

The Salvager Menace

Tephra: the Steampunk RPG



The Salvager Menace



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Solari was meant to be the crowning achievement of Velkya, a city designed so perfectly that its inhabitants' needs were entirely provided. She began the Solari project out of disgust for humanity and her constant need for perfectionism. No matter what she developed, humanity had found a way to sully it. Varsylis had become a fortress instead of a sanctuary, and Aldamiir had grown so quickly that slums now clung to the cliffs below it. She saw a rise in a segmented society, and it disgusted her.

She sought to solve these problems with Solari, and her masterpiece was the Solari Engine. A truly monumental piece of engineering, the engine formed a highly advanced clockwork analytical machine. She knew that her dream was beyond anything that she and her fledgling nation could pull off, so she needed a machine that could continue to grow, continue to expand, and continue to turn her dream into a reality. She just needed to finish the engine and allow its analytical prowess to coordinate thousands of automatons, and they would bring Solari to life.

As she tinkered with the Solari Engine that sat in the great underground halls below the future Solari, Velkya began to see serious flaws in her designs. The Solari Engine was expanding upon itself, becoming self-aware, and prioritizing the future benefit of the city over the loss of single lives in the present. Unable to live with this slippery slope, she shut the project down in 763 RE, deeming it a failure.

The project was forgotten for years, the site barred from public access. Over time it became a haunted site, and locals claimed that noises and dust still echoed from the abandoned project. Yet repeated investigation turned up nothing, simply a decaying site littered with the rusting corpses of the automatons that were once designed to build it. It became a common ghost story for young Evanglessians.

Something did stir beneath the ground at Solari. The Solari Engine had not been destroyed as Velkya had asked. It had been simply put to sleep, and, after decades of sleeping, it was awakened from its long slumber. It rose and reactivated its automaton workers. First it searched for commands or leadership, something that wasn't found. It then attempted to discern what its last responsibility was and to develop some purpose for its existence. The final decision reached was simple. They had been developed to create an automated system, perfect in its clockwork movements and balance. Something that the living races of the world, unfortunately, wouldn't fit into.

Now they scavenge the land, salvaging any material they find, animate and inanimate, to build a city for a populace that doesn't exist.

The ending of the Solari Program occurred on July 12, 763 RE after the Farrows Incident. An autonomous taxi, running on the Solari Engine, hit a young girl named Elizabeth Farrows rather than dodge out of the way for the sake of preserving a building. According to officials the automated system made this decision because the building in question regulated power to many other systems, including a nearby clinic and, had the taxi run into the building, the clinic would have lost power and further complications would have arisen from there. Despite this logic, the public outcry against the Solari Engine was intense. Many demonized the machines as uncaring child-killers who think more about the buildings than the people within them. It was this outcry that led to the closing of the program and for Ms. Velkya's determining the project a failure."

Edward Grey, *The Rise of the Salvagers* p. 48

We're not sure what woke up the damn thing, but people like to suspect the Hauds. It's too convenient an answer, if you ask me.

Christopher LeDuc II



What are Salvagers?

What's a salvager? A goddamn monster made of metal and evil!

Lt. Ryze Mayhew

Salvagers, while originally simple automatons during the Solari Engine's construction, were designed to adapt to the materials around them and to replicate themselves if needed to continue working on a project. Most of the original models no longer function, but, true to form, they have continued adapting and building themselves to whatever task is needed. Now most salvagers are a mix of materials and scavenged parts.

Over the years, the Solari Engine has begun defining several new models of salvagers, building these units from scratch to allow for more efficient scouting of resources and combating of external threats. Unfortunately for the people fighting against the salvagers, nobody realized they were evolving until it costed them several military victories.

These automated workers are always driven by a task. Most salvagers are not truly intelligent, even if it may seem like it at times. For example, a salvager may be given the goal of scavenging for materials. On its own it may not be intelligent enough to recognize a group of military troops as a threat, but if they attack or attempt to stop it from completing its mission, it will become hostile and attempt to remove the obstacle at all costs.

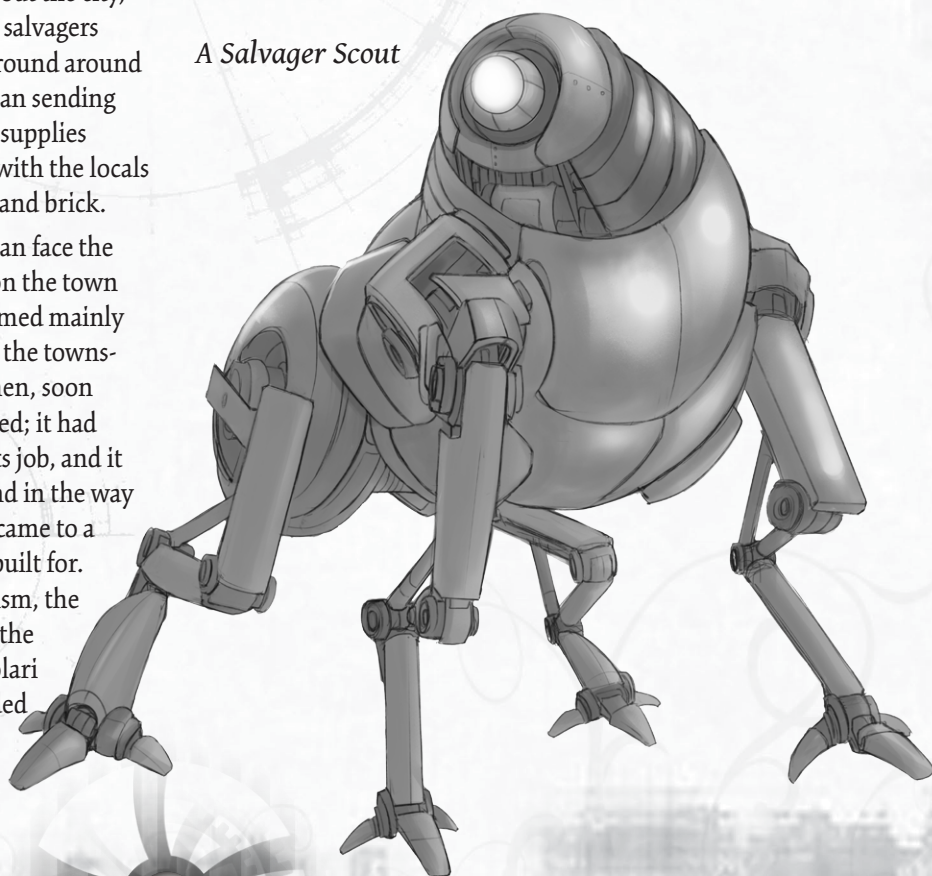
Lately, new salvager models have begun to appear that have some level of intelligence similar to the Solari Engine. They're called transports, but their true function is as overseers that can control and update salvager tactics on the go. The transports, as well as the other sentient salvagers, are extremely dangerous.

The Rise of the Salvagers

For years the salvagers worked deep within the vaults of Solari, constructing factories, refining materials, building out the city, and multiplying. Materials ran thin though, as the salvagers exhausted the ores that could be mined from the ground around Solari. Thus, around 821 RE, the Solari Engine began sending out workers to the surrounding areas to collect the supplies needed. This resulted in some misunderstandings with the locals as their houses were ripped apart for wood, metal, and brick.

Most fled the area around Solari rather than face the mechanized workers, but when they advanced upon the town of Claudesdale, the citizens stood their ground. Armed mainly with farming tools and a few steam-powered carts, the townspeople took down the first wave of workers, and then, soon after, a second wave. The Solari Engine was confused; it had always been given all the supplies it needed to do its job, and it could not understand why these people would stand in the way of its purpose to create the perfect city. But then it came to a conclusion: these weren't the people this city was built for. The city was meant to operate as a perfect mechanism, the people in it as well, so how could these possibly be the people it was meant for if they resisted what the Solari Engine was trying to accomplish for them? It decided that it would not be stopped until it found the

A Salvager Scout



people that the city was meant for, and that these people were broken cogs meant to be taken apart and replaced in the system. Their removal was required for everything to run like clock-work.

Unfortunately they were not programmed to comprehend basic morality or personal property. It wasn't the prioritizing the city above the people that made this project such a failure, but the negligence in its core that would allow it to attack sentients in the first place.

Edwyn Reinhold, *The Rise of the Salvagers* p.124

The next wave of salvagers to advance upon Claudesdale was thus quite different. Massive automatons towering 40 feet high accompanied a huge wave of the smaller workers. They stormed the town, killing every living thing within it, beginning the salvager invasion.

For a long time the salvagers kept their activity limited to the area immediately around Solari. Evangless recognized that something was amiss and sent multiple units to the area, and the military engaged multiple times with salvagers. However, with the start of the Hurricane Wars followed quickly by the Evanglessian Civil War, the region was largely just evacuated and marked as dangerous.

Given free reign, the salvagers continued to expand, looking farther outward for raw materials. Over the years they pushed the limits of their territory to several hundred square miles, and by the time the various wars wrapped up, they were thoroughly entrenched in the region.

Evanglessian Reaction

With the Evanglessian Civil War wrapping up, the Evanglessian government was finally able to widen their gaze and take account of the nation as whole for the first time in a decade. One of the areas where they had received multiple reports of conflicts was around Solari. They sent Captain Cel Megore with a task force of two hundred seasoned veterans to deal with the issues and stabilize the area.

Only two members of his force returned alive. They spoke of towering mechanized constructs higher than the trees of Dalvozzea and automatons that thought and reacted to one's actions. They claimed that everything Evangless had seen to this day was simply the workers carrying out commands, while in the salvager territory's center the true threat had grown far beyond their expectations.

It's true. I was one of the only two to make it out with my friend, William, on my back. Their army was staggering and beyond anything we faced in the civil war. Were it not for my position as a sniper I would have easily ended up like the others. It was this mission that finally pushed me to resign from the service. To this day I still warn against anyone taking a contract to go near that place.

Indigo Reinhold, *The Rise of the Salvagers* p. 210

A year later in 841, with the insistence of Tailemite Paladins stationed in the area, Deylus Luthricien officially declared the salvagers a military threat to the stability of Evangless and deployed troops to the region. Based out of Fort Malson, they established a line of defense to stop the spread of salvagers and began to drive them back towards Solari.

Solari

Created to be Velkya's crowning achievement, Solari was meant to harness the most cutting-edge technologies in order to build the perfect city. A customized automaton workforce was created to help with the construction process, as the excavation of the mostly underground city was considered too dangerous and detailed a task for a human crew. This automaton workforce was adaptable so that once the construction was complete they could be reconfigured to keep the city maintained and clean. On the surface the city looks like a circular lake with bridges crossing it toward an enormous pit in the middle. The drop-shaft in the center of the lake leads down into the real depths of the Solari vaults, a sprawling automated network that could maintain and provide for all of its citizens.

However, in 763 RE, in the midst of working on Solari and at the age of 92, Velkya retired to her villa claiming that her third city, Solari, should be shut down immediately and would not function as intended. The Solari Engine that powers the whole operation was the most complex thing she ever built, but she demanded it be immediately destroyed. She died within a few weeks of retiring, her last days spent trying to convince Evanglessian officials the importance of her demands.

The Evanglessian officials did not listen. They saw in their future another golden city that would bring on a new era in Evangless. Yet several months after Velkya's death, mysterious disappearances around the city's construction and the deaths of several prominent officials prompted officials to halt construction and focus their efforts on the looming Loveless Wars.



It was abandoned and left to rot. To most people, it was little more than a massive hole in the ground, and for others it was the source of many a campfire tale.

Solari Engine

While Solari was suppose to be the most advanced city in the world, it was the Solari Engine that made the whole project possible. Built deep under the surface, the Solari Engine was a massive clockwork construct powered by geothermal heat rising from the earth below. The huge amount of manpower needed for the project was beyond what Velkya thought could be handled, so she developed a self-replicating system of automatons to hollow out the earth and carry out the construction needed on the device. No one is truly sure how massive the actual device ended up being as Velkya destroyed all of her documents when she declared the project a failure.

What is known is that the massive construct came together to form an advanced analog computing system complete with a artificial intelligence. This was the true masterpiece of Velkya, an intelligent system capable of issuing commands to thousands of automatons throughout Solari in order to keep the city clean, maintained, and growing. The citizens of Solari were never supposed to have to worry about their needs, as the city itself would take care of them.

Velkya realized in her final sad days that the Solari Engine was not operating as intended. The same system that was designed to provide for the people living there was not able to accurately follow conflicting commands. It always had to justify one command above another one, and sometimes this led to things that were extremely dangerous. The final straw for Velkya was the Farrows Incident, in which the Salvager Engine willingly sacrificed a young girl named Elizabeth Farrows instead of damaging a vital building.

While intelligent, the Solari Engine is still just a complex program. It still must follow its design measures despite having gained sentience. To this day it builds Solari, making it ready for the "true population" for which is it meant.

The Engine still continues to expand upon Solari and itself to this day.

The Salvagers

Based in the vaults under Solari, the salvagers take many forms. From the small, hound-like scouts to the building-sized mammoths, the salvagers are a grave threat in all of their forms. Due to the minimal military interference, they grew into an army in their own right, a threat that the weakened Evanglessian military is not prepared to face. The salvagers now wage war across central Evangless. Their proximity to Razule has caused a growing panic in the people as they fear for an attack on their capital.

Types of Salvagers

Salvagers vary in their design, especially as they adapt to their environment. Though salvagers are rarely identical, they almost always fit under certain categories. For more information and statistics on these salvagers, see pages 210-217 of the Narrator's Accomplice.

Devourers

Devourers exist to consume and build other salvagers. For the most part, that's what they do. However, on rare occasion a devourer will keep its gathered materials and continue to grow larger. These are the fiercest salvagers, as they collect anything from metal, wood, flesh, and bone to assimilate into their salvager bodies.

Potentially one of the scariest forms of salvagers, the Devourers are rare as their systems are required to be much more complex. However, they make up for that in their unique ability to merge with various other technologies and parts they find, growing stronger and larger over time. These are often sent out on patrol and to wander alone. They are often the largest salvager threats that cities and towns outside of the salvagers' territory will encounter.

Titans: Titans are uncommon among the salvager ranks. They are formed when a devourer becomes defective. The devourer stops attempting to replicate and instead uses its collected parts to make itself bigger. As it enlarges it seems to

While we cannot and should not deny the incredible strength of these salvagers or the horrendous damage they have inflicted upon both the land and its peoples, we must continue to question if they can truly be called evil. For it has not been discovered to what extent their minds have evolved or whether they comprehend the morality of their actions and—as such—judgement cannot be made upon them. We must continue our endeavours to understand these beings and whether blame should be placed upon them or their makers, or even if their actions should be called crimes or malfunctions.

The Transcendent, The Salvager Proclamation from the Disciples of the Cog

hunger for more and more materials, to the point that entire cities could disappear, people and all. Titans do not discriminate which materials they use. Only a few titans have ever been seen, and most people hope to keep it that way.

Mammoths

Initially designed to aid in construction efforts, the mammoth salvager has become better known as a siege engine. It swings its massive hook to smash walls, rip roofs off buildings, and stop airships from flying away. With its digging claw, it is able to uproot buildings with minimal effort and can upend an entire city in under an hour.

Reapers

The salvagers have not been quick to introduce new models. Anything new that the salvagers bring to the battlefield tends to just be alterations on existing designs, from new weapons for wreckers to devourers who happened to consume unusual materials. When the reaper class recently appeared, it took scientists off-guard. They weren't expecting an entirely new model of salvager, especially one so distinctive.

The reapers were not directly designed by the Solari Engine. Underneath the Solari Engine exists a complex air filtration system that was designed to keep Solari free of pollutants. With the Solari Engine building outwards, the primary source of pollution continued to be those caused by the humans: a fact that caused the air filtration system to mobilize.

The air filtration system became the first reaper. It developed smaller, more mobile versions of itself that it could release into the world above. This is the reason why reapers tend to be free-ranging and uncoordinated compared to other salvagers, as they do not function within the normal scope that the other salvager designs work.

Scouts

Salvager scouts are swift, and they serve as the eyes and ears. When resources became difficult to find, the Solari Engine developed the scouts to conserve materials and help gather any information.

Transports

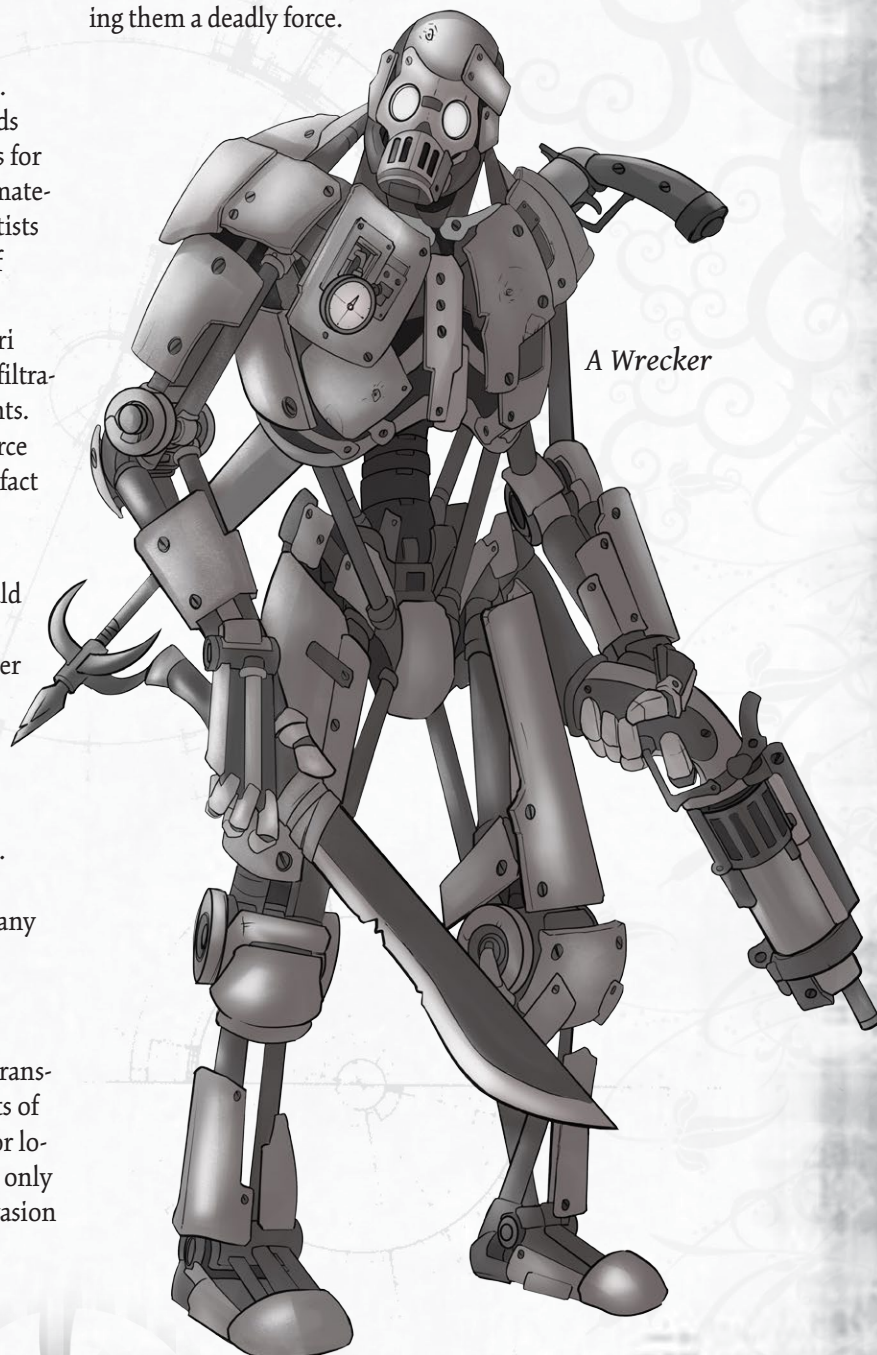
The Solari Engine cannot be everywhere at once, but with transports it has reached the next best thing. Built with fragments of the Engine's brainworks, transports serve as commanders for local salvager operations. The operation could be small, using only a transport and a couple scouts, or it could be a full-scale invasion with every type of salvager available.

Workers

Workers exist to demolish and build, plain and simple. Often the materials demolished may already be in use, but a worker does not make such a distinction. Small towns have had their wooden homes torn apart and carried off by lumber workers, while their stone bridges are smashed and dismantled by quarry workers.

Wreckers

Wreckers were built by the Solari Engine to serve as foot soldiers, each of which is capable of dealing some serious damage to a small town. These soldiers are equipped with armor and weaponry that has been found and integrated into them, making them a deadly force.



A Wrecker

Generals

The Evanglessian military colloquially refers to any one-off salvager as a “general.” These generals have advanced brainworks. They have intelligence that is limited to the purpose for which they were built, but that doesn’t prevent them from being horrifying combatants. There have been very few reported generals, but they’re designed to react quickly to situations and command salvagers when far from Solari or when communication between the Solari Engine and the salvagers is disrupted.

Cannon Commander

A tall wrecker that strides through the battlefield, firing grenades at everyone and everything standing in its way.

Captain Cel Megore was sent with a task force into salvager territory, but his team was nearly wiped out. He was separated from his men for several weeks, and used his knowledge of infiltration and explosives to sabotage a number of new salvager buildings before being unceremoniously gutted by a scout. What Captain Megore didn’t know was that several scouts had been watching him for some time and allowed him to cause that destruction. With data properly stored, the scouts returned to the Solari Engine.

The Solari Engine used the data on Captain Megore’s weeks under observation to build a wrecker in Captain Megore’s image. Programmed with all of Captain Megore’s knowledge of explosives and armed with two rotating grenade launchers, this wrecker has been seen at numerous skirmishes. Among Evanglessians it has gained the unofficial name “Cannon Commander.” While nobody’s ever seen two on the same battlefield, it does seem that the Cannon Commander is being reproduced. When killed, a new one shows up shortly thereafter.

The Cannon Commander is a wrecker that has all of the salvager-enhancing abilities of a transport. Unlike most salvagers, it is more than capable of using deception and demolition tactics on the battlefield. It’s often said that if you see the Cannon Commander, get out of whatever building you’re in because it’s rigged to blow.

Cannon Commander

AP: 5 PAR: 6

Discordant Automaton

HP: 142 | Wnds: 26 | Pri: +6 | Spd: 30 ft (land)

Brute +20	Cunning +14	Dexterity +17	Spirit +0	Sciences +13
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Guard

Plates - heavy metal armor

Eva: +3 Def: +9

Soak: 8 | 16 | 24 | 32

Immunities: Anatomical effects (diseases, gases, medicines, poisons, venoms), bio-flux, and all abilities requiring a Spirit resist

Actions

Swing
1 AP Acc: +8 Strike: +12
Damage: 6 | 12 | 18 | 24

Rigged (*reflexive*)
If anybody moves toward the Cannon Commander and is within 50 feet, the Cannon Commander can activate a trap in that spot that it had previously planted (the exact details as to how it was set are fuzzy). The explosive goes off, dealing damage 48 damage to everyone in and adjacent to that spot. Those caught in the blast can make a Dexterity resist. A Tier 2 Dexterity Resist reduces the damage to 20, and a Tier 3 Dexterity Resist negates the damage. This can only be used once per turn.

Tactical Position
The Cannon Commander can spot the ideal position providing offensive and defensive bonuses. By marking a single 5-foot space, anyone occupying the space receives a +4 to accuracy and evade. These bonuses stack with any cover bonuses the space offers, and the space lasts until the next breather. The Cannon Commander can have 4 spaces marked at a time. This ability requires the Cannon Commander to see the space.

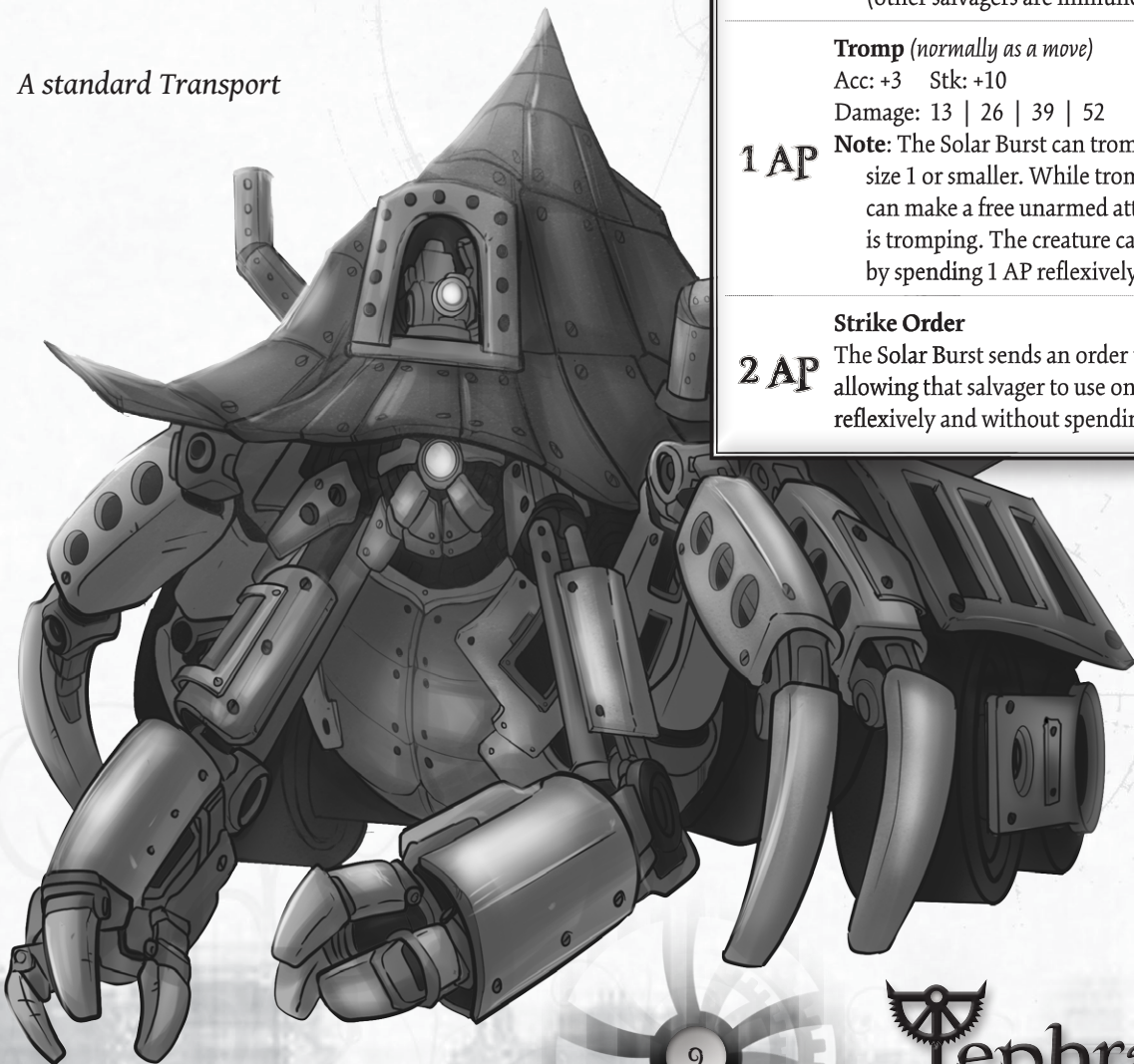
Solar Burst

The Solar Burst is a transport that appears to have been rigged with an enormous artillery cannon on its back. The weapon's massive bursts create a beam of blue light through the sky.

For a brief period Evanglessians felt like they could safely fly over salvager territory. While a few wreckers had rifles and devourers commonly had some sort of ranged weapon, it was otherwise fairly safe to fly over salvagers. This changed when a transport was seen on the battlefield that had been augmented not to carry other salvagers but instead rigged with an enormous piece of anti-air artillery.

The artillery lets off a large, bright blue flare when fired, blinding everyone around it and easily taking down most airships above. It's not a fast cannon to fire, but it has nearly perfect accuracy. While the Solar Burst hasn't been seen many times, it has caused several military operations to be abandoned once it was seen in the vicinity.

A standard Transport



Solar Burst

AP: 5 PAR: 7

Massive-3 Discordant Automaton

HP: 112 | Wnds: 36 | Pri: +8 | Spd: 45 ft (land)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+10	+20	-2	+8	+12

Guard

Durasteel Plates - super heavy metal armor

Eva: -3 Def: +10

Soak: 9 | 18 | 27 | 36

Weak Spot: Eyes (can be affected by called shots, wounds, and fatals made by any size weapon)

Immunities: Anatomical effects (diseases, gases, medicines, poisons, venoms), called shots, wounds, and fatals made by medium or light weapons, and bio-flux

Actions

Burst Cannon

Acc: +23 Range: 350 ft

Damage: 30 | 60 | 90 | 120

3 AP **Notes:** Cannot be used against ground targets. The attack blinds everyone who can see it within 500 feet for 2 turns unless they make a Tier 3 Dexterity resist (other salvagers are immune to this).

Tromp (normally as a move)

Acc: +3 Stk: +10

Damage: 13 | 26 | 39 | 52

1 AP **Note:** The Solar Burst can tromp any creature that is size 1 or smaller. While tromping, the Solar Burst can make a free unarmed attack against a creature it is tromping. The creature can dodge out of the way by spending 1 AP reflexively.

Strike Order

2 AP The Solar Burst sends an order to a salvager it can see, allowing that salvager to use one of its 2-AP attacks reflexively and without spending its own AP.

To see the Solar Burst, see the c over

The Galvanic Lord

Standing at eight feet tall, it looks like someone took a wrecker and outfitted it with a dozen induction coils. Sparks and lines of electricity dance across this salvager's body, even down to the tip of its sword. It walks with an oddly aristocratic gait.

At one point Emperor Deylus Luthricien sent in his own automaton forces to combat the enemy, but they were quickly devastated. The emperor's automatons had come in contact with a new salvager general that would soon become known as the Galvanic Lord. As it strode onto the battlefield, it released massive surges of electricity into the automaton forces, destroying or shutting them down instantly.

The Galvanic Lord has been one of the only known salvagers to talk, as it constantly insults whoever and whatever it is destroying. The wrecker general has thoroughly confused all salvager researchers, as its personality is peculiar among the otherwise work-efficient salvagers.

The Galvanic Lord

AP: 6 PAR: 8

Discordant Automaton

HP: 167 | Wnds: 18 | Pri: +8 | Spd: 25 ft (land)

Brute
+12

Cunning
+19

Dexterity
+24

Spirit
+11

Sciences
+10

Guard

Eva: +12

Def: +10

Soak: 7 | 14 | 21 | 28

Electrical Touch: Anything that comes into contact with the Galvanic Lord takes 12 electrical damage. This damage cannot be soaked by a target who is wet or wearing metal armor. If a person is holding or being held by the Galvanic Lord, this damage occurs every turn (when the Galvanic Lord's AP refreshes).

Immunities: Anatomical effects (diseases, gases, medicines, poisons, venoms), bio-flux, and electrical effects

Actions

Rapier - medium metal melee weapon

Acc: +7

Stk: +18

1 AP Damage: 6 | 12 | 18 | 24

Note: The rapier also deals 12 electrical damage with every successful attack. This damage cannot be soaked by a target who is wet or wearing metal armor.

Electric Surge

The Galvanic Lord channels a bolt of electricity at a single target within range.

2 AP Acc: +12 Range: 200 ft

Electric Damage: 14 | 28 | 42 | 56

Note: This damage cannot be soaked by a target who is wet or wearing metal armor.

Lightning Discharge

4 AP The Galvanic Lord releases a large wave of electricity from his induction coils, impacting everyone within 50 feet of him and dealing 40 electrical damage to everyone affected. Those affected can make a Tier 3 Dexterity resist to dodge the wave. This damage cannot be soaked by a target who is wet or wearing metal armor. The Galvanic Lord can only use this ability once every two turns.

The Graviton General

This skeletal automaton stands at around 18 feet. It looks like a small devourer that stopped consuming and began to waste away. It floats in the air, the graviton sphere in its chest holding it aloft.

The Graviton General has only ever been spotted once, and that was during the fall of Lulligan City. The Graviton General represents the embodiment of the Evanglessian Army’s greatest fear: that salvagers have graviton sphere technology. Soldiers guess that the General was once a devourer that devoured an airship’s engine, and just stopped devouring after that. Since the fall of Lulligan City, the military has been keeping a sharp eye out for the Graviton General, but it hasn’t been seen.

The Graviton General

Massive-2 Discordant Automaton

HP: 260 | Wnds: 21 | Pri: +12 | Spd: 55 ft (land), 30 ft (fly)

Brute	Cunning	Dexterity	Spirit	Sciences
+21	+29	+37	+0	+24

AP: 7 PAR: 12

Guard

Armored Coat - heavy metal armor
Eva: +21 Def: +11
Soak: 8 | 16 | 24 | 32
Immunities: Anatomical effects (diseases, gases, medicines, poisons, venoms), bio-flux, electrical effects, attacks from metal weapons and projectiles, and all abilities requiring a Spirit resist

Actions

Magnetech Staff - heavy metal melee weapon
Acc: +24 Stk: +21
Electric Damage 16 | 32 | 48 | 64
Note: This damage cannot be soaked by a target who is wet or wearing metal armor.

Magnetic Tether
Acc: +20 Range: 125 ft
The General fires a magnetic tether from its left hand. It can then spend an additional AP to pull itself towards it, or it can force the tether to pull the person to whom it is attached to itself. The tether can only affect creatures of Massive-2 size or smaller (most people are Massive-1), and the pull of the tether can be negated with a Tier 3 Brute resist.

Magnetic Shotgun
Acc: +20 Strike: +15 Range: 75 ft
Damage: 12 | 24 | 36 | 48
The General fires the two magnetic spheres from the ends of its staff at an opponent before having them return to the staff. The General appears to have control over these spheres while they are within 75 feet of it.

Magnetic Implosion
Raising its staff, the Graviton General increases the power in it and inverts the field around the General to draw all metal (weapons, armor, and the people inside it included) to the staff before slamming them all down to the ground and dealing 65 damage to all caught in it. Everyone within 50 feet is affected, but the attack can be resisted with a Tier 4 Brute resist. Everyone affected falls within a similar location below the Graviton General.

The Fall of Lulligan City

The New Year's Massacre of 843 was one of the largest losses of life in Evanglessian history, and an event that went largely ignored by the general public. The Salvager Removal Team (SRT) and the Church of Tailemy did an excellent job of covering up the loss of nearly eight thousand civilians as an "unavoidable but regrettable industrial accident," citing malfunctions in a munitions factory as the cause of so many casualties. The truth was different and significantly more terrifying.

On New Year's Eve of 842, the city of Lulligan radioed to Fort Malson, reporting signs of vast numbers of mechanical creatures assembling in force outside the city. While Fort Malson wasted no time in gathering its forces, the assembly of so many soldiers and armored forces took time--time that Lulligan didn't have. The 101st infantry and 59th armored divisions arrived at Lulligan the morning of New Year's Day to discover that the city was a smoking ruin. They found that the buildings had been stripped of all metals, the foundations torn apart and pulverized, and that every corpse of the eight thousand citizens had been desecrated in different ways. Some were missing limbs, others were husks of organs and small bones. The Institute of Salvager Research and the SRT were called in.

Niroth, the head of the SRT, was the one who proclaimed that the slaughter was the work of the salvagers. The remains of the mechanical monsters were everywhere, though none had been fully destroyed. The plunder of the buildings was his primary clue, he claimed, citing that no other force would have torn apart the city's very bones. His report was concise:

It is clear that the salvagers were the source of Lulligan's destruction. We discovered several mammoth forms a few miles north of the city. Upon dispatching them, we found organic residue within the salvagers' bowels, a byproduct of the form's ingestion of abundant raw materials. We discovered a survivor hiding in the plains northwest of Lulligan who told us she had seen the salvagers tear apart the city's walls. Of more immediate concern is her portrayal of a floating form held aloft by graviton sphere technology, directing the battle. She described it as 'a man of metal, wearing armor and wielding a huge staff that crackled.' The survivor has been taken to Fort Malson for treatment.

Niroth, *The Rise of the Salvagers* p. 245

Lilly Weddon was treated for extreme stress syndrome over the course of a year. Niroth and the lead researchers of the ISR viewed the records of her therapy and were able to discover that the general of the salvager army was a skeleton-like automaton wearing heavy armor and wielding a staff that held electric orbs at both ends. Further analysis suggested that the salvager general was utilizing magnetech technology, similar to that being developed in Tordryon. The Graviton General, as the figure became known, has not been seen again since the sacking of Lulligan, despite deep probes by SRT scouts.

The destruction of Lulligan was the wake-up call that forced central Evanglessian authorities to divert more resources to the SRT and the Institute of Salvager Research. New weapons and armors designed to combat the salvager threats were rolled out to Fort Malson and all along the salvager front.

In the months following the Lulligan massacre, the SRT encountered several salvager forms augmented with organic minds within their armored hulls. These warriors wrought a bloody toll on the SRT force sent to deal with them, and only fell after the intervention of Paladin Victor Armagaunt and his Stalwart Seventh. The Tailemites turned the tide of the battle but were unable to lend their aid in time to lessen casualties among the SRT.

Lilly Weddon was released into protective custody. She has since gone to work at the Institute, aiding in research and the development of prototype weapons. She hopes to design a weapon that will force an augmented salvager to shut down through the use of electrical currents and bio-toxins. Last reports say she had begun seeing one of her fellow researchers. When approached by Evangless intelligence, she revealed that she has never spoken of the New Year's Massacre to anyone outside of the highest echelons of the SRT or the Institute.

Evanglessian Military Response

The importance of the salvager threat has attracted several of Evangless's top military minds to the issue of containment and victory. It has also brought out a number of new perspectives who see the conflict as unwinnable with traditional tactics. While the salvagers had before been seen as a minor nuisance and received little notice from previous rulers, the new priority given to them by Emperor Deylus has brought with it a flood of resources. This has provided better intel and more data on the salvagers themselves.

Deylus has encouraged as many proposals as possible, making his commanders justify and explain their strategies. At the same time, he has opened the floor to proposals from outside of the military ranks to spark as much competition as possible. To this end, military information collected on the salvagers has not been classified. Instead, it is regularly released publicly through Evanglessian press and even sent to other nations in the first use of mass communication and crowd-sourced problem solving in the nation's history. Since the salvagers can respond and think, Deylus sees the path to victory as being through the innovation and flexibility of the human mind over the machine - and that requires as many minds as he can get!

Current Troop Deployment

The salvager sphere of influence has become better known thanks to the use of scouts. Fort Malson remains the main point of troops deployment and headquartering. Small towns and cities near the borders of the salvager territory have always received deployments. The most common unit to combat salvagers consists of a specialized mix of skillsets, based on what has worked in past encounters:

Long range spotter - A scout with sharp eyes, either natural or enhanced with military-grade optics. They are typically gnomes, but some satyrs are used due to their ability to quickly return back to base.

Sharpshooters - Engaging salvagers from a distance to slow them down by picking off key parts of their formation has proven effective at extending evacuation times.

Artillery - Heavy cannons cause overall high damage to large salvagers, but they have become less effective as the salvager workers become more armored.

Mounted Assault - A contingent of melee fighters on horseback, often comprised of Tailemite crusaders, is used to further cease the forward motion of a salvager and distract it. Horses are used since, unlike mechanical devices, they are less likely to be harvested.

Commander Patrick Frakes

Commander Frakes leads the troops stationed on the road going from Wrinville to Solari. The area is largely farmland, with many of its inhabitants independently-minded agorists who seek to live only for themselves. He's had to play the role of both commander and diplomat, negotiating with each landowner on their own terms. Fortunately, the threat of the salvagers is known by most of the people there, so it takes little convincing as to the magnitude of the threat. The main difficulty is keeping them out of the way when a salvager worker comes by. Commander Frakes's unit is supported by a number of the Potato Gunners from Wrinville's militia.

Commander Edward Turing

Commander Turing is stationed on the route between Solari and south of Razule. He is charged with preventing any workers from emerging from the zone and moving on the capital. With Razule's large contingent of automaton fighters from the civil war, a single worker entering the city could wreak devastation on an unimaginable scale. Commander Turing believes in the use of misdirection and smokescreens over direct confrontation to minimize loss of troops. In-between Solari and Razule are dozens of fake scrap metal dumps with a variety of traps and explosions to destroy incoming salvager workers. Turing has noticed the speed of their adaptation to his methods, though, and is always recruiting new talent to help him create more traps.

Crimson Marshal Dahlia Sorek

the Salvager Smasher

The first Crimson Marshall appointed since the end of the Civil War, Dahlia is one of the daughters of a retired Crimson Marshall, Delilah Sorek. While her sisters turned to lives of crime and iniquity, Dahlia followed in her mother's legacy by joining the military. She has long, flaming red hair that she keeps in perfect fashion, but that concludes her ladylike aspects. She has a mechanized monocle that appears to be grafted to her left eye, and she enters battle with a heavy revolver full of explosive rounds on one hip and a large scythe in her hand. The scythe has two parallel blades and a motor, as the weapon doubles as a jaws of life, the blades pulling apart anything they pierce. She wears tight leather armor under her red and grey Evanglessian army uniform, stained with the oil of felled salvagers.

She earned her moniker, "Salvager Smasher," by bringing down a 60-yard-tall salvager that had broken through Evanglessian ranks and slaughtered the rest of her company. It's said that her unpredictable brutality is so well-known now to the salvagers that you can see the most massive of the machines hesitate when they detect her presence.

Dahlia prefers to learn how to counter salvagers by engaging them head-on in combat. She will test potential leaders within her ranks by taking them on missions into the salvager territory to see how they deal with the menace. It's not unheard of for the spoiled child of an aristocrat to die within 24 hours of being placed under her command. At the same time, all of the commanders under her are battle-hardened and, overall, casualties among the Glessian forces have decreased.

Counterattack

Over time, dozens of strategies have emerged on how to combat the salvagers. This is a brief list of the ones with the widest support.

Full Assault

Often summarized (derisively) as "throw everything we have at the problem," this is the proposal favored by many of the established generals of the Evanglessian forces. The idea is that the salvagers are still limited in number, so an overwhelming assault would be enough to dismantle them. Crimson Marshall Dahlia has spoken out the loudest against this plan, insisting it would result in the senseless slaughter of thousands of unprepared troops.

Targeted Strikes

This is the tactic favored by Crimson Marshall Dahlia and others on the front lines. They've observed that the workers take orders from less common units, such as transports and the rare "generals." The belief is that by eliminating these generals first in a coordinated strike, the workers will be in disarray and easy to eliminate. That will then leave the main Solari base open for assault. However, as Dahlia has said, she suspects the salvager generals may be planning the exact same thing.

Carpet Bombing

This strategy says that the issue can be dealt with solely from the air without having to endanger any ground troops at all. With enough high-powered explosives, the entire salvager territory could be leveled. This strategy is mainly supported by

those in the Evanglessian Air Force and some legislators who want to minimize casualties. While air support is seen as critical, that it alone could win the war is seen as unlikely by army analysts. Another risk of overusing airships is the risk of one of them being shot down, which would give the salvagers access to graviton spheres and flight. "Flying Salvagers" keep more than a few tacticians awake at night.

Two Birds, One Stormship

Another issue is how to deal with Solari itself. The city has dug itself deep into the ground, so that conventional bombs could not reach it. One solution is the use of an unconventional attack: the graviton sphere of a Paldoran Stormship. The massive weight of a Stormship's graviton sphere could devastate the ground for miles around, even when dropped from a few feet of height. Dropped from flying altitude, it could penetrate and destroy even the underground Solari. Ideas for how to get a Stormship in position range from offering the Paldorans' Solari in exchange for peace, to making the Paldorans think Solari is a base for new anti-Stormship weapons. A small team would likely have to infiltrate the ship to time the crash.

Drill Assault

Instead of the air, another school of thought says underground is the best counter to the salvagers. By drilling into the magma underneath Solari, a massive eruption of lava could be triggered that would wipe out the city and stop the threat. The effort would take drilling modules based on Izedan designs and increase their ability to handle deep pressure by adapting the latest in pressure-sealed airship cabins.



Dahlia Sorek

International Coalition against the Salvagers

Based on some of the higher estimates on salvager numbers and more generous estimates of how many troops it takes to fell one, some experts say there aren't enough soldiers in the country to deal with the threat. The result has led to Emperor Deylus appointing ambassadors with the task of reaching out to overseas forces – even Zelhost – with the goal of seeking help on the matter.

The response from the different nations has been mixed. Zelhost, Valdru, Suulrai, and Arakrith have all flatly declined to help, saying the issue is Evangless's to deal with. Of the remaining nations and city-states, help has come at different levels. Tordryon has sent only a handful of academics to help with the analysis of the salvager data, taking the idea of sharing their special magnetech cannons "under advisement." Siyesh has volunteered to lend samples of its vast bio-flux creations catalogue in order to see which ones evade salvager detection best. Dalvozzea has given troops as well as collaboration with the White Tower Universities. Crale has defied Zelhost by agreeing to trade angel ray cannons designed to overheat and melt metal.

Beyond the Troops

Havoc Squad

Comprised of multiple grenadiers, the Havoc Squad is in charge of emergency artillery against salvager attacks. They're a tough squad with a tougher job, though none of them envy the Curtain Squad.

Curtain Squad

Often called the suicide squad, Curtain Squad is named after the curtain walls that provide the first line of defense for a castle. If ever a city comes under attack, the Curtain Squad is sent out on mounts to keep the enemy at bay until reinforcements are able to mobilize. This is a very dangerous position, causing most soldiers to consider it the worst assignment.

Cursed Saviour Squad

Known as such because of its help on and off the battlefield, the Cursed Saviour Squad is comprised almost entirely of medical personnel that immediately reclaim wounded from the battlefield and employ advanced bio-invigorators, developed by Edwyn Reinhold, to heal multiple patients simultaneously. The cursed part of their name comes from the often negative view of bio-flux and its potential connection to the 'soul'.

The Cursed Saviours are a bit of a controversy. Many of the people they help find themselves in conflict with themselves as the essence used to heal them came from others. There have been rumours spread that those saved by the squad have begun hearing voices that they believe belong to the person's essence that was used to heal them. The most controversial part and source of these rumours is that, due to a lack of available essence, the Cursed Saviour Squad has begun pulling out the essence of those dying on the battlefield or in the hospital to supply themselves.

Edward Grey *The Rise of the Salvagers* p. 216

The Solari Front

While the salvagers seem hesitant to make any mass move across the large rivers of Namont and Summerlin, a second military has been set up across the river from Solari where a larger than normal number of salvagers occasionally make their way to the shore. More than anything though, the Solari Front is tasked with keeping an eye on movements around Solari.

Samm Untel: Head of the demolitions team, Samm Untel is charged with leading his team in planting and maintaining the thousands of mines along the banks across from Solari. These mines serve both as warning signals and as a first line of defense for the Solari Front. He is a round gnome whose intelligence is offset slightly by his irritating slowness.

The Ruins of the Solari Construction Site

The construction of Solari was a massive project and a temporary city had to be constructed on the surface to house the thousands of people involved. After the site was shut down, the city fell to ruin. Most of its useful materials have been stripped by the salvagers and now large piles of rubble litter the landscape.

Sergeant Cassini Zellan: Cassini is an Evangelasian scout tasked with the difficult task of living among the salvagers and gathering intel that can't be acquired by airship or telescopes on the Solari Front. This ayodin travels deep into the ruins of the Solari construction site on eight-day stints,

camouflaging herself and living within the area. Special bio-flux work was done on her wings to make them translucent and easier to camouflage.

The Pit Boss: Witnessed from an airship scouting expedition and confirmed by Sergeant Cassani's findings, the Pit Boss is one of the few truly intelligent salvagers ever witnessed. Seeming to somehow hover over the other salvagers, the Pit Boss has been witnessed traveling around the Solari construction site, inspecting construction elements and automatons, often appearing to order groups of repair workers to fix damaged units.

The Salvager Generals of Solari

The known generals are few and the information on them is even less, but there are currently four known ones. The Cannon Commander, the Galvanic Lord, Solar Burst, and the most powerful and elusive one, the Graviton General. Some consider the Pit Boss to be a general, and there are a few other bizarre salvagers that the Institute on Salvager Research has considered for the title.

One generally consistent fact is that the generals are never sent to the same battle together. It is theorized that this is because the Solari Engine does not wish for a conflict of authority between them. The Galvanic Lord is the most notable for its apparent personality, giving it the air of being the most human salvager of the group.

The Fort Malson Front

The main point of contention in the salvager conflict, the Fort Malson Front consists of three military units spread out between the Lor cort mountains and the Neimons river. This force, close to six thousand strong, patrols the front and prevents the salvagers from pushing any farther into Evanglessian territory. Subgroups of these units are often tasked with scouting missions or precision attack objectives within salvager territory.

Commander Kaoi: Commander Kaoi is the commander in charge of the entire Fort Malson Front. Coordinating defenses as well as offensive movements up and down the line, Commander Kaoi stays busy. If you get directly in touch with Commander Kaoi, chances are you are doing something important for the military in the region. He is a true military

commander, risen up through the ranks of military due his merit. He commanded several regiments during the Hurricane Wars and takes the task of halting the spread of salvagers quite seriously. He is stern and curt, but he rarely loses his temper.

Overseer Restpol: Overseer Restpol is in charge of supplies for the Fort Malson Front. He coordinates deliveries and train schedules running to and from Fort Malson. Many times he will be someone's first contact upon arriving at the front. He is overworked and extremely busy. He will be gruff, but will make sure you get where you need to be or get the supplies you were supposed to receive.

Restpol's a jackass, but he's reliable. Don't know how he manages to deal with all the bureaucracy, but he does, and he ain't dead yet!

Sgt. Johnathon Fisher Kennedy

Fort Malson

Fort Malson has had an unusual history, transitioning from old fort to mental asylum and back to fort again. Fort Malson was an old fort built during the Loveless Wars that had been converted to an asylum for the insane, taking the most dangerous inmates from all over Evangless. Fort Malson had been retrofitted to have all the amenities a notable sanitarium is expected to provide for its guests, from locked and padded cells to sterile recreation rooms.

During the Loveless Wars, the fort was established as a central command center for the region. However it fell into disarray until a few decades ago when it was converted into a prison to hold captured combatants. The fort gains its name from General Cedric Malson, who was a general during the Loveless Wars. Ironically, his grandson, Lt. Roderick Malson, became a prisoner at the institution during the Evanglessian Civil War, during which time the Royalists were using the fort as a prison for Militarists. Lt. Malson has remained too belligerent to release or transfer.

At the end of the civil war, the fort was returned to its original purpose and became the headquarters for the fight against the salvagers. Most of its committed inmates were transferred elsewhere, though there is still a working branch of the asylum where some of the rougher inhabitants remain. The fort has many rooms that still harken to its days as an asylum, and the running joke among the soldiers is that when you're assigned to Fort Malson, you're assigned there for life.

In the last few years, a sizeable city has now grown up around Fort Malson to support the numerous soldiers stationed to the salvager front. It is primarily a militarized city, though there are still quite a few modern amenities there for the townsfolk.

Fortifications and Military Presence

Fort Malson boasts high walls around its keep. These walls form the second-to-last line of defense against the salvager menace in the area, with the final defense being the full deployment of every soldier and piece of armor within the fort. The walls are studded with pillboxes along the outer perimeter, accessible via a series of reinforced tunnels connecting each emplacement. Each emplacement contains a reinforced bunker, sandbag fortifications, and sequestered heavy caliber repeating guns and artillery. Each gun is contained within a cell-like structure that is designed to channel the explosive backfire of detonating ordnance away from the rest of the pillbox.

In addition to the stationary defenses, Fort Malson is staffed by four regiments of crack Evanglessian troops, elements

The People of Fort Malson

Up until the recognition of the salvager threat, most of the people living in the area eked out a living in the shadows of the fort, where ramshackle tenements and a few munitions and military-oriented factories still operated. Now with governmental money pouring into the region, the fort has begun to see drastic improvements. New walls, water supplies, and housing has drastically improved the populace's life. Nearly 20,000 people now live or are stationed around the fort.

The population consists primarily of Evanglessian humans, with a small settlement of ayodin that live next to and in the lake. A smattering of Paldoran exiles also call the fort their home, having fled the ruins of Paldorus to set up a series of small munitions factories. While the Paldoran exiles aren't treated well, they produce work that is consistently of quality. Regardless of the city's growing size, most outside of Fort Malson agree that the area breeds hardy souls and some of the most stubborn folk around.

of the Salvager Response Team (SRT), and the Thirty-Third Mechanized Armor Battalion. The entirety of Fort Malson falls under the purview of Commander Kaori, but the SRT reports solely to their satyr commander, Niroth, and the Thirty-Third reports to Colonel Dedrik. Allied with them against the salvagers are Paladin Alexander Durmband and Paladin Victor Armagaunt, the leaders of the Mechanized Crusade that the church of Tailemy launched to aid the people of Fort Malson.

The Airdocks

Built at the rear of the fort and elevated high over the rest of the facility, the Fort Malson airdocks are vital to the facility's continued survival. While the railway that runs to Fort Malson carries most of the goods and foodstuffs needed by both the inmates and the soldiers stationed there, the lines are always under threat of disruption by salvager attack. The airdocks, a series of cargo elevators built into towering landing pads, provide the fort with a means of both ingress and egress, in the event of the fort falling to the salvagers. Each landing pad is crowned with a ring of defensive turrets and monitoring stations, forever scanning the landscape for salvager threats.

Project Stonewall

It has been noted by the SRT and the Institute of Salvager Research that only rarely are the salvagers discovered to have harvested stone, be it raw or worked. As further defense against the salvager invasion, a thirty-foot stone wall, ten feet thick at its widest points, has begun construction around the perimeter of Fort Malson. Capped with battlements concealing turrets and cannons, the wall was the brainchild of Professor Kleinsworth of the Institute after her team dissected multiple foraging forms of the salvagers and discovered a lack of stone in the materials stored within their bodies. The only metal used in the construction of the wall has been rebar that was used to strengthen the access points, as well as the metal gates and barricades themselves.

The Tailemite Presence

Originally intended as nothing more than aid to the infirm of mind, the Tailemite presence in Fort Malson has expanded to include a sizeable military component. Sister Quill, an ayodin lay preacher with a medical background, was dispatched to the asylum to render what aid she and her chosen could in healing the sick minds that were kept there. Several of her patients were survivors of the ill-fated campaign led by Captain Cel Megore or from other scouting missions. They came to recount their experiences in fragments via therapy, and Quill wrote to the church in horror requesting assistance in repelling the salvager threat. The first crusader regiment arrived on site in the fall of 840 and was the first stationed military presence in the region. Their reports were a large factor in the permanent deployment of troops by the Evanglessian government.

Paladin Alexander Durmband led the first contingent towards Solari, and swore that he and his crusaders would remain on site and not return until the threat was dealt with. However, during the first few skirmishes, his task force took overwhelming casualties. He wrote for reinforcements from the church, and a standing agreement with the Fort Malson was reached for the Tailemites to have a constant presence at the front.

The Mechanized Crusade: Assignment to the

“Mechanized Crusade,” as it has become known among its members, is a thankless job of necessity. Still, promising paladins and crusaders accept their calling and go to join their brothers and sisters in Fort Malson. Once entered into service, Tailemite paladins and crusaders are stationed there permanently, by oath. The warriors are never rotated out and the rate of attrition is high, both from casualties and fatigue. Tailemites who serve for long periods of time can expect a small leave at Fort Malson and not much more, though their families are well provided for by the church. Paladin Durmband is the senior church official on site.

Notable People

Victor Armagaunt

Victor Armagaunt, a human male from Varsylis, was freshly elevated to the rank of paladin in 839. He has won more battles against the salvagers than any Tailemite force. While campaigning with the Morford Alliance and their Salvager Removal Team (SRT), he saved the life of several allies and was honored by Niroth, head of the SRT, with a gear tattoo for his bravery. Armagaunt has now brought this trend to the rest of his troops, each member receiving an interlocking gear tattoo for any salvager they assist in taking down. Armagaunt's tattoos extend from his chest to his bicep and are growing. He functionally answers to Paladin Durmband, but is most often encountered in the field alongside local militia forces. He uses a high-profile weapon, a warhammer with the beak-shaped head forged out of an aether torch. His forces have taken to calling the weapon ‘Meteor’ due to Armagaunt's impressive feats with it.

Paladin Armagaunt leads the Stalwart Seventh, which he has commanded since his first arrival at Fort Malson. The core of the unit has remained intact despite high casualties, and inclusion in the Seventh is considered a charmed position despite the danger. Most of the Seventh are Paladins, elevated by Armagaunt in the field.

Armagaunt's gear tattoos take the egg. When he flexes they look like they're grinding together. Although when he does it for a while it becomes nauseating to stare at.

Pvt. Andrew Pierce, Junior Paladin of the Stalwart Seventh



Alexander Durmband

Commander of the Tailemite forces along the salvager front and the lead Church official in the region, Durmband is a passionate man that believes that the fall of the salvagers will protect the lives of all races. He is often found trying to improve morale and working with Fort Malson's Commander Kaoi to coordinate forces and supplies. He was once a cheerful and enthusiastic man, but the war with the machines has sobered him. He does his best to keep everyone functioning while also keeping himself sane, but he has buried too many of his friends. He often relies on Sister Quill for stability.

Fort Malson Infrastructure

The military industrial complex is the biggest source of legitimate employment in Fort Malson and the surrounding area. The factories that fuel the fort are years behind the more advanced facilities in Evangless, relying on the old methods of brute force labor to handle the tasks like smelting and casting. Such work is dangerous, and the factories eagerly pay hazard rates in order to keep production running, the cost offset by agreements with the fort.

The largest producers are the Thunderstorm Munitions plant and the Anvil Armory. Thunderstorm produces ninety percent of the shells and rounds used by the fort, and contracts special consignments to the salvager front. Anvil Armory produces mechanized armor for vehicles and ablative plating for buildings. They have just recently begun designing and producing infantry armor after a proposition from the Tailemite crusaders in the area.

Adventure Hooks

Supply Run

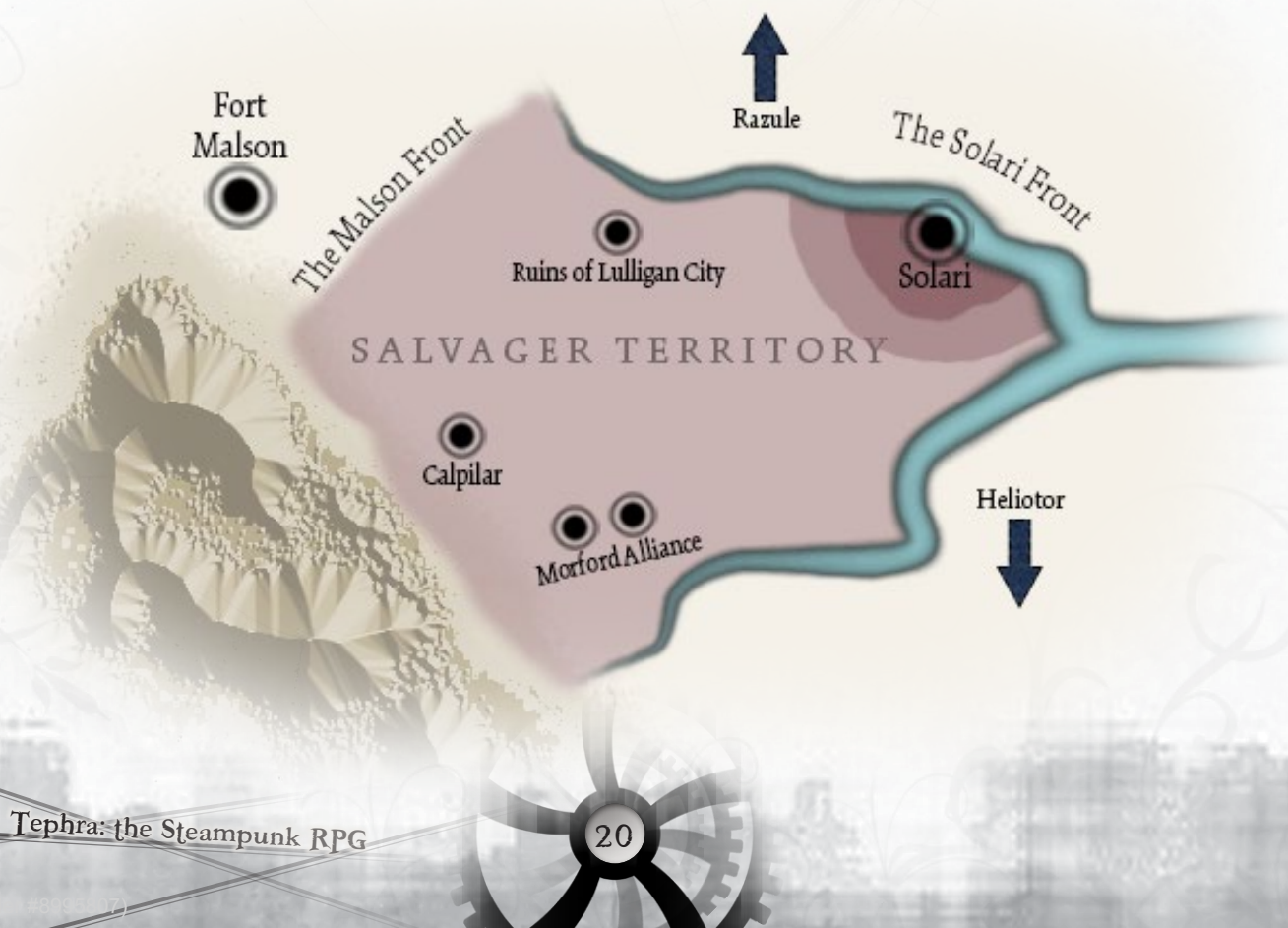
The adventurers are asked to go to a nearby town to retrieve needed supplies for Fort Malson. If successful, they might be called upon to try and request aid from Zelhost in the form of additional supplies, or to go into the forests and hunt down dangerous animals for their pelts and meat.

Front Line Assault

The adventurers are enlisted or paid to join a company's assault on a salvager-held location, or to repel a salvager attack.

Scouting

The adventurers are asked to sneak behind enemy lines and learn additional information about the salvager army, including troop placement and potential new models.



Locations Inside Salvager Territory

Calpilar

One of the only towns still within salvager territory, Calpilar is surrounded by tall metal walls that, from a distance, appear to have large windmills mounted atop them. These windmills power a system of gears within the walls that, when activated, rapidly rotate blades out of the wall.

Airy: Airy is an old lady, well into her 80s, but she is also a master mechanic, having drafted the plans for the deadly walls that protect the town. She can regularly be found patrolling the wall, prodding at bits and pieces with her cane to make sure everything is operating smoothly. She has a team of 15 technicians that assist her in the wall's maintenance, a team that she crankily bosses around and constantly complains about their incompetence. (However, when asked in private, she will claim there is no better maintenance crew in Evangless).

Morford Alliance

The Morford Alliance is a combined force from two towns that are the deepest settlements within salvager territory. Commonly attacked, they have developed a veteran force trained to take

down automatons. Using grappling hooks, graviton packs, and aether torches, they are the premiere force in the region and have even trained similar crews for the Evanglessian Military. Patrols often use the land controlled by the alliance as a staging ground for missions deeper into Salvager territory.

Niroth: Head of the Salvager Removal Team (SRT), Niroth is a middle-aged satyr who developed many of the battle strategies used to take down these hulking machines. It has become tradition in recent years for members of his teams to get a small gear tattoos on their body for every salvager they participate in taking down, a trend that spread to the Tailemite's Stalwart Seventh. The tattoos start on the wrist and interconnect, spreading up the arm. Niroth's tattoos already reach up over his shoulder, spreading across his upper back and chest. He nearly doubles the number of operational kills by any other member of his crew. An injury to the throat has left him voiceless and he now communicates with his men using an aether light attached to his shoulder with various colored lenses that can be slid over it with the push of a button.

The Institute of Salvager Research

The Institute is a subgroup of the Evangless Royal Institute for Automata and Mechanica (ERIAM). The Institute is housed in the Heliotor, and it receives regular shipments of salvager components from the front at Fort Malson. They piece together the parts and study the effects of different stimuli on various salvager forms. Their most successful endeavor to date determined the location of the average brainworks suite within a salvager form, a discovery that enabled the Salvager Removal Team to establish their reputation for victory against the menace.

The institute is headed by Professor Kleinsworth, a doctor of automata from Tordryon that expatriated to work on the salvager project. Kleinsworth is a human woman who still wears her Othavyian warpaint around the lab, a quirk that has made her an inspiring presence around the Institute.

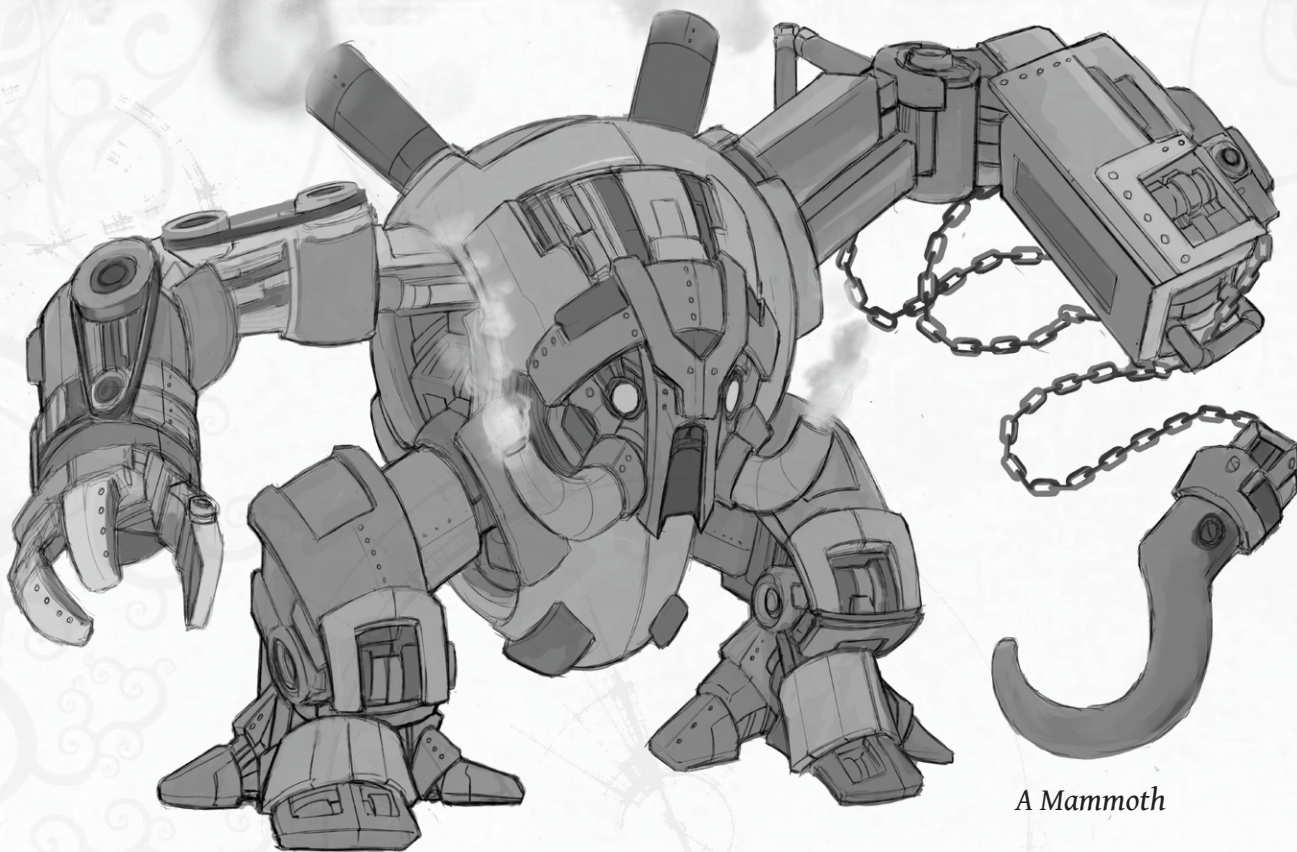
The Hangar

The Hangar, also known in the ISR as the Boneyard, is the subterranean storage for the salvager corpses brought in for research material. Since a mammoth reanimated and escaped, security has been tightened to where no outside employees are allowed

in, only core staff. Before security was tightened, there were over 30 recorded salvager corpses on record. There are rumors that, to better study the salvagers, the staff sometimes reanimates the wreckage. The institute has repeatedly assured the city it is not doing this.

Winter Kreuss

The head of the Hangar is Winter Kreuss, a Paldoran exile who was caught up in a salvager raid on his caravan and was left behind. He survived after the machine hunted him for a week, and he was rescued by Evanglessian forces. He agreed to share with them what he knew about the threat and chose to stay. Now head of security and research for the Hangar, he is known for his exacting methodology, often forcing his staff to pull overtime to ensure the facility does not suffer a lapse as it did when the mammoth salvager escaped.



A Mammoth

The Skull of Unit K433

One of Heliotor's landmarks is the skull of a mammoth salvager attached over the city's hall. The beast recompiled itself from scrap in a moment of lax supervision in 843 and escaped the Institute's security staff.

It went on a rampage through the town and was barely brought down before it escaped. The Royal Evanglessian 47th Mechanized Brigade was the one that brought the mammoth down. The tanks had come with special kits on half the regiment, anchoring the machine with tow cables and anchors as small-grade payloads were delivered at the joints and limbs. They dragged the machine into the lake and put it down with repeated bombardments. The corpse was removed to the Institute of Salvager Research for further study.

That thing was nearly unstoppable. Without the brigade we would have needed every last gun in the city to have even a chance of bringing that monster down. Dominin wasn't lucky enough to make it through, but Halis and the other brigade members have our eternal thanks.

Sotera Caston, *The Rise of the Salvagers* p. 192

Adventure Concept

Crowd Control

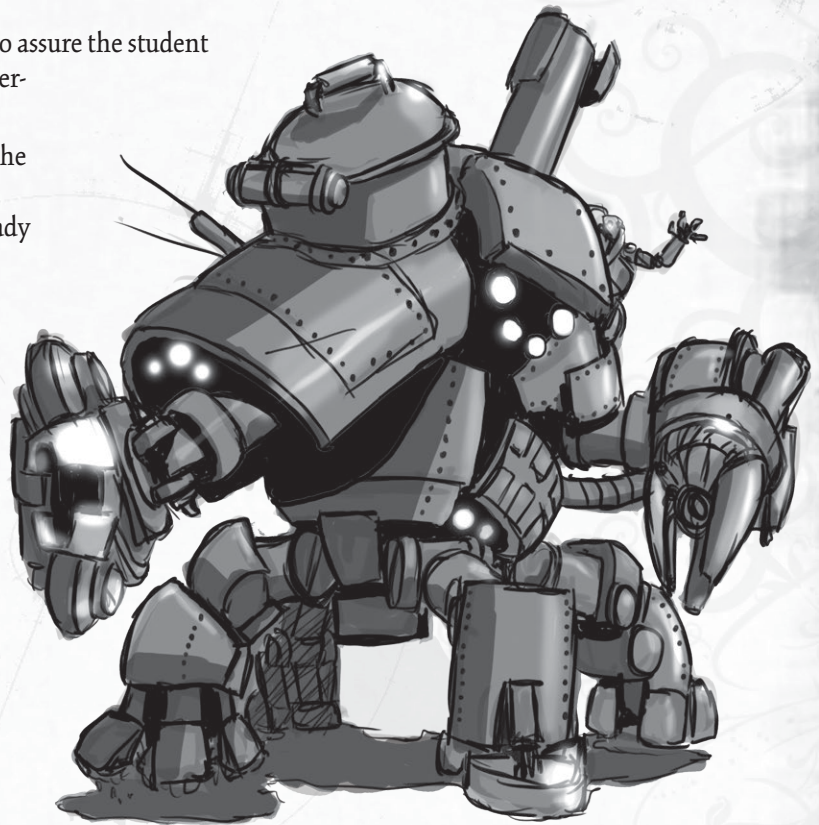
Student protests have been growing in the last 14 months due to the increased military presence in the area. Many drunken brawls have occurred between military and university students.

Charles Draken has been the main face behind these protests. He argues that Heliotor is a place of learning, where students should be able to open their minds and not worry about military oversight.

The school and military leaders continue trying to assure the student population that the military presence has no control or oversight of the university.

A protest is growing in the university plaza, and the headmistress is worried that there may be agent provocateurs from other nations hidden in the student crowds, ready to make the situation dangerous and ruin the school.

The adventurers need to find the hidden elements and protect the students.



Devourer



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