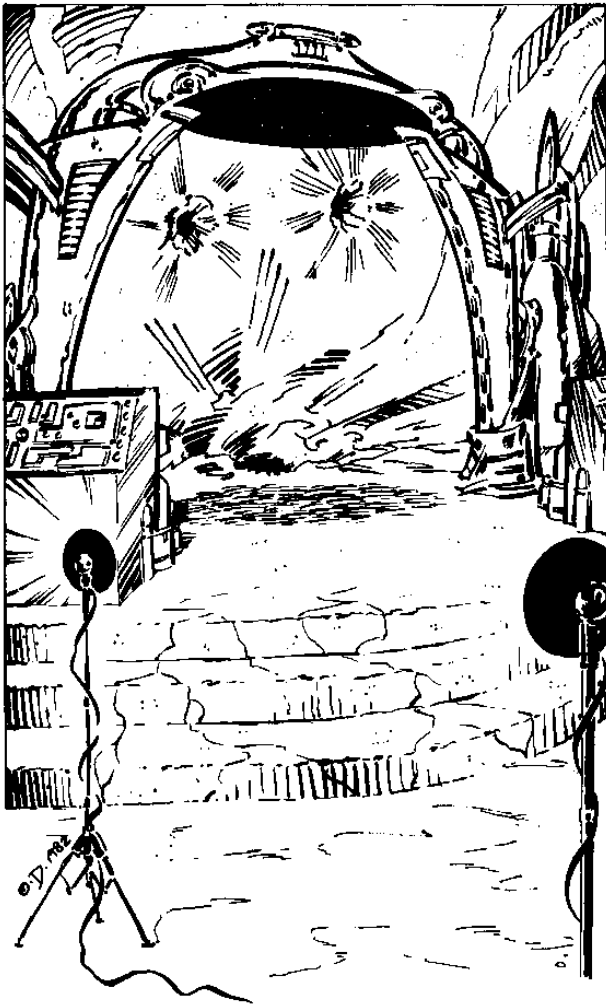
King Lydor XII has not told his two sons of PROJECT 12's nature. He plans to tell Kud when he steps down. But Aerth, calculating devil that he is, has tried to send numerous spies into Delta continent, but they never return. (If the SM likes, a Neo-Monarchist spy could be found within the ranks of say, the accounting departments, and they can witness the horrifying way in which he is eliminated).

THE GATE

The gate's origin is unknown. There are three of them in the Incedus System. They are of a previous Incedus III's society. Actually, if proper archeology were ever carried out, signs of the previous civilization would be formed, though no discoveries of this magnitude— these are lost.

The Claarions control a gate on the planet of Incedus VI and have rid-dled out its working (though not how to construct it).

The Gate is only connected to the two other Gates, though one could be beamed into oblivion quite easily. When in prime shape, the gate still exhibited a one percent chance of malfunction (it totally scrambled matter at the other end!) and didn't respond twenty percent of the time, requiring another attempt.



Through the years, the Gate has declined in efficiency— now it has a five percent malfunction rate plus a fifty percent lack of response. Also, due to a peculiarity, all power sources that are beamed successfully have only 10d 10% chance of energy remaining (10-100%). One could attempt to bring the Gate back to original efficiency— this would be considered a SEVEN SCIENCE problem at complexity level sixteen with ten separate steps, minimal yearly research cost could be high (MCR 25) and the success chance being only one percent per year, non-cumulative! There is also an equal chance of damaging the Gate irreparably, increasing the steps to twenty (starting from scratch).

The Gate is a very archaic looking, definitely awe inspiring. It is an amazing massive structure, most of its works embedded deep in to the ground and drawing on vast energies therein stored. These energies (and other maintenance) must be replaced after every ten beamings (one beaming a minute) at the cost of twenty thousand Cr. It can handle a maximum load of one thousand kg.

THE CLAARIONS

The Claarions are not a blatant or forward race. They are a very elder race, evolving slowly. They prefer to stay out of the limelight, preferring to work the motions from behind, as is demonstrated on Abrice.

They support King Lydor XII and his conservative Renent party government. They would, however, support any stable governments, of which the Renent is the most so. Currently, this is the Claarion goal— stabilize Abrice so it can be used for future operations (the Claarions are very patient and unemotional; they can take it slowly). They have given several gross of low grade neuro-whips to the government, who issued them to the military; this is designed to aid in the military purges of dissidents and traitors.

Claarions speak by telepathy to those capable (Ara, Jasura, and the two lieutenants, plus any other psionic around), and in an irritating, high pitched, computer assisted, immitation of the native tongue, to others. (All the Claarions are fully conversant in Abrician dialects). Their own tongue is quite lovely, actually.

Generally, their society is individual— oriented, with lack of any fixed command structures, as evidenced in their military organization. They are truly an Athenian democracy. The Claarions have no true sexual differentiation as we know it— they are, basically a mixture of Male-Female, female being the dominant nature, at least amongst their own.

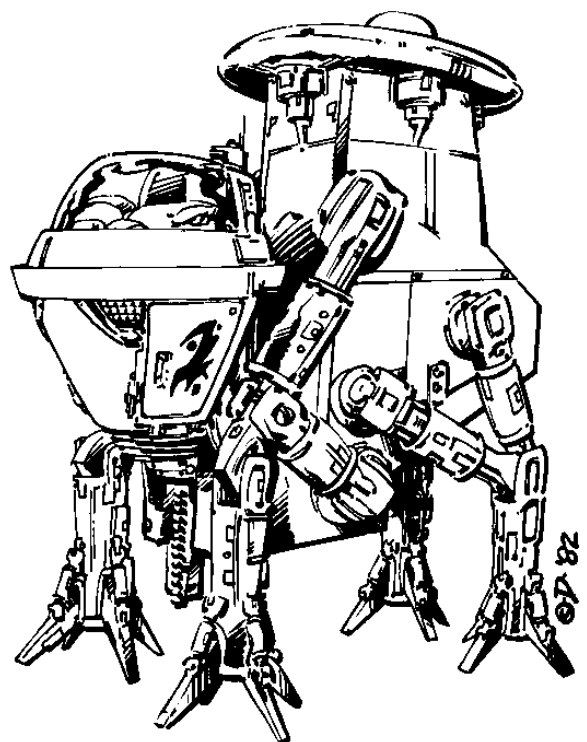
Every group of them (variable in size as to the situation) has its share, (perhaps 1 in 20), of Vala of Gaia. This being a translation, Gaia being roughly equivalent to that worshipped, but Vala has no truly translatable counterpart— it means something like worshipper-tuner-piest-member of It All.

The Vala have power over the minds of all, being natural telepaths; they are forever at odds with the more dominant war-like factions of the Claarions. The Vala consider these members to be responding to a more basic Sperm Intelligence, not yet in tune to the more subtle and invincible ways of Egg Intelligence. Thus, the goal of the Vala, through continued tuning, is admittedly, a humble one: raise the level of intelligence and comprehension of the general Claarion populace to theirs— a genetic wisdom, biological intelligence, a compassionate understanding of caste difference and speciation. They are not impatient and continue to play the normal Claarions social games. They cannot be cruel (unless their own kind are threatened), being too sensitive to evolutionary differences.

The general Claarion goal is to spread their influence and command amongst the stars. Claarions care little for how this is done. They exhibit little capacity to sympathize with lesser species— they only do what is the most necessary and the most practical methods of extending their own breed— it is fortunate they have an endless patience, for their atrocities can seem amazingly cruel (in human eyes).

To this the Vala act as a tempering agent, being interested in inter-species symbiosis. They exhibit the closet thing to friendship one will ever see in a Claarion. However, they will not display this attitude before the regular Claarions, hanging back, perhaps approaching the primitives when alone.

The general Claarions are in dull grey quadrupedal suits with bronze trim. The Vala are readily identifiable, being in dark green with black trim. Their suits house them, for Claarions are water creatures.



The Claarions serving on Incedus III are never below Average, being something of an elite force in an Athenian democracy. The Vala, however, do not measure by the same standards:

General	Claarion Type	Vala
—	Inadequate	01-10
—	Below Average	11-26
01-15	Average	27-42
16-35	Above Average	43-58
36-70	Competent	59-75
71-90	Superior	76-90
91-00	Exceptional	91-00

CLAARION PHYSICAL STATS

	Body Mass	Carry Cap	Damage F	Hand-Hand	Stamina	Shock CR
Inadequate	225	225	50	15	90	8
Below Average	225	225	50	20	90	9
Average	225	225	55	25	90	11
Above Average	225	225	60	35	90	13
Competent	225	225	60	45	90	15
Superior	225	225	60	50	90	17
Exceptional	225	225	65	60	90	18

These figures represent suited Claarions. Unarmored Claarions would be very weak. Some stats are identical, regardless— this is due to the total standardization of Claarion equipment. Thus, the differences represent the operator being able to get the most from his machine.

The Claarions use a quadruped walker which counts as powered armor. Each such walker is equipped with a fusion rifle, PML, and a Y-rack. A science sensor is installed, and these items should be mentioned. If penetrated, the walker is disabled.

The most powerful of Valas is present, Tsatiith, a full capacity telepath. At some point Tsatiith will use his Great Command on the agents, with great and awesome effects.

It is fortunate that the Vala are somewhat benign; that is Tsatiith's main purpose in this adventure— She can provide an opportunity for the escape.

In combat, it is very important to use the S.O. rules concerning morale. Claarions never experience berserker rage or mad panic, but they are very influenced by the tide of battle. If things are going wrong, they could easily retreat, very orderly. Surrender would be the last solution—bravery check must be made to do so. Otherwise they fight until they die if retreat is impossible. The Vala would likely commit suicide. None wish to fall into the hands of primitives.

Claarions always check as a group.

(Further information of Claarions can be had in the forth coming Holy Catholic Empire Star Sector Atlas).

INCEDUS VI:

Under the thick methane cloud cover of Incedus VI, Claarions some 500 years ago established a Weapons Research and Testing Outpost. In some survey work done here, the Claarions found traces of previous habitation and finally the Gate, surrounded by a time worn base.

INCEDUS II:

The Claarions know of its existence, but have done only mild exploration here.

Because of their original presence in the Incedus Starsystem, Claarions consider it theirs. The Empire shall definitely want it.

THE MISSION TEAM

This mission was designed for a well-rounded team of 5 or 6 characters. It is very important that a psionic be present, and a Tech could well save a groups life (as was demonstrated in playtesting). Also, players will find someone with some medical abilities helpful.

INCEDUS III

The planet Abrice has a secret. Your government is interested in establishing formal agreements with Abrice and discovering the reason for technological anomalies evident on Incedus III (Abrice).

Mission: Infiltrate the planet to learn what is going on. Previous attempts have failed at the cost of several teams of operatives. There may still be some operatives alive and in a position to offer assistance.

INCEDUS III is a complete adventure/scenario for use with the SPACE OPERA game system. This is not a game but a Star Master's aid for use with SPACE OPERA.