

TWILIGHT: 2000™ 2nd Edition

2010

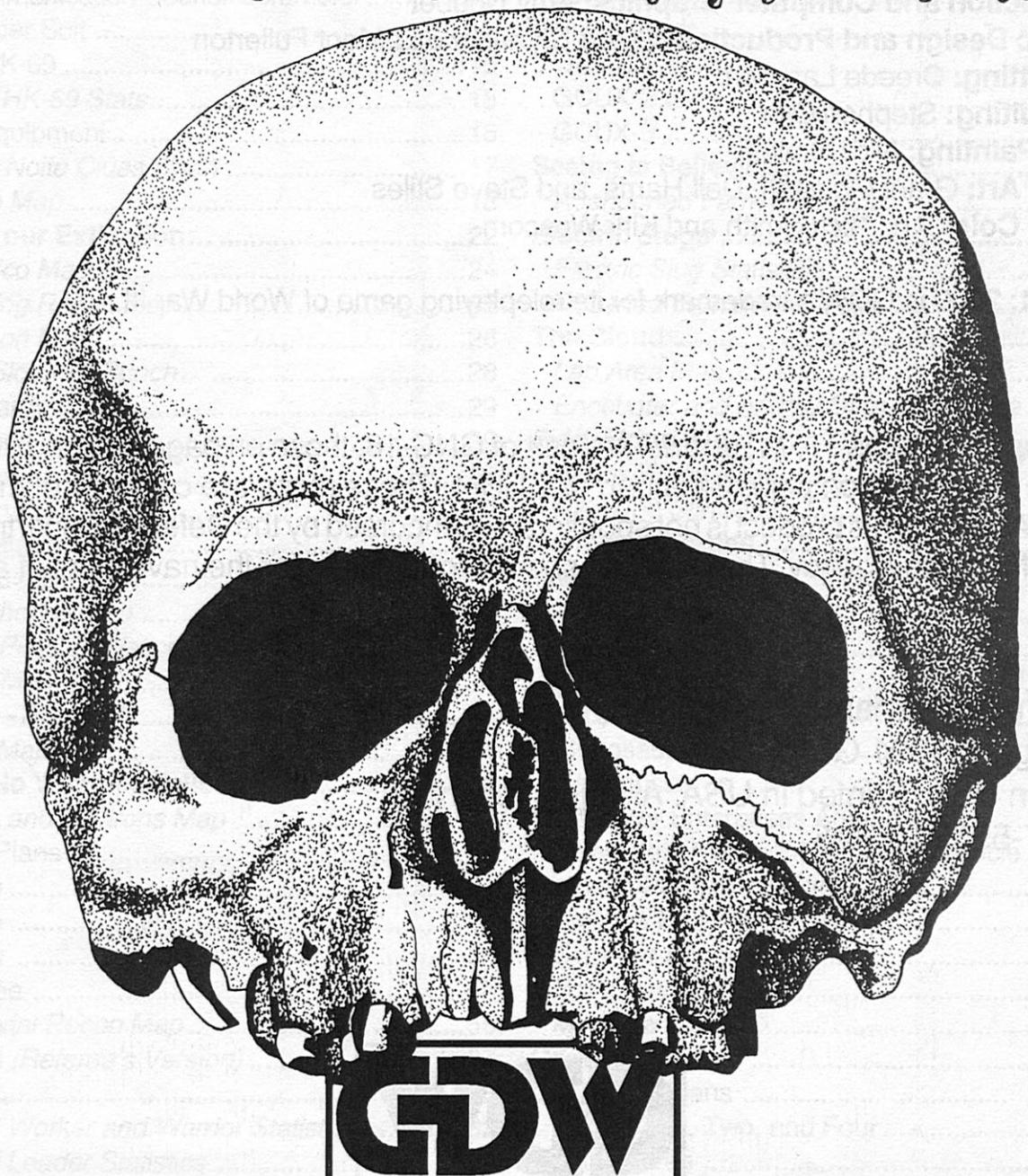
THE WILDLIFE IN NIGHTMARES™



GDW

TM

INNOCENT NIGHTMARES



CREDITS

Design

"*You're Not From Around Here, Are You?*" and *This Ain't No Weather Balloon* were written by Charles E. Gannon
The Rumors of Our Extinction... and *The Orpheus Extract* were written by Lester Smith
Them? was written by Craig Sheeley
Warlord was written by Frank A. Chadwick
Seeing is Believing was written by Legion G. McRae
Electric Slugs, The Cloud, and Fido, Fidas, Fidat were written by Loren K. Wiseman

Development: Loren K. Wiseman

Editing: Lester Smith

Art Direction and Computer Graphics: Amy Doubet

Graphic Design and Production: Steve Bryant and LaMont Fullerton

Typesetting: Creede Lambard

Copyediting: Stephen Olle

Cover Painting: Nick Smith

Interior Art: Grant Goleash, Dell Harris, and Steve Stiles

Interior Color Art: Nick Smith and Kirk Wescom

Twilight: 2000 is GDW's trademark for its roleplaying game of World War III.

The maps on pages 10, 11, and 97 are part of GNC-18, those on pages 42 and 100 are part of GNC-13, and that on page 34 is part of GNC-4. These maps are courtesy of the Defense Mapping Agency. This product is not sponsored or endorsed by the Defense Department or the Defense Mapping Agency. These charts should not be used for the navigation of aircraft.

Twilight Nightmares

Copyright© 1991 GDW, Inc.

Made in USA. Printed in USA. All rights reserved.

ISBN 1-55878-095-5



P.O. Box 1646
Bloomington, IL 61702-1646

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	5	Warlord	68
You're Not from Around Here, Are You?	6	Sketch Map of the Compound	71
General Orientation Map	8	Compound Map	72
Tapajos River Basin Map	10	The Compound	73
Alien Weapons	14	The Work Shed: Level 1	74
Alien Automatic Assault Rifle	14	Level 1 Map	74
Alien Hand Laser	14	Levels 2 to 9	75
Alien Tracker Rockets	15	Levels 2 to 9 Map	75
Alien Remote Sensor	15	Level 10	76
Alien Communication Seeker-Scrambler	15	Level 10 Map	77
Alien Leaper Suit	15	Vehicle Cards	77
G3 with HK-69	15	GCUX-1	77
G3 with HK-69 Stats	15	GCUX-2	78
Other Equipment	15	GCUX-3	79
Morte por Noite Clues Chart	17	Seeing is Believing	80
Last Base Map	18	Abandoned Farm Map	81
Rumors of our Extinction.....	22	Electric Slugs	82
New Mexico Map	24	Electric Slug Statistics	82
The Burning Ranch Map	25	Deserted Farmhouse Map	83
Box Canyon Map	26	The Cloud	84
Stats for Sloane's Bunch	28	Lab Area Map	85
Dinosaur Cards	29	Encounter and Animal Data Chart: The Cloud	85
Saurolophus	29	Fido, Fidas, Fidat	86
Triceratops	29	Police Station Map	87
Stegosaurus	29	Neo-Dog Statistics	87
Tyrannosaurus	29	Perforated Pages	89
The Orpheus Extract	30	WMO Flier	89
The Farmhouse Map	32	WMO Letter	90
ET Laser Pistol Statistics	33	Dinosaur Full-Page Cards	91
Germany Map	34	Saurolophus	91
Map Key—The Post	35	Triceratops	92
The Post Map	36	Stegosaurus	93
This Ain't No Weather Balloon	40	Tyrannosaurus	94
Mindanao and Environs Map	42	Barminter Enterprises Agreement	95
UFO Deck Plans	54	"Barminsters Missing" Newspaper Article	96
Level One	54	Colored Perforated Pages	97
Level Two	54	Tapajos River Basin Map	97
Level Four	54	Sloane's Ranch Map	98
Level Three	55	Box Canyon Map	99
Rizel—Aerial Recon Map	56	Mindanao Map	100
UFO Area (Referee's Version)	57	Computer Screen	101
Them?	58	UFO Deck Plans	102
Arthropod Worker and Warrior Statistics	62	Levels One, Two, and Four	102
Arthropod Leader Statistics	63	Level Three	103
Geomorphic Hive Maps	64	Alien Anatomical Computer Graphic	104



INTRODUCTION

Shortly after **Merc: 2000** was published, we decided to go ahead with a project that had been on the back burner for a long time: **Twilight Nightmares**. The notion of SF scenarios for the **Twilight: 2000** system has been kicking around for a while, but we were not sure how it would be received by our customers-at-large. **Twilight: 2000** has always been viewed as a serious military RPG, and we were unsure how people would take to a collection of science-fiction adventures for it. After the publication of **Cadillacs and Dinosaurs**, however, we received a number of letters from referees telling us how they had introduced dinosaurs into a **Twilight** adventure as a one-time bizarre event, with great success. A few queries at conventions convinced us that an anthology of science-fiction-type adventures would be well received. Practically every **Twilight: 2000** campaign sometimes enters the doldrums, and one-shot adventures with a "weird" slant to them looked like just the thing to perk things up. As long as no referee was forced to use them—as long as they did not become part of the "official timeline," as one referee called it—we were told, everyone would be happy.

So . . . here it is.

The organization of **Twilight Nightmares** is different from any other product we have done. The last 16 pages of this book are perforated, and the last eight are perforated and in color. On these perforated pages, we have printed a number of player handouts to help spice up the scenarios and make them easier to enter into for both players and referee.

Some **Twilight: 2000** players and referees may not find these adventures to their liking, but we believe that most people will find them a welcome diversion. One of the secrets of a good roleplaying session is to make proper use of the unexpected, and every scenario presented in this book can certainly be described as that.

MODIFYING THE BACKGROUNDS

Some of the adventures and scenarios are written with the **Twilight: 2000** background in mind, others with **Merc: 2000**. Each can be modified for use with the other background. In some cases, the referee may wish to transfer the location of the adventure.

"You're Not From Around Here, Are You?": This adventure is primarily aimed at **Merc: 2000** characters. Its conversion to **Twilight: 2000** will require some extensive background changes. The two keys to the situation are the alien's motivation for being on Earth and the location of the adventure.

If the adventure is to be used with **Twilight: 2000**, the alien's motivation as stated becomes untenable. Referees are free to devise their own, but the simplest is to leave it unexplained and inexplicable . . . aliens do things for reasons which are not always rational from a human perspective.

In **Merc: 2000**, the scenario can easily be shifted to just about any wilderness area, leaving the alien's motivations intact (although this will require some changes in encounters and NPC names).

The Rumors of Our Extinction . . .: This adventure is primarily aimed at **Twilight** characters. The main change to the background for **Merc** is to eliminate the mention of the **Twilight War** and simply have the self-made millionaire be a little more eccentric than the text describes and the location a little more exotic.

The Orpheus Extract: This adventure is primarily aimed at **Twilight: 2000** characters. The main change that needs to be made to shift it to a **Merc: 2000** background is the motivation for the aliens to depart from Earth. A shift in locale merely requires a change in the names of the various NPCs.

This Ain't No Weather Balloon: This adventure is primarily aimed at **Merc: 2000** characters. For **Twilight: 2000** adventures, it is simply necessary to eliminate the hiring cycle and have the group encounter the wrecked saucer and its "inhabitants" as part of an existing campaign.

Them?: This adventure is primarily aimed at **Twilight: 2000** characters. It may be changed to one for **Merc: 2000** by eliminating all mention of the **Twilight War** and its effects. The locale can be readily changed to suit any individual campaign.

Warlord: This adventure is primarily aimed at **Twilight: 2000** characters. It may be changed to one for **Merc: 2000** by eliminating all mention of the **Twilight War** and its effects. The locale can be readily changed to suit any individual campaign, as discussed in the adventure itself.

Folios: The various folios are usually aimed one way or another, but the situations are such that the referee should have no trouble inserting them into any existing scenario.

HANDOUTS

The following is a guide to the referee regarding the use of the various handouts contained in pages 89-104. Players and referees of this module may photocopy sections for personal use only.

"You're Not From Around Here, Are You?": This adventure requires the use of the handouts on pages 89-90, 97, and 104. The WMO letter and WMO flyer handouts reflect this adventure's emphasis on the **Merc: 2000** background, but the alien anatomical readout can be used with any background.

The Rumors of Our Extinction . . .: This adventure requires the use of the materials on pages 91-94 and 98-99. Players will find them handy in determining what the creatures they encounter look like.

The Orpheus Extract: This module has no perforated handouts, but referees may wish to make copies of the warlord's stronghold map.

This Ain't No Weather Balloon: This adventure requires the use of the handouts on pages 95-96 and 100-103.

Them?: This module has no perforated handouts, but referees will wish to make copies of the underground geomorphic tunnels for their own convenience.

Warlord: This module has no perforated handouts, but referees will wish to make copies of the Warlord's compound for player use.

Folios: The various folios have no handouts, although the maps which accompany them are reproducible, and are usable in both the **Twilight: 2000** and **Merc: 2000** backgrounds.

JUST A SUGGESTION . . .

*If we shadows have offended,
Think of this (and all is mended),
That you have but slumber'd here,
While these visions did appear,
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream . . .*

— *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Referees need not make any of these events part of their campaign unless the players are agreeable. If the players do not like the way things turn out, the referee need only tell them it was all a collective nightmare, and everything is as it was before.

— Loren K. Wiseman



©91 D.H.

"YOU'RE NOT FROM AROUND HERE, ARE YOU?"

This adventure is primarily aimed at Merc: 2000 characters.

REFEREE'S INFORMATION

The player characters have become aware of an employment opportunity in Brazil. But it's not the normal counterinsurgency job that they're accustomed to seeing; this is a little different. The WMO (World Meteorological Organization) has spent the past five years enforcing a variety of antilogging mandates designed to preserve the Amazon rain forest. However, despite increasing success, a recent setback has put the entire program in jeopardy.

The WMO's forward-operations bases along the Tapajos River have been the targets of systematic raids of incredible destructiveness. The few survivors who have been recovered by search-and-rescue teams report that the assaults were always at night, and always involved a deluge of high-power ordnance that destroyed buildings, vehicles, and personnel with pin-point accuracy.

Although the manpower losses have not been excessive yet, the WMO is worried. So far, none of the aggressors have been identified, much less killed or captured. If this pattern persists, the various nations who contribute to the WMO security force contingents (which are known as "blue helmets" due to their UN markings) may begin to consider withdrawing their support for what is beginning to look like a suicide mission.

What the characters do not know as they accept this job and fly south to the *selvas* (rain forests) of the Amazon River basin is that their foe is from another planet, sent to Earth for the express purpose of destroying the rain forests and inflicting other ecological damage.

In order to carry out this mission, the alien has decided to start by eliminating those forces which are restraining the operations of "natives" (humans) who will do his job for him. In other words, the alien has decided that, with a little help, the slash-and-burn farmers and the illegal loggers (known as "wildcutters") will do more ecological damage than he could ever hope to inflict on his own. The only help needed by these "natives" is the removal of certain forces that block their activities; namely, the WMO units in the Amazonian basin.

THE LOCATION

Brazil of the early 21st century is more miserable and impoverished than ever before. Teeming cities are cluttered with the homeless and the desperate. Mugging gangs employ mass-rush tactics even against heavily armed individuals; the few who die buy survival for the rest. In the *selvas* of the Amazonian basin, the situation is equally depressing. The mighty rain forests continue to fall before desperate slash-and-burn farmers and rogue logging companies. However, over the past two years the pace of deforestation has dropped significantly, thanks to the (often bloody) efforts of a single organization: the WMO.

Despite a general weakening of the power and respect commanded by the United Nations, the World Meteorological Organization (one of its offshoot agencies) enjoyed an increase in prestige and clout when it was charged with enforcing a variety of international accords having to do with the preservation of rain forests around the globe. This ecologically admirable mission was not achievable without the use of force, since most rain forests were (and still are) located in desperately poor nations that exploit these biomes for the many rich resources that are within them. Consequently, the

WMO found itself increasing its requests for security assets and logistical support. As a result, the blue helmets that used to be associated with UN peacekeeping forces are now most frequently encountered protecting rain forests and enforcing conservancy mandates.

The WMO operations in Brazil use the Amazon River network as their highway, shipping equipment and personnel from the river's main course into the innumerable tributaries that cut through the jungles and the highlands. Having secured the areas immediately around the Amazon itself, the WMO has now begun moving farther inland, taking illegal farmers into custody and—on occasion—engaging in pitched battles with stubborn wildcutters. However, the WMO success story is now looking somewhat questionable; the enemy known only as *Morte por Noite* (Death by Night) has torn two blue-helmet companies to pieces and shows no sign of stopping there.

Life in the *selvas* is not always pleasant. Although teeming with life and crisscrossed with life-giving rivers, the forest is also a place where death can come swiftly, and in many forms. Referees should double the number of animal encounters that they would normally use. The *selvas* are home to a variety of large, dangerous predators. These include pumas, crocodiles, and constrictor snakes. Smaller but no less lethal are poisonous snakes, spiders, and the infamous piranha.

Another constant enemy in this region is the incessant rain and humidity. The Amazon basin experiences over 190 centimeters of rainfall per year. The generally high temperatures (never less than 16°C, and often as much as 38°C) produce an oppressive level of humidity that can easily lead to exhaustion and heat stroke. To reflect this, referees should require *three* periods of rest for every *two* periods of activity. In addition, water consumption requirements are doubled.

These climatological conditions are as hard on machinery as they are on individuals. Rust develops quickly. Airborne grit joins with condensation and leaks into weapons, jamming slides, fouling barrels, and generally making weapons unreliable unless they receive a great deal of preventative maintenance. Referees should require characters to spend one activity period every two days on equipment maintenance. If they do not do so, their equipment should suffer at least one inauspiciously timed failure per day.

THE NPCS

There are seven major NPCs in this adventure, as described below. Six of them are humans and one is the alien. The alien is dealt with separately, following the humans.

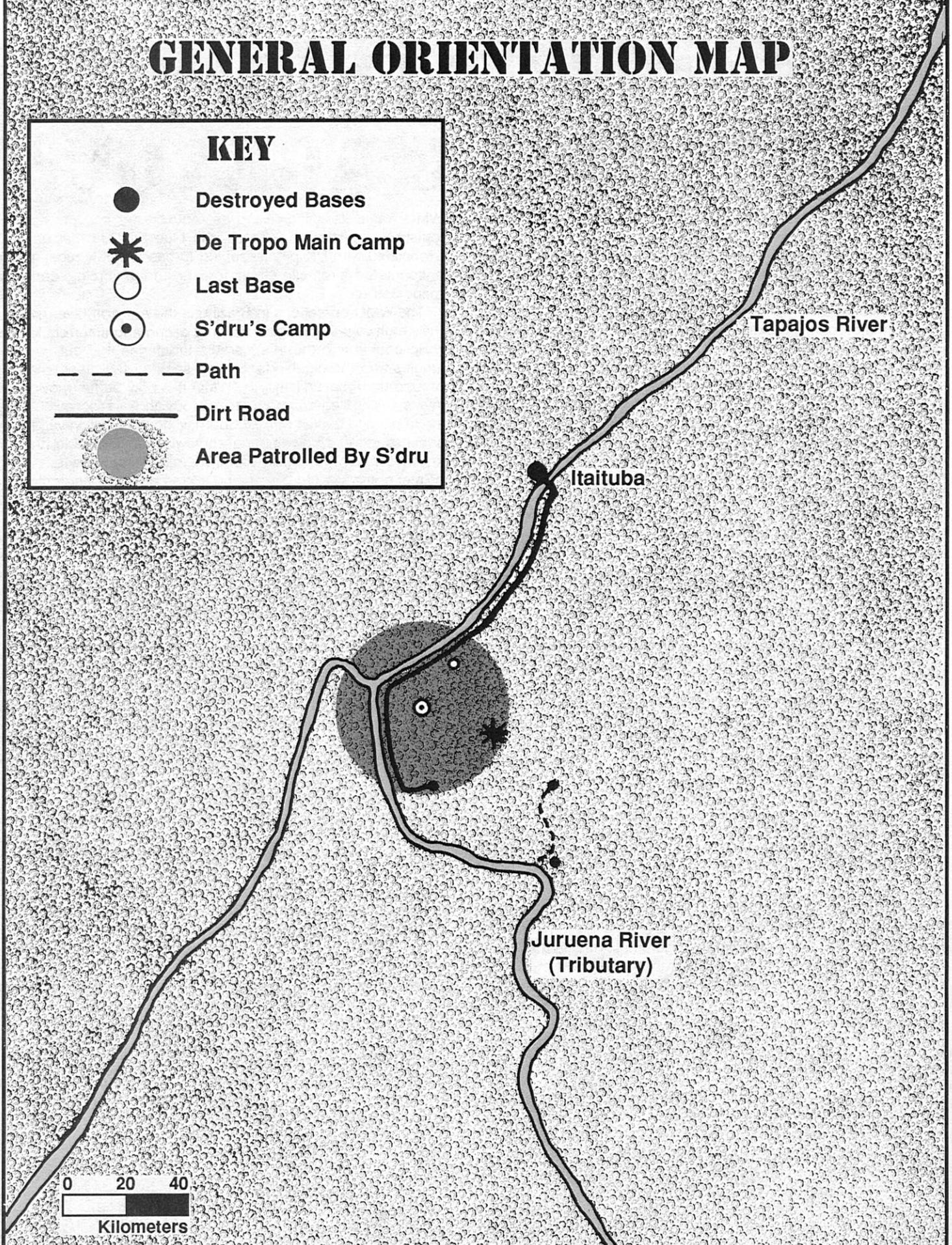
Manuel Pablocala

Manuel Pablocala, as logging chief for the wildcutters of De Tropo Corporation, is in charge of the largest and most destructive wildcutter camp operating along the Tapajos River. Although he grew up amongst the *favelas* (slums) of Rio de Janeiro, a strong sense of practicality and a streak of ruthlessness allowed Manuel to create other opportunities for himself. The best of these came in the guise of a security "expediter" for De Tropo's rain forest logging operations. In six years, he worked his way up from hired gun to operational overseer. His current assignment on the Tapajos River is the first time he has been placed in complete charge of a logging site.

GENERAL ORIENTATION MAP

KEY

- Destroyed Bases
- * De Tropo Main Camp
- Last Base
- S'dru's Camp
- Path
- Dirt Road
- Area Patrolled By S'dru



Manuel is not evil, although he is an absolute opportunist. He sees the actions of the WMO and the UN as being invasions of Brazilian sovereignty. The fact that Brazil now cooperates with these mandates only makes him despise the current government.

Manuel has no idea what is destroying the WMO bases, but he's all for it. However, he also knows that the WMO is likely to blame him and is equally unlikely to believe his claims of innocence. Consequently, Manuel has been preparing for war; his men are well-armed, his positions are well-prepared, and his state of general readiness is high. Manuel is a Veteran NPC.

Paco

The stooped, surly individual who goes only by the name "Paco" is thought by many to be part Indian, or part monkey, or even part puma, so much a part of the jungle is he. Paco is indeed at home in the *selvas* and he has been an indispensable aide to Manuel, who uses this man-creature for scouting and surveying.

Paco is also quite comfortable with murder and is quite good at it. His ability to move silently, and his preference for killing with his hands (or melee weapons), has made him an effective assassin on many occasions when diplomacy failed to work.

Paco is not stupid, but his interests and knowledge are both very limited. He lives to eat, run, hunt, kill, and, maybe, mate.

Paco is an Elite NPC, exceptionally skilled in Stealth and Tracking.

Captain Soren Helsingaard

The commanding officer of the Itaituba WMO unit, Soren Helsingaard is a well-trained, well-liked officer in the Danish Army who jumped at the chance for an actual field command. He has found that the challenge of commanding a WMO unit in South America was all that he had hoped for—and more. Helsingaard's company arrived in the *selvas* nine months ago and immediately began leapfrogging down the Tapajos River, establishing bases and leaving behind security assets until follow-up units could arrive. However, three weeks ago several of his most advanced posts began to miss their scheduled radio contacts. Efforts to reach them by helicopter cost the captain his only chopper; it vanished without a trace (the alien shot it down).

Then some of his most advanced bases began to be obliterated. The survivors of the last attack managed to reach the company HQ just outside of Itaituba, where they told tales of immense firepower and absolute destruction. With only one base ("Last Base") left between the mysterious enemy advance and the Company HQ at Itaituba, Helsingaard has decided to move forward, hoping to intercept and blunt (if not turn back) the advancing hostiles.

Helsingaard is a genial man in his late thirties with a ready smile and a "let's-go" attitude. He is a Veteran NPC.

Lieutenant Alec Julkaren

Alec is Capt. Helsingaard's intelligence officer/special-operations leader. Currently on detached duty from the Danish *Jaegerkorpset* (commandos), Alec has led almost half of the enforcement actions conducted against De Tropo Corporation in the past six months. Alec's mixed background (English, Danish, and Finnish) has given him a knack for picking up new languages, including the local Indian dialects. He is a quiet spoken, efficient officer who has a great love of nature; he requested this assignment for moral and ethical reasons. Alec is a Veteran NPC.

Roderick Ndele

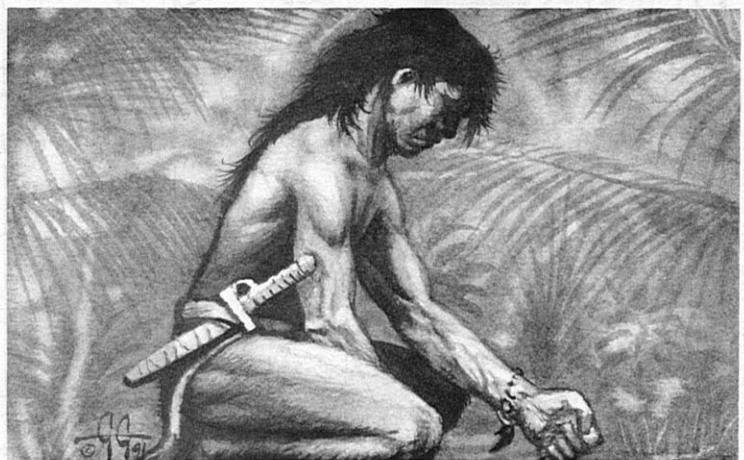
As chief scientist for WMO reforestation efforts in the Tapajos River basin, Roderick Ndele's specialty is management of rain forest biomes. But ever since he narrowly escaped incineration in the last attack by the unknown enemy that is reducing the WMO forces, his interest has turned to battlefield forensics.

Ndele survived by diving into the narrow trench used by mechanics when they work on the underside of vehicle chassis. After hiding there the remainder of the night, he emerged to find the camp a wasteland, inhabited by a handful of lucky survivors. While waiting for rescue, he decided to gather clues about the attackers.

However, when he left the camp clearing and entered the forest, he was surprised to find that there wasn't a single trace of the attackers. The WMO leaders had estimated that they were under attack by at least two heavily armed platoons, yet Ndele could only find hints of light movement along the extant game trails.

Despite warnings from Capt. Helsingaard, Ndele is eager to go back out into the jungle and continue his search for *Morte por Noite*, which he believes is not an "armed force" at all—but a single being, origin unknown.

Ndele is from Kenya, and is well-respected amongst ecology-oriented academicians around the globe. He has two doctorates, one in environmental management, the other in biology. He is a Novice NPC (but an excellent scientific/research asset).

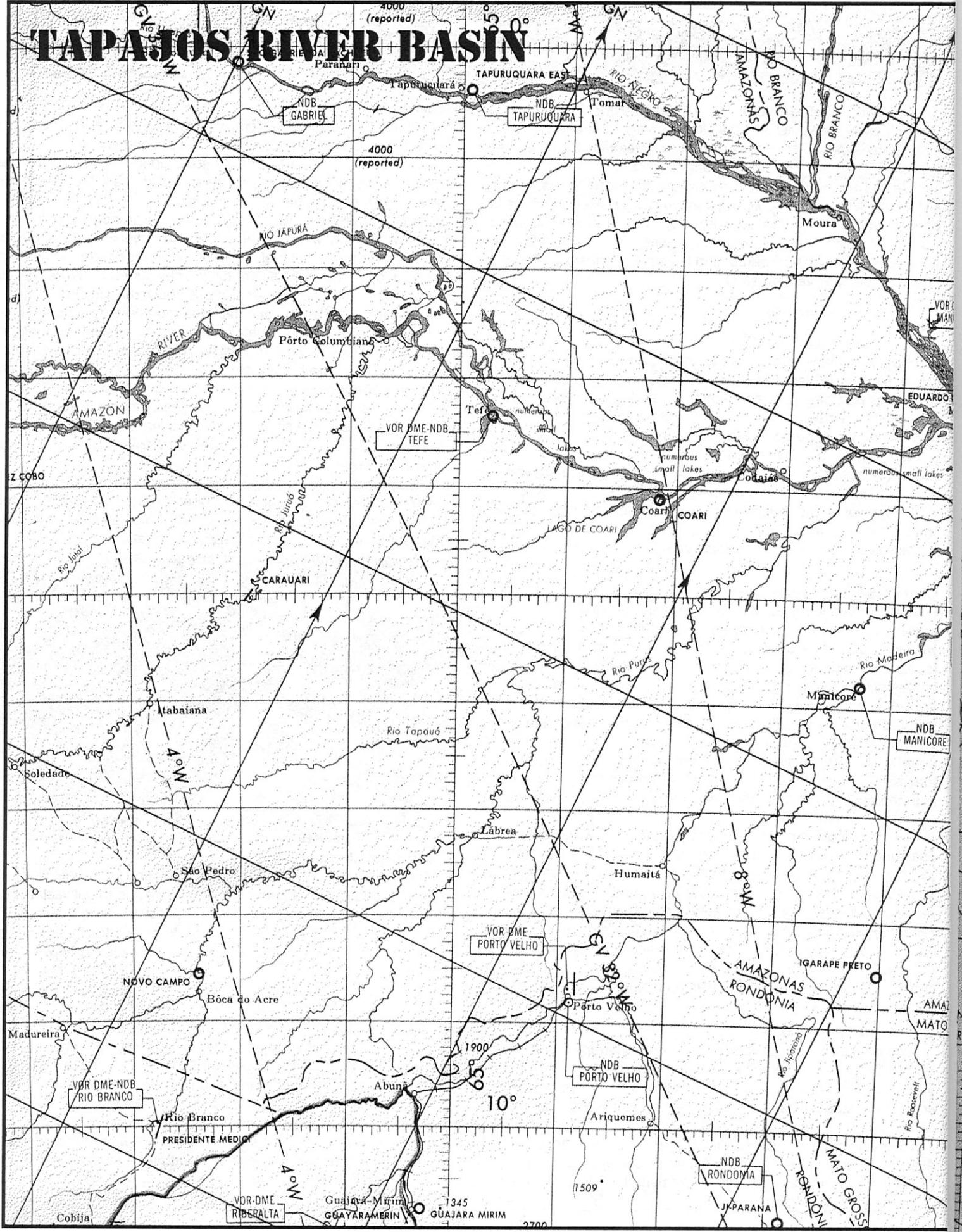


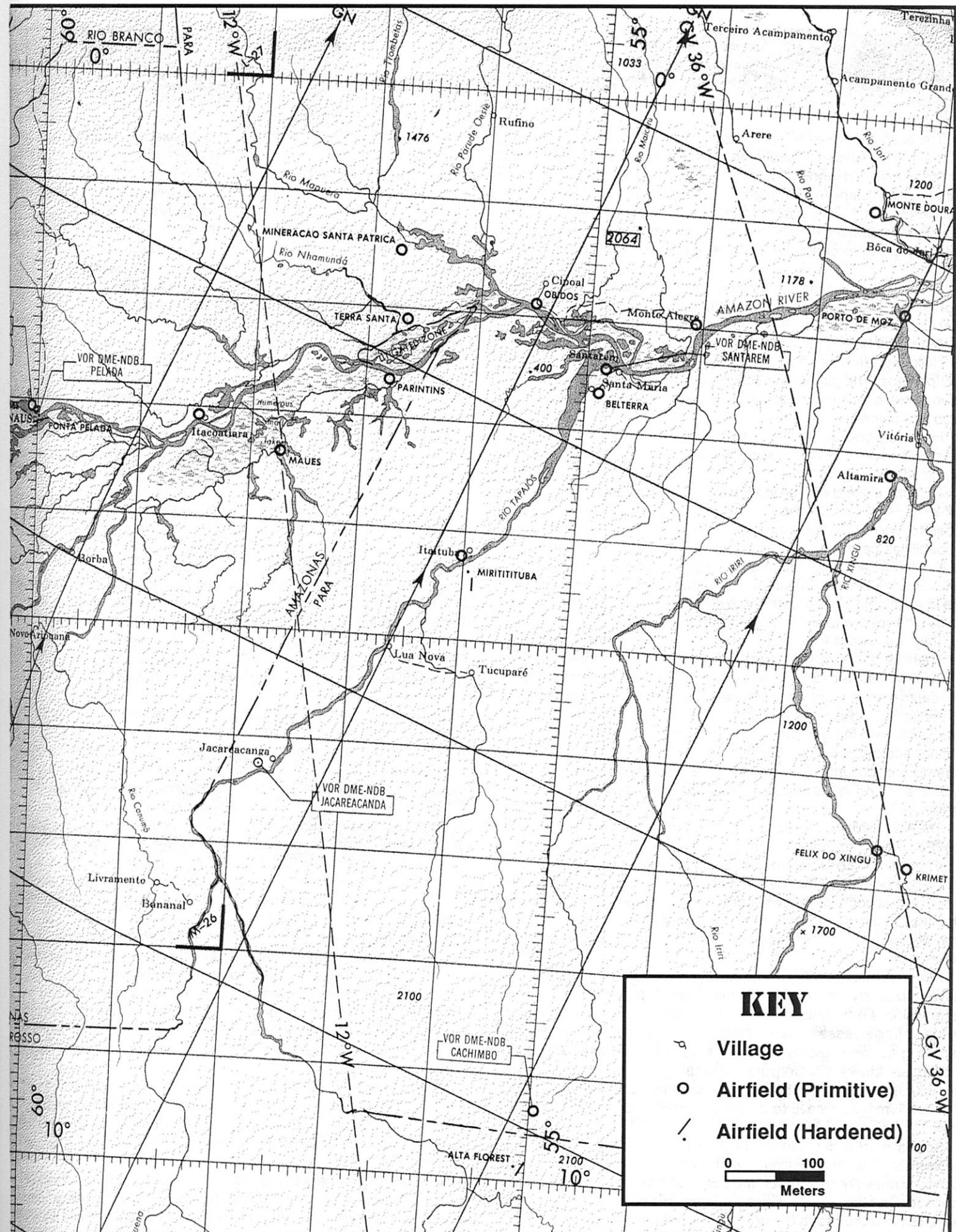
Captain Getulio Alvares

Captain Getulio Alvares is the commander of the local Brazilian security forces. After word of *Morte por Noite* and the devastation of various WMO units reached the Brazilian government, a number of officers offered to lead an expeditionary force into the Tapajos River basin to quell whatever disturbance was taking place there. Alvares got the job.

Alvares is indeed a decisive officer. Unfortunately, he is a dismal tactician; his answer to every problem is "more firepower." He and his company (three platoons of 32) arrived in Itaituba just a week ago and already he has managed to antagonize the entire WMO contingent with his swaggering arrogance. In fact, Alvares (like many Third World COs) feels that the honor of his nation's military is at stake. He sees the NATO-affiliated Danish WMO unit as a rival, as representing a standard of excellence that he is determined to match and exceed. Therefore, he's spoiling for a fight with *Morte por Noite* and is wont to dismiss Helsingaard's warnings as "exaggerations" (he is just tactful enough to avoid the word "cowardice"). Alvares is an Experienced NPC.

TAPAJOS RIVER BASIN





The Alien

The alien calls itself a *T'ch'gaazru*. Its complete name is *S'druou Zhiis*, which translates roughly as "old-worker travels." The first part of the name, "old-worker," is a hereditary name based on the labor function of distant forbears (much as our names of Taylor, Miller, Cartwright, etc.). The second name is its personal name, which is usually a descriptive verb. Since this particular *T'ch'gaazru* makes its living by going to other star systems, it acquired the personal name "travels."

S'druou Zhiis (*S'dru* to its intimates and superiors) is an alien horror with a terrifying arsenal at its disposal—but for all of that, it is just another mercenary, like the characters.

S'dru and his people are part of the Concordium, an organization of stellar systems that pervades this part of the galaxy, much as the UN pervades the globe. The activities and mandates of the Concordium—not to mention the eternal bickering among its members—are also reminiscent of the UN.

However, one law has remained essentially uncontested for the past 300 years; the Precontact Quarantine Mandate. This mandate states that prior to formal contact by authorized Concordium specialists, a world with an indigenous sapient species is completely off-limits. And usually, the Concordium specialists decide that it is best to wait until the planet has developed its own interstellar capabilities before initiating contact.

Not all alien organizations are happy about the Precontact Quarantine Mandate. In particular, various corporations that specialize in developing and utilizing biological resources find the mandate to be a frequent and annoying impediment to business. Consequently, they are always looking for ways to circumvent the restrictions.

There is one exception to the Quarantine restrictions, however; "green" worlds (those with carbon-based, native life-forms) in danger of destruction by sapient natives are subject to the Enforced Preservation clause. In short, green worlds are too rare and too precious to let indigenous species ruin them—native rights do not include ecological suicide. Therefore, many commercial organizations attempt to covertly "encourage" the natives to ruin their own biosphere. And this is precisely what *S'dru* was sent here to accomplish.

The MashenTal Corporation—*S'dru's* employer—has had its eye on Earth for the better part of a century. The native use and proliferation of atomic weapons encouraged the corporate analysts, who were predicting that by the end of the 20th century, the natives would in fact come so close to completely destroying their biosphere that the Concordium would have to impose the Enforced Preservation clause, thereby opening the world up for limited commercial development.

However, the events of the last few years suggest that the humans have effectively exhausted themselves in terms of large-scale aggression. Furthermore, the current global economic decline has resulted in decreased use of internal combustion engines, thereby reducing the ecologically crippling emissions produced by private individuals. MashenTal Corporation's managers wrung their tentacles in frustration; just a little bit more damage to the biosphere and the Concordium would have to initiate Enforced Preservation proceedings.

So MashenTal decided to "help" the humans along the road to ecological disaster. However, they had to be very sly about it; if the Concordium were to find out, the corporation could have its charter revoked. So MashenTal's management came up with a truly elegant plan; remove the restraints on rain forest logging.

Since these logging operations are centered in a largely wild and untamed section of Earth's globe, the selective destruction of impediments (such as the WMO forces) would be likely to remain poorly documented and poorly understood.

As a result, MashenTal could conduct its covert operations with an essentially free hand. Once freed to plunder the rain forests, economically desperate humans would complete the job of environmental ruination—thereby bringing about Enforced Preservation proceedings, and new business opportunities for MashenTal.

It was decided that a single, highly trained and well-armed mercenary was all that was needed for the job: The opposing forces were few in number and not equipped to the highest local technological standards. After a considerable search, MashenTal decided to hire *S'dru*, who was told that if he was discovered, the corporation would be forced to deny any knowledge of—or involvement in—his activities on Earth. Aware that this was indeed a "success-only" contract, *S'dru* selected his weapons and was inserted into his target zone by a special operations vessel. Since then, he has been monitoring the communications of both the WMO and the De Tropo Corporation. Having determined the nature of his targets, his de facto allies (De Tropo), and the delicate political balance of the situation, *S'dru* began systematically eliminating the WMO operations in the Tapajos River basin.

T'CH'GAAZRU PHYSIOLOGY

In addition to helping the referee get "into the head" of this key NPC, this information may fall into the players' hands if they manage to capture—and negotiate with—*S'dru*. The *T'ch'gaazru* are native to the nearby Proxima Centauri star system, located only 4.29 light-years away. The first planet in that system, *T'ch'gar*, is a very large, slowly rotating planet, located much closer to its star than Earth is to the sun.

The gravity of *T'ch'gar* is 1.3 gees, which caused the *T'ch'gaazru* to evolve as a rugged, strong species. The 21-hour days and nights cause extreme temperature variations, resulting in the development of a versatile metabolism that responds positively to a wide variety of environmental conditions. Even in the daytime, however, *T'ch'gar* is not a very warm planet, on the average. Hovering at the extreme edge of Proxima Centauri's narrow life-sustaining zone, the world is a gloomy environment of dusky red light, grays, and blacks. Consequently, although the *T'ch'gaazru* have excellent infrared vision and light-sensitivity (treat them as having innate, double-power thermal imaging and light intensification capabilities), they are also quite color-blind.

The *T'ch'gaazru* are descended not from hunting creatures, but from scavengers. Not much larger than humans, they are actually fairly small and weak compared to the large beasts that originally dominated their world. However, what the *T'ch'gaazru* lacked in terms of size, they made up for in terms of speed and agility—which is comparable to human values, despite the tendency of higher-gravity organisms to be clumsier than those originating in lower-gravity environments.

Being scavengers, the *T'ch'gaazru* frequently had to flee for their lives when larger, more dangerous carnivores decided to stroll by and rob them of their kill. Consequently, the *T'ch'gaazru* adapted to arboreal travel and nesting practices (making the rain forest a natural home for *S'dru*).

T'ch'gaazi body chemistry is carbon-based. However, instead of a bony skeleton, there is more reliance on a pliant, cartilaginous framework, supported by silicon-fibered muscle tissues. There are no

joints; isometric counterbalancing, aided by a quick hardening of the silicate strands, provides the T'ch'gaazi musculature with leverage and the necessary resistance. The cartilaginous framework resembles an extended, highly flexible human spine in both structure and purpose; it is a neural conduit of extraordinary speed and resilience.



T'ch'gaazi have six limbs: four arms and two legs. The legs are much heavier than the arms and terminate in two frontal stabilization pads and one heavier "heel-pad." The arms are completely flexible, terminating in three opposable prehensile digits. T'ch'gaazi are ambidextrous, and their four-arm arrangement allows them to wield two long arms (or their equivalents) simultaneously. T'ch'gaazi sensory apparatus is located in a small, recessive nodule located in the same spot as the human head. Visual senses are the most acute. T'ch'gaazi eyes (all three) have almost 10 times the resolving power of human eyes and can integrate all visual information into one image, or can focus on (and track) two or three separate objects. Their extreme sensitivity to light—particular at wavelengths outside the human visible spectrum: mainly ultraviolet but some IR—gives the T'ch'gaazru extraordinary night vision. However, it makes them quite

vulnerable to being blinded by unfiltered terrestrial daylight or other bright flashes (such as flares, magnesium flashes, or thermite explosions). If S'dru should be exposed to any of these visual stimuli without the benefit of ocular filtration, he will be blinded for 2D6 hours. T'ch'gaazi hearing is fair, and their sense of smell is poor.

S'dru is slightly larger than a typical T'ch'gaazi, standing about seven feet tall and weighing in at just over 180 kilograms. His appearance is best described as that of an anthropomorphic starfish. His stats are: Strength: 13, Agility: 8, Constitution: 9, Intelligence: 9, Education: 9, and Charisma: N/A.

S'dru is an Elite NPC. Obviously, many of his skills (such as Energy Weapon) are different from those available to standard Twilight/Merc: 2000 characters, and therefore must be inferred from his equipment. Any items that S'dru has with him, he is qualified to use—and use well.

T'CH'GAAZI PSYCHOLOGY

T'ch'gaazi psychology is, in many ways, quite similar to that of humans (which was a major hiring "plus" for S'dru). Given the T'ch'gaazi scavenger heritage, they are opportunists, always ready and willing to take advantage of a new opportunity. While not cowardly, they are also eternally ready to abandon a pursuit which has gone sour.

The T'ch'gaazru are more fatalistic than humans, largely owing to the environment of their home planet. T'ch'gar's dense atmosphere, great size, stellar proximity, and tremendous temperature variances all combine to produce tempestuous meteorological conditions. Their society is constantly being disrupted by massive storms, earthquakes, tectonic eruptions, and the like. Consequently, it took the T'ch'gaazru nearly five centuries to progress from the beginning of their industrial age to a technological level that approximated Earth's World War II era. It was at this point that T'ch'gaazi eyes turned toward their planet's two moons, longing for the comparatively "placid" environments on these barren bodies.

Learning this, the Concordium decided to make "early" contact at this point in time; they felt that the T'ch'gaazru might be unable to stabilize their social and industrial base long enough to ever achieve reliable spaceflight, and that therefore, the standard rules regarding quarantine had to be altered. This occurred approximately 250 years ago. Since then, the T'ch'gaazru have proven to be hard workers and—not surprisingly—hardy and effective soldiers. S'dru is a slightly special example, but he is in most ways quite representative of his people.

S'dru considers his current job to be something of a "double-or-nothing" venture. If he succeeds, he'll receive an enormous fee and the undying gratitude of the MashenTal Corporation. If he fails, MashenTal may hunt him down itself. At the very least, the corporation will deny any knowledge of him, and leave him to rot on this hopelessly primitive—but fecund—planet. Consequently, if S'dru is apprehended or incapacitated, he will not prove to be the "implacable alien foe" of most science fiction movies. At this point, he will realize that his only chance for survival lies with his captors: he knows that the moment he is discovered by either the locals or the Concordium, MashenTal will wish to assassinate him. Therefore, he will attempt to communicate with the humans (he can already speak English and Portuguese haltingly) and secure asylum for himself. The United States will be most interested in such a find, and S'dru can expect to vanish into the intelligence community's labyrinth, where he will live out his days exchanging information on extraterrestrial realities for a continued, comfortable existence.

S'DRU'S EQUIPMENT

All alien devices can be dismantled, but they will prove totally undecipherable to humans at their present level of technology, much as a solid state radio would be totally incomprehensible to a 14th-century peasant.

Alien Automatic Assault Tube

This weapon is a highly advanced form of rocket-propelled grenade launcher. Each grenade has a bore size of about 42 mm. The launcher takes a clip of three rounds, each of which may be coded for a different fire-and-forget target before any are launched.

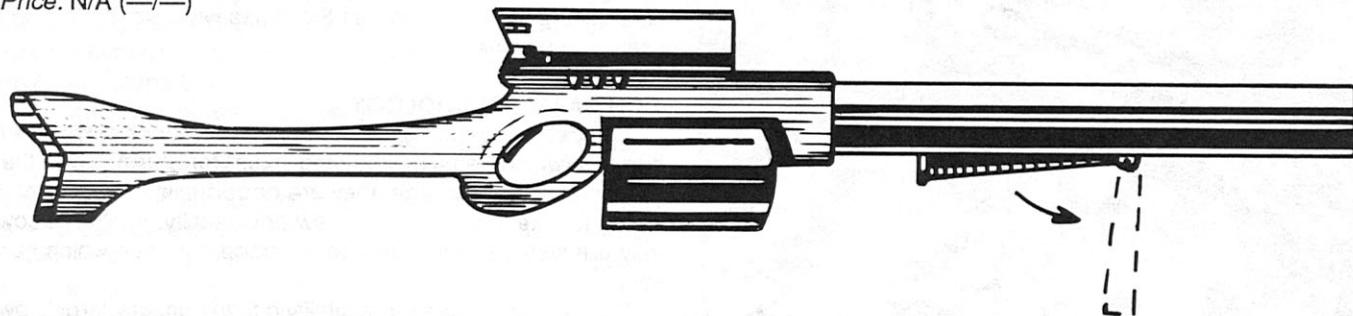
The operator can then squeeze the trigger and all rounds which have designated targets will launch and seek their targets. If no longer in view, targets will be pursued based on last known position and observed vector.

Ammo: 42mm rocket-assisted, dual-purpose grenade

Wt: 3.4 kg (Loaded Mag: 2.3 kg)

Mag: 3-round drum

Price: N/A (—/—)



Type	ROF	Mag	Rng	IFR	Rnd	Damage	Pen
AAT	3	3	250	2800	HEDP	C:10, B:30	80C

Alien Hand Laser

This weapon is a compact, rugged UV laser that can be directly interfaced with the targeting system integral to the leaper suit (see page 15). The effect of this is to increase the user's skill level by 2.

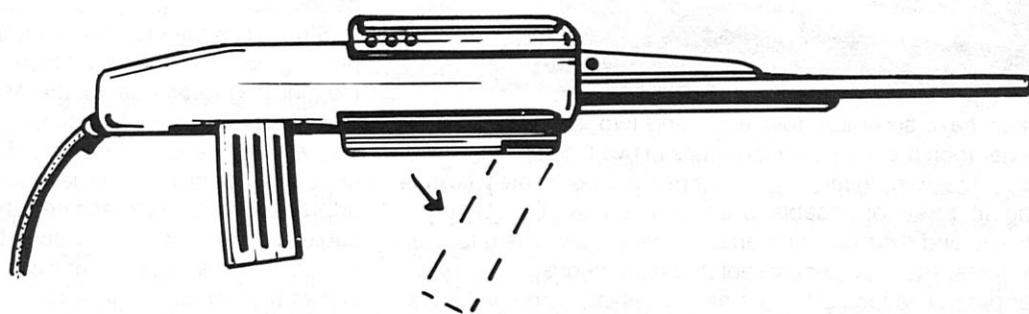
The hand laser is a high-end UV weapon, making it almost completely invisible. However, when firing through smoke or aerosols, the beam does become visible as a very faint, violet-colored shaft.

Ammo: N/A

Wt: 2.1 kg

Mag: External power pack

Price: N/A (—/—)



Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	—Recoil—	SS	Brst	Rng
Hand laser	SA	8	2-4	3	*	0	—	—	80

*Unlimited charges as long as leaper suit is functional.

Alien Tracker Rockets

These weapons are the ultimate in fire-and-forget technology. An operator can aim at a target, lock on to it, and allow the unit to maintain independent target observation until instructed to fire. If a target moves out of visual range, the operator is informed. At this point, the operator has the options of (a) aborting the firing command and leaving the old targeting data in memory, (b) aborting the firing command and clearing the current targeting data from memory, or (c) firing the rocket, which will then fly upward and conduct a "bird's-eye" search for its target.

The operator can give a firing command remotely, but must be present when setting up and targeting (or retargeting) a tracker rocket. S'dru controls the firing of his tracker rockets from the control circuitry in his leaper suit (see below).

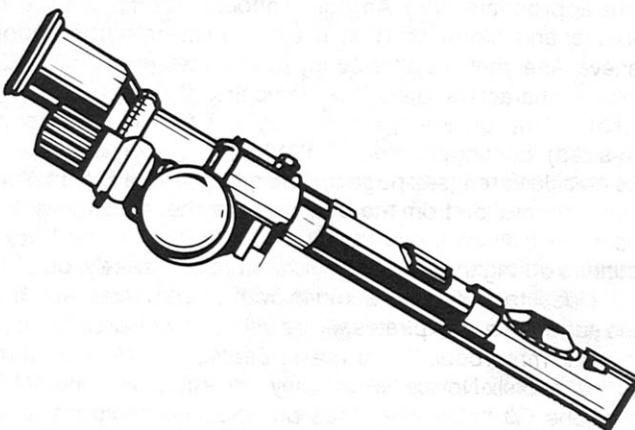
The tracker rocket warhead is a highly advanced combination antipersonnel/antiarmor munition. Firing the rocket consumes the brackets which are used to hold it in position (they are constructed of a flammable, epoxy-like organic material). Mounted and fired from a tree, a tracker rocket leaves a slight scorch mark on bark. It takes one phase to set up a tracker rocket, and one more phase to aim it and lock it on target. These rockets are single-shot, self-contained units.

Ammo: Alien tracker rocket

Wt: 3.8 kg

Price: N/A (—/—)

Weapon	Rld	Rng	Dam	Pen
Tracker rocket	—	5500	C:14, B:60	180 C



Alien Remote Sensor

This device is a combination audio/video sensor with a 240° pick-up field. Its visual capabilities extend down into the very lowest IR ranges and the very highest UV ranges (making it a thermal imager, as well). The controller/transceiver is a separate unit which is about the size of a paperback book. The sensor itself is about the size of a tennis ball and masses 0.4 kilograms. It can be attached to any surface by means of a special variable-chemistry adhesive surface.

Wt: 0.5 kg

Price: N/A (—/—)

Power Source: Self-contained cold-fusion cell (powers all sensor, null-grav units, and integral hand laser)

Wt: None (19.4 kg when gravitic nullification is not operating)

Price: N/A (—/—)

Alien Communication Seeker-Scrambler

This multiband radio/vhf/uhf scrambler conducts a sensor sweep of all communication bands every 0.02 seconds. Once activity is detected on any given frequency, the unit interdicts the broadcast. The device has a range of 200 kilometers. It is integral to the leaper suit and therefore has no separate weight listing.

Alien Leaper Suit

This exoskeletal armor is equipped with gravitic nullification webbing, allowing the wearer to make extraordinary leaps, sprint at increased speed, etc. It has an attachment for an integral hand laser. It includes a pop-up targeting visor, with a heads-up (something of a misnomer for the essentially "headless" T'ch'gaazru) multiscreen display that shows the operator the current view from all deployed tracker rockets currently in his control. The suit has IR and radar absorbant qualities, and is camouflaged in the visible light spectrum as well.

Armor: 3 (2 in the legs and arms)

Movement: 1.5 times normal (45 meters per phase for S'dru)

G3 with HK-69

This is S'dru's "native weaponry." He uses it to create the illusion (and leave evidence which indicates) that his attacks are being conducted by "native forces" (humans, that is).

Ammo: G3, 7.62mm N; HK-69, 40mm grenades

Wt: G3, 5 kg; HK-69, 2 kg

Mag: G3, 20 box; HK-69, 1i

Price: G3, \$500 (C/R); HK-69, \$500 (S/R)

G3 WITH HK-69 STATS

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Recoil		
				Blk	Mag	SS
G3	5	4	2-3-Nil	5	20	4

Type	ROF	Mag	Rng	IFR	Rnd	Damage	Pen
HK-69	1	1i	100	400	HE	C: 3, B: 12	Nil
					HEDP	C: 3, B: 12	4C
					CHEM	C: 1, B: 4	Nil
					ILLUM	B: 100	Nil

Other Equipment

S'dru also has camping gear, some food from his homeworld, a small medical kit, a few electronic books and magazines from his homeworld, and ammunition and spares for his weapons.

STARTING OUT: ARRIVAL

The group will hear about the WMO contract through an old and reliable contact. Information on the WMO (see the "Publicity Packet" handout) is readily available, as is a map of the region (give the players the appropriate map). An inquiry about the contract will result in the job offer and information that is relayed in the teletype handout from Geneva. After that, it's off to sunny (and sometimes rainy) Brazil.

The player characters' group will arrive first at Santarem, on the banks of the Amazon River, where they will be met by a small (fireteam-sized) contingent from the WMO forces. The officer in charge is Alec Julkaren (see page 9). The group will be able to glean a little more information from the Danes as they head downriver in a patrol boat.

Encounters during this part of the adventure are unlikely, but if the referee decides to use one, a run-in with river pirates south of Belterra is suggested. The pirates will be using one small sailing boat and one small motorboat. There are 11 pirates: two Veteran, three Experienced, and six Novice NPCs. They are armed with one BM-59 battle rifle, one G3 battle rifle, three pump-action shotguns, three .30-30 hunting rifles, and three double-barreled shotguns. The group will attack suddenly, and will scatter just as fast when its members feel the impact of the WMO's accurate return fire.

Arriving at Itaituba, the characters will have an opportunity to talk to Captain Helsingaard, who will outline the current situation. (The referee should feel free to provide the players with their area map at this point). Helsingaard is genuinely glad to see the group, and is willing to give them a free hand in terms of their activity. However, it is imperative that the enemy known only as *Morte por Noite* be stopped before it can reach and ruin the main WMO base at Itaituba itself. If it does manage to destroy that base, it may damage the scientific and clerical compound also located there, which would almost completely ruin the current operations under way in the Tapajos River basin. It is also possible that the attack would cause hundreds of civilian casualties in the ramshackle (and highly flammable) outlying quarters of Itaituba itself.

The characters will also meet Captain Alvares, who clearly does not welcome their presence. They will get the distinct feeling that Alvares considers them to be both rivals and intruders. He plans to head to Last Base the next day, and will not delay his departure to accommodate the player characters; if they want to tag along with his small convoy, they're welcome to, but Alvares is impatient to get going.

If the PCs search around the main base a bit, or if they decide to do any research amongst the WMO scientific team, they will be introduced to Dr. Ndele. Ndele will try to convince the group that they are not up against a *group* of enemies, but rather a *single* enemy. He will also request that they help him search for that enemy, rather than join the general military defensive preparations and area sweeps that Alvares is planning. Ndele is leaving for Itaituba with Helsingaard and Jurkaren two days from now; they will be accompanied by two squads of WMO troops.

The player characters should now recognize that they have three broad choices: accompany Alvares, accompany the later party of Ndele and the WMO squads, or strike out on their own—either to hunt for the enemy or to move down to Last Base.

Going With Alvares: Alvares has three platoons of 32 soldiers each. Each platoon is composed of four squads of eight each. Squads are armed with six G3 battle rifles, one MP-5 SMG, and one MAG MG. Each platoon has been issued 16 fragmentation grenades. Each platoon has two 2½-ton trucks, one jeep, and one ¾-ton truck.

Halfway to Last Base (as it is now being called), this convoy will be ambushed by S'dru. The alien will have been trailing the convoy for some time, locking programming warheads of the six tracker rockets and the three assault tubes he has with him. When each weapon "knows" what vehicle to attack, S'dru will move down the road ahead of the convoy, set up an ambush, and retire to a position where he can observe. The tracker rockets and assault tubes will open fire when the vehicle they are programmed to attack drives into range (or self-destruct when anything larger than 40 kilograms moves within 10 meters). Of course, the characters should have the opportunity to search for the source of the incoming fire and respond in kind, but S'dru is not near any of the rockets.

Alvares will insist on moving on to Last Base after detaching a party to take any wounded back to safety. He will only allow the characters a few minutes to search the jungle for clues or tracks; he is rattled now and wants to reach the safety of the base. If the PCs choose to stay behind to look for clues, it is an Average: Observation task to note some unusual scorch marks in the forks of several trees. Closer examination will reveal that these marks are superficial, but very recent (they are still warm to the touch). A Difficult: Observation task will locate a spot where crushed foliage indicates someone crouched for several minutes. An outstanding success at this task roll will reveal other traces of the ambusher, and indicate that there was only a single individual.

Going with Ndele and the WMO: In this case, the group will travel by boat, somewhat spread out. Nothing untoward should happen. However, if the pirate attack was not used during the upriver travel to Itaituba, it should occur here.

Striking Out on Their Own: It is still somewhat early to do this, since the characters are not in the area of S'dru's operations yet. If they travel south on their own, they will have one brief encounter with wildcutters, who will not immediately fire upon them (the PCs have no blue helmets). The group will encounter Paco (see page 9) at this time, as well as four De Tropo wildcutters (two armed with G3s, and two armed with pump-action shotguns). Paco will not attack the characters unless the group seems hostile or tries to take the wildcutters prisoner. If Paco learns that the group is "somewhat affiliated" with the WMO, he will tell them that he has a message from Manuel Pablo Cala (see page 8): *Morte por Noite* is not working for De Tropo, and vice versa. After this encounter, the characters will be able to either search further on their own (see The Hunt, page 17) or decide to join the other forces currently gathered at Last Base.

At Last Base

In addition to what's left of Captain Alvares' company, there is one WMO squad manning Last Base when he arrives. This will increase to three squads when Captain Helsingaard's group arrives. Each Danish WMO squad is comprised of nine men. Squad armament is seven G3 battle rifles (two with HK-69 grenade launchers), one MAG MG, and one Uzi SMG. The base has one Carl Gustav AT system (usually carried by a submachinegunner). The available 40mm grenade mixture emphasizes HEDP and ILLUM rounds. Each squad is comprised of one Elite, two Veterans, four Experienced, and two Novice NPCs. Vehicles already at the base include two jeeps, two ¾-ton trucks, and one HWK II APC (from *Merc: 2000*) equipped with an M2HB MG.

Since all the *dramatis personae* are now at Last Base, this becomes the logical place for a showdown between the various—possibly conflicting—groups and their strategies. Alvares will attempt to usurp command based on local authority, but his impetuosity (and

low remaining forces) will ultimately allow Helsingaard to retain the upper hand. However, the resolution between the conflicting strategies of preparing a harder defensive position (favored by Helsingaard) and that of hunting *Morte por Noite* (favored by Ndele) is not clear cut. Helsingaard will not order anyone around other than the standard troops (both WMO and Brazilian), but he will not provide Ndele with security if the scientist decides to go off on his own. The players are free to choose either of the two evolving paths of action: the hunt or the defense.

THE HUNT

Ndele will be overjoyed if the players choose this path. Although possessed of a strong personality, he will follow the characters' lead so long as the focus of the hunt remains on gathering information about the enemy, rather than (for instance) lying in wait and setting traps. It should be possible to find some tracks in this area, as well as any spoor left behind as the attacker travelled from the most recently destroyed base to this one.

This mission should require several days. Each day, Ndele and the PCs should come across another interesting clue. Determine which clue by rolling 1D6 and consulting the table at right.

On the third day of the hunt, the PCs come across a more recognizable set of tracks: human. It is an Average: Tracking task to follow this trail to the main operations area for De Tropo Corporation. Here the players will find Manuel Pablocala's 100-man operation in full swing, cutting down the mighty trees of the rain forest, towing them away with heavy equipment, and then burning a path through the undergrowth to clear a track for the vehicles as they move to the next stand of trees. If the players had a favorable encounter (comparatively speaking) with Paco previously, Manuel might be willing to converse with the characters rather than shoot them. Otherwise, the De Tropo chief is quite likely to open fire on the characters as soon as he spots them. Manuel fears that if the group reports back, the WMO will show up to close them down and (as usual) a fight will result.

For every hour that the group remains anywhere near the De Tropo operation, roll 1D6. Any result of 5 or 6 indicates that the characters—or their tracks—have been spotted (probably by Paco). Manuel will send out a force of 12 men to pursue the PCs (all Experienced, armed with three G3, six pump-action shotguns, and three .30-30 hunting rifles). If this group is not successful, he and Paco will join another group of 20 to finish the job. (Twelve of the 20 will be equipped as the preceding group; the other eight are all Veterans and are armed with two G3s, one RPK, three AKMRs, and two Madson M50 SMGs). If this group is also defeated, the remaining De Tropo personnel (almost all simple workers) will abandon their operation and equipment and fade into the *selvas*.

Between the clues they have discovered of S'dru's existence and the fact that the De Tropo operation does not have the sort of heavy weaponry that has been used to destroy the WMO's bases, the PCs should have begun to believe Ndele's hypothesis by the end of their hunt: There is no enemy "force" behind the base assaults—just a single, very deadly being.

DEFENSIVE PREPARATIONS

If the PCs stick around and try to contribute to the defense of Last Base, rather than go on the hunt described above, Helsingaard will offer them the job of planning and coordinating the preparations. This includes setting watches, designing and constructing defensive positions, assigning unit duties, and perimeter coverage.

MORTE POR NOITE CLUES

Die	Result
1	Nest
2	Rocket remains
3	Tracks
4	Scraps
5	Spent clip
6	Spent clip

Nest: The PCs find an arboreal "nest" that S'dru has used overnight and abandoned until (and unless) he needs it later on. There is a peculiar lack of hair and unusual, musky odor. No animals remain in its immediate vicinity other than insects. The branches comprising the nest were obviously cut with a sharp-edged tool: Their edges are so smooth as to seem almost to have been polished.

Rocket Remains: The mooring pad of a tracker rocket has failed to ignite and consume itself. It will be obvious to the PCs that the pad is some sort of brace. Some mild scorching marks can be noted on a successful Difficult: Observation task. The placement and angle of these marks suggest a rocket exhaust.

Tracks: The PCs find a scattering of S'dru's tracks. They are like nothing anyone has ever seen before.

Scraps: S'dru had to move suddenly, and was unable to completely hide the remains of a meal (or excretions). Meal remains will display unusual "grinding" marks, almost as though the feeding creature had a set of serrated ridges rather than teeth.

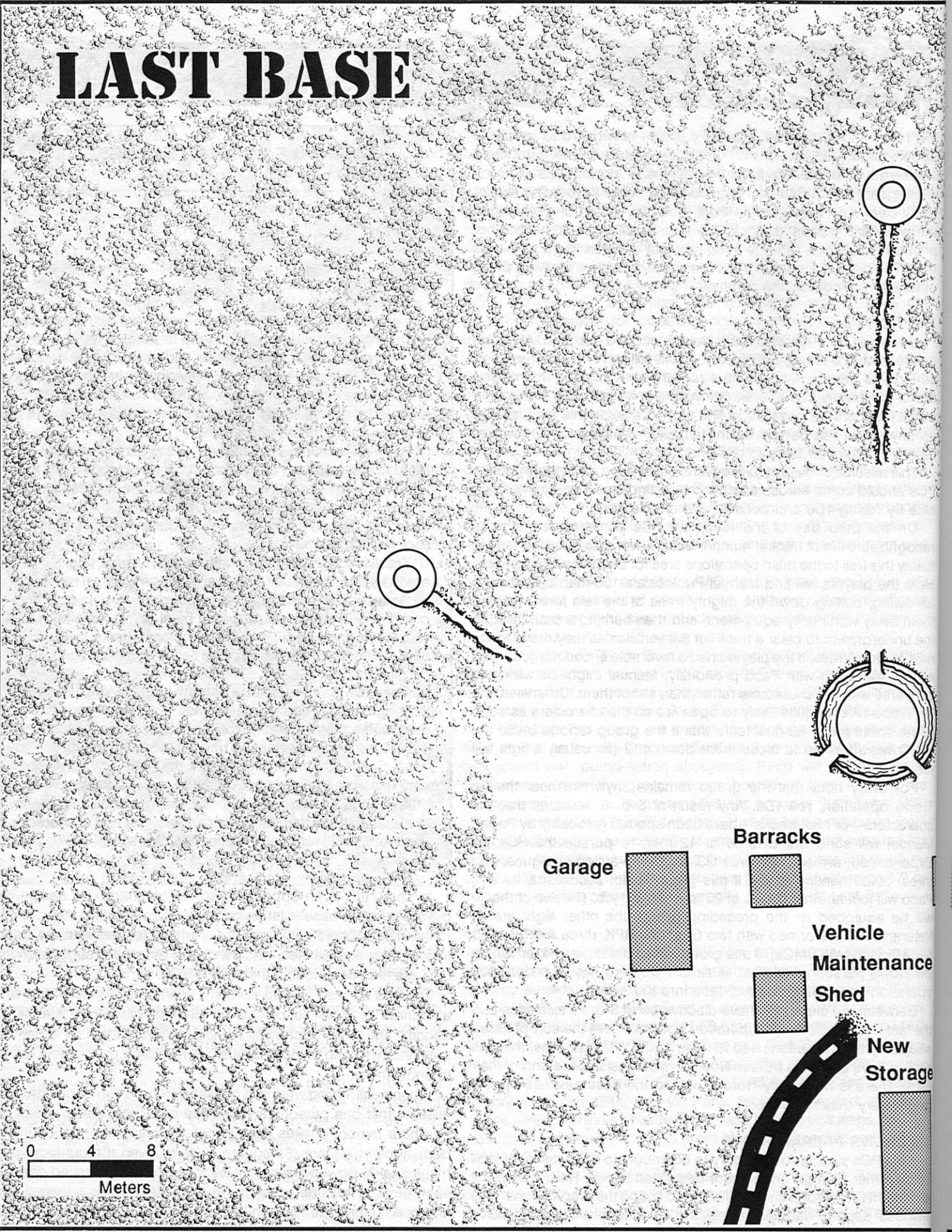
Spent Clip: The PCs find an empty clip for S'dru's automatic assault tube. The drumlike device is a rotary-feed mechanism with a number of electronic interface areas for "fire-and-forget" targeting information transfer. The characters will not have means to chemically analyze the metal, but it will look very unusual. An Average: Education task will allow someone studying the drum closely to determine that what at first seem like unusual scratch marks are actually some kind of character set. No one will recognize these marks or be able to decode them at all.

In short, this is an opportunity to let the characters design and build a little "fire base" of their own in the middle of the Amazon rain forest. They should also occasionally have to deal with resistance from Alvares and his men, who will deeply resent any suggestion that they are less dependable than the WMO troops.

The PCs will also have to work in a search mission for Ndele who, after three days, will set off into the forest on his own to "gather evidence." The good doctor will manage to avoid them for a day and then return, having found one clue (roll randomly on the table above) to show them.

When determining what sort of base defenses can be constructed, assume that one person can excavate one cubic meter of soil per four-hour period. It takes eight people the same amount of time to clear a forest square (64 square meters, given the outdoor eight-meter scale). Downed trees can be towed into any desired position; each trunk is considered as being 24 meters (three squares) long and one meter high. All such labor is very taxing (remember the increased rest requirements imposed by the climate of the *selvas*).

LAST BASE



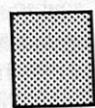
Garage



Barracks



Vehicle
Maintenance
Shed



New
Storage



0 4 8
Meters

Well



New Storage

1/2 Constructed



KEY



Small Defense Bunker



Main HQ Bunker



Trench



Wide Path



Road



Light Woods

Heavy Woods

Players should amend the map of Last Base (see pages 18-19) to represent the changes made by this work. Lastly, a maximum of two-thirds of the personnel at Last Base may be used for construction tasks over the course of a single day; the rest are required for sentry and defensive duty. The problems with the Brazilians will intensify if they are constantly being assigned to construction tasks.

Whether the PCs choose to oversee the defense or to go on the hunt (in which case Last Base will remain as presented on the map), they will be on the base when S'dru makes his next attack. If they had been hunting, then they will have returned only hours before; allow them to place the WMO and Brazilian units, but no additional preparations are permitted.

THE ATTACK ON LAST BASE

S'dru will attack this last WMO base at night, and will be more wary than usual. He has noted the arrival of the Brazilians, the PCs, and the WMO command staff, so he realizes that he's beginning to attract attention. He also knows that the humans are probably going to start trying new ways of fighting back, so he wants to accomplish his mission and get out as quickly as possible.

S'dru's objective is to force the humans to abandon the base and retreat to Itaituba. Therefore, he needs to inflict enough losses upon the men in the current garrison to make them feel that they can no longer hold the position. However, if he is too successful in his attack, the humans will not be able to withdraw their casualties and might decide to stand and fight to the death rather than abandon their comrades. S'dru doesn't want this to occur; he must constantly be mindful of not defeating the humans in too ghastly a fashion, otherwise a more serious inquiry and force commitment might occur. (He considers the characters to be the first hint that this is already happening.) Besides, S'dru wants witnesses to go back and retell the appropriate tales of horror, as that might get the WMO operation to start retracting even more.

S'dru therefore plans to ensure at least 40 percent are killed in action amongst the current Last Base garrison (60 percent is optimal). He also intends to destroy the APC and half of the available vehicles. However, he considers it important to leave at least one of the WMO officers alive, as well as one of the PCs (he wants "responsible" reporters to carry the story of this disaster back to Itaituba and beyond).

S'dru will pretarget all the vehicles he intends to destroy with tracker rockets. He will target two of the small perimeter bunkers with automatic assault tube HE rounds (aimed shots, targeted to go in through the windows). If characters are in either (or both) of these positions when the fighting starts, the referee may decide to be kind and rule that there was an NPC between the PC and the blast, thereby sparing the PC what might otherwise be almost certain death. (However, the PC's eardrums will have been damaged due to the tight confines in which the sound of the blast is trapped, resulting in several days of complete deafness.)

After this opening salvo, S'dru will engage his communication scrambler, thereby interdicting any radio contact the garrison might have with the outside world. S'dru will then change positions, fire his laser and battle rifle (with GL) at targets of opportunity, and move again. If he has noted that the humans are using active IR, or if he can see vision-enhancing equipment in obvious positions, he will eliminate these assets before firing at living targets.

S'dru can move 45 meters per phase through the treetops, and he will use this ability to attempt to make the humans believe that they are completely surrounded. Spotting S'dru is a Difficult: Observation task; using light intensification equipment reduces the task to Average. If players are using passive IR, S'dru will be spotted automatically every time he uses his laser (the laser heats the air it

encounters as it beams toward its target, enough for it to show up on IR, but not enough to make it glow visibly). If S'dru realizes that he has been spotted (which is obvious if he suddenly experiences a steady stream of aimed fire in his direction), he will attempt to eliminate the spotter. If he cannot do so in one phase of fire, he will retreat back into the selva at maximum speed. Similarly, if S'dru achieves his goals, he will fade back into the forest and wait, leaving a remote monitor behind to observe the humans' activities in the wake of the attack.

The PCs are free to respond to the attack however they wish. In the wake of the assault, they may realize (on an Average test of Observation) that each time personnel were taken under fire, it was by the same kinds of weapons (a G3 and a GL). If the characters do not think to check, Ndele will inspect the dead and wounded. He will discover any wounds inflicted by lasers automatically (for player characters this is an Average: Medical task). The laser wounds are unusual in that the tissues evince the bloating and widespread tissue coagulation that is consistent with severe burns. No bullet will be found in the wound (obviously). The players should not be told this is a laser wound; they should have to figure it out themselves. Remember that S'dru is using a high-band UV laser, so unless the characters were using IR vision gear, no one will have seen the beam.

If the PCs do not eventually think of it, Ndele will be eager to scour the perimeter for clues. It will be easy to find spent 40mm grenade casings, 7.62mm N brass, and (at least) two of the automatic assault tube grenade casings. If the PCs ascend into the trees to search for other clues (since this is where the incoming seemed to be emanating from), they may find (Difficult: Tracking) a trail of scratched bark, crushed branches, and damaged leaves. From this, they will be able to conclusively determine that the entire attack was mounted by a single, very fast, very arboreally adept individual. And judging from the nature of some of the imprints, there's nothing at all human about that individual. An additional test of Tracking, this time at Average difficulty, will also show players the path that S'dru took when leaving the area and reveal the remote monitor that he left behind.

After this blistering attack, the Brazilians will be more than ready to leave. Capt. Helsingaard doesn't want to, but he feels that he doesn't have a choice; the base is ruined and somebody has to report back. As a result, the PCs are on their own now.

Ndele will elect to stay with the PCs and find the creature which is responsible for all this destruction. However, he is interested in taking it alive, if possible ("Think of the benefits to science!" he says). The PCs have three probable options at this point: track the creature, try to get the creature to show itself again by baiting it in, or return with the rest of the garrison to Itaituba.

Tracking the Creature: This should be a nerve-wracking experience for the PCs. The referee should impose a few "false alarms" along the way—an encounter with an anaconda, a puma, a few wild-cutters, and the like. These encounters should occur suddenly and without warning, making the characters think that maybe they've flushed their prey. However, after four hours, the PCs will finally enter S'dru's area. He is sleeping high up in the trees, and is recording the activity at Last Base with the remote sensor for study when he awakens. Although his suit has an alarm net to alert him when a roughly human-sized creature comes within 100 meters, he has reduced the device's range to 10 meters to reduce the number of false alarms from wild boars, pumas, and tapirs. Consequently, the players have one chance to spot him (a Difficult test of Observation) before they virtually "bump into" him (i.e., enter the 10-meter radius).

In this situation, S'dru will spring up and flee, carrying only his automatic assault tube with him (and the hand laser, which is connected to his suit). The PCs will see his outline fairly well as he

begins to move—and before the camouflaging of his suit can blend in with the new background. Then he'll be swinging away through the trees at 45 meters per phase.

If the characters spot S'dru before bumping into him, they can try to open fire on him. However, if there is any discussion about how best to do this, Ndele will protest—loudly—awakening S'dru, who will flee (though in this case, the alien will manage to grab two additional clips for his automatic assault tube).

Baiting S'dru: The success of this ploy depends upon what the player characters use for bait and how they set it up. Simply putting some food out in the middle of the jungle isn't going to do any good—although it might attract a number of pumas and anacondas. Cries of distress are more likely to cause S'dru to avoid the baited area; the cries are either from someone who is not involved in the current operation, from someone who is involved and who will soon be dead, or are part of a ruse. None of these reasons will draw him closer.

What *will* bait S'dru in is if his remote sensor "fails" (he will come to repair or replace it), or the remote sensor shows that several characters are repairing the camp, going about life as usual, etc. He will become particularly agitated if he sees them studying the shell casings from his automatic assault gun and attempting to use a radio. In either case, S'dru will lose no time returning to the camp, doing so as soon as he wakes up and discovers what's going on (at dusk).

When he arrives, any hidden players should have several chances at a Difficult test of Observation to spot him, more if they are using passive IR. It will be immediately obvious to any observer that S'dru is far from human. If a firefight results, S'dru may be wounded, but the referee should allow him to escape. The player characters will be able to follow his tracks back to the lair mentioned in the Tracking the Creature option above (although S'dru will no longer be there, nor will he have stopped to pick up any of his equipment).

Returning to Itaituba: If the PCs do this, they will lose any opportunity to track S'dru unless they return to Last Base within two days. If not, S'dru will have policed up most of the spoor he created during the course of his attack and will have moved on. If this occurs, the referee should create a map of the WMO base at Itaituba and allow the characters to try to make their last stand here with any surviving WMO and Brazilian forces. They might be successful in injuring or killing S'dru this time, but any significant damage to the Itaituba base will cause the entire WMO program to come under close, unfavorably disposed scrutiny.

S'dru's Campsite

Once S'dru has fled from his campsite, the player characters will have the opportunity to inspect the T'ch'gaazru's abandoned gear, which includes his remaining supply of tracker rockets and assault tube clips, his G3/HK-69 combination, his food supply (including special vitamin supplements), his camping gear, the remote sensor controller/transceiver, and his personal medical kit. Unfortunately, the characters won't be able to inform anyone else about their discoveries—once chased away from his base, S'dru will activate his communication scrambler and will keep it on until either he or the characters are dead.

Obviously, the PCs will be able to ascertain many additional details about S'dru, based on this gear. The tracker rockets (all 27 remaining) obviously explain how he was able to mount a huge, first-strike barrage every time. The self-consuming adhesive base explains why no brackets, or other forensic evidence, was left behind by each system used.

The G3/HK-69 combo (with plenty of remaining ammunition) was the alien's way of making sure that its targets believed themselves to

be under conventional human attack. His food supply is mostly comprised of terrestrial boar and tapir (dried). However, he also has some packaged foods from his own world (mostly meats and vegetable pastes) that are completely unlike anything the humans have ever seen, smelled, or tasted.

Various components from his camping gear reflect T'ch'gaazru attributes: his "reading lamp" is an extremely low-luminosity IR light—invisible to human eyes. Various ocular filters suggest extreme sensitivity to normal terrestrial light levels. The mass of all his weight-bearing gear and the sturdiness of construction suggests that the alien is considerably heavier than a human, and a good deal more powerful. The real give-away is also the hardest to decipher: the medical kit.

Since the device is automated, it is designed to be user-friendly. Consequently, once the PCs can get it to activate (on a Difficult test of Medical skill), they can get access to all sorts of anatomical data. In short, they can get a look at their foe. However, they are not able to read the statistical data that the program offers. (The referee should provide the players with the anatomical illustrations at this point.) However, by knowing their enemy even to this limited degree, the PCs may now set out to fight on more even terms.

SHOWDOWN IN THE SELVAS

At this point, the player characters should realize that they now have some absolutely irresistible bait: S'dru's vitamin supplements and medical kit. In addition, they have evidence of his presence, which might be an "embarrassment" to other off-world visitors of his ilk. If the group tries to depart for Itaituba with its evidence, S'dru will attack it to try to get his gear back and kill the witnesses. However, he will be forced to use his laser only, since the automatic assault tube is too imprecise (he could wind up destroying the very items he is attempting to regain).

If the group decides to set out these items as bait, S'dru will scout out the area of the engagement as carefully as possible. He will conduct his reconnaissance and attack at night, making use of his vastly superior vision capabilities. However, smart players will realize that since S'dru's vision is almost an organic version of thermal imaging, they may be able to deprive him of his advantage. For instance, if the PCs were to return to the base and burn every downed tree in an irregular, scattered pattern, then they would be creating an extremely "muddled" IR environment. If they took care hiding themselves near or among the embers of this fire, and camouflaged themselves appropriately (remember, the T'ch'gaazru also have image-intensifying capabilities), S'dru might miss a number of teammembers. If the characters do not think of this ploy, the referee may wish to have Ndele come up with it.

The PCs may wish to use the tracker rockets themselves, but they won't be able to: The command and control relays are internalized and synced to S'dru's suit.

If S'dru is hit or finds that his attack is failing in a big way, he may decide to remotely detonate the warheads in the remaining tracker rockets (as both a diversion and a counterstrike). He will not do this, however, if he might be within their blast radius. This means that if S'dru is in a cluttered environment where a tracker rocket could be hidden, he will not exercise this option.

The referee should endeavor to make this a fast and furious final firefight. In the end, S'dru should either be killed or incapacitated. If severely wounded, he could be stabilized and revived via the services of his automated medical kit (assuming it has not been destroyed or damaged). If still conscious, S'dru will surrender and request asylum in the United States. It's up to the PCs to handle that particular negotiation.



©'91 DH.

THE RUMORS OF OUR EXTINCTION...

In this adventure, the PCs get the chance of a lifetime to hunt a living tyrannosaurus rex that is terrorizing a small New Mexico town.

Note: This adventure uses creatures from the **Cadillacs and Dinosaurs** roleplaying game. For the referee's convenience, illustrations and statistics for these creatures are included on pages 91-94 in the pullout section at the end of this book. The statistics listed are taken directly from **Cadillacs and Dinosaurs**, but in some cases are modified somewhat to better suit this adventure. In particular, the listings for Number Appearing are superseded by the encounter information below, as are the listings for Habitat (obviously). Also note that while the Attack listings for animals in **Twilight: 2000** are given as a percentage, the listings for **Cadillacs and Dinosaurs** animals are given as a range on 1D10. (The effect in each case is the same.)

BACKGROUND

When the world he knew started destroying itself, Jason Sloane was not a happy man. The son of middle-class, small-town grocery store owners who scrimped their entire lives just to make ends meet, Sloane dedicated himself early on to becoming rich. And he did a good job of it. At 18, he left his hometown of Claunch, New Mexico, to pursue a business degree at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. Even working himself through school, he graduated a semester ahead of schedule. High grades and a go-getter attitude landed him a job with a local banking firm, and within five years he had parlayed that and a handful of canny investments into a million dollars. By age 31, the one million had become five. At age 34, he bought a stretch of land in a box canyon just a few miles south of his hometown, had a ranch built on it, and settled there to run his financial empire.

When the Twilight War came, Sloane saw the handwriting on the wall. He knew that within a few short years civilization would collapse and his money would not mean a thing any longer. The frustration of the thought maddened him. All of his efforts had been turned toward accumulating wealth, yet because of the rest of humanity's inability to live at peace, he was going to lose it all. Desperately, Sloane began converting his wealth into hard goods. He stocked his ranch with food, livestock, and seed for crops, and hired more servants to care for it all. He fortified the house and hired mercenaries to patrol his lands, and gunsmiths to keep them supplied with weapons and ammunition. He bought paintings, sculptures, and books, and hired curators and librarians to manage them. Before long, he began to envision the ranch as a repository of knowledge for a new Dark Age, and he sought even more actively to acquire things to preserve that knowledge. Once again, Sloane had a mission: Future generations would bless him for his foresight, and in that he would gain a sort of immortality.

It was during the pursuit of knowledge to be saved that Sloane came across another idea to guarantee his immortality in human memory. He found a report by a group of researchers in Sacramento that claimed that they were on the verge of discovering how to recreate extinct life forms from nothing but traces of DNA. "Given the right fossils," they said, "we might even be able to recreate a dinosaur." Something in Sloane's brain clicked. He had collected a lot of fossils; he still wanted to beef up his roving security; and more

than anything, he wanted to make a name for himself. Sloane decided to sponsor the building of a dinosaur. Within a week's time, he had hired the bulk of the Sacramento lab team to come work on his ranch.

The team was successful beyond imagination. Over the course of the next 18 months, they produced a handful of dimetrodons, stegosauri, and triceratopses. But most impressive of all, as far as Sloane was concerned, they created a breeding pair of tyrannosaurs, which Sloane turned loose to prowl the ranch's perimeter.

Unfortunately, Sloane's mercs took an instant dislike to the tyrannosaurs. Not only were the creatures downright deadly, the mercs also saw them as direct competition for the ranch's security positions. Eventually, they decided to manufacture an incident that would cause the tyrannosaurs to go berserk. Then they would kill the creatures, justifying themselves to Sloane as having been forced to do so.

What the mercenaries did not know, however, is that one of the gunsmiths had taken a dislike to *them* and had sabotaged their ammunition. In the mercs' battle with the tyrannosaurs, fully 30 percent of their rounds failed to fire. End result: The tyrannosaurs won. Then they went on to ravage the rest of the ranch.

The creatures demolished everything but the heavily walled main compound, and ate everyone they caught outside of it. Then they started on the livestock; the other dinosaurs were out of reach across the chill, mountain waters of the valley's central stream. Once the last of the livestock had been eaten, hunger drove the male to break down the gate at the valley's northern mouth and exit into the wider world outside.

Just in time for the player characters to arrive.

COURSE OF THE ADVENTURE

While travelling through New Mexico, the PCs find an isolated ranch house (not Sloane's, but rather one about 40 kilometers away from his valley) that has been demolished by the escaped tyrannosaurus.

A short time later, they come upon the town of Claunch, where a hysterical group of townspeople beg them to hunt and kill the monster that attacked them. The townspeople scrape together the best of their meager belongings to offer as a reward.

When they follow the tracks of the creature, they find that the trail leads to a secluded box canyon. Surprisingly, there are other dinosaurs here as well.

Eventually, the PCs kill the tyrannosaurus and its mate, and rescue the valley's owner, who is able to reward them well from his stockpile of wealth and equipment.

THUNDER'S TRAIL

While travelling across New Mexico, the PCs spot a large column of smoke rising in the distance. From the looks of things, it would appear that a building is burning. When they investigate, they discover the remains of a ranch house that was crushed by something large and heavy. Apparently the wreck caught fire when the fireplace was toppled.

A look around reveals the remains of a distillery 10 meters beyond the house, and lots of splashed blood on the ground near

a smashed jeep lying next to it. If any of the PCs succeed at a Difficult test of Observation, they find buried under the debris of the distillery a half dozen spent shotgun shells, and a human hand with the ragged remains of a flannel-clad forearm attached. Finally, in the mud surrounding a smashed cattle trough, a single, meter-wide clawed footprint can be seen.

An Average test of Tracking will reveal other partial prints that make it clear the creature that made them is headed toward the north. If the PCs have a map of the area (undoubtedly an old one), they can see that a small town named Claunch lies barely 10 kilometers in that direction. Whether Claunch is still inhabited remains to be seen. But one thing is certain: If there *are* any people living there, they need to be warned of the danger they are in.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

As the PCs approach Claunch, they discover that it consists of less than nine streets total: four running vaguely north/south and five running east/west. The centermost of the east/west streets is the town's main drag, and when the PCs enter it, they encounter a mob of just under 100 townspeople milling about in a confused welter of shouts and wailing. With very little trouble, the PCs learn that the

beast they have been following has already been here and gone. The locals describe it as a huge, upright-walking reptile, over 30 meters tall (an exaggeration—it is actually somewhat short of 10). Witnesses say it had a tough, scaly hide like a snake, and bullets bounced right off it (another exaggeration—the one fellow who had gumption enough to fire a weapon at it missed completely with his pistol). When it left, it carried a young woman off with it.

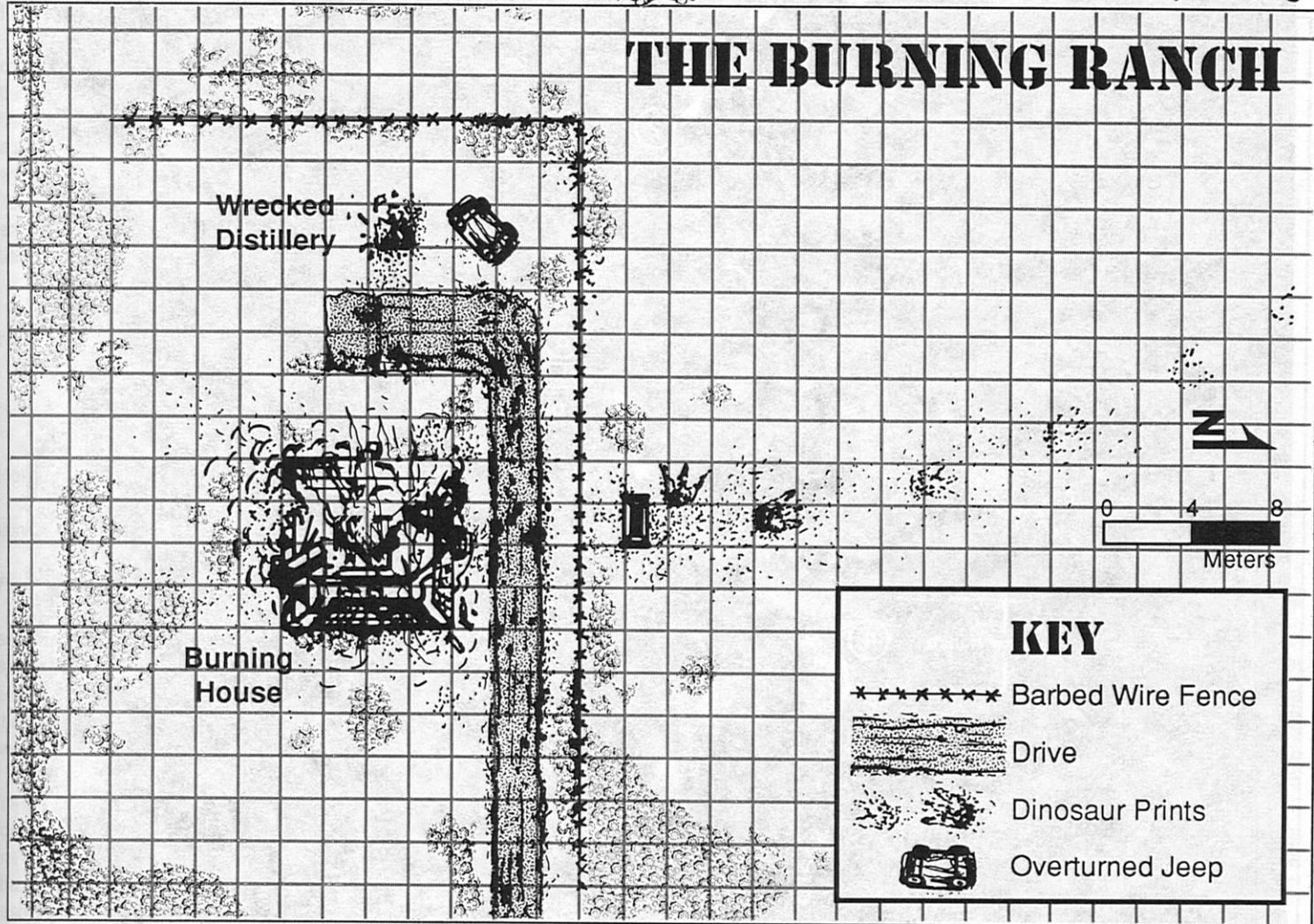
While the town has a part-time mayor, he is too horrified to be of any use at the moment, and there is no local police officer. Almost immediately, the townspeople turn to the PCs, begging them to go kill the thing and bring the woman back. Someone shouts, "We need to offer a reward," and suddenly people start dragging their treasures out of their homes and pressing them upon the PCs. One old man offers them an antique mahogany rocking chair; others offer them food, clothes, cooking utensils, and even jewelry. It quickly becomes obvious that the town is offering its best. If pressed, they will even offer ammunition and/or firearms from their meager supplies, but no one has anything larger than a shotgun.

If the PCs ask, a handful of young townsmen (5-10 Novice level) agree to go along on the hunt, but they will have to go on foot, and only half of them have firearms.

NEW MEXICO



THE BURNING RANCH



LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

The tyrannosaur's trail leads west out of town and is easy to follow for the first two kilometers. Then it enters a stretch of rocky ground that obscures tracks. Fifteen minutes of searching and a successful Difficult test of Tracking (have the PCs keep searching until someone succeeds) reveal a torn and bloodied strip of dress and part of one human foot—all that remains of the townswoman. A series of bloody clawprints lead south, out of the rock and back to desert soil, where the creature's tracks can be followed easily once again. Those tracks lead the PCs directly to Sloane's valley: The monster has fed and is returning "home."

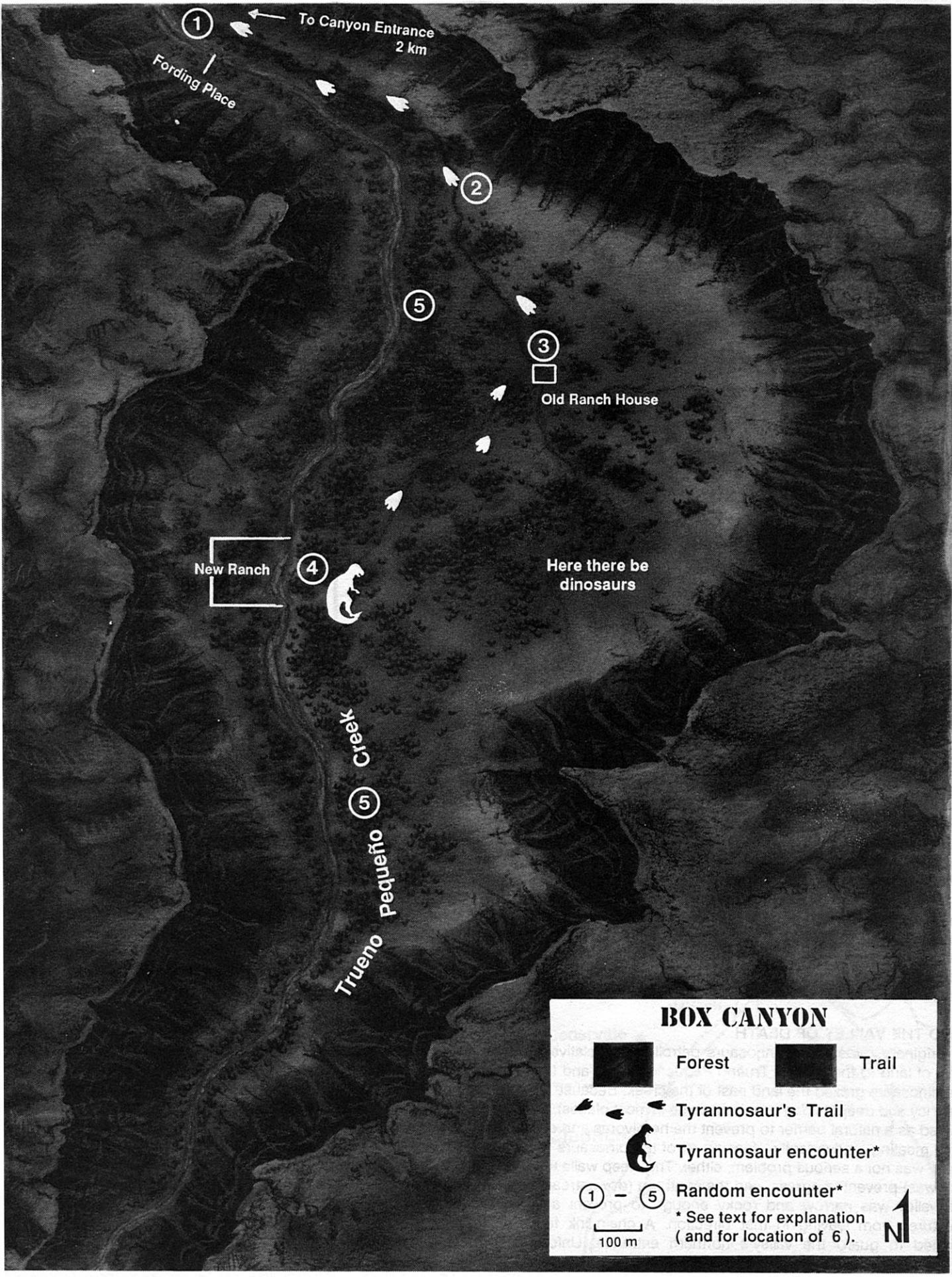
INTO THE VALLEY OF DEATH

Originally, Sloane's tyrannosaurs patrolled the relatively narrow strip of land to the west of Trueno Pequeño Creek, and the rest of the dinosaurs grazed the land east of the creek. Because its waters were icy and deep (two to three meters so in most places), the creek served as a natural barrier to prevent the herbivores and carnivores from meeting inadvertently. Keeping all of the dinosaurs within the valley was not a serious problem, either. The steep walls to the east and west prevented egress, and the southern (downstream) end of the valley was narrow and rocky enough to prevent any of the creatures from leaving in that direction. A chain-link fence was erected to guard the valley's northern entrance. Unfortunately,

hunger eventually impelled the male tyrannosaur to overcome these obstacles. Finding its way barred to the south and east, it explored to the north. Eventually, it discovered a stretch of stream shallow enough to ford. Once past the stream, instead of turning to the south, it continued northward, smashing the chain-link fence and exiting into the larger world.

After feeding on a couple of humans, the sated tyrannosaur has returned "home" to Sloane's valley. But upon returning, the creature had no overriding motivation to cross the stream once again. Instead, it has wandered into the wide, eastern side of the valley, putting the animals there—including the other dinosaurs, of course—into a panic.

When the PCs follow the tyrannosaurus into the valley, they will discover the eastern side first. The tyrannosaur's tracks lead the PCs down an overgrown path to the ruins of the valley's original ranch house, then continue southward. As the PCs pursue, eventually they spot Sloane's ranch on the other side of the stream, through a break in the woods lining the banks. All along the way, from valley entrance to their first glimpse of Sloane's ranch, the PCs will have chances for random encounters with the dinosaurs on this eastern side. The overall result is that this part of the adventure will be much like a typical "lost world" tale, but in miniature—due to the valley's small size. (As mentioned earlier, statistics for the dinosaurs may be found on pages 91-94 in the pullout section at the end of the book.)



Random Eastern Encounters

Because the tyrannosaur's invasion of the valley's eastern side has considerably stirred up the herbivorous dinosaurs who dwell there, the creatures are constantly on the move, which greatly increases the frequency of encounter for the PCs. (As well, the herbivores are agitated enough to have a greater tendency to attack whatever they encounter—double the normal listed chance of attacking the PCs). To represent this increased activity, the referee should roll on the encounter table below at the following specific points in the PCs' travel on the eastern side of the stream:

1. When they first enter the valley (i.e., just inside the ruined northern gate).
2. Halfway down the trail to the ruined ranch house.
3. When they discover the ruined ranch house.
4. When they first spot Sloane's ranch across the stream.
5. Halfway up- or down-stream if the PCs follow the stream looking for a place to ford.
6. At any point if they stop to camp or spend several minutes stationary (while discussing plans or the like).

Fixed Eastern Encounter: Tyrannosaurus

Because the PCs have come hunting the tyrannosaurus, it is assumed that they will continue tracking it until they encounter it. As a result, his trail will lead them to a spot from which they can notice Sloane's ranch on the other side of the stream. In terms of plot, then, the tyrannosaurus will have served his purpose, and it is time to do away with it.

For that reason, once the PCs have spotted Sloane's ranch, the male tyrannosaurus attacks. He has doubled back on his trail, looking for a fording place in order to rejoin his mate on the western side of the valley. (Remember, though, that the PCs have no way of knowing that there is another tyrannosaur in the valley—the referee should reserve it as a surprise.) Because the PCs stand in his path, the male tyrannosaur attacks them automatically.

HIDDEN VALLEY RANCH

When the PCs spot Sloane's ranch, smoke rising from a chimney makes it immediately obvious that the ranch is inhabited. After they have dealt with the tyrannosaur, then, the PCs will most likely want to take a closer look at the ranch. That closer look reveals that the chain-link fence outside the security wall has been broken down in places, and the barn has been torn up a bit around the doors (where the tyrannosaurs chewed planks away in order to get at a few cattle huddled inside). Further investigation reveals the remains of cattle scattered about all around the ranch. A Difficult test of Observation or Tracking also reveals the remains of a few of Sloane's mercenary guards.

The ranch's security wall is stone and cement, three meters high. While this is not high enough to deter a determined tyrannosaur, it has proved sufficient to detour Sloane's pair as long as nothing edible could be viewed inside. For this reason, a sentry (one of the Novice NPCs—see Stats for Sloane's Bunch, page 28) is posted on the barn roof 24 hours a day, and if a tyrannosaur is spotted in the area, the ranch's inhabitants and what little livestock they managed to save are driven indoors until the creature leaves.

What happens next depends entirely upon the PCs.

EAST SIDE ENCOUNTER TABLE

Die	Result
1	Normal animal
2	Normal animal
3	Sauropodus
4	Triceratops
5	Stegosaurus
6	Savaged creature

Normal Animal: An animal native to this region has been encountered. Roll on the North American Animal Encounters table (page 217 of *Twilight: 2000*, 2nd edition) to determine what type. Treat results of "Dog" as Wolf and "Bear" as Large Cat. Because these creatures are stirred up by agitated dinosaurs stomping about, they also have an increased chance of attacking when encountered. Add 10 percent to their normal rating. This encounter can happen multiple times.

Sauropodus: The PCs discover—or are discovered by—a single saurolophus (not 2D6, as per the *Cadillacs and Dinosaurs* statistics). Characters who fail an Average test of Observation mistake it for the tyrannosaurus they are hunting. If the encounter remains peaceful, the mistake will become evident after a few moments of observing the creature. Note that there are more than one saurolophus in the area, so this encounter may occur multiple times with different saurolophuses. Remember that these creatures have double the normal listed chance of attacking when encountered.

Triceratops: A single triceratops is discovered by the PCs (not 1D6, as per *Cadillacs and Dinosaurs*). As with Sauropodus, there are multiple such creatures in the valley, so repeated rolls of 3 will result in multiple such encounters. Remember that these creatures have double the normal listed chance of attacking when encountered.

Stegosaurus: The PCs discover a single stegosaur (not 1D6–2, as in *Cadillacs and Dinosaurs*). Remember that the creatures have double the normal listed chance of attacking when encountered.

Savaged Creature: With all of the animal activity currently occurring on the east side of the creek, fights are breaking out more frequently among creatures, and some are suffering severely as a result. In this encounter, the PCs discover a dead or dying creature that has been mauled by something else. Roll 1D6–1 on this table to determine exactly what the creature is, treating rolls of less than 1 as 1.

The Open Approach

If some or all of the PCs approach the ranch openly, as soon as they come within his view, the sentry on the barn roof begins jumping up and down and waving for them to come closer. As they close the distance, they begin to hear him shouting "Hurry!" "There are monsters!" and "Get inside the wall." Once he's convinced that they are headed for the gate, he climbs down from the barn, goes to the gate, and lets the PCs in.

Once inside, the PCs are led to the main house, where they are introduced to Jason Sloane (see Operation Evac, page 28).

The Sneaky Approach

When the PCs approach the ranch, there is a chance they will be spotted by this barkeep sentry. Everyone in the group should make an Easy test of Observation to see if they spot him first; characters with outstanding successes can each warn one companion who may have failed his or her roll. Unless the PCs decide to hide—which requires an Easy test of Stealth—the sentry will spot them. A Difficult test of Stealth will get them all the way up to the wall without being spotted.

Getting over the wall is a different story. If the PCs try it during the daylight, they will definitely be spotted. If they try at night, each must make an Average test of Stealth to succeed.

Once the PCs are inside the compound, any NPCs they discover will be thrilled to meet them—as soon as the NPCs get over their initial shock at seeing strangers, that is. None of the NPCs will give the PCs any trouble, although Sloane, the handyman, and the gunsmith and his apprentice are prepared to defend themselves if need be.

OPERATION EVAC

When Sloane meets the player characters, he greets them as saviors. While he and his people have some light weapons, they are neither trained nor armed well enough to face the tyrannosaurs, but he knows that they cannot last forever remaining holed up from the creatures and subsisting on canned goods. In order for his ranch to work over the long run, fields must eventually be planted and livestock must be able to graze, and in order for that to happen, the tyrannosaurs must be destroyed. Of course, Sloane recognizes that once the tyrannosaurs are gone, he is going to need a new group of guards to protect the ranch from possible attacks by wandering marauders.

Taking all of this into consideration, Sloane offers the PCs jobs. He wants them to become his new security force, and their first task will

STATS FOR SLOANE'S BUNCH

Jason Sloane

Sloane is fanatically dedicated to protecting his repository of knowledge. As a consequence, he has a stubbornness that will bear him well in a fight.

Level: Experienced

Attributes: 5

Skills: 4

Initiative: 3

Nelson Sims

Sims is Sloane's gunsmith, and he has been in a scrap or two before. Sloane looks to Sims for advice when things come down to combat.

Level: Veteran

Attributes: 6

Skills: 5

Initiative: 4

Other NPCs

The ranch's handyman and the gunsmith's apprentice are both Experienced NPCs. The ranch also houses a butler, maid, cook, two ranch hands, and three research scientists, all of which are Novice NPCs.

be to hunt and kill the tyrannosaurs. In payment, he offers them a home, regular meals, pleasant company, and the chance to use the repository of knowledge that they would be protecting.

Assuming that the PCs do not take him up on that offer, Sloane asks them to help him evacuate the ranch and travel to Claunch, where he can begin a search for a new security force. But in this case, Sloane does not want the tyrannosaurs to be killed. They will be the ranch's only protection from marauders while he is finding new guards. In payment for leading his group to Claunch, Sloane offers the PCs anything from the ranch that they can carry, except for his books. Sloane's primary motivation is to preserve the knowledge in those books. Anything else—including works of art, jewelry, food, small arms, and ammunition—is fair game. There is even a single M12 SMAW with a case of HE rounds.



BUGGING OUT

If the PCs agree to hire on as the ranch's new guards, all that remains to be done is to run the dinosaur hunt to kill the tyrannosaurs (or tyrannosaur, if the PCs have already killed the male during their exploration of the valley's eastern side). The details of that hunt are left to the referee and players to work out, but remember that nothing else, the tyrannosaur(s) will eventually wander past the ranch in search of food, and the PCs can ambush it/them from that location.

On the other hand, if the PCs do not desire to end their careers as adventurers, they will more likely agree to guide Sloane and his party out of the valley. In that case, everything will go fine until they reach the valley's entrance. Once there, they will discover that the tyrannosaurs (if both are still alive) have chosen it as their new nesting place, and as the PCs approach, the tyrannosaurs attack (See the map of the valley on page 26. The PCs start at the south edge, the dinosaurs at the point marked "Tyrannosaur Lair.") Of course, if the PCs have chosen their reward wisely, they will be well armed for the confrontation.

After the battle, all that remains is for the PCs to take Sloane to Claunch. When they arrive there and tell their story (which Sloane authenticates), the locals mourn the death of their townswoman, but they treat the PCs as heroes.

Sauropelos

Description: Upright bipedal herbivorous dinosaur, 6 to 12 meters long and between 2 and 6 tons in weight. Native to the foothills and forests.

Size: (1D6) 1-3, small; 4-6, large

Habitat: Hills, forests, jungle

Number Appearing: 2D6

Attack: Small, 2; large, 3

Combat Move: Small, 8/32;

large, 8/24

Hits: Small, 60; large, 100

Armor: Small, none; large, 1 (chest, abdomen, hind legs)

Weapon: Charge+tail

Base Hit Number: Small, 3/2; large, 2/2

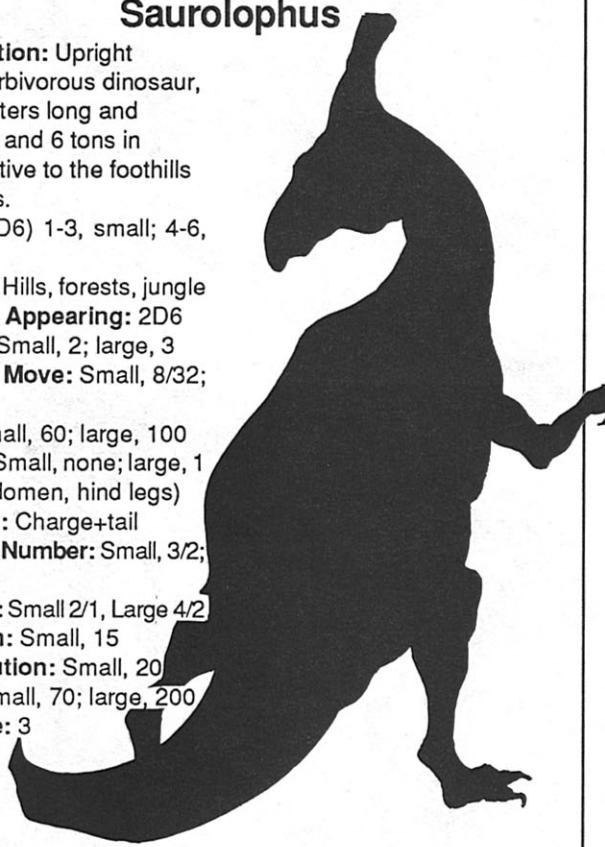
Damage: Small 2/1, Large 4/2

Strength: Small, 15

Constitution: Small, 20

Meat: Small, 70; large, 200

Initiative: 3



Triceratops

Description: A large herbivorous quadrupedal dinosaur with bony armor covering the head and neck, and with 3 horns projecting forward. Triceratopses are about 8 to 10 meters long and weigh from 6 to 8 tons. They are native to the flats.

Size: Large

Habitat: Flats, prairie

Number Appearing: 1D6

Attack: 3

Combat Move: 8/24

Hits: 120

Armor: Head, 2; other, 1

Weapon: Charge

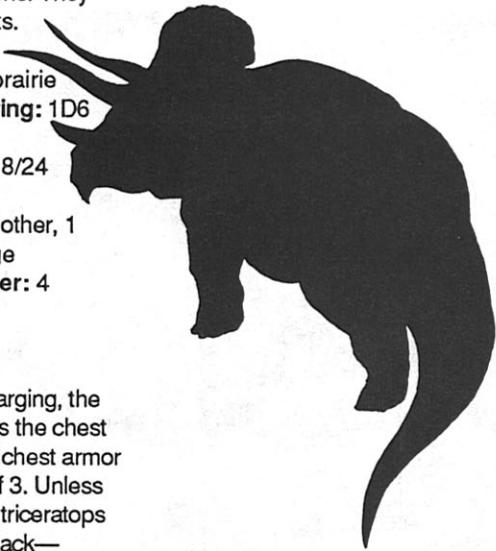
Base Hit Number: 4

Damage: 6

Meat: 250

Initiative: 2

Notes: When charging, the head's armor covers the chest as well, making the chest armor an effective value of 3. Unless provoked, only one triceratops from a group will attack—usually the oldest male.



Stegosaurus

Description: Herbivorous quadrupedal dinosaur about 10 meters in length and weighing 4 tons. It is notable for its small head and massive body, as well as its characteristic plates and spikes running down its spine and studding its tail. It will usually not attack unless provoked.

Size: Large

Habitat: Forest, jungle

Number Appearing: 1D6+2 (rounded up)

Attack: 2

Combat Move: 8/32

Hits: 80

Armor: Chest and abdomen, 1

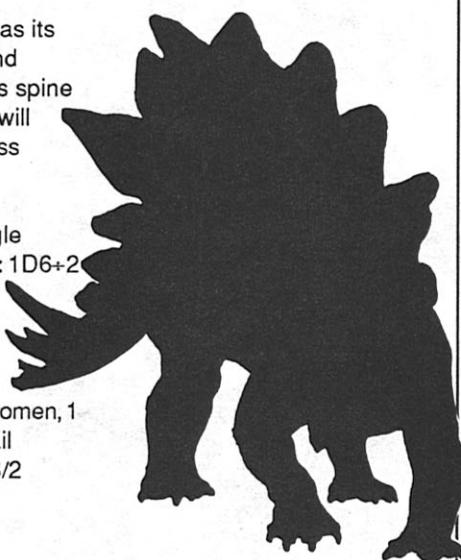
Weapon: Charge+tail

Base Hit Number: 3/2

Damage: 3/3

Meat: 125

Initiative: 3



Tyrannosaurus Rex

Description: The largest of the carnosaurs, tyrannosaurs are 10 or more meters long and weigh 8 to 10 tons. They are upright bipeds.

Size: Large

Habitat: Forest, hills, flats

Number Appearing: 1

Attack: 7

Combat Move: 8/24

Hits: 140

Armor: Head, 2; arms, 0; all other locations, 1

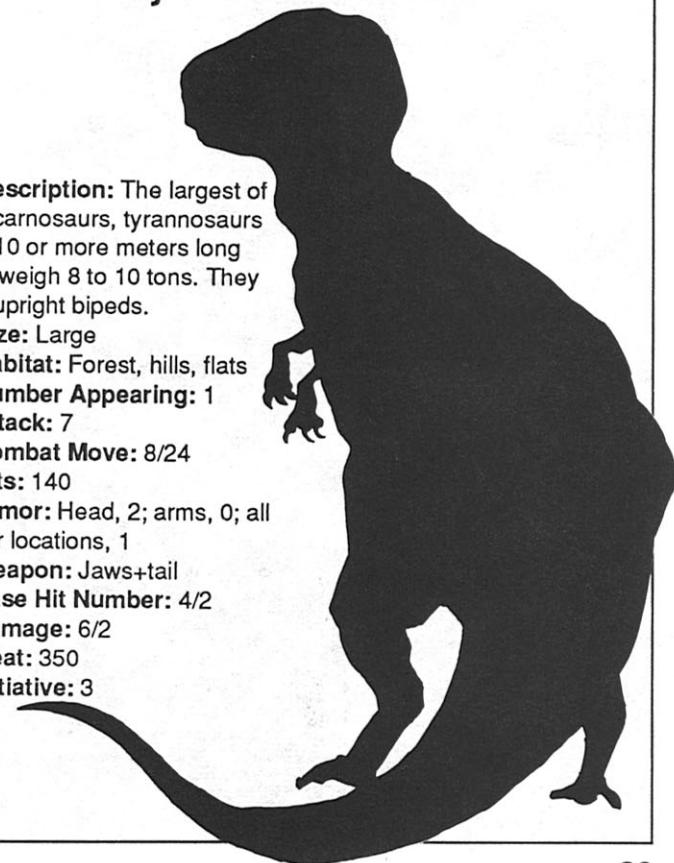
Weapon: Jaws+tail

Base Hit Number: 4/2

Damage: 6/2

Meat: 350

Initiative: 3





THE ORPHEUS EXTRACT

Less than a decade before the onset of the Twilight War, US President Ronald Reagan was heard to express regret that there were no enemy extraterrestrials to fight. The president believed that by having a shared enemy, the nations of humanity might join together in unity, to rise above ancient grudges and forge a worldwide bond against a common foe. Of course, his dream of a unified world was never to come to pass. By the end of his century, the Earth was to be ravaged by battles of human against human.

What no one knew at the time, of course, is that extraterrestrials had been dwelling on the Earth for centuries. Ironically, however, they were working not to undermine humanity's development, but rather to foster it. But despite their best efforts, humans seemed bent on self-destruction. With the coming of the Twilight War, the aliens' hopes for a human peace were cruelly shattered. Dejected, they slipped away from the planet as secretly as they had come.

Except for an unlucky few, that is.

In this adventure, the player characters are hired to help rescue a hostage from a top-secret military base. But they don't know that the hostage and their employers are ETs just trying to get home.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

As the Twilight: 2000 rules explain, the nuclear detonations of World War III ruined pretty much all electronic control components across the face of the globe. Also, the war's widespread destruction left most of the world incapable of producing reliable electrical power. As a result of all this, facilities that were once high-tech centers are now little more than dusty warehouses of worthless machinery. And while portable generators that run on alcohol can supply electricity enough to run a few lights and some radio equipment, they are neither powerful enough, nor reliable enough, to restore the surviving high-tech centers to operation. Consequently, these facilities lie abandoned, a constant, nagging reminder of technology that humanity has lost in its folly.

One such facility is a top-secret US Army intelligence base codenamed Orpheus, located in a forested rural area 50 kilometers southeast of Frankfurt, Germany. Before the start of the Twilight War, this base played a vital part in processing military intelligence. Now, it lies forgotten by all but Oberst Klaus Freising, German attaché at the base before the US abandoned it. Freising has become somewhat obsessive about the facility: He has carefully protected its equipment, with the result that very little of it was damaged by the radiation that destroyed most of the world's technology. The only problem is, Freising has no way of powering the equipment to put it back into operation. He is convinced that, if he could do so, he would be able to use the base's resources to become a major force to be contended with in Europe.

Like many who desire great power, Freising verges on madness, and sometimes it isn't clear which side of the line he is on. But sometimes the mad can see things others cannot. In Freising's case, this is aliens. The oberst has long been convinced that aliens brought about the Twilight War, and when an ET came to investigate what remains of Orpheus Base, Freising identified him immediately.

Now he is holding that alien captive, trying to wrest out of him the alien technology necessary to put the base back into operation. But he didn't count on other aliens coming to rescue their friend. And he certainly didn't expect them to have humans helping.

REFEREEING THE SCENARIO

This adventure is set in Germany, in the vicinity of Frankfurt, but it need not necessarily be so. That is, a referee could easily transplant it to some other part of the world, if so desired.

While running the scenario, the most important thing for the referee to keep in mind is that the aliens would like to keep their true nature secret, but not so much that they will die for it. It is the referee's job to slowly drop hints that the aliens are not what they seem, so that over the course of the adventure the characters will come to recognize them for what they are. Of course, if nothing else triggers this recognition, the arrival of the UFO at the adventure's end should certainly do it.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

While traveling through Germany, the characters reach a spot midway between Frankfurt and Munich, when they hear the sounds of a small firefight. When they investigate, they discover a pair of supposed CIA agents pinned down in a ramshackle farmhouse by nearly a dozen marauders. Surprisingly, however, the agents are using laser pistols in their defense. What the characters do not know is that the "agents" are actually extraterrestrials in disguise.

Upon coming to the ETs' aid, the characters help drive the marauders off, and are employed as guards to help the aliens rescue a comrade who is being held captive by a local warlord. As the characters travel with their employers, they begin to notice odd things about them, things that suggest the "CIA agents" are not what they seem. Finally, the group arrives at the site where the aliens' comrade is being held (formerly a secret US Army Intelligence base). They stage a raid on the site and—with the help of the aliens' high-tech equipment—locate the hostage.

At this point, the base's commander snaps. Convinced that the Earth's woes are the fault of alien invaders, he is determined to make at least these three pay for their race's perfidy. He locks himself into a vault containing a tactical nuclear warhead and begins work to arm it and set it off, hoping to take the aliens with him to death.

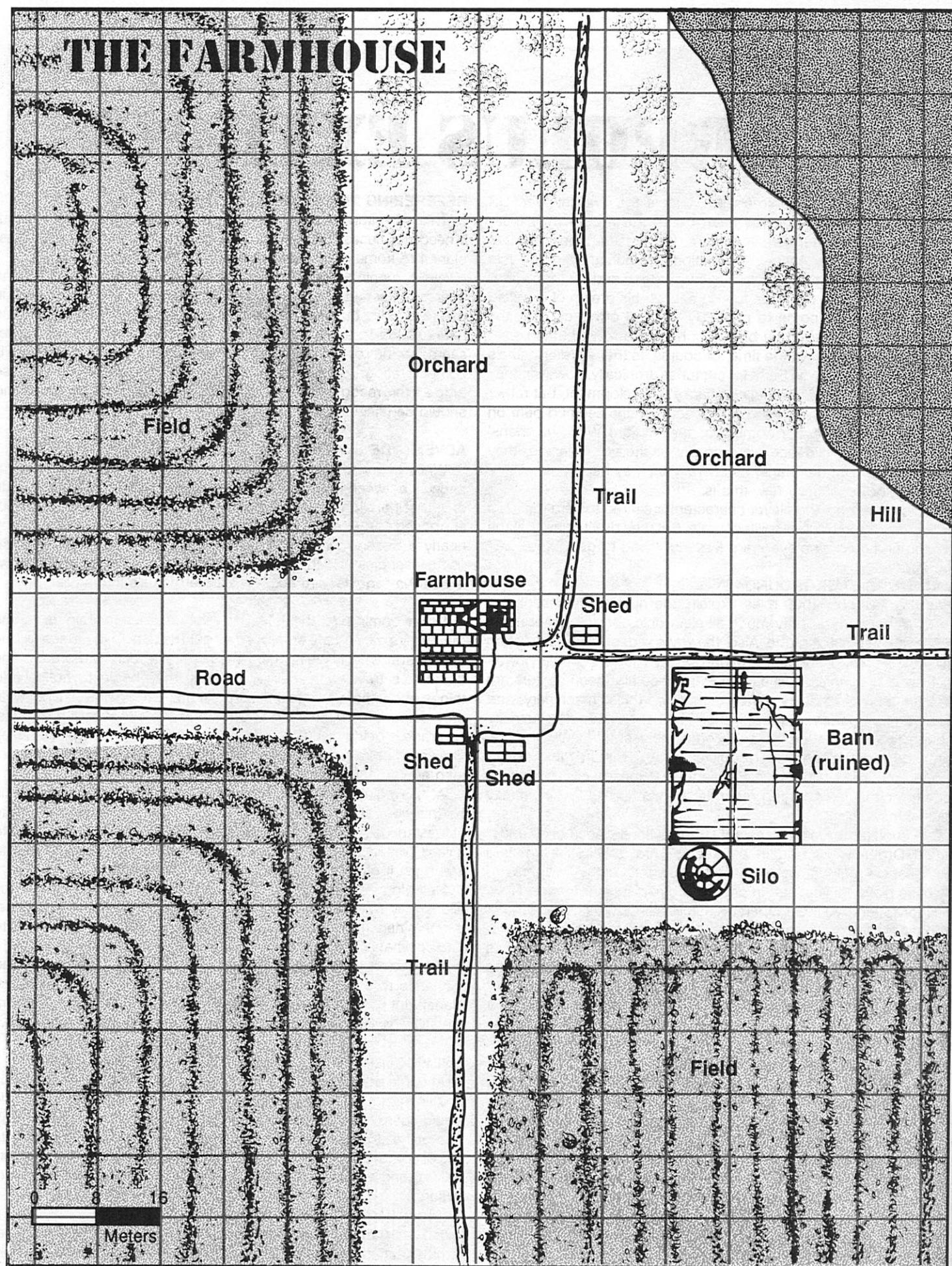
Realizing that they cannot stop the blast and cannot outrun it, the aliens play their trump card: They call their ship to come and get them. When the saucer arrives, the aliens ask the characters to decide what action should be taken concerning the bomb. Finally, if the characters have acquitted themselves admirably, they are offered a chance to escape the Twilight Earth and emigrate to the aliens' planet. But of course, they turn the offer down, recognizing that there are still wrongs to be righted on Earth (and still things to shoot!).

UNEVEN ODDS

At some point during their travels, the characters hear the sounds of a firefight from beyond a line of hills. From the noises, the battle would seem to involve perhaps a dozen individuals (lots of yelling), with half a dozen pistols, one or two assault rifles (characters with lots of combat experience—i.e., Initiative 5 or 6—can identify them as AKMs), and a what seems a single weapon distinguishable by its strange "zip-crack" sound.

If the characters investigate, upon cresting the hills they spot a group of 10 marauders assaulting a small, ramshackle farmhouse. Another member of the group lies motionless, with a smoldering hole

THE FARMHOUSE



in him, on the ground. The surviving marauders are crouched behind various pieces of cover; then, at a shout from their leader, they all leap up and run forward, guns blazing.

Immediately, a beam of light flashes from a window of the farmhouse and catches one of the assailants in mid stride, then just as quickly winks out. There is a thunderous crack of displaced air rushing back together, and the target falls face down in the dirt. The rest of the group goes prone as well, intentionally. But they have gained some ground, and as the characters watch, the marauders prepare themselves for another rush.

From inside the house, a voice can be heard cursing volubly in English.

If the PCs Join In: It is assumed that if the characters join the battle, they will help the farmhouse defenders against the marauders. In that case, the referee can run the battle using the map and stats below. Once the marauders have lost another four members, they will give up the fight and simply try to get away. Shortly thereafter, the defenders will come out and introduce themselves to the player characters, as explained under Meeting Smith and Jones, below.

If the PCs Slink Away: It is also possible, of course, that the characters will decide at some point along the line that they do not want to get involved in someone else's fight, so they simply leave. In this case, the referee should assume that Smith and Jones (the people in the farmhouse) drive the marauders away and then stumble upon the characters further down the road.

MARAUDER STATISTICS

Marauder Chief (1)

From his uniform, equipment, and bearing, this man was once a sergeant in the Soviet Army. Now he is the leader of a rag-tag band of marauders.

It is obvious that he has some military experience, but unfortunately the group he is leading consists primarily of greenhorns and screwups. He carries an AKM.

Experience: Veteran

Attributes: 6

Skills: 5

Initiative: 4

Marauder Lieutenants (2)

Like their leader, these two fellows are obviously ex-members of the Soviet Army: they still wear the jacket and trousers of a Soviet private. Both carry AKMs, and they seem to know how to use them.

Experience: Experienced

Attributes: 5

Skills: 4

Initiative: 3

Marauder Rabble (7)

The bulk of the marauder force (seven men, not counting the one motionless when the characters arrive) are rank amateurs. They are dressed in an assortment of oddments they have collected piecemeal and are equipped in the same way. Two of them have Vz-52 pistols; the other five have P-64s.

Experience: Novice

Attributes: 6

Skills: 5

Initiative: 4

SAM SMITH AND JANET JONES

The two people in the farmhouse go by the names of Sam Smith and Janet Jones. They appear to be CIA agents—they have gray business suits, dark glasses, earphone radios, and leather briefcases—and they cultivate that impression. Actually, they are aliens—as in from another planet. But the characters have no way of knowing that. For sidearms, Smith and Jones each carry a .380 automatic pistol, but in their briefcases they also carry compact laser pistols (see the stats below), with 15 magazines each. When the characters discover the two aliens in the farmhouse, they are using the lasers for defense against the marauders.

These two aliens are junior members from the crew of a UFO that is about to leave Earth until humans grow up some and develop a more stable social system. Unfortunately, one of their fellow crew-members has been captured by a local warlord, and they are intent upon getting him back.

Experience: Veteran

Attributes: 6

Skills: 5

Initiative: 4

ET LASER PISTOL

It is not inconceivable that the US could have developed a small number of personal laser weapons before the Twilight War, and that some of them would have found their way into the hands of CIA agents. This is, in fact, exactly what Smith and Jones claim in passing themselves off as CIA. It is, however, a bit difficult to believe that 20th-century human technology could have produced a power supply so compact as to fit within the grip of a hand weapon, as the alien lasers do. The lasers are, then, in fact, the characters' first clue that Smith and Jones are not natives of Earth.

Ammo: —

Wt.: 0.8 kg

Mag: Disposable power pack worth 10 shots.

Price: N/A (—/—)

ET LASER PISTOL STATISTICS

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	—Recoil—		
					SS	Brst	Rng
ETLP	1	4	3	2	—	—	30

MEETING SMITH AND JONES

The farmhouse battle has convinced Smith and Jones that they need some help if they are to survive their mission. If the characters were instrumental in ending that battle, they will be an obvious choice for the aliens to recruit.

If, on the other hand, the characters avoided the battle, Smith and Jones will not have even known that they were there, but they are headed in the same general direction as the characters, and the referee should work things out so that the two groups meet. (The ETs are travelling on cross-country motorcycles.) Of course, not having seen the farm house defenders, the characters will have no way of knowing that they were Smith and Jones—the laser pistols are locked away safely in the briefcases.

In any event, the aliens are intent upon hiring some aid. They need someone to help protect them on their way to their objective, to help liberate their friend from the oberst's camp, and to help protect them



GERMANY

City

Large City

Railroad

Airport

Mountain

0 100 Meters

Meters

Map Key—The Post

Note: The map of The Post appears on pages 36 and 37.

The post is entirely surrounded by trees, and many trees grow within the compound as well. The grounds are ringed by a two-meter-tall fence (formerly electrified), surmounted by razor wire. Since taking over the post, Freising has also had sand bags piled waist high against the inside of the fence, to provide some cover for defenders, in case of an attack.

The post currently houses a total of 28 people: Freising, five technicians, 21 enlisted personnel, and one alien. A squad of five guards patrols the perimeter at all times.

A. Gate House: The gates across the road are chained shut. The gate house itself serves as an office for the captain of the guards. There is always someone here to command the perimeter patrol.

B. Main Offices: Just inside the north door is a foyer with a receptionist's desk. The rest of the building is divided up into administrative offices. Freising has taken over the building as his personal quarters, and he keeps the alien, Bill Williams, locked up in one of the old offices. Note that a secret underground tunnel leads from this building to the electronics shed (I).

C. Barracks: This is a three-story building with a basement. The first floor is primarily a dining/meeting room; a kitchen and storerooms occupy the basement. The upper two floors are dormitory-style barracks where the bulk of the base's occupants sleep.

D. Parking Lots: A few Humvees and motorcycles are parked here. The north lot also contains a deuce-and-a-half (2½-ton truck).

E. Assembly Ground: This was designed to serve triple-duty as an assembly point for general announcements, a sports field, and a helicopter landing pad. Now it serves as a field for growing vegetables to supplement the camp's food stores.

F. Tool Shop: This building contains tools for maintaining vehicles. The west end is being converted to a smithy.

G. Storage Shed: Nothing but lawn-care gear in here.

H. Armory: Quite simply, this is where the post's weapons are secured and maintained, except those assigned to the guards (who keep them close at hand at all times). Besides a generous collection of small arms, the armory also contains three MG3s with 200 belts of ammunition, and a pair of HK-69s with 19 HE rounds, five HEDP rounds, one CS round, and eight ILLUM rounds.

I. Electronics Shed: This building once contained bank after bank of sophisticated computers and communications equipment. Now it contains just the shells of that equipment; Freising had the electronic components removed and buried in the southeast corner of the assembly field, to protect them from the electromagnetic pulses of nuclear explosions. There are two vaults at the east end of this building. One is empty; the other has been lined with lead and contains a partially dismantled nuclear warhead that Freising hopes to turn into some sort of power plant, with the aid of extraterrestrial knowledge. Note that a secret underground tunnel leads from this building to the main office, where Freising now resides.

on their way back to their ship, which lies hidden about 25 kilometers to the northwest of Munich. In return for these services, they are willing to offer the characters \$10,000 in gold, and they can even pay a 10 percent advance.

Of course, it is also very important that the aliens maintain their cover as CIA agents. While actually saying as little as possible, they work to convey the impression that their captive friend, who goes by the name of Bill Williams, was working undercover to scope out local conditions when he was unexpectedly discovered and taken prisoner. He managed to get out one short radio message before they took him. (The truth is that he had been stationed in Frankfurt and was headed back for the ship when he found Orpheus Base and stumbled into the hands of one of Freising's patrols.)

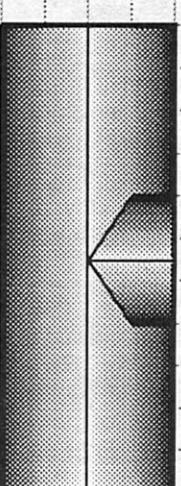
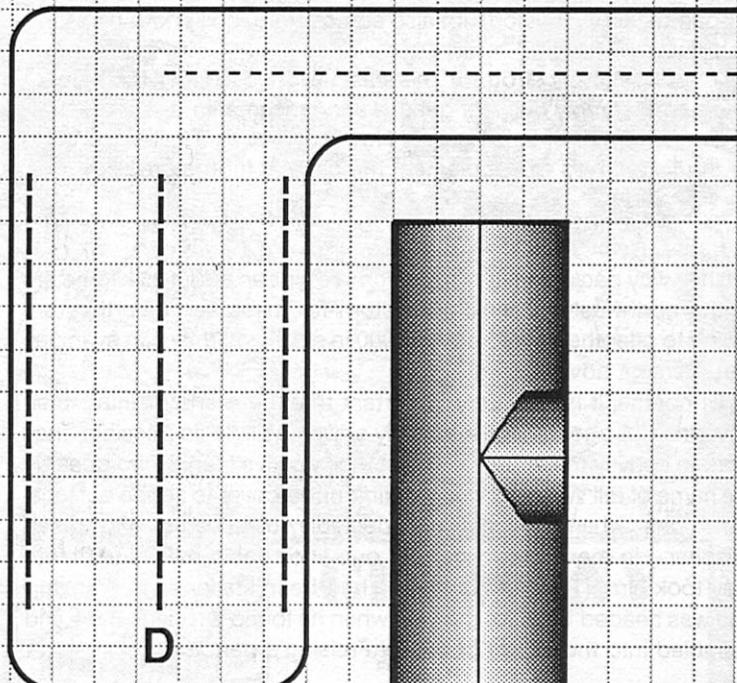
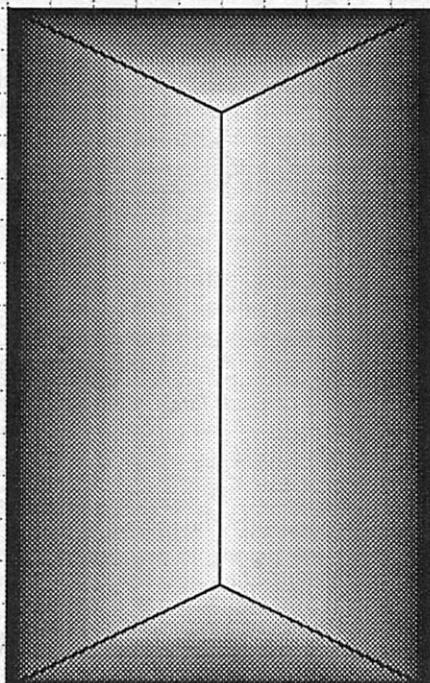
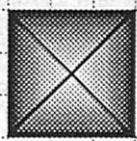
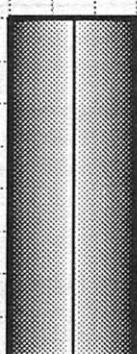
SECRETS WILL OUT

Depending upon what mode of travel the characters have, the trip to Orpheus could take anywhere from a few hours to several days (if they are walking). The referee should use the *Twilight: 2000* encounter rules to generate encounters along the way. But the primary purpose of this part of the adventure is to gradually let slip clues to Smith and Jones' true origins. The two are very anxious to leave Terra (as anxious as most Americans are to return home from Europe), and they are very worried about their comrade, Bill. The combined pressures are beginning to make them somewhat careless about maintaining their cover.

One way this manifests itself is in an occasional lapse into bickering between the two in their native language. The referee should have this happen about once per four-hour period. The first time it happens, each character should make a roll versus one-quarter the rating of *each language* that character knows. If any of the rolls are successful, that character becomes convinced that the tongue Smith and Jones are speaking does not belong to the group to which the language rolled against belongs. If the character is successful on more than one roll, he or she will know that the aliens' language does not belong to any of those groups.

The second time Smith and Jones lapse into their native tongue, the task reduces to Difficult; the third time to Average; and the fourth time to Easy. The characters can compare their results in order to cross more language groups off the list of possibilities. Eventually, they should come to realize that Smith and Jones are speaking something none of them have ever heard of.

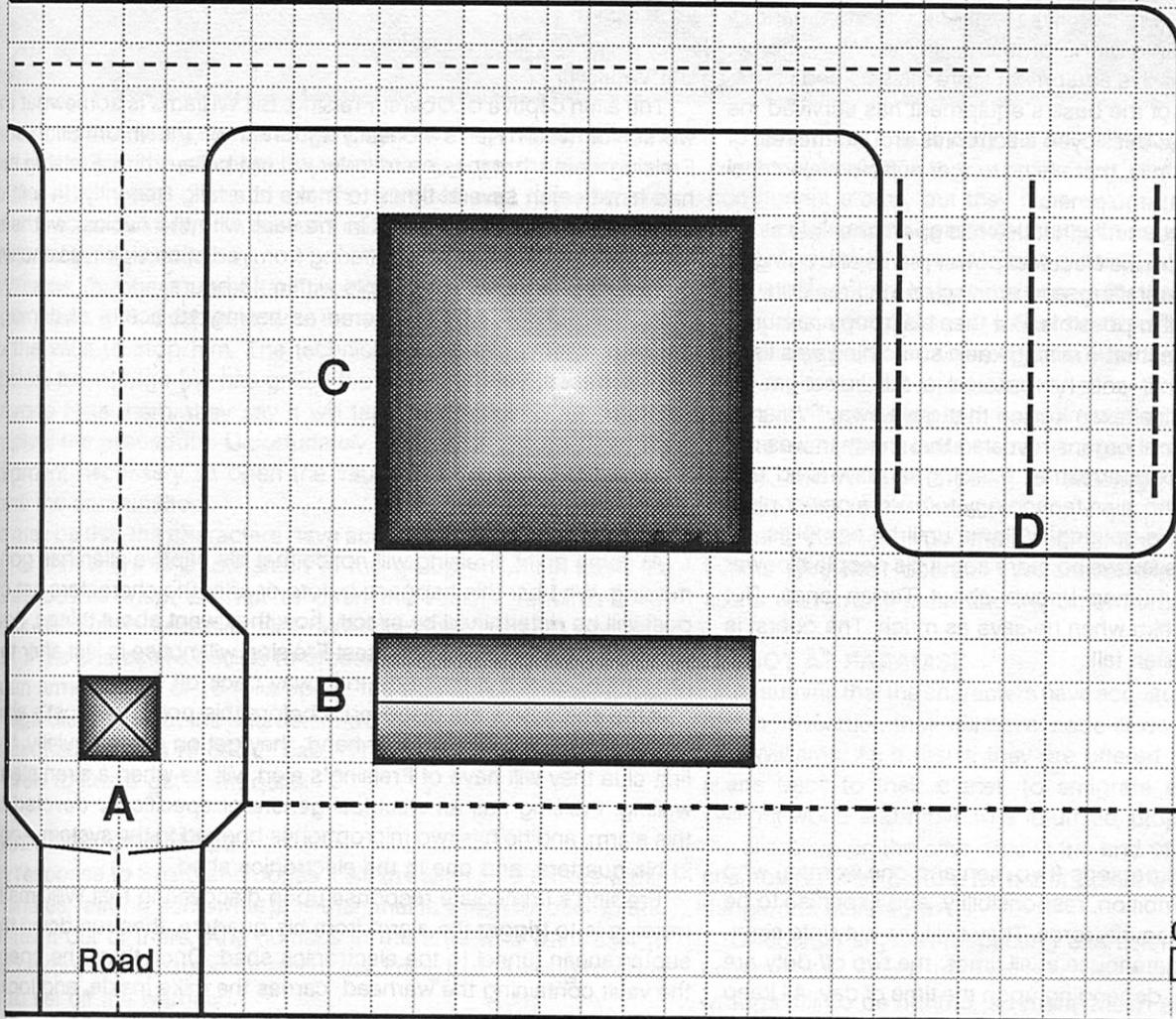
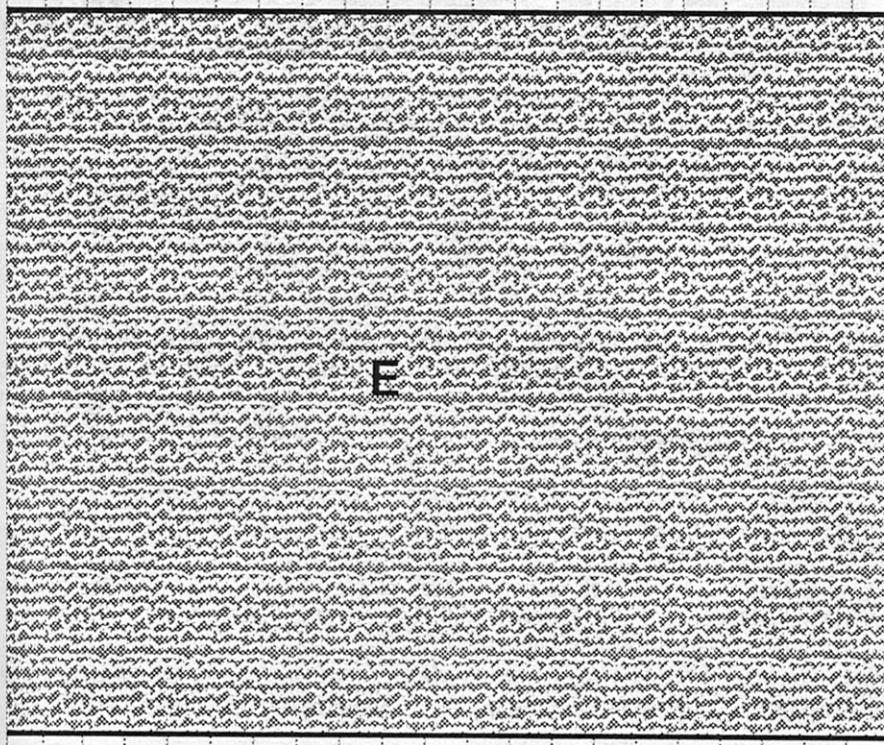
Another evidence of the fact that Smith and Jones are ETs is that about once every two hours Jones stops, opens her briefcase, puts on a headset earphone and mike, points the briefcase toward Frankfurt, and fiddles with some controls inside. Then, after speaking a few words into the mike, she packs the whole thing away once more. What she is doing is checking the direction and distance to Bill Williams' beacon (each of the ETs have a beacon surgically implanted in their skulls), then reporting back to their ship. A Difficult test of Stealth or Observation will allow a character a peek into the



THE POST

- A Gate House
- B Main Offices
- C Barracks
- D Parking Lots
- E Assembly Ground
- F Tool Shop
- G Storage Shed
- H Armory
- I Electronics Shed

Perimeter
Fence



briefcase, upon which that character sees an incredible array of switches and indicator lights, as well as spotting Jones' laser pistol in a holster affixed inside the case's top.

SLIPPING THE BAIT

With their briefcases, Smith and Jones can pinpoint exactly where Williams is located on the post. Their desire is to slip in, free him, and slip back out—without alerting the post personnel. Whether that works or not will depend upon the exact actions of the PCs.

A TOUGH NUT TO CRACK

The intelligence post is hidden within a copse of trees, marked only by a gravel road leading into it. When the group reaches a point half a kilometer away, Smith and Jones call a halt to reconnoiter.

THE NPCs

Klaus Freising

The German Army's attaché to US Army Intelligence at Orpheus Base, Oberst Klaus Freising, has had long experience with dealing with secrets. As a consequence, he has become quite adept at looking beyond the "smoke and mirrors" of covert operations to the kernel of truth at their heart. Unfortunately, he has become quite paranoid in the process.

When the US abandoned Orpheus Base shortly after the beginning of the Twilight War, Freising was assigned to command a German contingent to maintain and protect it. Immediately, he set about having the most sensitive equipment stored in shielded vaults. As a consequence, much of the base's equipment has survived the electromagnetic pulses that destroyed electronics around the rest of the world. The only problem is, there is no longer sufficient electrical power available to run that equipment.

Freising is determined to rectify that. He has spent the time since the war studying how to operate electrical power plants and trying to devise a plan for capturing, staffing, and running one in Frankfurt. So far, the project has seemed impossible. But then his troops captured "Bill Williams," an extraterrestrial. Freising knew something was fishy when he first met Williams, and he ordered a full investigation. Surprisingly, it was a medical examination that gave away Williams' secret—X-rays of the internal organs revealed that the man was not a *man*, after all, but an extraterrestrial. Freising is convinced that Williams can supply him with alien technology to build a power plant right next to the base. He is holding Williams until he complies.

The problem is, Williams knows no more about his people's power plants than the average human knows about Terran ones. But Freising does not believe him when he says as much. The oberst is determined to make the alien talk.

Experience: Veteran

Attributes: 6

Skills: 5

Initiative: 4

Captains of the Guard

There are three enlisted persons (two men and one woman) who have displayed enough ambition, responsibility, and expertise to be trusted to lead the post's security force. They split the duty into eight-hour shifts. One is at the gatehouse at all times; the two off-duty are either relaxing or sleeping, depending upon the time of day. All keep

their personal weapons—P7 M13 pistols—continually close at hand. Whoever is on duty also carries an H&K CAW.

Experience: Veteran

Attributes: 6

Skills: 5

Initiative: 4

The Guard

The remaining 18 enlisted persons take turns pulling guard duty and doing other chores around the post. There are always five on duty as perimeter patrol. They carry G11 machineguns. The other 13 can obtain G3s at the armory, once one of the off-duty captains opens it for them.

Experience: Experienced

Attributes: 5

Skills: 4

Initiative: 3

The Technicians

While expert at electronics and the like, these five techs are virtually worthless in a fight. None carry firearms.

Experience: Novice

Attributes: 5

Skills: 2

Initiative: 1

Bill Williams

The alien captive of Oberst Freising, Bill Williams is somewhat the worse for wear. He is honestly ignorant of the information that Freising wants, but the commander will not believe him. Freising has had him beaten several times to make him talk. Recently, in a fit of rage, he even locked Williams in the vault with the nuclear warhead for an hour. Williams is now suffering from radiation sickness and will die unless treated by his people within 48 hours.

Williams should be considered as having 15 points of damage counted against him already.

Experience: Veteran

Attributes: 6

Skills: 5

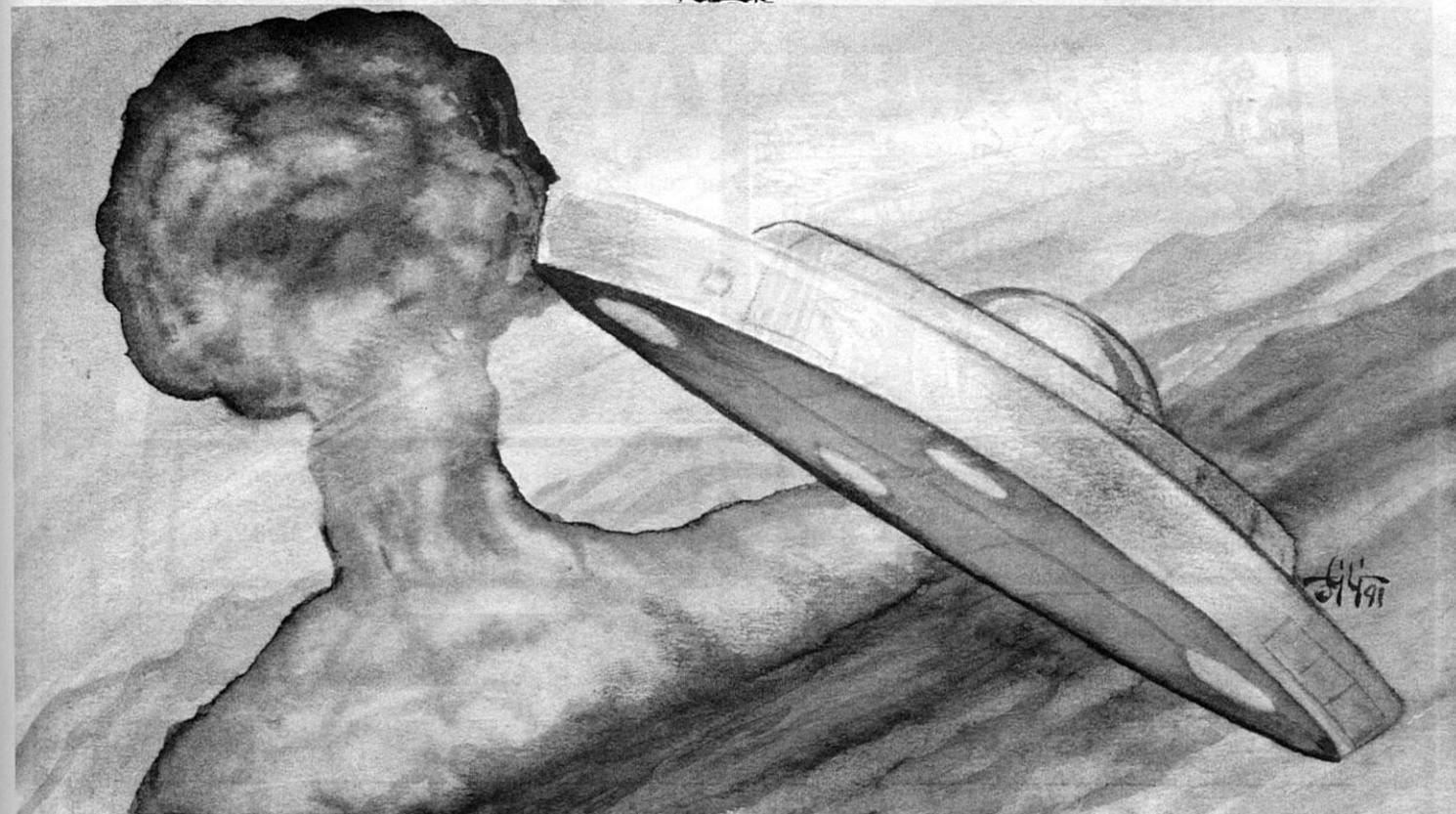
Initiative: 4

HELL HATH NO FURY

At some point, Freising will notice that his captive alien has gone missing. Whether this happens before or after the characters get off post will be determined by exactly how they went about things, how well they rolled, etc. But the latest Freising will notice is just after the characters clear the fence on their way back off the post.

If the characters are discovered before this point, the post's alert will be obvious. If, on the other hand, they get on and off quietly, the first clue they will have of Freising's alert will be when a siren starts wailing. Freising has an electrical generator specifically devoted to this alarm, and he has two microphones hooked to the system—one in his quarters, and one in the electronics shed.

Freising's immediate response upon discovering that Williams is missing is to trigger the alarm from his quarters, then run down the subterranean tunnel to the electronics shed. Once there, he opens the vault containing the warhead, carries the mike inside, and locks



himself in. Immediately thereafter, he begins arming the bomb, all the while ranting into the microphone—and thereby over the alarm loudspeaker—that he is going to set the thing off and take the alien bastards to hell with him. "You can't outrun a nuclear explosion!" he shouts, laughing maniacally.

Williams, for one, knows that Freising is crazy enough to do it. So do the post's guard captains, who immediately set to trying to break into the vault to stop him. The technicians know that Freising has sufficient knowledge (he has grilled them about it many times), and if anyone asks them, they say it will take him about 30 minutes to complete the procedure. Unfortunately, no one on the post has the equipment necessary to open the vault, and no one but Freising knows the combination.

It may be that the characters have some high-explosives they can use, or that there is a locksmith in the group, in which case the referee can let them attempt to open the vault. It requires a roll versus one-eighth Lockpick skill, with locksmith tools, to open the door. If the characters decide to breach it with explosives, the vault has an armor rating of 16 (it is about 100 mm of rolled steel plate).

Regardless of what the characters do, however, Smith and Jones decide that it is time to call a "cab." They radio their ship and beg the crew to come get them quick.

A QUESTION OF ETHICS

In response to Smith and Jones' call, the alien ship arrives within 15 minutes, leaving somewhat less than that in which to load up and high-tail it out of there. Any humans in the area who want a lift to safer regions are free to come along, assuming that Freising remains free to set off the warhead.

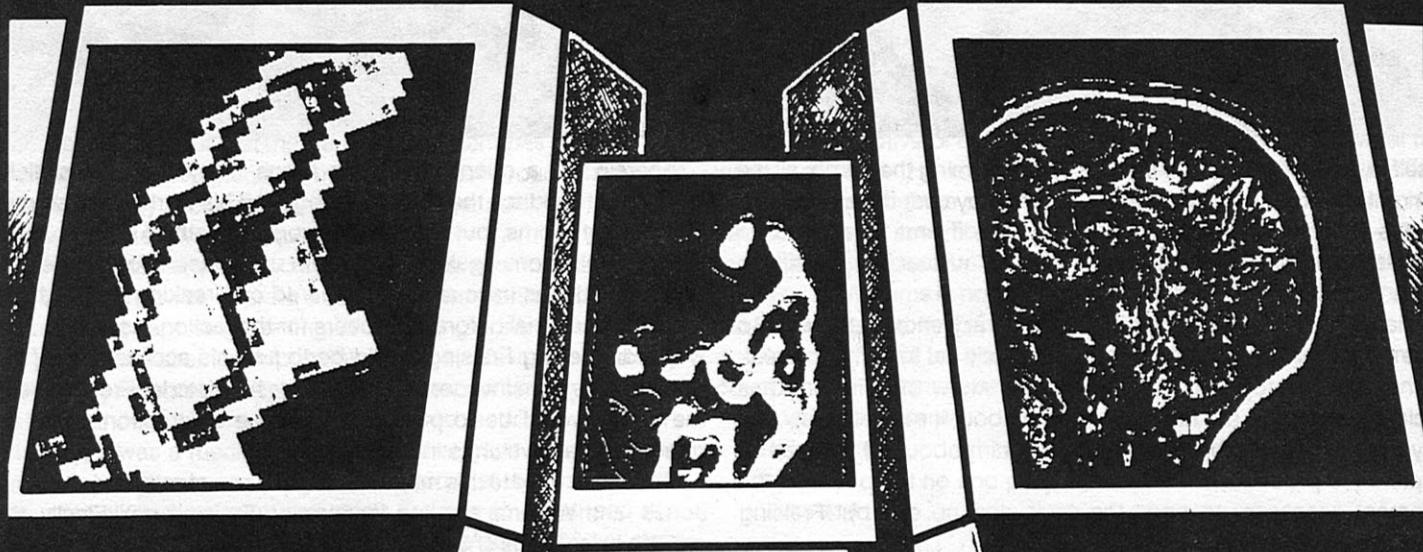
Therein lies a quandary for the aliens. They have the sufficient weaponry to reduce the vault, Freising, and his warhead to so many component atoms, but they have sworn an oath to take no direct, destructive actions against humans. In using lasers for self-defense, Smith and Jones have at least bordered on breaking that oath, and they will stand trial before their peers for that action. As well, in some ways, destroying Freising would be to fulfil his accusations of their presence as alien invaders. On the other hand, to let Freising set off the bomb would be to passively allow the destruction of the surrounding area, which is in itself a great evil.

The aliens debate this matter for a few tense moments (with Smith, Jones, and Williams arguing for blowing Freising up). Finally, their captain turns to the characters and says, "We cannot decide the fate of one of your kind. You must decide: Should we destroy him, or let events take their course?" Whichever the characters decide, the aliens will remove them and the other humans to a safe distance.

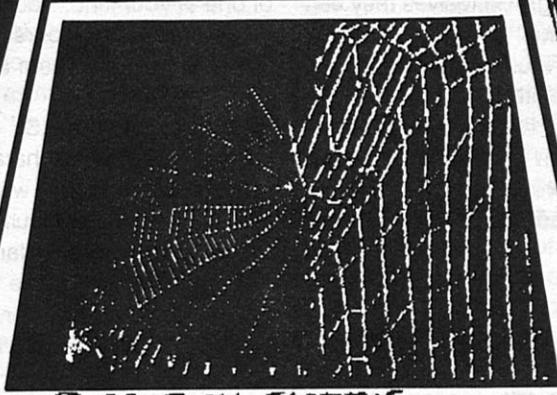
A SHOT AT PARADISE

Assuming that the characters have acquitted themselves admirably in this adventure, they will have made close friends in Smith, Jones, and Williams. As a result, they are offered a chance to go with the aliens back to their planet, to emigrate away from the ravaged Twilight world and move to a futuristic, utopian society. If they take the aliens up on the offer, that is the end of the campaign for these characters. They go to a far better place, where there is no grubby, dangerous adventure.

Of course, any self-respecting character would opt to stay right here on Earth, where there yet is so much work to be done, so many wrongs still to be righted, so many mean and uglies yet to shoot.



...and there is no
one who can
take his place.
He is the last
of the great
leaders of our
time.



©1991 DELL HARRIS

...and there is no
one who can
take his place.
He is the last
of the great
leaders of our
time.

THIS AIN'T NO WEATHER BALLOON

By checking the "usual channels," the PCs have been offered a contract in the Philippines. It seems straightforward enough; an American industrialist and his wife have reputedly been captured by one of the local rebel groups. Although there have been no ransom demands yet, the PCs are asked to find the kidnappers, raid their base, and extricate the hostages. One pan-European mercenary group has already tried, but it hasn't been heard from in over a week. The assumption is that it has failed—probably ambushed and killed (or captured) by insurgents. The pay offered is pretty good: \$65,000 up front, another \$550,000 upon success.

However, there's a little hitch to all this, one the players have no way of knowing. The American industrialist and his wife are not being held by Philippine rebels. Instead, they discovered a downed UFO during their final tour of the island of Mindanao, and were "captured" by the alien ship's computer. Since then, the computer has used them to augment its database and processing procedures via man/machine interfaces. In this role, both Eric and Louisa Barminster have unwillingly been contributing to the UFO's ongoing campaign to acquire and control human servitors.

THE LOCATION

The Philippine island of Mindanao (see map, page 42) is a rugged, mountainous land of volcanoes, lakes, and jungle. It is home to diverse subgroups of the Philippine people, including a large population of Muslim Negrito tribesmen (often referred to as Moros), and populations with predominantly Indonesian heritage. This demographic mix represents a fertile ground for interethnic strife—a situation which the current Philippine civil war has only exacerbated.

The Filipino-Christian population, along with the privileged mestizos (who are of mixed Caucasian-Filipino ancestry) are generally loyal to the "official" government in Manila. However, some of these Filipinos are involved with various communist guerrilla groups, often in leadership positions. The most powerful of these groups is known as the NPA (New Peoples' Army). The Moros are essentially apolitical separatists. Their leading rebel group, the MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front), once shared objectives with various procommunist groups, but this alliance of convenience has eroded over the past three years, largely due to fundamental differences in policy and objectives. The Moros are not particularly well-equipped, but they are very fierce fighters.

The Indonesian subgroup tends to stay in its own communities along the southern edge of Mindanao. However, an increasing number of teenagers from this subgroup are joining the communist groups. The Negritos are an almost-extinct group of aborigines. In the recent years of constant violence, they have ceased to have any trust for non-Negritos. They will avoid outsiders if they can, but if armed intruders approach their nomadic camps, they will stage fierce and absolutely ruthless ambushes.

The national language of the Philippines is Tagalog, an offshoot of ancient Malay dialects. However, both English and Spanish are widely spoken; much casual conversation between Filipinos of all types (except Negritos) involves a simultaneous mix of all three languages.

LIFE ON MINDANAO

The uplands of Mindanao (where most of the adventure takes place) are likely to receive at least 305 centimeters of rainfall over the course of a year, with the high temperatures (24-35°C) producing an oppressive level of humidity. PCs working and fighting in this environment may experience exhaustion and heat stroke quite easily if they do not take proper precautions. Consequently, referees should require *three* periods of rest for every *two* periods of activity. Additionally, water consumption requirements are doubled.

These climatological conditions are as hard on machinery as they are on individuals. Rust develops quickly. Airborne grit joins with condensation and leaks into weapons, jamming slides, fouling barrels, and generally making weapons unreliable unless they receive a great deal of preventative maintenance time. Referees should require PCs to spend one activity period every two days on equipment maintenance. If they do not do so, their equipment should suffer at least one inauspiciously timed failure per day.

Mindanao wildlife is both very wild and very alive. In addition to wild boar, pythons, vipers, and six-meter-long crocodiles, the jungles are home to a wide variety of aggressive lizards, including the monitor lizard. The monitor is a slightly down-scaled relative of the Komodo dragon, reaching up to three meters in length. Never very fearful of man to begin with, many of these predator species have grown quite accustomed to the taste of human flesh over the past five years, since they occasionally feast on the bodies of war dead. Consequently, they are now quite aggressive. Referees might want to prepare a special chart for animal encounters which includes the diverse (and plentiful) predators of this region.

THE NPCS

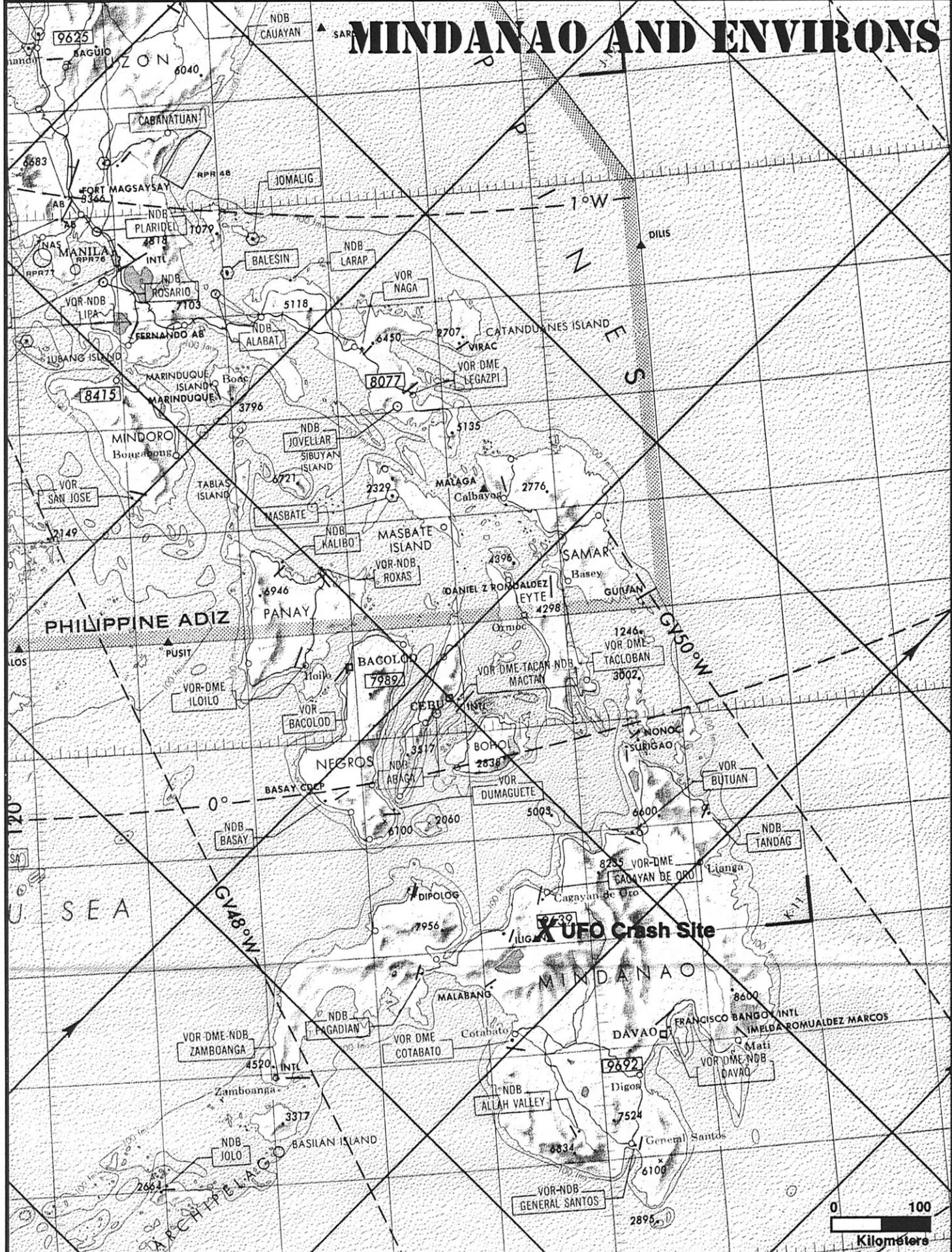
Eric Peyton "E. P." Barminster

E.P. Barminster is a classic American success story. Born in a lower middle-class Galveston suburb in 1940, he began his climb to fortune with a scholarship to Northwestern University and ended up as a major player in the petroleum industry. Still a wealthy man, he retired from his major corporate posts in 1997. Since then, he has concentrated on developing new off-shore oil resources and promoting alternate fuel production (such as the current resurgence of gasohol). Although he makes a tidy profit on these ventures, he confesses that this is just his way of "playing."

E.P. married Louisa (née Trapkin) fairly late in life (he was 48, she was 36) and since then has become accustomed to travelling around the world on archaeological "working holidays." The latest of these trips—to Mindanao—followed close on the heels of Barminster's visit to a new exploratory drilling site just off the island of Cebu. Unfortunately, rather than uncovering Negrito artifacts on Mindanao, the Barminsters found a UFO which turned them into mental slaves.

Many of Barminster's personal attributes are of extreme value to the UFO computer, which is adding E.P.'s accumulated knowledge and intuition to its own processing capabilities. Always generous and loyal to friends, Barminster is also crisply efficient and absolutely ruthless to proven foes—traits the computer recognizes and "admires." Barminster attempts to fight against the computer's

MINDANAO AND ENVIRONS



domination of him, but is not able to break free. He will openly embrace any rescue attempts and do everything in his power to assure Louisa's safe escape and the destruction of the UFO.

Eric Barminster is an Experienced NPC.

Louisa Barminster

Louisa Trapkin (now Barminster) was a young, celebrated archaeologist when she met and married Eric Barminster in 1988. Although her marriage intruded upon the amount of time she was able to spend pursuing her profession, Eric's copious supply of money helped Louisa to fund more ambitious (albeit infrequent) expeditions. By 1995, she had become the toast of the archaeological community.

As the global situation deteriorated in the latter half of the 1990s, Louisa found herself initiating fewer expeditions, due to unpredictable security conditions in the countries she wanted to visit. As a result, she has had to satisfy her professional curiosity by mounting brief forays into areas where Eric—and his omnipresent security personnel—were already conducting business.

However, Mindanao was a slightly different case. Intent on a second honeymoon, the couple decided to send the security personnel home after returning to Manila from Cebu. Then they flew down to Mindanao, where Louisa was interested in determining if the Negritos of Mindanao—a little-researched people—had created any artifacts in an earlier period of history. In particular, she was in search of cave paintings and ritual burial mounds. What she found was something far older—and far more dangerous.

On the sixth and last day of their expedition into the volcanic uplands near Malabang, the Barminsters and their guide, Ramon Macapagal, came across an area where a rockslide had exposed the rim of a large metal object. Exploring further, the trio found an entrance and ventured inside.

What they found within was astounding. Despite extensive water damage (which misled E.P. to think at first that it might be a downed WW II plane), the vehicle inside retained enough of its original shape to make its extraterrestrial origins apparent. Despite her husband's protests, and Ramon's abject terror, Louisa insisted on pressing on. She knew she was right in the middle of the biggest, most important archaeological find of all time.

Unfortunately, the UFO was not completely inactive, and the intrusion by the three humans triggered its systems back into life. It then proceeded to seize all three, establishing direct human/machine interfaces with the Barminsters and implanting a "control node" in Ramon.

Mrs. Barminster's knowledge regarding human history and traditions is quite useful to the computer, which is attempting to achieve its objectives through "biological drones" which are manipulated via control nodes. However, in order to use these human agents efficiently, the computer knows it must be able to interact in an essentially "normal" manner with the natives. Therefore, it uses Mrs. Barminster as a database for programming emulations of human behavior and interpersonal contact.

Louisa Barminster is a Novice NPC.

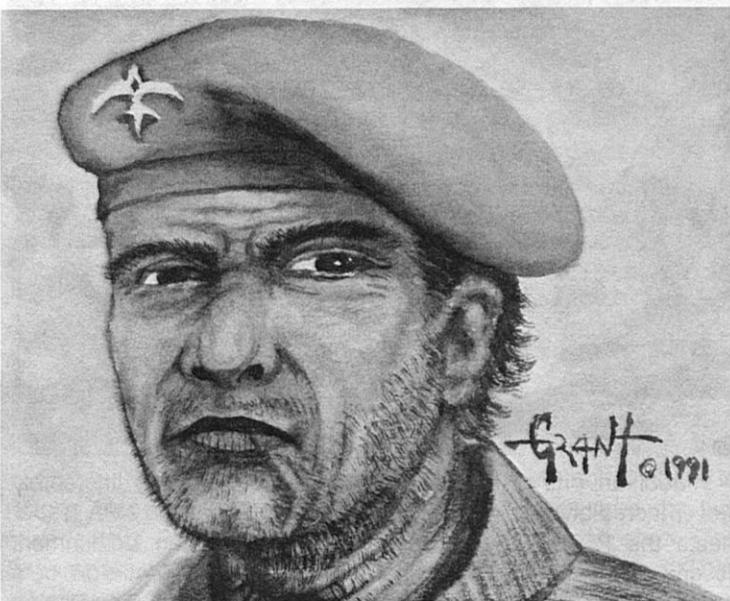
Major Cesar Rizal

Major Rizal is the senior government officer in Malabang, and his superiors back at division HQ in Cotabato are starting to ask some pointed questions about what is going on in his sector.

After Mr. and Mrs. Barminster failed to make their expected radio contact several weeks ago, orders came down from Manila to conduct a search of the area around Lake Lanao and Ragang Volcano. Since Rizal's forces had just recently destroyed a number of NPA camps in that area, the major guessed that the area was essentially secure. He sent out two squads to conduct the search and rescue. But they never came back.

Rizal got nervous. After repeated attempts at radio contact, he sent up several choppers to recon the area, but nothing showed up except hints that one area of the jungle had been disrupted by a recent rockslide. Although the rockslide could explain either the disappearance of the Barminsters or his two squads, it could not explain both events. Consequently, Rizal still has an unexplained mystery on his hands. Furthermore, his battalion has taken disproportionate losses during the last year—many due to desertions. Therefore, the major does not want to admit that he doesn't know what's become of his troops; he needs to blame their disappearance on rebel activities. After conducting some interrogations, he discovered that the Barminsters' tour guide, Ramon Macapagal, had definite NPA connections. Rizal has therefore informed his superiors that he has "conclusive evidence" that the NPA kidnapped the Barminsters with the aid of Macapagal, and that the rebels ambushed the troops he sent to search for the missing Americans. He is using this situation as a pretext for requesting reinforcements and better supplies.

Rizal is a Veteran NPC.



Sergeant Elpidio Quezoto

Quezoto, special-operations overseer for government forces, is a deadly, quiet, career NCO with a taste for homicide and jungle combat. He is the man Rizal picks to lead any missions of a "dubious" nature—particularly those which involve killings that division HQ in Cotabato might not approve of.

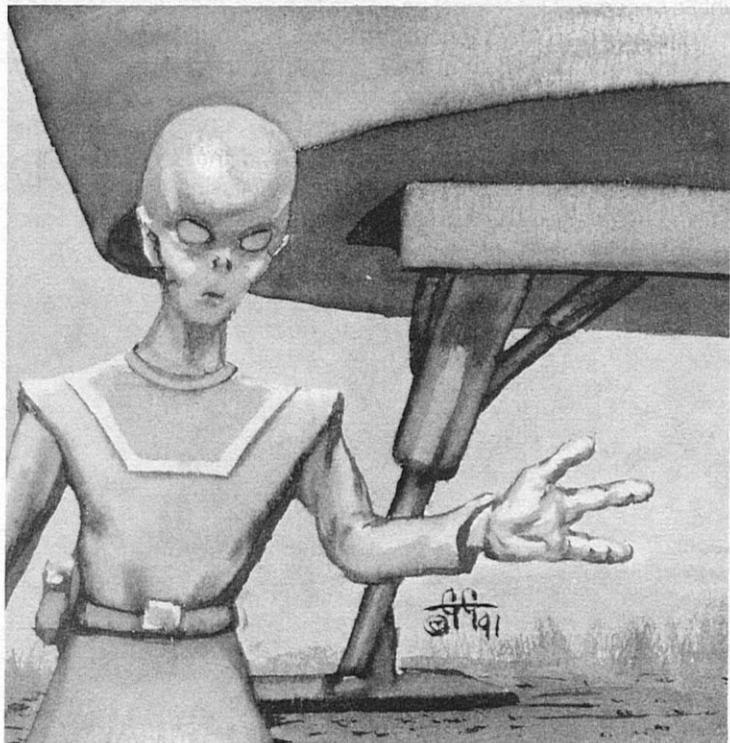
Quezoto trained with the US Special Forces during his early career and is a rabid anticommunist. However, he is not particularly pro-American; he is as willing to kill them as any other nationality. And anyone who is seen—or even seriously suspected—of consorting with the NPA is a valid target, in Quezoto's eyes.

Quezoto is an Elite NPC.

Ka Fernando Verata

Ka (comrade) Verata was educated at the University of California at Berkeley and still has a taste for Coors and foot-long hot dogs. However, after the decline of the Aquino government, he grew increasingly distrustful of the military cronies that seemed to be gaining control in Manila. Eventually, he drifted into an association with an underground NPA cell. His education and ability for quick thinking pushed him up through the ranks to his current position: senior officer of the Malabang NPA rebels.

Unlike the government leaders, Verata has a better idea of what's going on. For instance, he knows that none of his people have kidnapped the Americans. He also knows that his forces have not had any engagements with government troops in the past several weeks, so the NPA is not responsible for the disappearance of Rizal's men. He also knows that the Moros are gathering their forces for an operation near Cotabato, so it is unlikely that they are responsible.



In addition, one of Verata's patrols was ambushed by "incredibly brave, incredibly fast" men just three days before the NPA leader meets the PCs. The two survivors of the 12-man detachment described the attack as having the "speed and precision of a machine." The weaponry was standard American issue (The Filipino Army is American-equipped) but the survivors swear that no ordinary soldiers could have shot and moved so quickly. The survivors didn't get a good look at the attackers, because they didn't feel like sticking around and adding their bodies to the growing pile.

Therefore, Verata is beginning to suspect that "something else" is loose in his neck of the woods—possibly something that isn't entirely human.

Verata is a Veteran NPC.

Alva Ropas

Proprietress of Casa Ropas Hotel, Alva is a good-natured woman whose once bright smile is now tarnished by layers of sadness.

Widowed by Moro bullets, she has also endured having one of her two sons killed while serving with the government forces against the New Peoples' Army (on the northern island of Luzon). In short, she has had her fill of war, soldiers, and death. She will be reserved with the PCs until (and unless) they can convince her that they're not here to kill anybody; they're just here to save Mr. and Mrs. Barminster. The Barminsters stayed at the Casa Ropas for two nights before they started their expedition into the volcanic uplands just south of Lake Lanao.

She knows that they planned to end their trip at the foot of Ragang Volcano and that they were going to radio for a helicopter once they got there. That radio message was never received.

Alva liked the Barminsters and is willing to help the PCs track them down, once she believes that the characters can be trusted. To this end, she is willing to direct them to the local NPA leader, *Ka Verata*, if the government proves to be of no help. She has no love for the NPA, but she knew Verata when he was a little boy and still believes that he is essentially a good (if misguided) person.

Alva is a Novice NPC without any useful combat skills.

Ramon Macapagal

While it is true that Ramon is an NPA sympathizer and informant, it is not true that he had anything to do with the disappearance of the Barminsters. Quite the contrary; Ramon was a cheerful, knowledgeable, and (above all) patient guide to the Americans as they puttered about countless caves and unrewarding dirt mounds.

When the expedition came across the UFO, Ramon was the first to suggest that the group leave the area immediately and radio for the helicopter. "Why not let the government troops come out and determine what this big metal thing was?" he argued. But when the Barminsters insisted on actually entering the strange craft, Ramon mastered his fear and accompanied them. It may have been the most heroic—and tragic—act of his life.

When the UFO computer detected intruders, it scanned all three. Based on brief brain scans, it detected superior intellects and databases in the Barminsters, which it took under its control via emissions that allow direct control and access to brain activity. It adjudged Ramon to be a more expendable resource, and dealt with him in a harsher fashion: It stunned him and implanted a control node.

Ramon is now little more than a biological robot under the control of the UFO's central computer. If encountered, he will behave in a stilted, almost dazed fashion. His speech will be slow and painfully deliberate. However, since his emotions still exist unimpaired under his tightly controlled exterior, Ramon's eyes often seem to be watering. In fact, he is crying in shame, frustration, and pain.

Ramon is an Experienced NPC who is equipped with a control node.

Lieutenant Janosc Hladny

Before being implanted with a control node, Hladny was the commander of a group of European mercenaries with commando/elite backgrounds. They had just finished a cadre ticket in the Golden Triangle when they learned about the contract to find and rescue the Barminsters.

Together with his seven men, Hladny hopped the first plane to Manila. From there, he was sent down to Cotabato, where he received his instructions. His men managed to pick up the trail of the Barminsters after three days of sweeps. They followed the tracks

straight to the UFO, where they encountered Ramon. Although suspicious of the Filipino's odd and stilted behavior, Hladny sent several of his teammembers inside. These individuals also succumbed to the UFO computer's stunning device and were implanted with control nodes. They were then used to secure Hladny's trust and lure the rest of the mercenary team inside.

Hladny and all but one of his men are now servitors of the UFO computer (the one other merc died during the implantation of the control node). Hladny occasionally manages to muster enough resistance to the node that the pain imposed by the device (to enforce obedience) renders him unconscious. However, he is finding this harder and harder to do. Hladny was formerly a *fohadnagy* (1st Lieutenant) in the Hungarian Army. The other nationalities in his command are French, Italian, Dutch, and British.

Hladny is an Elite NPC who is equipped with a control node.

The UFO

The UFO is, in a sense, this scenario's most important character. It is dominated by a ruthless computer that has no concept of compassion, mercy, or compromise: It must conquer, or it will destroy itself (more on this later).

The UFO crash-landed on Mindanao some 3,000 years ago. The aliens on board were small, hairless humanoids who were a pseudo-hive-mind species with an utterly pragmatic bent. They were governed by Thinkers, generalist-leaders who lived in an almost entirely mental realm, their physical needs and interests being nearly nonexistent. Under this caste were the Drones, specialists who lived in triplet groups and carried out specific functions such as research, maintenance, medical care, etc. A third caste (not included on the UFO) was the Breeder, a barely sentient, hermaphroditic hive-mother whose only purpose was to create offspring.

This particular shipload of aliens had been sent to observe humanity's development throughout the world and to collect samples. The aliens' attitude toward humanity was much the same as that which a human entomologist would have toward a butterfly: an interesting species that is best examined via capture and dissection. This utter disregard for the rights of other intelligent species was also part of the computer's programming.

However, as this grisly research team was preparing to leave the atmosphere and depart for home, the UFO experienced a failure in its main drive, and the ship began falling helplessly back toward the planet's surface. Assisted by the computer, the aliens were able to maintain some navigational control of their craft, and began trying for a water landing. But they had lost too much altitude and instead plummeted directly into a lava flow near Ragang Volcano.

Although the impact of the crash killed most of the aliens (and the sudden increase in heat finished off the few survivors), the hull of the ship remained intact. Made of collapsed metals, it easily withstood the temperatures of the lava, which completely encysted the craft in a pseudopod of rapidly cooling molten rock. The ship's computer assessed the situation and essentially powered itself down, leaving only a few sensors alert to detect any flaws or openings that might develop in its impregnable tomb. Earlier this year, one of Mindanao's many earthquakes caused the old basaltic flow to split, exposing the UFO to open air once again and shattering one of the hull's weapons mounts. This split also sent a rockslide down the slope of the now-dormant volcano—the same rockslide which Rizal has noted on his aerial reconnaissance photos.

This exposure to open air triggered the last operating external sensor to reawaken the computer, which immediately searched the heavens for any signals that would indicate whether or not its alien builders had returned. Instead, it found human satellites and no shortage of evidence indicating that the native life-forms had progressed dramatically and now constituted a danger to the ship and the computer.

This activated an automatic defense subroutine in the computer, which requires the computer to defend the ship against the natives with any and all available means. If the ship is not able to repel the natives, it must self-destruct in order to prevent capture and subsequent analysis; the aliens didn't want any of their primitive laboratory specimens finding their homeworld and coming to pay them a visit.

Unfortunately, many of the ship's security systems have failed. All the computer had to work with was the computer room itself, one of the californium batteries, and the physiological research laboratory.

In this laboratory, the computer has access to a beam which is able to stun humans by imparting a small, selectively targeted electric shock to the medulla oblongata, resulting in temporary unconsciousness. It also has access to a robotic arm that had been used for assisting in vivisections, as well as two brain-scanning devices which could be configured to control and read mental activity. Lastly, it has a considerable supply of control nodes left. These small, black studs were originally designed for surgical implantation in specimens that were retained for live study. In the event that the creature might escape or become uncontrollable, the aliens could usurp all voluntary functions via the electronic interface between the stud and the creature's brain. If the subject still managed to resist, stimulation of pain centers could be used to compel obedience.

With these resources at hand, the computer evolved a simple but effective plan. First, capture two humans. These subjects would be constantly brain-scanned in order to understand the behavior of the natives and plan appropriate strategies and responses. After this, more humans would be baited to this location, stunned by the beam in the laboratory, and have control nodes implanted. In this way, the computer would build an army of human robot-slaves to protect itself as it tried to evolve a broader strategy for dominating the local region. Ultimately, the computer's purpose is to rule the world, although this would be a very lengthy and complex task requiring a huge logistical base. However, the UFO computer is as patient as it is remorseless.

So far, the computer has managed to implant control nodes in Ramon Macapagal, Janosc Hladny and his mercs, and the two squads that Rizal sent out in search of the Barminsters. The Barminsters themselves are under almost constant brain scan. They are allowed only a few moments every day to perform necessary hygienic functions and to eat. Then they are led back to the brain scanners by their zombie-like guards.

So far, the computer has had only one run-in with humans that it could not control: a small group of NPA guerrillas bumped into a group of the mercs who had been sent out to gather food. The mercs decimated the NPA unit. Only two escaped (these are the same two individuals who survived to report to Verata). The computer, assisted by unwilling advice from Eric Barminster, realizes that another rescue attempt is likely. Therefore, it has been preparing for this eventuality. But rather than killing the next group of rescuers, the computer wants to capture them and use them—just as it has done with Hladny and his men.

STARTING OUT

The players will first learn of the Barminsters' plight in a newspaper article (the players should be given the copy of the article on page 96). From there, it is easy to discover that there is a general contract available. The players should be given the sheet that lists the opportunity, as taken from a computer service billboard (see page 101). After making arrangements with Barminsters' representatives in Sacramento—give the players the letter of agreement (page 95) at this point—and making any desired purchases from the normal, gray, or black markets, the PC group is flown to Manila. Then it's down to Malabang by helicopter for the start of the mission.

Once in Malabang, the players have three logical sources of information, should they wish to get a local perspective on what might have happened to the Barminsters. These three sources are the local military authorities, knowledgeable townspeople, and the NPA rebels.



Local Military Authorities: Whether or not the PCs try to start their inquiries at the top of the military totem pole or at the bottom, they will be referred to the local commander, Major Cesar Rizal. Rizal will welcome them warmly (perhaps too warmly?) and invite them to explain why they have come to Malabang (although he already knows, thanks to official communiques from Cotabato). He will listen patiently and then ask what he can do to help; he is just as interested as they are in solving this mystery.

If asked, he will tell of his attempts to search for the Barminsters, his aerial reconnaissance efforts, and his belief that Ramon Macapagal was in fact an NPA agent. He is convinced that Macapagal led the Barminsters into an NPA trap and that it is only a matter of time before a ransom request is issued—assuming the NPA didn't simply kill the Americans out of spite.

If asked, he will produce his photo reconnaissance of the area in which the Barminsters were supposed to end their expedition. He will give a copy of the photo to the PCs. However, this is a doctored photograph; the area in which the rockslide occurred has been retouched to eliminate the visual evidence of this geological event. Rizal has done this to alleviate any suspicion that his men may have been lost in a rockslide. Indeed, Rizal figures that the rockslide itself could

be the result of an NPA demolitions charge set in ambush, and he doesn't want HQ in Cotabato thinking that he lost any of his men to so simple a tactic. His tactical abilities are in enough question as it is.

Instead, Rizal will warn the PCs that it is really too dangerous to go searching for the Barminsters. After all, the NPA eliminated his search party, which had been 20 men strong.

If the players evince their determination to conduct a search no matter the danger, Rizal will applaud them for their bravery. At the end of this meeting, the major will assign Sgt. Quezoto the task of tailing the PCs, and he gives the sergeant a squad of the most bloodthirsty troops available for assistance. Quezoto's squad is comprised of two Elite, four Veteran, and four Experienced troopers. They are armed with one M60 MG, seven M16A2 rifles (with one M203 GL), one M40 sniper rifle, and one H&K CAW. Fragmentation and smoke grenades (both HC and WP) are all available. Quezoto will use local informants to stay apprised of the characters' movements, and once they move out and into the jungle he will muster his squad and set out after them, attempting to keep at least two kilometers between his men and the characters.

Townspeople: The group can attempt to interview various villagers, only to discover that most of them are exaggerating the nature and degree of the contact they had with Barminsters. The great majority of the locals only saw the missing Americans once or twice, from the distance.

The only good source of information is Alva Ropas, proprietress of Casa Ropas Hotel. The Barminsters stayed with her several days before leaving for their "vacation" into the uplands. Alva shakes her head at the notion: "Who would go into the heart of the jungle for a vacation?" However, she can dispel any suspicions that foul play might have been at work in the Barminsters' disappearance. The Barminsters were quite obviously and quite deeply in love.

She scoffs at the idea that Ramon Macapagal would have set the Americans up for an NPA kidnapping. In her opinion, Ramon simply doesn't have the nerve for that kind of thing. Besides, she explains, Mama Ropas is one of the leading matriarchs of Malabang, and she would have heard if the NPA was planning such a thing. What's more, she would have spoken against it. The Americans had been nice (if crazy) people.

In the course of their conversation with Mama Ropas, the PCs may (and should) get the idea that she probably knows who the local NPA leaders are. If the group asks, Alva will at first tell them that they (the PCs) don't want to meet with the NPA; those rebels are dangerous people. She will criticize the NPA vociferously, eventually revealing that she lost a son to the communist insurgents (although he had been stationed on Luzon when it happened). However, if the players are both polite and persistent, they will be able to get Alva to promise to set up a meeting for them with the leader of the local rebels. If Alva has had a very favorable reaction to the PCs, she may even volunteer this help.

It will take one day for Alva to arrange the meeting, which will be located at a small village that can only be reached by a two-day walk into the upland jungle. She recommends that the PCs take their full packs: There might be a long journey ahead. She will not say more.

NPA Rebels: In almost all situations, the PCs can only contact the rebels through Alva Ropas. However, if the group is particularly vocal, persistent, and troublesome, the rebels may decide to initiate a meeting themselves—by surprise. This will happen only after the PCs have to decided to begin their search for the Barminsters (see the next step of the scenario).

LEAVING MALABANG: THE SEARCH BEGINS

Eventually, the PCs will realize that in order to find the Barminsters, they are going to have to go looking for them. This means following the couple's planned itinerary and trying to pick up their trail. Judging from the map, the player characters have about 50 kilometers of mountainous terrain ahead of them—or about 10 four-hour periods of walking.

The First Day Out

Whichever direction the PCs take, they will run into a group of Moros on the first day of their journey. Unless the PCs make a very obvious (and risky) show of supplication, the Moros will attempt to ambush the group (spotting the ambush beforehand is a Difficult: Observation task). Once the Moros have taken more casualties than they have inflicted, they will attempt to withdraw. If there are still nine or more of them left after the engagement, the referee might opt to have these insurgents shadow the group and try another attack during the upcoming night.

There are 12 Moros, armed with eight M16A2s, three M3A1 SMGs, and one M1 carbine. Two Moros are Veterans, and the rest are Experienced.

The Second Day: Meeting the NPA Rebels

Whether the PCs arranged a meeting with the NPA through Alva Ropas, made such attempts on their own in Malabang, or didn't even bother asking about the NPA, *Ka* Fernando Verata will make a point of meeting them in the following fashion:

Two days into their march through the upland jungle, the PCs will be passing an isolated village on a wooded hillside. A single figure will come toward them and wave. The individual will announce that he is *Ka* Verata, head of the local NPA cell. (If the players sought the NPA through Alva or by general inquiry in Malabang, Verata will add that he has been told that the players have been looking for him.) Verata invites the PCs to join him on the porch of an outlying house.

At about that moment, one or more of the players is likely to notice (on an Average: Observation test) that about 40 armed men have risen out of the grass and trees to either side of them (distance ranges between 200 and 300 meters). These are NPA rebels and

they begin to slowly close in on the PCs from all sides. However, their weapons are carried at rest; apparently, they're not eager to do any shooting. However, they herd the players in the general direction of the porch on which Verata is now sitting. The NPA rebels are armed with 30 M16A2s (three with attached M203 GL), two M60 MGs, three semiautomatic shotguns, three Uzi SMGs, and two M14 rifles. Of the 40, two are Elite, eight are Veterans, 20 are Experienced, and 10 are Novices.

Verata will want to know just who the PCs are (and, if they were making general inquiries, why the devil they were making such a nuisance of themselves—if they wanted to get his attention, they've succeeded). If the PCs come clean and explain their mission, Verata will grow very interested and invite them to come along for a walk, up to the northern slopes of Ragang Volcano. He will not explain why at this point (he wishes to observe the PCs a bit more to make sure that they are not government agents).

Only six NPA rebels will come along with Verata and the PCs as they start this journey. All six NPA rebels are Experienced and are carrying M16A2 rifles and Colt .45 automatics.

UNWANTED VISITORS

As Verata's group and the characters continue their trek into the uplands, they have no difficulty in picking up the Barminsters' trail. Louisa took all sorts of soil and rock samples, leaving a trail of (unintended) "archaeological bread crumbs" for the group to follow. However, staying just two kilometers behind the group is Quezoto and his squad, who have been quietly tailing the PCs ever since they left Malabang. The only time when the two units may bump into each other is when the combined PC/Verata group comes to a halt for an hour or more.

In such situations, Quezoto often has no way to become aware of the fact that the party he's tracking has halted. In such cases, he will continue to approach the PC/Verata group. Any PC who bothers to scan the area behind them while the group is stopped (for an hour or longer) may spot Quezoto's unit if he or she can succeed at a Difficult: Observation test. If the government troops are spotted, Verata will insist on picking up the pace immediately, even if that means becoming fatigued later on.



An Unusual Ambush Site

When the NPA/PC group is just one day shy of reaching the UFO area, Verata will veer off the main trail and begin marching on a narrower game trail, one which is apparently quite well-known to the NPA troops. After an hour's march, they will come to a small clearing. Blood stains and tracks suggest that it was just recently the site of a fairly one-sided ambush. Verata will share what he knows, explaining that only two men out of a 12-man NPA patrol survived an attack mounted by only four or five opposing troops. These troops had apparently hidden themselves to the side of the path just moments before the patrol came through.

The unusual thing about the attack was the speed, accuracy, and almost insane courage of the attackers. According to the survivors, after their first volley, the ambushees walked out of the treeline, firing as they came . . . and still hit their targets almost every time. Then Verata indicates where one of the attacker's footprints are mixed with blood. Apparently, this one had been hit. Following his footsteps away from the scene of the ambush, the PCs discover that he apparently walked along with his comrades—unaided—for close to a kilometer, losing several pints of blood in the process. Then evidence suggests that he collapsed and was dragged unceremoniously off by the others.

From this point, the trail leads up a steep ridge and disappears over the side. If the player characters ask where the trail leads, Verata will pull out the real (undocored) aerial reconnaissance photograph of the northern slope of Ragang and will point to the rockslide—the rockslide which does not appear on the "official" version of the same photograph.

Obviously, Major Rizal is covering something up—but who knows what that might be?

A New Ambush Site

Whether or not the PCs and Verata became aware of Quezoto or not, the two groups will run into each other as they try to take two small, less conspicuous game trails up the northern slope of Ragang. These trails converge about three kilometers from the UFO site (which is obscured by trees until one is within 200 meters of the area).

Both groups will become aware of each other at more or less the same time. Optionally, referees can allow the best observer in the PC party to attempt an Average: Observation roll. The referee should roll similarly for Quezoto (who has Observation: 7). Whichever party enjoys a superior degree of success has a one-phase advantage, during which it can move, open fire, etc. The other group is caught by surprise and cannot react.

Quezoto's men will fire at the NPA rebels first. Once the NPA has taken three casualties (or the moment that Verata is wounded or killed), the remaining rebels will flee.

Whether the PCs return fire or attempt to "explain the situation" to Quezoto and his men, they'll receive the same response: a barrage of incoming fire. NPA or not, the PCs have been seen "consorting with the enemy" and are therefore fair game, as far as Quezoto is concerned. Quezoto's troops have fairly high morale and will not be run off easily. As long as they are inflicting roughly as many casualties as they are receiving, they will continue to hold their ground. This should be the sharpest firefight that the PCs have experienced in this scenario so far. If the PCs themselves are not too wounded or exhausted to press on (and they should have no way of knowing that the trail comes to an end just three kilometers farther up the slope), then the referee should detain them with the need to tend to either



a wounded NPA rebel or (possibly) a government trooper. Even if the individual dies, this is a good spot to halt the PCs, because their next step will carry them into the midst of a nonstop maelstrom of violence and unexpected horror.

The Ship

Early the very next day—just about halfway through the first marching period—the players will begin scrambling over the debris left behind by the rockslide. Many of the trees on this slope were shattered and thrown about, creating a dense, leafy abatis. After about an hour of navigating this difficult terrain, the group will emerge from the splintered treeline—and catch sight of an impossibly even curve protruding from a shattered basalt outcropping just 200 meters ahead of them. This outcropping is mostly covered from aerial view by the forest, which still stands undamaged behind it and to either side. Apparently, the tip of this rocky protrusion was the initial source of the rockslide.

The ground between the "treeline" and the outcropping is littered with rocks and boulders of all sizes and shapes (movement is reduced by 75 percent). If the group attempts to cross the ground, it will be able to approach to within 100 meters . . . and then the firing begins.

THE UFO'S FORCES

All the servitors of the UFO's computer, with the exception of Mr. and Mrs. Barminster, have had control nodes implanted. These devices appear as small, black plastic nodules protruding from the lower extremes of the occipital region of the skull. The control nodes allow the computer to have complete control over all its human "robots." (The only exception to this is Janosc Hladny, who might be able to resist briefly.) Controlled individuals will never flee a combat situation, or experience fear or shock (from damage or anything else). They also have a permanent Initiative of 6, which cannot be reduced by wounding—these individuals stop acting when they are killed, not before. Lastly, controlled persons have all weapon (and hand-to-hand) skill levels increased by 1.

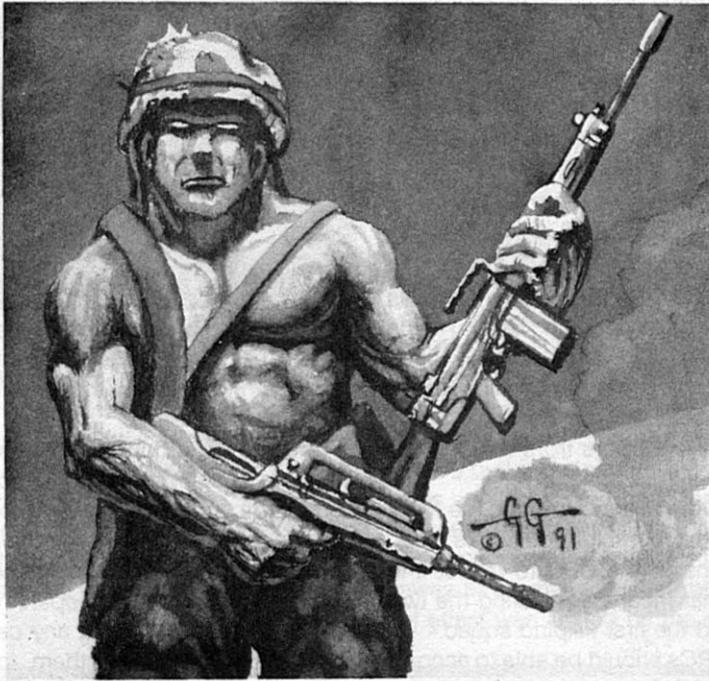
Hladny's Group

Six of Hladny's seven men survived the control node implantation process. Of these, three are Elite NPCs and the rest Veterans. They are armed with one MP-5SD3 SMG, two LAW-80s, one FN-FAL battle rifle, one G11 rifle, one L85 (IWS) assault rifle, one M16A2 with M203 GL, and one FA-MAS assault rifle. Hladny himself is equipped with a second G11. There are spare M16A2s for everyone (courtesy of those individuals who did not survive the implantation process and of the ambushed NPA rebels), as well as 17 fragmentation grenades, six HC smoke grenades, and three WP smoke grenades.

One of the GL gunners and the FN-FAL rifleman will be encountered on guard duty at the entry to the UFO (Level 2, Area F). They will wait until the PCs are within 100 meters before they rise from concealment and open fire. Once the characters are in retreat back to the woodline (which is a reasonable assumption), they will toss out smoke grenades to obscure their position and the surrounding area. This is done to provide cover for the first squad of implanted Filipino government troops, who will be sent outside the UFO to take up defensive positions near the ship (see below). Hladny and his other four men are used to guard the laboratory (Area L) and the computer itself (Area M) on Level 3. In the event that his forces are winning and the characters are on the verge of defeat, the referee may wish to have Hladny attempt to resist the control node and fall unconscious as a result (which should help give the initiative back to the PCs).

The Two Filipino Squads

Of these 20 individuals, only 15 survived the implantation process, and another one was killed during the ambush of the NPA patrol. The 14 survivors have been organized into two squads of seven. Each squad contains two Veteran NPCs, four Experienced, and one Novice. Armament for these NPCs is one M60 MG, five M16A2s (one with an M203 GL), and one Uzi SMG.



Squad One is kept in a state of high readiness on Level 2. Its primary task is to deploy outside the ship in the event of an attack by free humans. Hladny's two men are kept in their position at Area F, Level 2, to provide fire support from a (very) hardened position. The Filipinos will wait until the two mercs have smoked the surrounding area, then deploy under that cover. The computer will use these troops carefully, initiating a flanking maneuver if a protracted external firefight seems to be developing.

Squad Two is kept in and around Area I, Level 3. The reason for this is quite simple: The PCs will almost certainly have to pass through Area S, Level 3, in order to reach the lab and computer (Areas L and M). By keeping troops in fire-enabled positions at the starboard entrances to Area S, the computer is forcing the PCs to cross an open area under considerable fire. In addition to the large portal into Area I, other troops from Squad Two will be positioned at the portal into the starboard corridor, and the starboard airlock (F) into Area S.

Ramon Macapagal

Carrying an M16A2, Ramon stands guard over the Barnisters and also attends to their basic needs. If the PCs gain entrance to Area L, he will take cover behind the brain scanner platform on which Mrs. Barminster is lying and begin shooting at the player characters.

COMPUTER TACTICS

The computer needs to keep its existence as secret as possible. This means that once it has been discovered, it will endeavor

to destroy those individuals who know of it. If the PCs attempt to withdraw, it will send at least a full squad of the Filipinos in pursuit. If the group attempts to radio its current status and position to government forces, the computer will be able to jam its signal as long as it is within 10 kilometers of the crashed spacecraft.

(Of course, Rizal will not send help in any case. He has lost contact with Quezoto, which he takes to mean that the PCs have dispatched that group. Consequently, Rizal wants the characters to die. Otherwise, he can look forward to a court martial and a firing squad—probably all in the same afternoon.)

If the group manages to enter the vessel, the UFO will attempt to kill the PCs by catching them as they cross Area I (the old vehicle and large access bay) and as they head down the starboard corridor that leads to Area L (the laboratory).

Referees should remember that the computer's troops are no more emotional or self-concerned than chess men. The characters should be treated to the chilling sight of these biological automatons calmly withdrawing to new cover after they've taken enough damage to stun any two normal people. Play up the creepy aspect of fighting these "zombies"—they are fast, absolutely fearless, and perfectly obedient.

PLAYER OPTIONS

Faced with the highly accurate fire from the two mercs guarding the entrance to the ship, the referee can anticipate several PC responses:

Lay In Wait: Any attempt to "wait out" the UFO's computer will not be too successful. The mercs will put up their smoke screen to allow the first Filipino squad to deploy and commence operations against the PCs. If this group is defeated, the UFO will wait out the PCs, figuring that the humans must either withdraw (allowing the computer to deploy the rest of its troops in safety) or stay in position. They can only stay in position so long as their provisions last, and the computer is relatively sure that it has a greater stockpile of than do the PCs. (The computer is right.)

Once the PCs withdraw, the computer will send all remaining Filipinos and all but two of Hladny's mercs out after them to hunt them down. It is fully aware that the PCs might try to double-back to the ship, and will keep its pursuit of the humans well-dispersed to counter this possibility.

Radio for Help: This tactic will only work if the group puts at least 10 kilometers between themselves and the UFO (which can jam its signals at closer range). Note that if the PCs retreat the necessary 10 kilometers, the UFO will send out an aggressive search-and-destroy force dedicated to destroying their party.

The PCs should have been able to figure out that Quezoto and his men (being radio equipped) must have been operating under Rizal's orders. If the PCs try going over Rizal's head and getting in touch with the major's superiors down in Cotabato, their story will instigate an inquiry into Rizal's activities, but help will not be immediately forthcoming. It will take a week before choppers from division HQ show up in the vicinity of Ragang.

Concentrate Fire Upon the UFO Defenders: Although the most basic approach is not always the best, it just might be in this case. The only way that the PCs can get inside the UFO to rescue the Barminsters is to fight their way in. That means eliminating the two mercenary guards at the entrance and the first Filipino squad.

It may be a long, hard fight, but the PCs should be able to accomplish this. If they stop to inspect any of the dead, the PCs will begin to get some idea of what they're up against.

First, even a casual inspection makes it possible for a PC to note the control nodes (this is a Difficult: Observation task, reduced to an Easy task if the PC is conducting a more thorough investigation of the body). The node is very obviously a mechanical device. Surgical removal will reveal the node's extraordinary sophistication and completely alien design (microfluidic circuitry, etc.).

Second, the players will find that some of the dried meat carried by the computer's troops has an odd, yet familiar, smell. It is a Difficult: Medical task to realize that this is human flesh: The computer has no cannibalism taboo and has fed its new servitors with whatever protein sources are available . . . including their old comrades. Referees might decide to have one of the PCs realize this even if all the task rolls fail. This is sure to send some chills down the players' spines and is likely to arouse their ire and determination to exterminate whatever is responsible for this barbarity. And there's only one way to do that . . .

TAKING THE FIGHT INSIDE

The UFO is comprised of four separate levels. Each level's different areas/rooms are coded on the map for easy reference.



(Note that there are two versions of this map. The color version on pages 102-103 is intended for the players, and the black-and-white version on pages 55-56 is for the referee.) Descriptions of the map areas appear below.

The computer does not have sentinels wandering about the ship, therefore encounters will only occur at the prelisted positions. The computer can open and close those portals indicated in green on the color map (marked with a "W" for "working," on the referee's map). Those portals which are indicated with red are jammed in the open position (marked "O" for "open," on the referee's version). These are not high-speed portals in any case; they cannot be used to crush people passing through them, for instance.

Most of the ship's internal systems have been completely ruined by the impact of the crash or the decay of the intervening years. Objects which are still operable are specifically noted; the rest is simply alien junk, the primary value of which is the insight it may offer into the mindset of its builders. Illumination must be provided by flashlight (except in the laboratory and computer areas of Level 3).

The walls indicated on the UFO maps are of three types: hull (armor=250), bulkhead (armor=100), and interior wall (armor=40).

Level 1

Area A: For lack of a better term, this seems to be the vehicle's "bridge." However, the customary (or, rather, expected) control panels and numerous readouts are not present. Instead, there seem to be four small and two large seats/couches arranged in a roughly circular fashion about a small central reservoir. The size of the couches would be appropriate for pygmies or large children. The only things passing for controls seem to be several rows of colored tiles to either side of each seat.

There are what may be the remains of some kind of creatures (three of them) piled up against the port side bulkhead. They are too badly smashed and desiccated to determine anything about them other than that they had been alive at one time.

Area B: The central reservoir is a mysterious black pool, its bottom studded by small, metal studs. In fact, this is a holographic projector, which was used by the Minds (who served as the ship's bridge crew/controllers) to navigate, to study external phenomena, and to communicate with other ships, as well as for a status/control display device.

Area C: These two areas are shafts leading downward to Level 2. The nature of the transport mechanism is unclear. There seem to be no gears, pulleys, or levers. Each shaft has a disk in it, which was somehow raised and lowered to convey passengers between the decks. The starboard disk is flush with Level 1, meaning that ingress to Level 2 can only be accomplished by going down the port-side shaft.

Level 2

Area A: These areas contain seats, smaller versions of the holographic projector pit on Level 1, and a small array of colored tiles. Two of the seats contain alien remains (crushed and desiccated into unrecognizable lumps).

These rooms were gunnery control positions for the weapons occupying the areas labeled "G."

Area B: These rooms are filled with irregular, smooth shapes constructed of some brittle, porous, and very fragile material. These are desiccated sleeping/resting platforms that had been constructed out of form-fitting plastics—sort of a cross between a standard mattress and a waterbed.

A few simple implements of unfathomable purpose are scattered about in pieces. Apparently, when this ship landed, it came down a lot harder than it was supposed to. Of course, the PCs may have already realized this, given the shattered condition of the alien remains encountered elsewhere.

In the starboard-side chamber, there are two mummified alien Minds. These corpses are distinctly heavier and shorter of build than the remains of the Drones that can be found in two of the areas marked "A."

Area C: These two shafts lead up to Level 1. The port-side disk is flush with this level's floor. The starboard side's is flush with the deck above, effectively sealing the aperture linking Levels 1 and 2.

Area D: These shafts are identical to those listed in C (above). The starboard-side passenger disk is flush with this deck. Therefore, the only open passageway down to Level 3 is via the port-side shaft.

Area E: Room E seems to be a microelectronics junkyard. Various of the thinner, taller alien remains can be found here, but they are too ruined to allow much detail to be discerned. This area used to be the sensor suite/electronics coordination center.

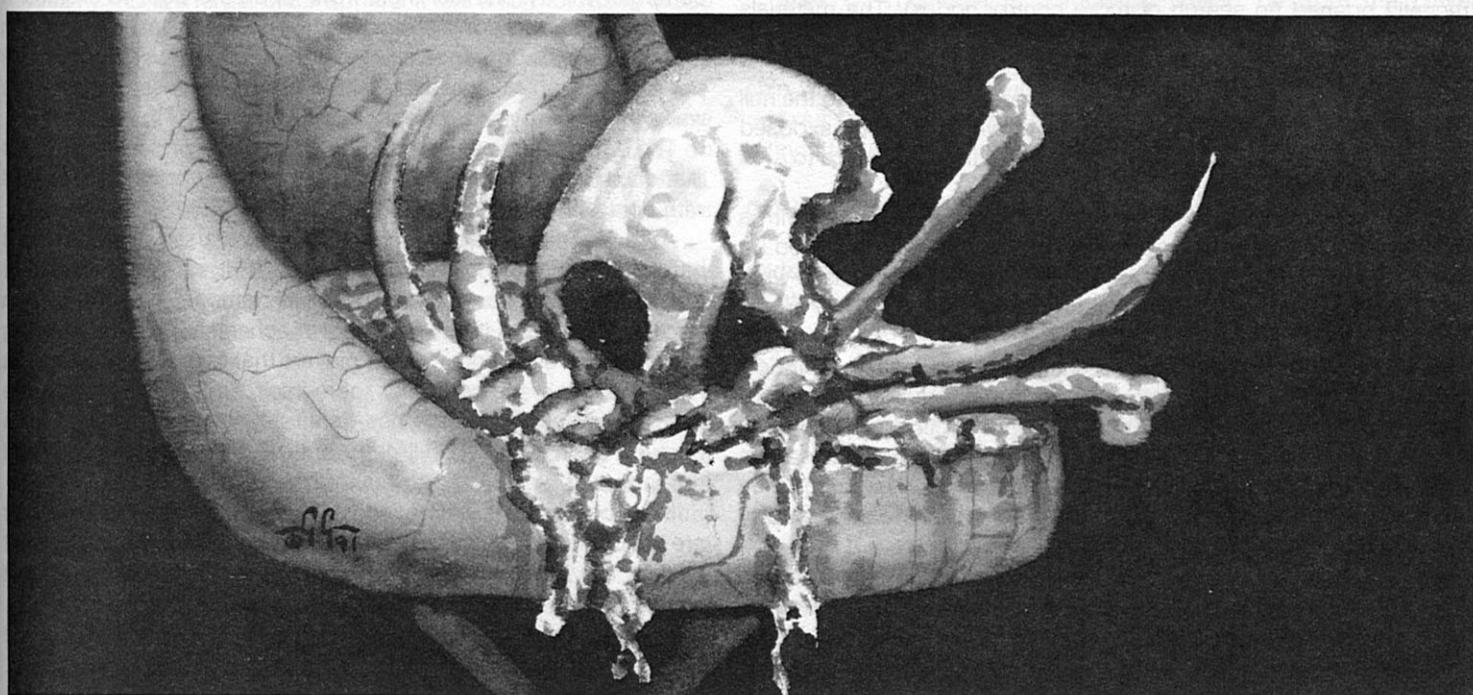
Area F: This area is badly wrecked, with the hull breached and a gap in the bulkhead to the adjoining Area A. This is the only means of entering or exiting the entombed UFO.

The area used to house the equipment integral to an induction-beam generator (see Area G for more details). Two of Hladny's men maintain a watch from here and will open fire on the PCs when they approach within 100 meters.

Area G: These rooms are sealed and will not be accessible unless the PCs use demolitions (or some equally forceful method) to penetrate the separating bulkhead.

Within, they will find the remains of the UFO's primary weaponry: the induction-beam generators. These devices resemble a sequence of toroidal accelerators, core-linked by a helical tube that leads to a ball and socket joint which protrudes beyond the vessel's hull (the weapon mount).

The induction beam was an efficient weapon. In brief, upon contact with a target, the beam would convert a number of atoms into antimatter. (They were "inverted" by a subatomic inductive process. Humans would best conceptualize it as turning quarks inside out and standing them on their heads, all at the same time.) This created a chain reaction of molecular bond-breaking (since all the target protons suddenly became negatrons, all the electrons became positrons, etc.). As a result, the target simply seemed to melt away as its matter fueled this expanding exothermic reaction. Area of effect was limited by the number of atoms initially inverted.



Level 3

Area A: These rooms resemble spartan, human studio apartments (sort of). However, furniture is almost nonexistent. Chair/couches and desiccated floor cushions (see Area B, Level 2) litter the floor in a hopeless post-crash tangle. However, the referee is encouraged to place fairly intact, mummified remains of two of these aliens (Drones) in separate rooms for the PCs to discover. (Other corpses litter these areas as well, but are generally in poor condition and without forensic value.)

The two intact bodies can be illustrated for the players via the included handouts (see page 104). Not much detailed analysis can be done under the current conditions. What can be determined (in addition to the visually evident features) is that these aliens did not bother to wear clothing (evidence suggests that utility harnesses were the only apparel they used). There is also no evidence of reproductive organs of any type, or any evidence of functional or vestigial nursing glands—despite the fact that a little vascular research will pretty conclusively suggest that the species was essentially mammalian.

Area B: From the scattered pieces of various seats, tables, and tabletop screens here, the room would seem to be some sort of combination recreation center/conference hall/library. It is an absolute wreck.

Area C: These are larger versions of Area A. Although very faded, it seems as though the walls are decorated in washes of color that resemble waves and eddies of muddied, pastel rainbows. These colors are in fact the remains of artworks (spectral poems) that were not only soothing to the Drones, but denoted superior status for those who possessed them.

Area D: These are continuations of the "D" shafts from Level 2. Both shafts continue on down to Level 4. The passenger disk on the port side is flush with the deck of this level, thereby preventing access to Level 4 beneath. The starboard passenger disk is (as noted previously) flush with the deck of Level 2, preventing passage upward, but allowing a descent to Level 4.

Area E: These seem to be utility closets, some of which have been recently opened (in search of more control nodes). The materials remaining within have been ruined by the crash and the passage of time.

Area F: These are airlocks. Those that are not adjacent to the hull were used to access internal spaces which were frequently exposed to vacuum during routine operations (such as the airlock next to Area S, the vehicle/cargo bay).

Area G: This area is rusted shut and can only be opened with a major effort, or a bit of plastique. Inside are robotic arms, folded up and telescoped down into their smallest configurations. These were used for automated cargo-handling tasks, and the like. They are, of course, nonfunctional.

Area H: This room's northeast corner is actually a plasteel window that allows individuals to observe the entirety of Area S. The minimal "colored tile" controls suggest that use of the robotic arms, and other operations in S, were controlled from here. Note that the plasteel has an armor rating of 50; it is very unlikely that anyone is going to be able to shoot through it. Anybody who tries is likely to send a flurry of ricochets bouncing around the interior of this space.

Area I: This is a large storage area. One wrecked, robotic cargo handler is laying on its side in the northwest corner. The cargo containers, and their contents, are ruined, reduced to small, rusted fragments of unidentifiable junk.

Area J: These are, apparently, holding pens. In three of them, the remains of humans can be found (two men and one woman). All were young adults. One mummified "test subject" is still wearing the black-and-white, striped headgear of an ancient Egyptian soldier of the Pharaohs. The aliens used these as holding cells for those humans whom they were using for behavioral experimentation.

Area K: This is a large open area of uncertain purpose. There is a variety of old blood stains on the floor.

This room was used when the aliens wished to force interaction between various combinations of the humans being held in the holding pens (see Area J). It was the on-board research facility for "group behavioral studies."

Area L: This is the vivisection/physiological research laboratory. Much of this room's equipment—including about half of its lighting—is still intact. This is also where Hladny and four of his men are on permanent station. It is in here that the control nodes are implanted—a fact attested to by the many blood stains on the tables and floor beneath the one surgical robot arm that remains in operation. By the time the players arrive here, the surviving defenders will have barricaded the door and possibly tried to flank the PCs by going through the holding pens (J), into the observation room (K), through the next set of pens (J) and into the north end of the starboard corridor. This will depend upon the relative numbers of defenders and attackers, and the current distribution of the PC group.

Mr. and Mrs. Barminster are both lying on huge, altar-like slabs lined with glowing lights and indicators. Both have their heads covered by a heavy, black object in the shape of an arch. This entire device—the altar and the black head cover—is the brain scanner. It has an armor value of 30. Any damage to the unit will cause it to cease to function, freeing the occupant immediately.

Referees should remember that Ramon Macapagal will hide behind Mrs. Barminster's brain scanner to fire at the PCs. Hitting him without killing Mrs. Barminster might be rather difficult.

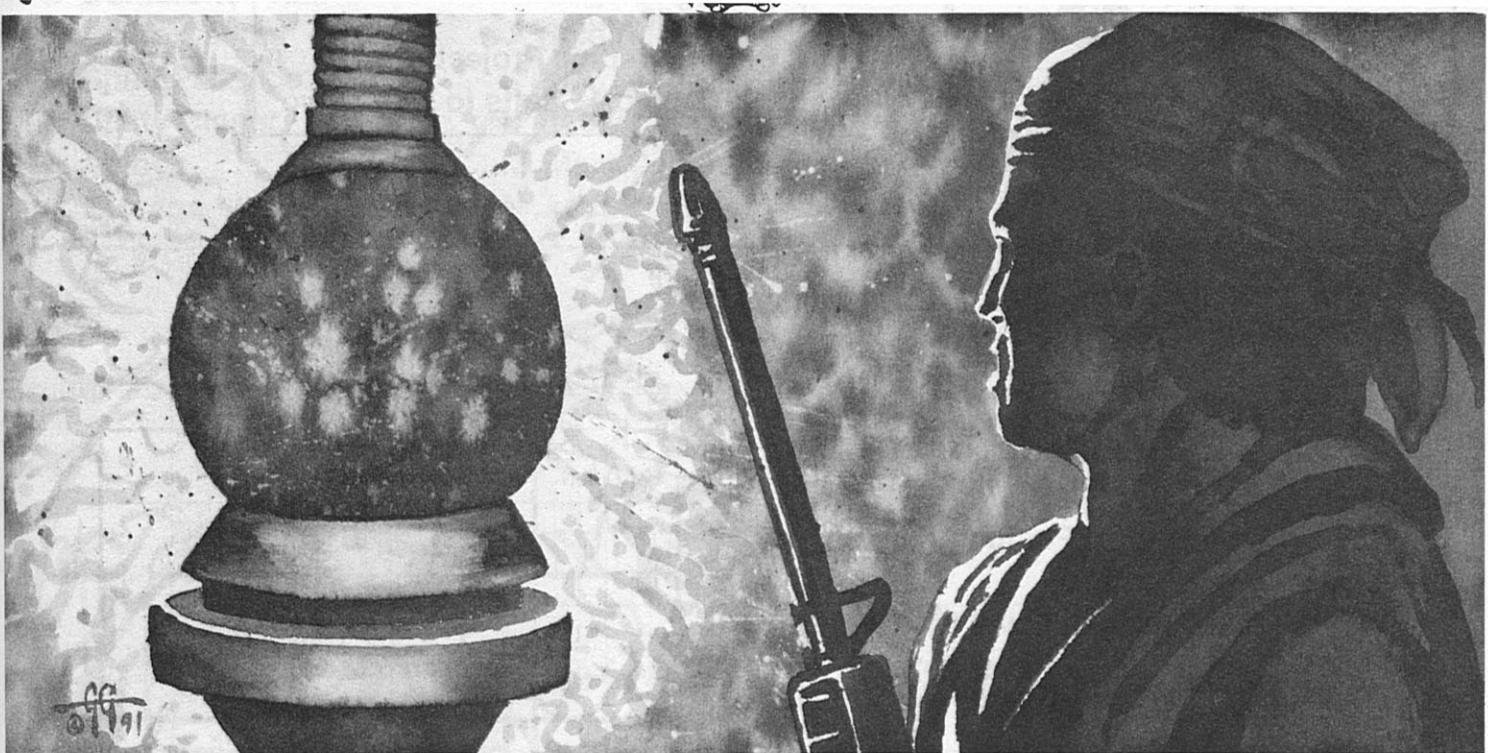
Once the normal defenses are in danger of being overcome, the computer will try one last trick; it will open the door to chamber N (the holding room for the emergency power cells). The radiation leakage from the damaged californium cell within N will inflict five rads per phase upon all individuals within Area L—unless they are in the walkway that provides access to the pens (J).

The Barnisters can be removed from the brain scanners without ill effect, even if the unit is still functioning. They have not been fitted with control nodes.

Area M: This is the computer which has caused all the trouble. It has an armor rating of 10. Any damage to it will begin to interrupt functions. Once it has taken 10 points of damage, it will seal all open doors and engage its self-destruct mechanism. The only warning system which still works (to alert players that something bad is about to happen) is in the computer room itself. The computer will cease to function entirely once it has taken 20 points of damage, but a back-up subroutine will still carry out the self-destruct order (it will not, however, seal all the doors in the vessel).

If the computer is destroyed while either Mr. or Mrs. Barminster are still under the influence of the brain scanner, there is a 30 percent chance they will become permanently insane due to the sudden mental trauma that the computer's demise will pass to them.

Once freed, both Mr. and Mrs. Barminster will be very weak and only quasiconscious, and will require physical assistance to travel.



Area N: This area houses an auxiliary energy source: a complex of californium-based nuclear fuel cells. Of the six on board, four are inert, one is still functioning (providing the computer with power), and the last has experienced containment failure, resulting in a low-intensity radiation leak. That "little leak" will inflict 10 rads per phase upon all individuals within Area N itself (five rads per phase to individuals in Area L).

Area O: This is an access/control walkway that rings the ship's ball-shaped combination central power plant and FTL (faster-than-light) drive.

Area P: This is a large, black sphere. It has an armor rating of 500 (making it effectively impenetrable). Within it are four fusion plants and a field-effect, FTL drive which works on a self-generating collapsar principle.

Area Q: This area is behind solid bulkhead and is probably unreachable by the PCs. However, if by some weird chance they do penetrate it, they will find that it is a long, funnel-like aperture, plugged at the front by solid basalt. The funnel is a fuel scoop, used for skimming hydrogen from gas giants or water from oceans.

Area R: Like Q, this area is behind solid bulkhead and is probably unreachable by the player characters. However, if they do somehow penetrate it, they will find that it is configured for cryogenic tankage (for deuterium).

Area S: Judging from the remains of the vehicle that obstructs the door of the port-side airlock (F), this was both a vehicle bay and a lading area for cargo, scientific samples, and anything else requiring considerable space. The floor is devoid of debris, as though it had been recently cleared away. This is in fact just what has happened; the computer has had its servants police the area to provide the second squad of controlled Filipino troops with a free-fire zone.

Area T: Various bits of rubbish—including human bones—have been piled up here, obstructing access to the door into Area M (the computer room). The computer has done this purposefully, in an

effort to discourage intruders from finding the "back door" into its brain.

Level 4

Area A: This is a large, black sphere. It has an armor rating of 500 (effectively impenetrable). Within it are four fusion plants, and a field-effect Faster-Than-Light drive which works on a self-generating collapsar principle.

Area B: This is an access/control walkway that rings the ship's central power plant/FTL drive "ball."

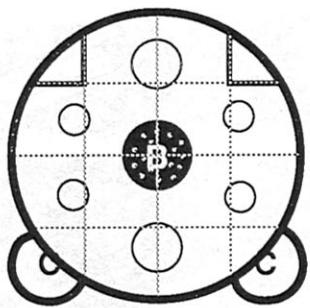
Area C: This area is completely sealed off from the player characters. It contains the vessel's drive system, which consists of a pair of gravitationally charged rings that, together, provide thrust for the ship when it travels at sublight speeds.

Area D: These are the bottom of the lift shafts described in the listings for Area D on both Levels 2 and 3.

COUNTDOWN TO FOREVER

Once the computer is inoperable, all individuals who have control node implants will be freed (assuming any are still alive).

When the PCs rescue Mr. and Mrs. Barminster, the computer will initiate a self-destruct mechanism. It takes 15 minutes for the system to reach the point of termination. The resulting blast will have a primary radius of 200 meters and a concussive value of 200. In addition, this will cause a second, and much larger, rockslide. Consequently, if the PCs flee downhill, they will be in the path of the rockslide. To determine the effects of this, assume each character to have a 50 percent chance of being hit by rocks. If a character is hit, roll 1D10 to determine the number of D6 to be rolled for damage to the character. Each die of damage will strike a random body area (these are a lot of small, discrete hits, rather than one single, large slab). Of course, if the group fled uphill or to either side, it only needs to get out of the blast radius; the rockslide will not affect it.

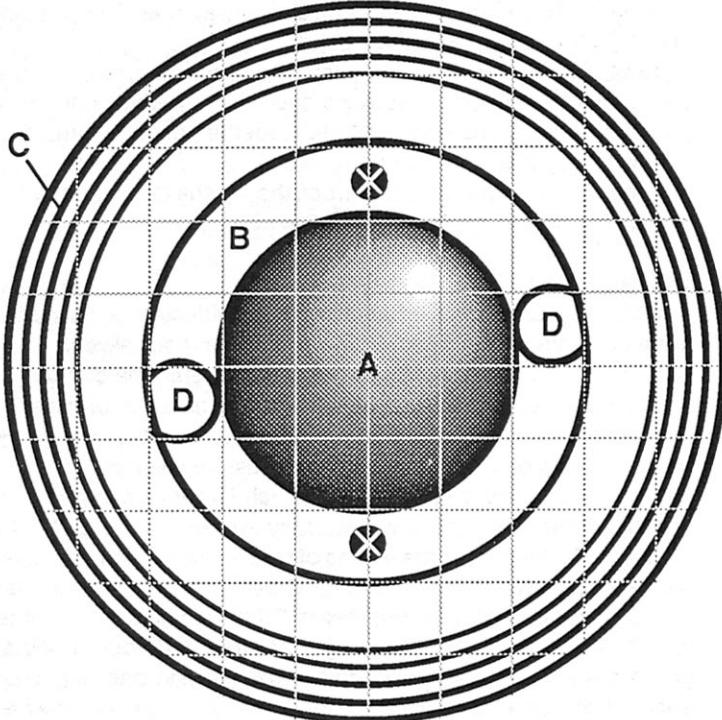
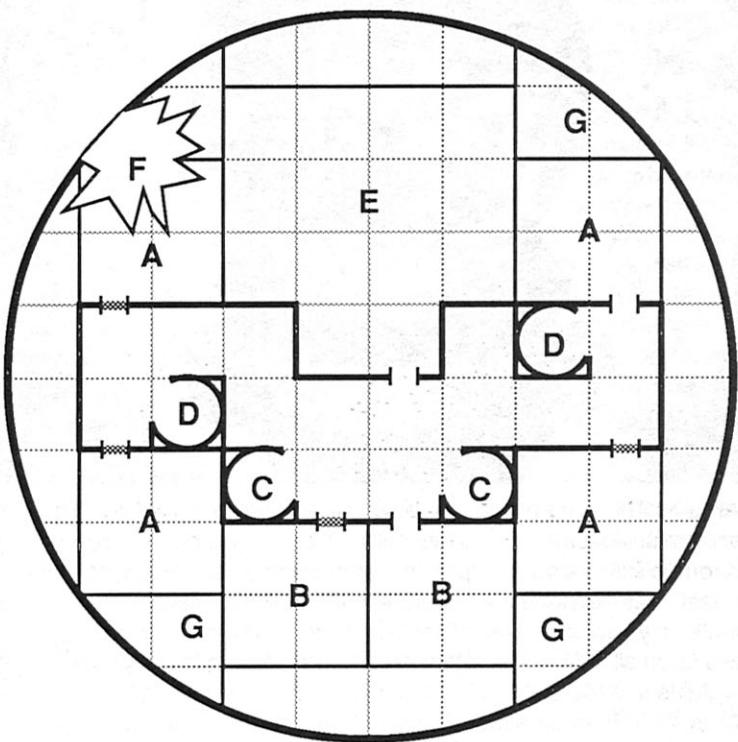


LEVEL ONE

- A Bridge
- B Holographic Projector
- C Transport Shafts to Level Two

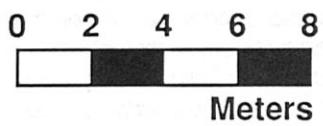
LEVEL TWO

- A Gunnery Control Positions
- B Sleeping Quarters
- C Transport Shaft to Level One
- D Transport Shaft to Level Three
- E Electronics Coordination Center
- F Breach in Hull
- G Induction Beam Generators



LEVEL FOUR

- A Fusion Generator
- B Access/Control Walkway
- C Ship's Thrust
- D Bottom Transport Shafts

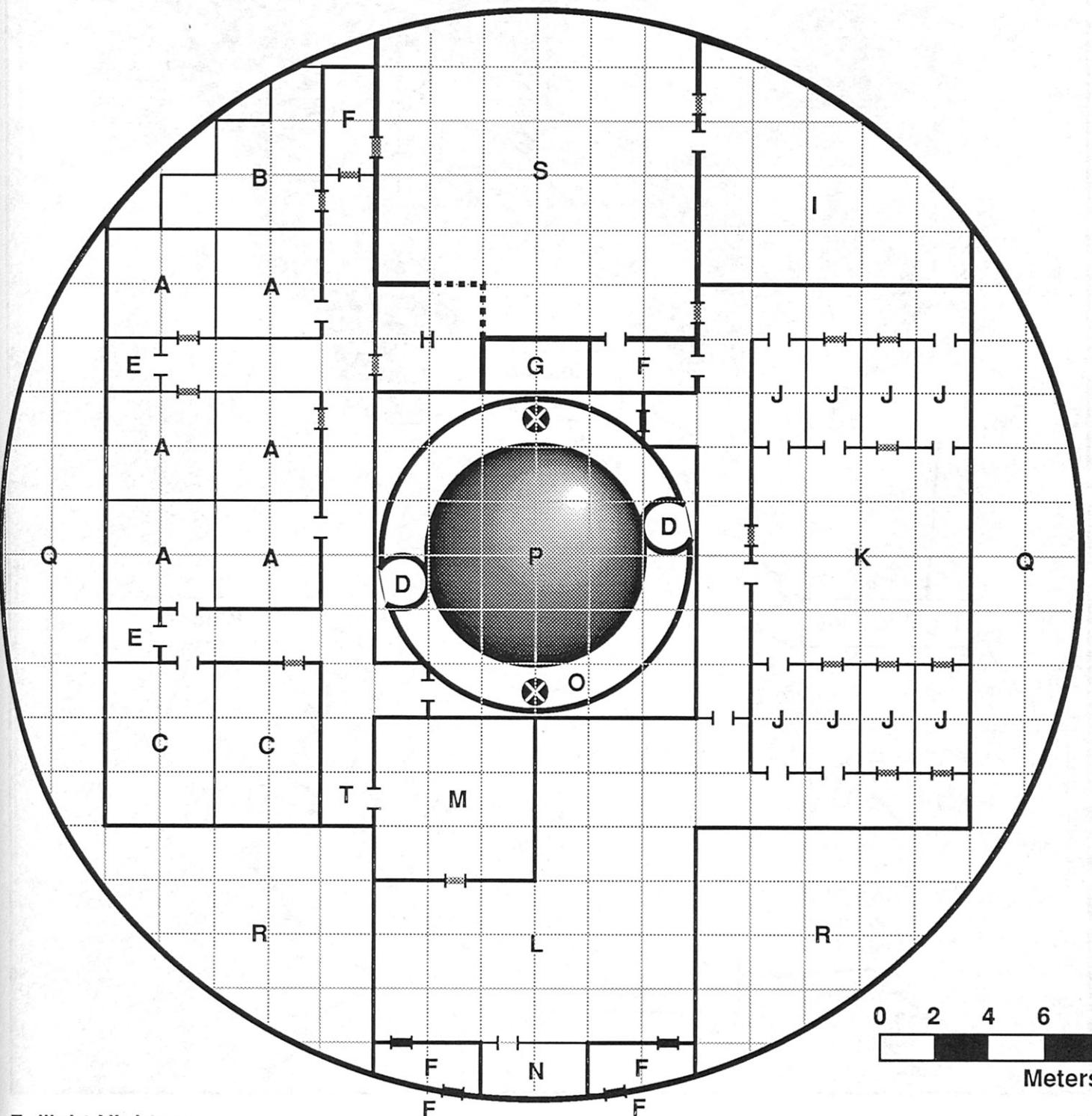


LEVEL THREE

A Small Cabins
B Conference Hall
C Large Cabins
D Shaft Passage
E Utility Closet
F Airlock
G Storage

H Observation Room
I Large Storage Area
J Holding Pens
K Interaction Area
L Research Laboratory
M Main Computer
N Auxiliary Energy Source

O Access/Control Walkway
P Fusion Generator
Q Fuel Scoops
R Cryogenic Tankage
S Cargo Bay
T Rubbish



0 2 4 6 8
Meters

GRIZEL-AERIAL RECON #4127

Rockslide

Metallic
Wreckage

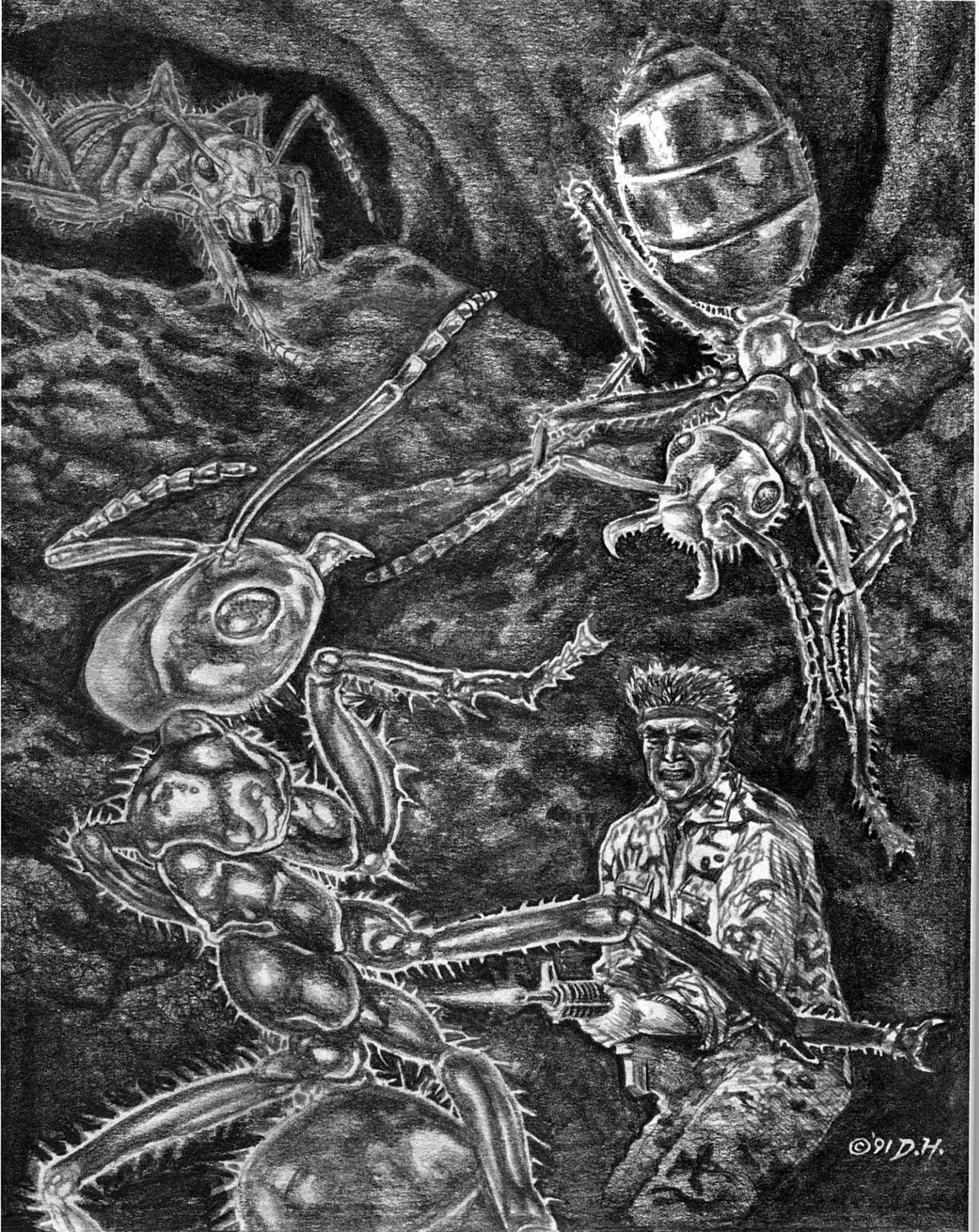
Light Woods

Heavy Woods

Old Lava Flow
(Basalt)

UFO AREA (REFEREE'S VERSION)

- Heavy Woods (Jungle)
- Light Woods (Jungle)
- Old Lava Flow (Basalt)
- Visible Rim of Saucer
- Rockslide



©'91 D.H.

THEM?

When I was a kid, I had an ant farm. Of course, so did a lot of other kids . . . There's something fascinating about ants. The way they go about their lives, their instinctive organization, their strength and persistence. It was always neat, watching them through the plastic.

I never figured there'd be a payback for every time I upended the farm to see 'em dig. A payback with interest.

An anthill sure looks different from the inside. Not at all like my ant farm . . .

As this adventure opens, the player characters are in central Germany, in an area of alternating patches of relatively dense woods and crop-bearing fields. They've been on the road for at least a week—patrolling, fleeing a war, or anything else that has them on the move and separates them from supply lines. It's late summer, around September, and the weather has been warm, with occasional heavy rains.

Modifications: This adventure is written for use as a *Twilight: 2000* scenario. If desired, this adventure can be set anywhere in the world where there are rural areas with a mix of light woods and fields. Simply change the names and nationality of the farmer and his family and the town of Kalkstadt. Minor modifications are necessary to convert it to a *Merc: 2000* scenario (eliminate mention of the mined wheat fields, trading for grain, alcohol fuel, etc., and substitute references relevant to the locality).

EXPLODED WHEAT

As the characters' vehicles grind down the barely paved road (once upon a time it was blacktopped, but several years of neglect and weather have conspired to reduce the road to a tire-shredding track), they notice evidence of human habitation in the area. There are some abandoned, rusting cars on the side of the road, but they've been thoroughly stripped—every useful part taken and some of the bodywork removed. The underbrush lining the road (and, in some cases, protruding through the roadway) has been trimmed a bit; the largest saplings have been hewn down to allow vehicles to use the road. Occasional burn marks slash through the roadside and the fields farther from the road, a sign that someone has been trying to control the brush (characters with rural backgrounds will know this, though characters with urban backgrounds will be in the dark).

But the surest sign of human habitation appears as the characters proceed: Plowed fields, bordered by wild stands of woods. Some of the fields wave with crops—wheat and rye, mostly. Again, characters with rural backgrounds (or with Biology or Farming skills) can perceive that the grain is almost ripe, ready for harvest in a couple of weeks. If the PCs stop and examine the fields closely, the telltale marks of a horse and plow can be noted. No vehicle has been in these fields for a long time.

If they wish, the PCs can scythe down some of the grain for future alcohol production. This requires a machete or a scythe—if the PCs try to use bayonets, they're going to be there for quite a while.

Farmers have to be pretty crafty to survive in this world. Consequently, the fields are protected with concealed mines scattered sparsely throughout the grain. Each mine is marked by a protruding rock, deliberately set in the soil for that purpose. PCs engaged in looting the grain are going to hit a mine, unless they specified that they were looking for mines (these are antipersonnel mines with damage ratings of C:4, B:12 and a penetration rating of Nil). The mines are concealed, so finding them is an Average task, as specified on page 202 of the *Twilight: 2000* rules. Clearing them is quite time-consuming, since only a few protruding rocks actually have mines beneath them, and there are a lot of protruding rocks. The "minefield" stats are Density: 0.02, Area: 250 meters.

(Referee's Note: This mined field is typical of the other grain fields in the area. The mines aren't supposed to be real threats; they're just there to punish greedy PCs for looting a poor farmer's grain.)

Of the several fields that the characters pass, they note that one has been harvested already. The stems are shorn short at almost ground level and not even a stalk remains—an exceptionally thorough job.

LOCALS

Eventually, the PCs come upon the home of the farmer who tills the grainfields. They are heralded by a trio of barking dogs, which can be heard even before the farmstead can be seen through the conifers lining the road. The farmhouse detailed on page 167 of the rulebook is fairly close to this one, except that there are no hedgerows or palisades (although there is a four-strand barbed-wire fence around the entire place), and the farmstead is surrounded by close pine trees, making vehicle access impossible except by means of a single dirt roadway winding through the trees.

The house and outbuildings are old, definitely prewar (the house and barn look like they were built pre-prewar—maybe before WW II!), constructed of heavy wood beams and stout brick. Part of the barn roof has been newly repaired with pine shingles (they're a light tan instead of the dull gray of the other shingles). A junkyard just visible behind the barn should make mechanics drool; it looks like a jumbled wealth of spare parts.

Aside from the dogs gathered at the gate, barking at the intruding characters, some chickens wandering about in the enclosure, and a windmill turning slowly in the breeze, there is no movement in the farmstead. Then the barn door opens and a man walks out and approaches the gate. He is dressed in a white T-shirt, Soviet infantry pants, a straw hat with a wide brim, and heavy, nonissue boots. He carries a double-barreled shotgun in the crook of his arm, broken open. "*Sei still!*" he snaps at the dogs, and they subside. His face is largely shadowed by the brim of the straw hat, revealing only a lower face and neck burned red-brown by the sun, wrinkled by age and nature. His clothes are largely clean, his pants knees dirty and his T-shirt armpits marked by perspiration. "*n Tag,*" he says to the assembled soldiers before his gates. "*Wie geht's?*"

DINNER PARTY

From being this long in Germany, the PCs should recognize German when they hear it. Anyone who actually knows German may reply; if no one in the group speaks German (which would be inexcusably stupid), the farmer proves to have a rudimentary grasp of English. His name is Axel Kreutz. He is very friendly to Bundeswehr soldiers (so long as there is no newly cut grain bundled on the characters' vehicles).



Farmer Kreutz is generally pleasant, if a bit guarded. If the PCs wish to trade for spare parts or food, or just want to talk, he invites them in to get out of the sun. If he sees his grain on the characters' vehicles, he chides them for stealing the fruits of another man's labors. "If you want grain, perhaps you should wait until it ripens and harvest it with the right tools," he says, grinning. "Or better yet, trade for it and save yourselves a great deal of unfamiliar labor. You are rich, and could purchase it all." He is, of course, correct: In a world where personal possessions are wealth, the PCs are filthy rich. Do the PCs want to trade? If so, he invites them in for some beer—he brews his own.

If the characters accept Kreutz's invitation to come in, he bids them to leave their longarms (rifles, SMGs, etc.) outside. "My house is too small for such things." Indeed, he leaves his shotgun on the porch as they go inside.

His wife and daughter, Marta and Lili, are inside the house. A chicken is baking in the oven, and the smell of fresh bread fills the entire structure (the characters are definitely salivating by now). What the PCs can see looks in keeping with a typical farmhouse: comfortable furniture, wooden floors, old and well-kept wallpaper on the walls, a fireplace at one end of the house, hand-powered and wood-fueled tools, a few electrical appliances that don't seem to be used any more. No weapons can be seen, save the shotgun still on the porch.

Marta and Lili are classically Teutonic blondes, clearly mother and daughter—Lili looks like a teenage version of her mother—attractive and cheerful. Kreutz sits at an ancient, sturdy wooden table in the dining room and invites the characters to do the same. There are five chairs at the table, all well-used. Lili fetches old metal folding chairs for the additional visitors.

By this time the characters must have formed definite impressions about Kreutz and his family. They may be thinking he's a pushover, or they may suspect a trap (everything's too nice and perfect), or they may be more charitable and chalk him up as one of the more pleasant people left in Germany. Actually, a bit of all three is true.

If the PCs try any stupid violence, Kreutz has a sawed-off shotgun under the table, and his former Bundeswehr commando son Ernst is carefully hidden up in one of the trees outside. Ernst has four M72 LAWs and an H&K G3 with an underslung HK-69 grenade launcher with five HEDP grenades. If anything goes wrong, he ambushes the characters, going for their heavy vehicles first (hitting the top armor because of his position). If the PCs manage to convince Kreutz that they're friendly, Ernst comes down from the trees and joins the party.

If the PCs really want to trade, Kreutz is willing to accept weapons and ammunition (especially 7.62 mm N) in exchange for spare parts or, miracle of miracles, lubrication oil! He has a large supply—several drums—of strained, recycled lubrication oil. This oil is worth a good \$2000 of trade per barrel. One barrel will supply all the PCs' vehicles (unless they're driving a company of tanks) and reduce maintenance requirements by 2 points per vehicle for one month.

Farmer Kreutz is an Experienced NPC (very sociable, generous). His son Ernst is a Veteran NPC (somewhat violent, moderately sociable). His wife Marta and daughter Lili are Novice NPCs (Marta is stubborn and somewhat ambitious; Lili is charismatic and moderately greedy).

Kreutz and his family are more than willing to answer questions and exchange information as well as trade. They want to know what's been going on in the outside world as well as what the characters have seen. Ernst particularly wants to know the status of the Bundeswehr; he has friends there. The whole family wants news of the 455th Infantry Battalion; the oldest daughter, Grettin, was in it (the fifth chair at the table was hers). She has been reported MIA, but everyone knows how unreliable government information is now. In exchange, the Kreutzes treat the PCs to a well-cooked and thoroughly enjoyable dinner, the best food the soldiers have had in months.

The Kreutzes are the only inhabitants of this acreage, with no neighbors until the hamlet of Kalkstadt, 10 kilometers away. Axel and Ernst do their best to raise food and till the fields surrounding their little homestead, while the women tend the animals and the house. They have no enemies that they know of, and their fields are seldom raided—the mines see to that.

Seldom raided until recently, that is. Kreutz explains: "We've had several fields completely stripped from top to ground, not even chaff left. The mines were blown up; we heard them go. But no bodies, no blood, and no grain!" He is clearly perplexed by the strange occurrences. Ernst reassures him that they'll catch the thieves eventually.

After dinner, the characters may stay the night, if they want to. They have to bivouac out by their vehicles, of course, since there's not enough room in the house for them.

If the PCs stay the night, they are awakened (or their guard is alerted) by the sound of combat in the distance. Someone is shooting off a great deal of ammunition to the southeast—small arms, mostly. The dogs are disturbed by the noise and run around behind the fence, whining and barking. The Kreutzes come out to see what the commotion is, and faint flashes can be seen far over the horizon to the southeast. "*Gott in Himmel!* It sounds like there is a war at Kalkstadt!" the elder Kreutz exclaims.

KALKSTADT

If the PCs don't stay the night at the Kreutz farm, they are wakened during the night by the same commotion and combat. If they forge on to Kalkstadt immediately upon leaving the Kreutz farm, they hear the battle as they approach (just assume that the battle occurs earlier if the PCs decide to go there during the day). By the time they arrive at the small town, the battle is over.

Kalkstadt was a modest town before the war, perhaps a few hundred people. The sign at its limits states that its current

population is 98 souls. Not any more.

When the PCs enter Kalkstadt, they find that the town is totally deserted. The empty buildings stare at the intruders with blank window eyes. The streets are relatively clean, and the roadblocks at the entries to the urban center are intact. Repaired and refurbished automobiles and light trucks line the main drag, parked before protected storefronts and swept sidewalks. A light breeze blows a rumpled hat up the street, past a car that squats, broken and recently wrecked, in the middle of the boulevard.

There are signs of a struggle everywhere. Several fires still burn destroyed buildings, and alcohol fuel drips from the ruptured gas tank of the wrecked car. Shell casings litter the sidewalks and empty firearms lie untended. Doors and windows are burst in, as if breached by tremendous force, like a human-sized bulldozer. Inside the buildings and along the street and sidewalks, trails of fresh blood stain floors and pavement.

But nowhere are there any bodies to be found. If the PCs search the building interiors, cautiously ready for ambush, they find no people, not even any animals. An obvious livery stable is cleaned out, the hay soaked with blood and the stalls smashed. And in every building, every crumb of food is missing, too.

By this point, the PCs should definitely be feeling paranoid.

If the PCs wish to stop and loot, they can gather a good 20 longarms, mostly civilian rifles and shotguns, and enough brass to make hundreds of rounds. They also find a gas station with a fuel tank loaded with 2500 liters of ethanol fuel.

One clue remains as to the Kalkstadters' fate: The poor citizens seem to have spent their life's blood to point to their murderers. Bloody and bizarre prints mark the ground and pavement. The prints look like ski-walking marks, curious ridged lines a couple of inches long and a foot across. The blood trails all lead northwest . . . back toward the Kreutz farm.



THE ATTACK OF THE ARTHROPODS

The PCs have several choices at this point: They can head back for the Kreutz farm; they can try to follow the blood trails; or they can get the heck out of the region as fast as their vehicles will take them.

Running Away: If the PCs try to flee the area and its ghastly occurrences, they run into trouble about a kilometer out of Kalkstadt. The road seems to be curiously buckled—a person driving a Hummer or other small wheeled vehicle can spot it and stop in time; those driving tanks or trucks have to succeed at an Average: Vehicle skill roll to stop before they hit the 10-centimeter bump. If any vehicle hits the bump, the ground beneath the road collapses. If the PCs stop their convoy before they hit the bump, the ground beneath the lead vehicle still collapses, plunging the vehicle into a two-meter trench excavated underneath the road. The inhabitants of the hole boil out and attack the PCs (see Arthropod Invaders, below).

Following the Tracks: If the PCs follow the blood trails, the trail becomes harder to follow as the blood stops eventually. Still, the tracks can be trailed, since the track-makers seem to have spared no energy to cover their trail. The tracks lead to a two-meter hole, dug straight out of fresh dirt, about two kilometers northwest of Kalkstadt. If the PCs go in, see The Hive, below.

Heading for the Farm: If the PCs head back for the Kreutz farm, they find devastation on a new scale. The entire farm appears to have been razed: The farmhouse and barns have holes in them, the fence is demolished, even the trees are rent and smashed. More "ski-tracks," similar to the ones found in Kalkstadt, mar the turf everywhere. No bodies are evident—the trio of horses are gone, as are the dogs, the chickens, every scrap of food, and the Kreutzes.

Only one survivor can be found. If the PCs search the wreckage carefully, one of them finds a stout metal vault door leading to a storm cellar. It's locked from the inside, but knocking on it convinces Lili to open it, P7 pistol clutched in shaking hands. She flings herself into her rescuer's arms, chattering incoherently about ants. Big ants. *Really* big ants. They killed everything, although Mama was still screaming when they carried her off.

The tracks are easy enough to follow, headed southeast. Will the PCs heroically attempt to rescue Marta? Or will they hang around and talk about it? If they linger and talk too long, they are ambushed

by more ants. If they try to take Lili and leave the region, they find every road blocked by tunneled roadblocks.

Of course, if the PCs didn't go to Kalkstadt at all, they will have still been at the Kreutz farm when the ants arrive, 2D6 at a time.

ARTHROPOD INVADERS

Several weeks before, a visitor from space plummeted into the atmosphere and landed between Kalkstadt and the Kreutz farm. The "falling star" was seen by several people, including Lili, but there was no thunderous explosion. The visitor landed quite softly and burrowed into the ground.

It was the nucleus of a hive, containing the workers, queen, and leaders in suspended animation. Once the oxygen awakened them, the workers began burrowing tunnels from the nucleus outward and breached the surface to find food. At first, any biomass would suffice to feed the famished hive. Then they began looking for more efficient biomass, like grain . . . and protein.

The hive is now kilometers wide in all directions. Enough protein has been found to feed many larvae. More is needed. Soon, the hive will devour everything living in the county-sized area, then it will expand . . .

Workers and Warriors

The "ants" are the worker drones. They do look ant-like, but there are subtle differences—they have triple mandibles for better manipulation; they have two "thoraxes" instead of one; they have four eyes (two large, two small); their six legs have too many joints. But they do the job of ant workers, digging, scouting for food, and defending the hive when necessary.

The warriors are variants of the workers, with larger mandibles, a shrunken abdomen, and a large head mounted with an acid sprayer.

Both types of drones are really quite big, measuring a good three meters in length, standing 1.5 meters off the ground and weighing at least 200 kilograms.

Leaders

The alien leaders look like an entirely different species. They are

ARTHROPOD WORKER AND WARRIOR STATISTICS

Animal	Meat	Move	# Appearing	Hits	Attack	Hit #	Damage	CON
Worker	N/A	5/10/30	2D6/turn	20	80%	4	3D6	18
Warrior	N/A	5/15/30	1D6/turn*	30	100%	6/2	4D6/1D6**	24

* Warriors only receive reinforcements while in the hive.

** Warriors spray acid, with a two-meter danger area (like automatic fire) and a range of four meters.

Notes: Workers have an Initiative of 2, warriors an Initiative of 3. Workers and warriors never flee while in the hive. Damage done is per combat phase. Once a worker or warrior grasps with its mandibles, it crushes (armor does not provide any protection), doing 3 or 4D6 damage to the location originally bitten until the area is critically damaged (limbs are bitten through; torso and head damage means death). The twin Hit#/Damage on the Warrior line indicates Hit# and Damage for the mandibles/acid spray. The acid spray is treated like automatic fire; the Hit# is the number of dice rolled for hits. They only spray this acid from two- to four-meter range. This acid does damage like fire, doing 1D6 damage per phase until a 1 is rolled for damage, which means the acid has been destroyed enough material to have become neutralized. Clothing prevents damage for the first phase, armor for the first and second phases. After that, the target begins to take damage unless the clothing or armor is removed (an Average: Agility task). In any case, the armor or clothing is ruined.

This acid is quite powerful and will even affect vehicle armor, dissolving 1 point of armor protection per combat phase, unless the die roll is a 1, when it stops working, as above. It also damages weapons. A weapon sprayed with acid stops working on the second combat phase of acid activity, and is destroyed on the fourth phase of acid activity.

ARTHROPOD LEADER STATISTICS

Animal	Meat	Move	# Appearing	Hits	Attack	Hit #	Damage	CON
Leader	N/A	5/10/20	1	15	50%	6	1D6	6

* If a leader has a clear shot at a target and isn't in great danger of being shot at in return, it will use a curious acid-spouting creature—which looks like a small warrior head with tiny legs—to shoot acid, just like a warrior. The leader's acid-creature has a range of 10 meters and a danger space of 2 meters.

bipedal, with oversized abdomens balanced between two extremely oversized hind legs with large, spike-flanged feet. Their torsos are only long enough to provide mounting for two pairs of arms, tipped with manipulative claws. A high-domed, four-eyed head with small mandibles sits atop the upper torso. These beings act as generals and overseers in the hive, commanding the worker drones via some sort of secret communication. Leaders have an Initiative of 4, and will avoid getting into combat if they can help it. After all, that's what warriors are for.

The Queen

The egg-laying queen is nothing but a big blob of flesh, chunking in food and chunking out eggs. It can't attack, run, or even notice that it's being attacked. It has 100 hits; count the penetration number of heavy weapons fired at it as hits done to it (a LAW would do 55+2D6 hits, since its penetration is 55C, for instance).

THE ARTHROPODS IN COMBAT

When the PCs first meet the arthropods, neither side quite knows what to expect. The first meeting will be with 2D6 workers; they attack immediately, smelling the protein the PCs represent. The PCs must roll 1D6 each combat phase at the first encounter—until a character rolls equal to or under his/her Initiative, as that PC is stunned, unable to believe his or her eyes and act. After the first meeting, the shock value is gone and the PCs can slay normally.

After three turns of combat, the workers are reinforced by 1D6 warriors. If in the hive, the workers are replaced by 1D6 warriors per turn—defense of the hive is warrior business. After five turns of combat, if the ants are outside the hive and aren't winning, they retreat to mass a stronger assault. The arthropods never retreat while they're in the hive.

Leaders are encountered rarely. If in the hive, a leader shows up after the third turn of combat, directing the warriors. The leader is extremely—almost supernaturally—canny, spotting every weakness in the PCs' tactics and ordering its warriors accordingly. For instance, if one of the PCs is particularly deadly, the leader will have a few warriors hold off the other PCs, and gang-attack the deadly PC with the others. Or it will order the warriors to crush weapons that are doing too much damage, or acid-spray heavy weapons. If there are enough warriors/workers available, a leader may have them dig through the ground to ambush the PCs from behind.

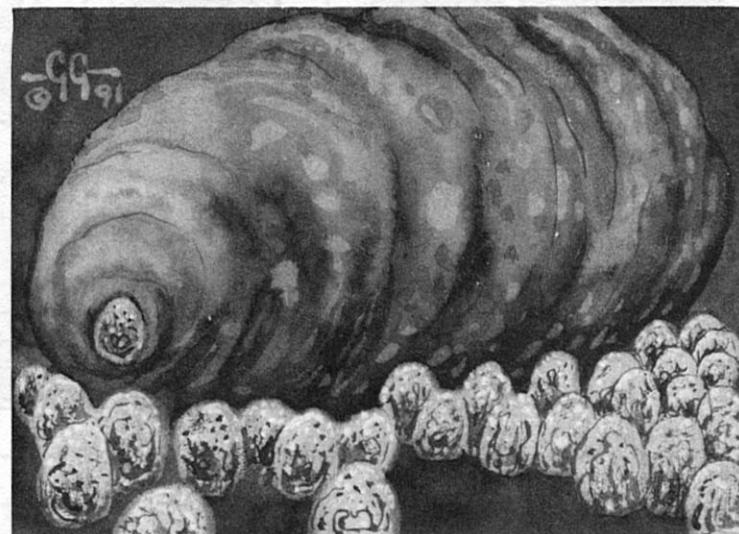
If an arthropod leader is killed, there is a four-turn delay before another appears. If the arthropods have no leader, they attack mindlessly, closing to melee and neglecting their acid sprays.

THE HIVE

The PCs encounter the hive one way or another, either by entering one of the tunnel openings or by having a vehicle fall in. Certainly, if they want to try to rescue anyone, they will have to go into the hive.

Providing a single map of the hive is not possible in the room available. The complex extends for kilometers, as noted, and is 100 meters thick, honeycombing the ground with tunnels over the entire county. The tunnels are only about two meters in diameter, so no vehicle larger than a motorcycle can be brought into the hive. For this reason, we have provided a series of geomorphic tunnel sections to be photocopied and assembled as the referee sees fit. These are presented on pages 64-67.

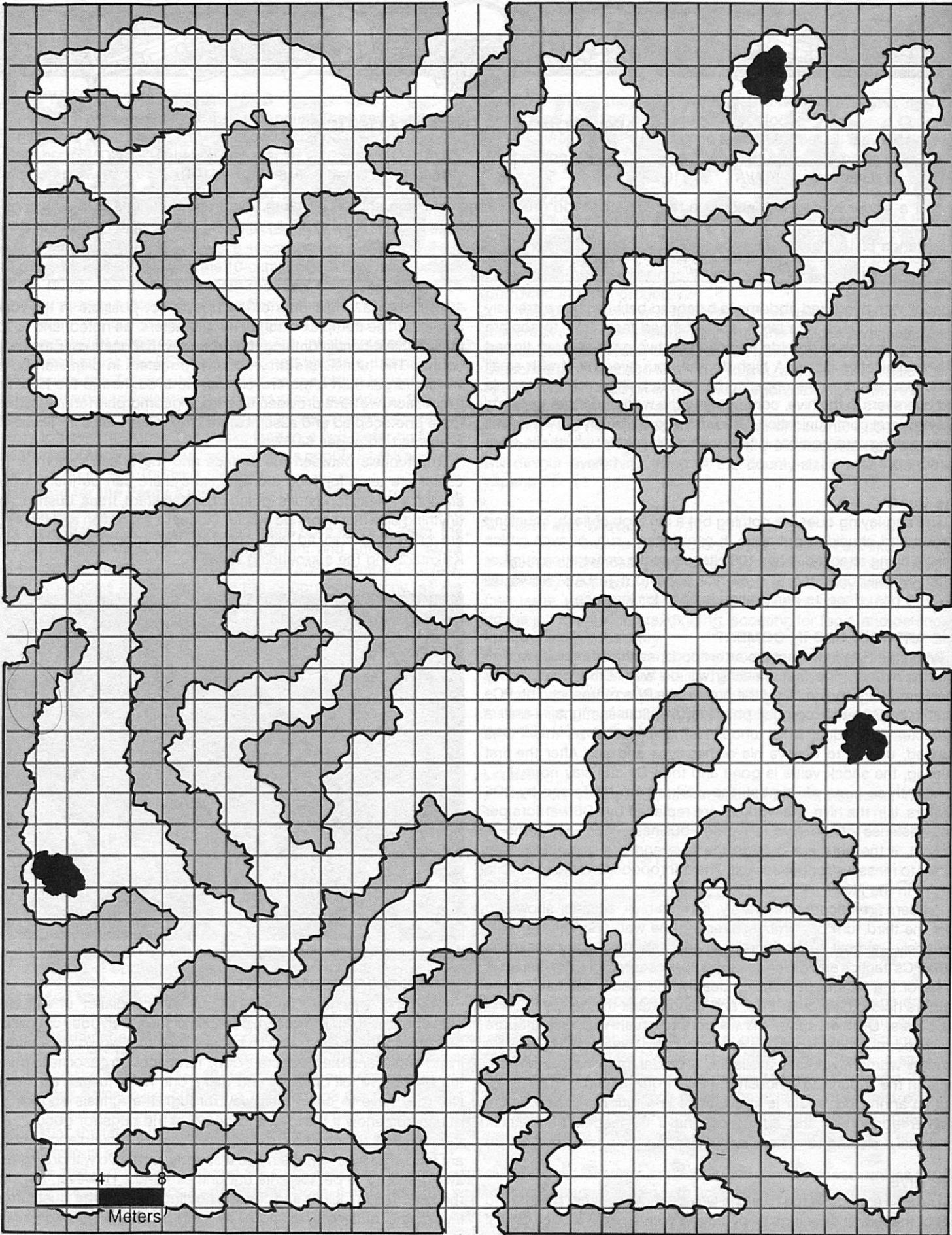
The tunnels between the surface and the queen's room at the center are used for food storage. Here there can be found whole stacks of wheat, foodstuffs looted from Kalkstadt, trees, bushes, and anything else that might be edible. Closer to the queen and the eggs are chambers stacked with corpses, the arthropods' prey from Kalkstadt and the surrounding area.

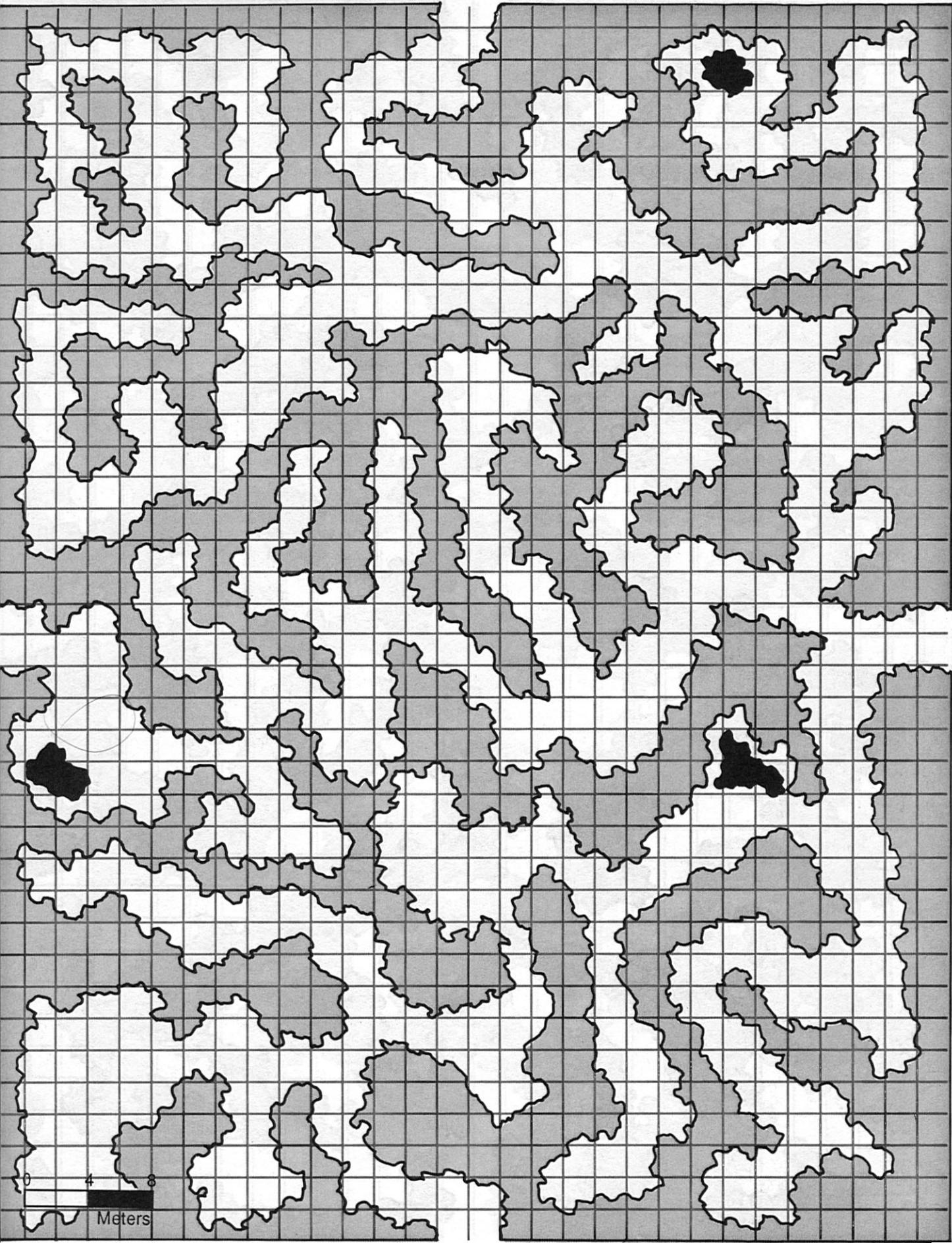


ANOTHER *!@#*! BUG HUNT

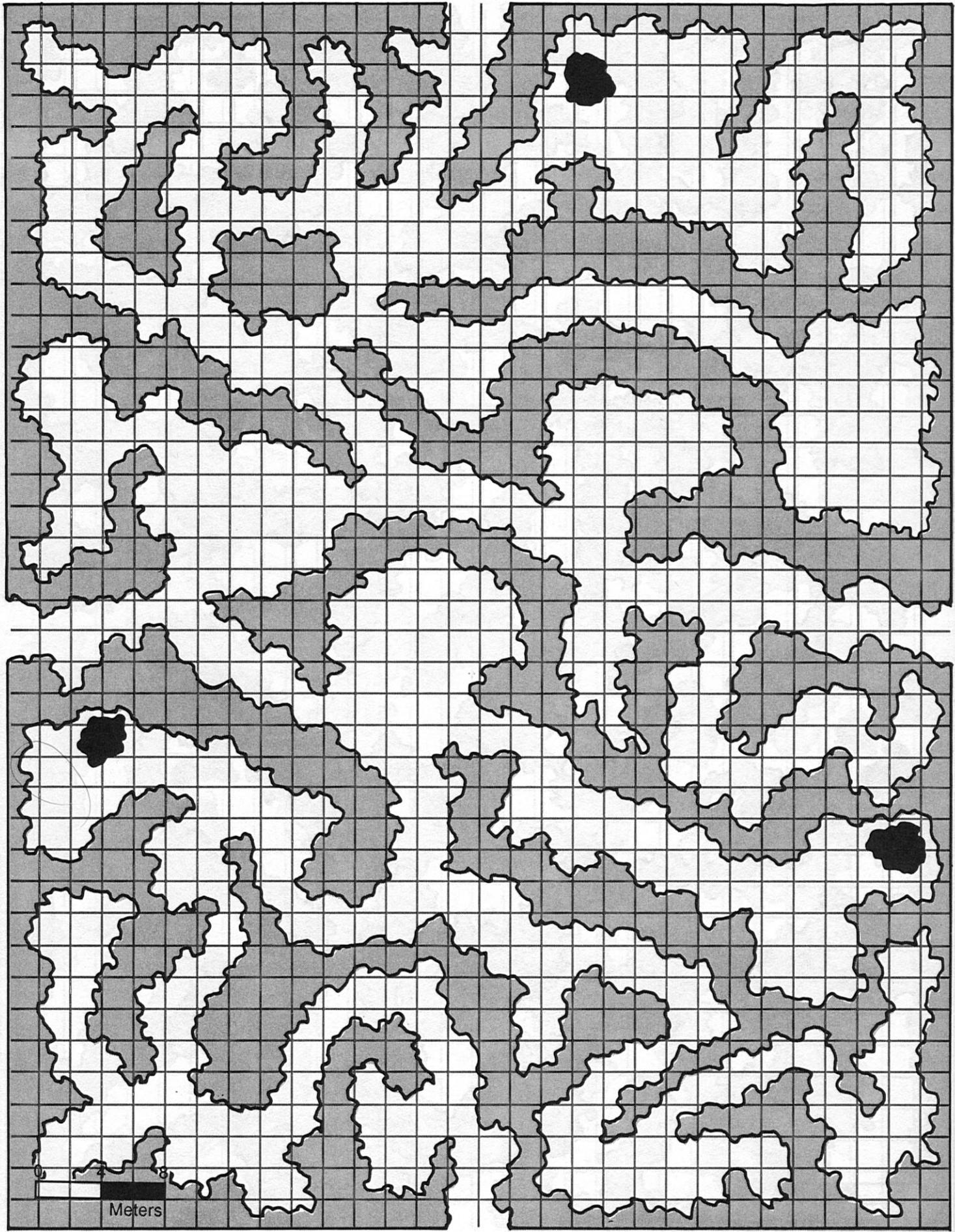
The only way the characters can rid the planet of the alien arthropods is to kill the queen. Because of their alien body chemistry, the arthropods are immune to nerve gases that would kill a human in moments, and the characters don't have enough gasoline to pump the whole hive full of vapor and make one huge fuel-air explosion. No, they have to crawl their way through the tunnels and kill the queen somehow if they want to be rid of the bugs for good.

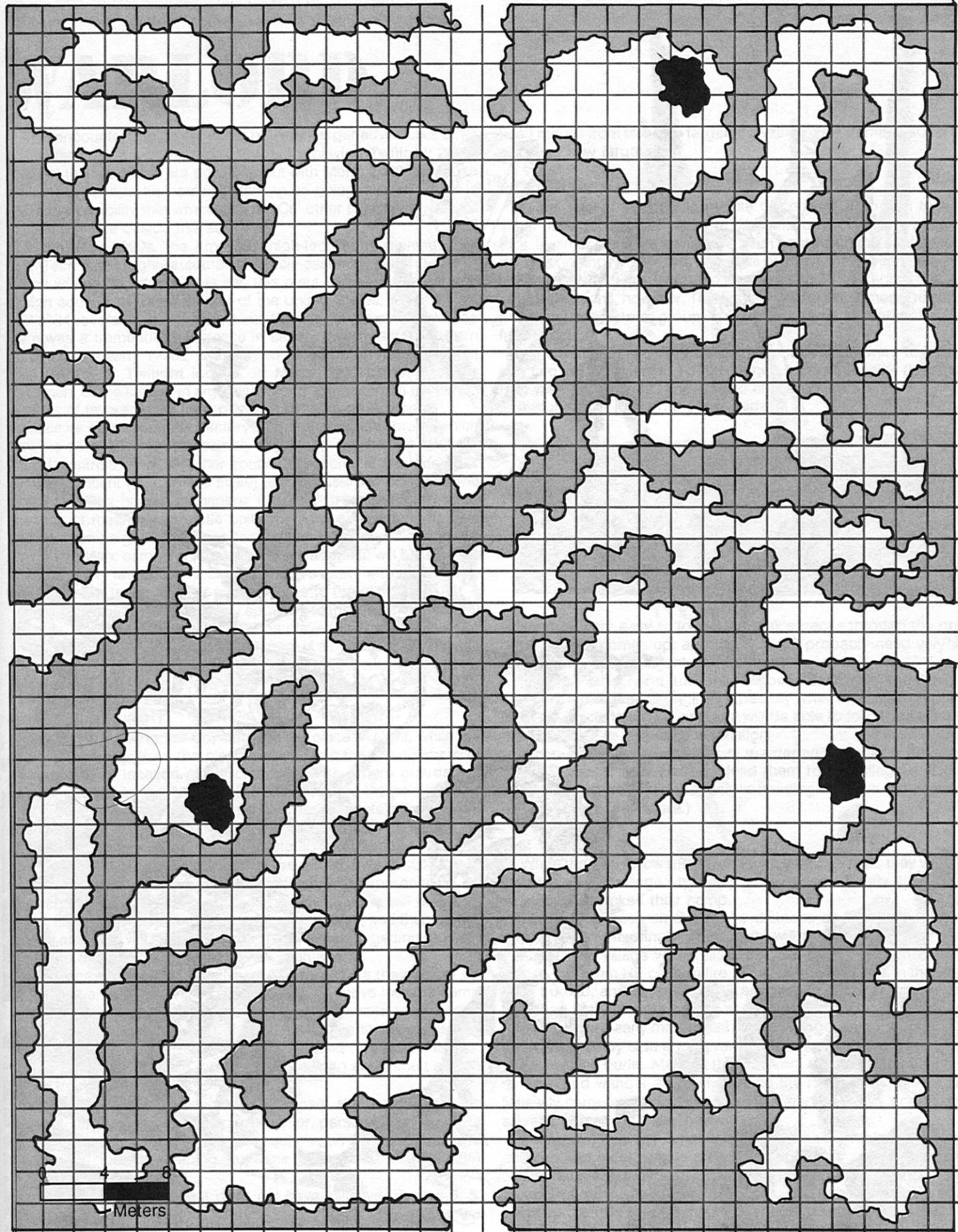
Of course, the characters don't have to stick around and become ant food. They can always make a speedy, strategic withdrawal (run away) and try to put the ants out of their minds. However, ignoring the hive doesn't kill it, and there's nothing to stop the queen from laying other queens. That should certainly give the players something to think about.





Meters







©1991 DELL HARRIS

WARLORD

This encounter can be set either between larger adventures or as an incident within a larger story. If you are playing *Twilight: 2000*, either of these options are possible, but with *Merc: 2000* it is much easier to place it as an incident within an on-going mission. There is a strong possibility that whatever the PCs' other mission is will pale to insignificance beside this scenario.

In the early 1990s, the American high-tech arms manufacturer ArAmTech built a highly automated vehicle-assembly plant. Depending on where the adventure is set, this plant can easily be set in a foreign country or a remote part of the United States, whatever will best suit the referee introducing it into the current adventure plot. As there was a tremendous increase in capital investment in Eastern Europe in the early 1990s, it is easy to reconcile an American-built plant with most *Twilight* locales. In *Merc: 2000* campaigns, the placement of the factory in any Third World nation can be explained in terms of favorable tax laws or a corrupt host government.

Since its completion, the factory's central computer brain (which controls all of the robot assembly machines, the factory environmental controls, and all other routine functions at the site) has become sentient (on a limited scale) and has usurped control of the facility from the human managers. It is now proceeding with construction of mechanized battle units for purposes of its own. In a *Twilight* campaign, there is no longer any corporate hierarchy to notice. In a *Merc* campaign, the corporate leadership will believe that local instability is the cause of the loss of contact with the factory, and may have teams of their own en route to the factory site.

None of this will be immediately apparent to the player characters, however, and the adventure should be played in such a way as to encourage the players to believe that there is a power-mad "warlord" controlling the actions of the robot tanks. All of the descriptions below are done with this in mind.

A VISITOR BY NIGHT

The first incident in this adventure takes place at night, while the PCs are camped. Have the players sketch out the arrangement of their camp, the location of vehicles and tents, where guards are posted, and so on. As this is likely to alert them to the possibility of attack, have them specify their guard-duty assignments before asking them for more detailed information.

At some point during the night, preferably in the early predawn hours (for best effect), their camp will be raided by a GCUX-2 (see page 78). The vehicle will be difficult to detect while approaching, as it is very quiet and will not be showing any lights. It will enter the camp, fire at several targets selected by the referee, and then depart at high speed. It will seem to be more interested in getting through the camp than doing the PCs any real damage.

Since the tank has an Initiative of 3, it will initiate the combat on Phase 3 of a combat turn. In that phase it will move into the camp while firing either its 25mm chaingun or 7.62mm coax machinegun (both of which are stabilized). It will then remain stationary during Phases 2 and 1 of that turn and all of the next turn until Phase 1. During Phase 1 of the next turn it will cease firing and depart at high speed from the camp.

During each phase in which it is stationary, the tank will fire at a different target, either a vehicle, tent, or person. It will use its chaingun to fire at vehicles and its machinegun to fire at tents and people. The rules for sleeping garrisons (*Merc: 2000*, pages 84-85) will come in handy here.

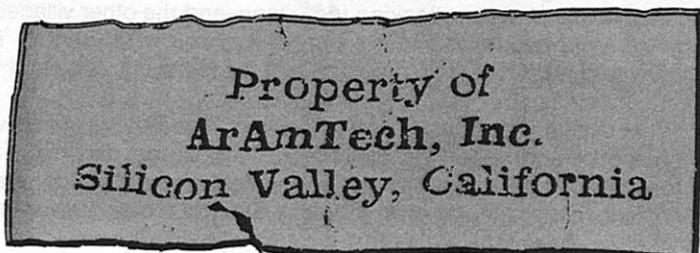
During phases in which it does not have Initiative (Phases 6, 5, and 4 of the second turn) it will remain stationary while its camera

head moves from target to target analyzing battle damage so far and selecting new targets.

PICKING UP THE PIECES

At the end of one frantic minute of combat, the robot tank will either have departed or will have been disabled or destroyed by the PCs. In either case, there will have been some damage caused to the PCs' camp and its vehicles. There will probably have been casualties suffered as well. Casualties and damage should be kept to manageable proportions, however. This first encounter is not meant to cripple the player characters' group, only sting it a little and provoke it into further action.

If the tank has left, the PCs will almost certainly want to follow it and find out who sent it. To further pique their curiosity, the referee may wish to have a PC find a small engraved plate which fell off the tank during the fight. The plate reads:



It will be very easy to follow the tank's tracks through the brush once the sun comes up, and the PCs will probably need very little additional encouragement to investigate.

If, on the other hand, the tank has been destroyed, the PCs may still wish to discover its origins (especially when investigation proves that the vehicle has no crew), and will be able to follow the tracks of the tank back to its previous location.

Whether they follow the trail of the departing tank, or backtrack from the wreck, their path will lead them to the village described below. (In the first case the tank is heading there, in the second it has just come from there.)

THE VILLAGE

When the PCs follow the trail of the mysterious tank, they will soon come to a small village which has been raided recently by the same tank which attacked their camp.

The PCs will see smoke in the distance as they approach the village. When they finally arrive, they will see the full extent of the damage. The village was walled, but the gate has been blown to pieces by 25mm HE cannon fire. Many of the dwellings in the village have burned, and several are still smoldering. Even stone buildings have had their interiors gutted and roofs burnt off.

There were clearly many deaths in the village, some of whom have been laid side by side and covered with sheets of canvas or plastic while awaiting burial. Many of the survivors are still in shock or grief-stricken and wander aimlessly among the ruins, while a few others listlessly carry out bodies, tend to the many wounded, or attempt to salvage something from the wreckage.

Perceptive PCs will notice that there is a very high proportion of children and older people among the survivors.

The villagers are hardly capable of serious resistance, but a handful of survivors will find weapons and attack savagely if they perceive the PCs to be a threat to what remains of their settlement,

or to have been connected with its destruction. If the PCs begin administering first aid and attempting to help the survivors, however, all will be grateful.

After several hours, the PCs will have completed the most pressing and immediate tasks. This will include first aid to all of the injured, rescue excavations of people trapped in rubble, and perhaps distribution of emergency supplies. Once this is done, the village elder will tell them the story of the attack, and the events which led up to it.

THE COMING OF THE WARLORD

The village is one of several located in a small, fertile valley, and it has escaped most of the troubles which afflict the rest of the world. Several months ago, however, all of that changed.

One morning a tank arrived outside the village and the crew demanded (by loudspeaker) to address the "village manager." When the chief mounted the walls, the tank crew announced that the village was now under the protection of "the Warlord" and the inhabitants need never again fear for their safety. The Warlord would prevent marauder bands from attacking the village, and the other villages in the valley, in return for distilled alcohol fuel and work parties. The tank would return the next day to collect the first work party and the first consignment of fuel.

That evening, a number of refugees from a nearby village arrived at the gate and asked for sanctuary. Their village had been approached by the tank a day earlier and had refused to cooperate. The tank had returned that morning and destroyed the village, scattering those inhabitants that it didn't kill.

The villagers were not well-prepared to deal with an armored vehicle, and so had complied with the request. Work parties began leaving by truck, under tank escort, to work for the Warlord, and returning after a few weeks.

At first, everything went fairly well. The work parties departed and returned on a regular basis, and the fuel tax was not impossibly high. Most of the parties told of building barracks and a defensive compound, with barbed wire, minefields, and guard towers. There were human supervisors, but many of them were recognized as people from other villages in the valley. There were a few uniformed guards, but again they had mostly been recruited from the local population, in this case from some of the rougher examples of it.

Security at the compound was provided by the uniformed guards and a number of small automated machinegun carts. As the guard towers were completed, surveillance cameras and remotely controlled machineguns and missile launchers were installed.

Gradually, though, things began getting worse. Fewer and fewer of the work parties came home at night. The who did return reported that the others were being kept in barracks and used to perform some sort of factory work in what was called the Work Shed, a large, corrugated building in the middle of the compound. Tanks periodically came and went, emerging from the north end of the Work Shed. No one ever saw the crewmen, nor were they allowed to talk to the workers held in the barracks.

Although the number of workers demanded for the work parties remained high, every day one or two more workers failed to return, until over half of the able-bodied men and women of the village had disappeared into the rough wooden barracks near the Work Shed.

AN ACT OF DEFIANCE

Finally, the villagers decided to act. They carefully planned an ambush using Molotov cocktails and three carefully hoarded antitank rockets. When the tank came again on its daily rounds, they would ambush and destroy it. Their hope was that, once they defeated the

tank, the other villages would join their rebellion, and that their combined resources would enable them to defeat the Warlord, or at least release their friends and family.

However, the tank seemed able to see right through their camouflage and spotted the ambush immediately. First, the tank blew apart the men and women waiting with the antitank weapons, and then systematically devastated the village. All of the time it was doing so, the loudspeaker kept repeating: "IT IS USELESS TO RESIST THE WARLORD. THE CONSEQUENCES OF YOUR TREASON WILL BE A LESSON FOR OTHERS."

AN ACT OF JUSTICE

The PCs will probably want to avenge themselves upon the Warlord and liberate the villages from his (her?) enslavement. They will probably require no urging to form their own plan of attack, once they have questioned the populace further. The Warlord's installation can't be very tough, after all.

Intelligence information will be available to the PCs in the form of a former worker in the camp who has been lucky enough to escape and avoid recapture. The worker (an Experienced NPC who worked in the farms for a few weeks) can be male or female, young or old, as the referee sees fit. The worker will sketch the layout of the compound and provide some rudimentary data on the guards and the other security features. This person will not be able to say much about the Work Shed other than rumors that "people go in and don't come out."

If the PCs wish to attempt to recruit locals to accompany them to the Warlord's compound (this does not include the escaped compound worker mentioned in the last paragraph), they will have no trouble recruiting all the Novice NPCs that they can provide arms for (assuming the group has a few extra weapons). If the group has no extras, the referee may send along a dozen Novice NPCs armed with double-barreled shotguns, hunting rifles, melee weapons, and a pistol or two.

Of course, the players are free to ignore the villagers' plight . . . in which case they may find themselves dealing with the Warlord in another adventure, his (her) strength somewhat increased.

A NOTE ON TIMING

If the PCs destroyed the tank in their first encounter with it, then the raid took place the afternoon before the tank attacked the PCs. If the players are following the tank, then the attack took place shortly after dawn following the attack on the PCs.

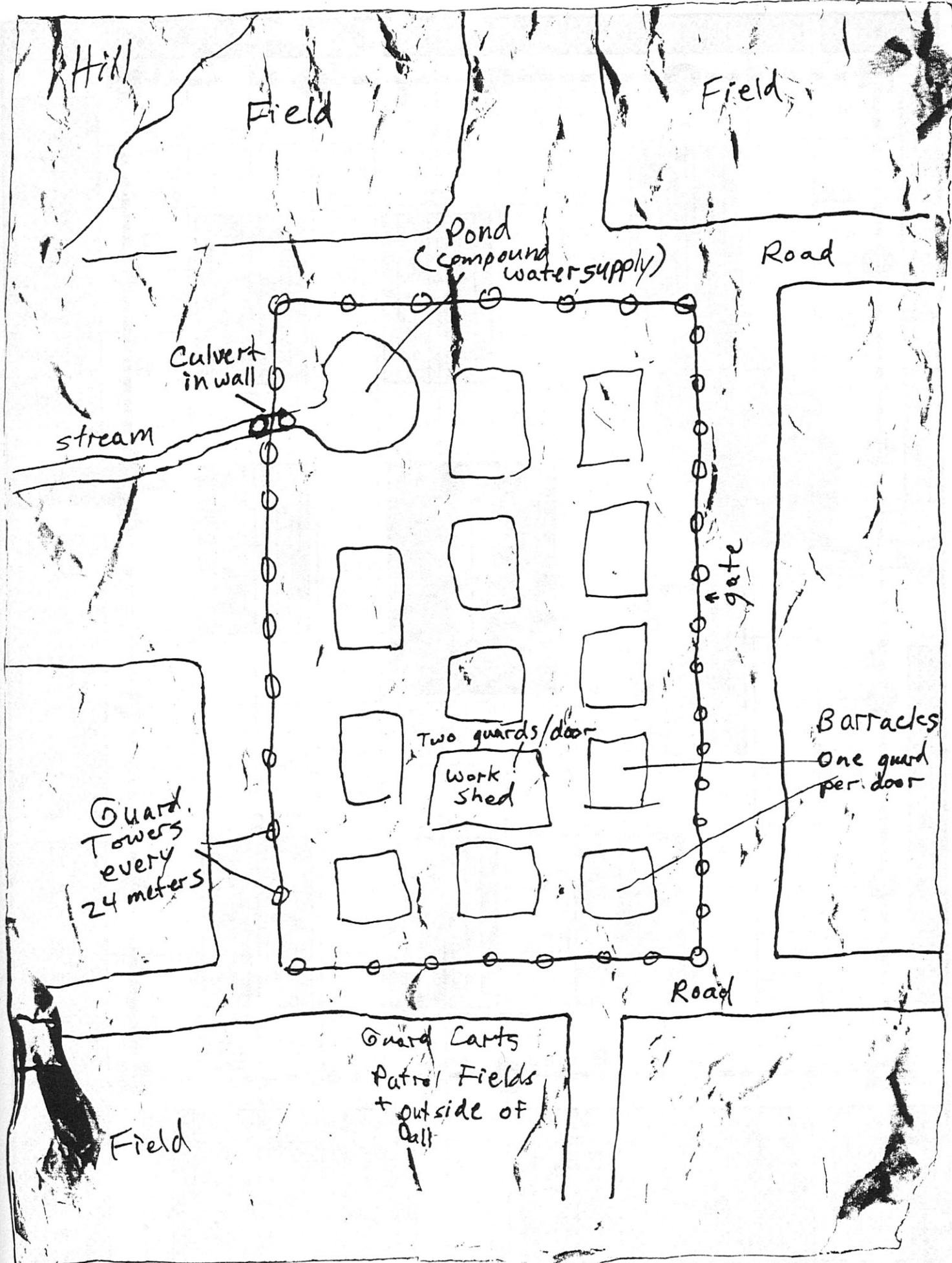
INTELLIGENCE ON THE COMPOUND

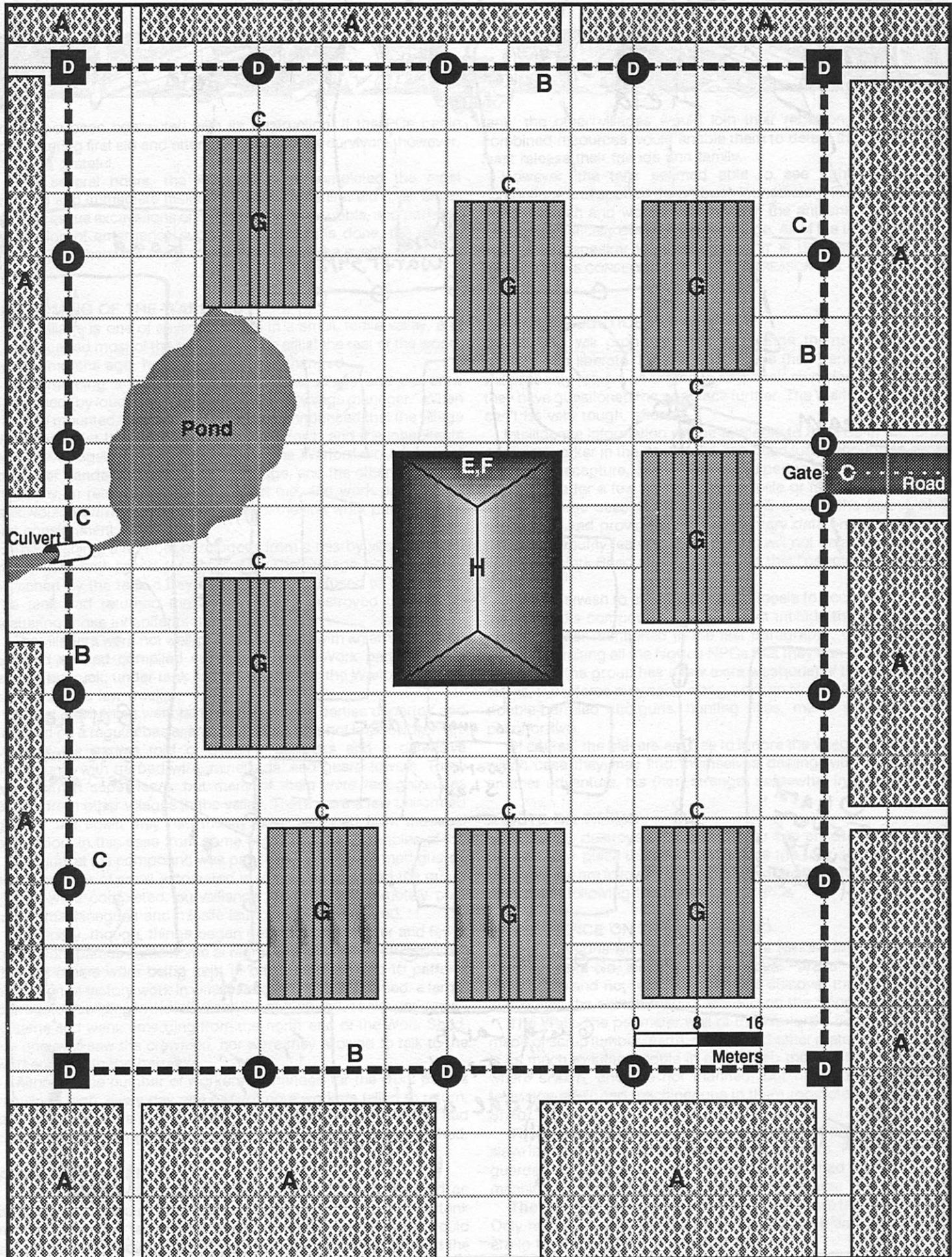
In discussions with returned workers (whose information is now several weeks old, since the most recent "drafts" of workers have been taken and not returned), the PCs discover the following facts, and obtain the sketch map presented on the opposite page.

The Wall: The perimeter wall of the Warlord's complex has been made of scrap lumber, earth, rubble, and other materials. Its purpose is as much to keep people in as to keep them out. The towers are where shown, and are not manned, but have remote-controlled, television-equipped machineguns in them (operated from the Work Shed).

The Fields: The camp is surrounded by fields where there are slave laborers growing food for the other workers. These workers are guarded by humans, who are in turn watched by one or two machinegun-equipped carts, operated by remote control.

The Barracks: Rough wooden barracks where the workers sleep. Only half of the captives are inside at any given time; the other half are in the Work Shed and down below.





THE COMPOUND

APPROACH

If the PCs have been paying attention, it should by now be obvious that the robot tank (and probably the other guard stations) uses thermal viewers. That is how the tank "saw through the camouflage." Player characters need to guard against IR signature giving away their position.

They will be okay peering over a hill, as hills or walls will pretty much block the IR signature of a body, and a head doesn't make much of a hot spot (it will probably be ignored by the robotic threat identification programming). The main problem for the PCs will be to come up with a covered route of approach, one that will conceal their IR signature until they can get over the wall. The creek will provide such an avenue of approach. Once inside they are fairly safe, as the robots tend to ignore humans inside the wall unless they are engaged in some form of proscribed behavior (like trying to leave or attacking the robots).

A. THE FIELDS

These are plowed fields where there are slave laborers growing food for the other workers. These fields extend for almost one kilometer in all directions around the compound. Like the factories, these are worked in 12-hour shifts by slave laborers. The slaves working these fields have been shackled with short chains so they can take small steps, but cannot run. The outer perimeter of these fields are patrolled by guard carts (see below) to prevent escapes.

B. THE WALL

The wall is a perimeter barrier of rubble and rammed earth, topped with coils of barbed wire. It seems to be designed primarily to keep people in rather than intruders out. Getting across the wall will take the number of five-second phases equal to 2D6 minus the character's Agility. The wall is patrolled on the inside by uniformed guards and the "guard carts."

The culvert through the wall is an obvious point of entry and was blocked by a grate when the wall was built. The grate can be loosened given a few minutes work with a file or hacksaw, but the culvert is too narrow to permit packs to be worn while crawling through. The PCs will have to enter the camp with only what they can carry in their hands or make several trips through.

C. UNIFORMED GUARDS

Those prisoners which the Warlord has chosen as extremely trustworthy are drafted as guards, and given surplus military uniforms. These uniforms are specially treated so they are highly visible under IR radiation, and are easily spotted by the robot carts and the guard tower sensors. Nine of 10 of these guards are Novice NPCs, Initiative of 1. One in 10 will be Experienced. These guards are armed only with small arms (mostly Uzi submachineguns) and melee weapons (clubs, knives, etc.) so they pose no threat to the GCUXs. Nevertheless, they are seldom trusted outside of the wall, and are deployed as follows:

- 1 at the entrance to each barracks
- 3 at the gate
- 1 walking a foot patrol for every three guard towers

The human guards have been ordered to break up any party of slaves not under direct control of another guard or a guard cart and to prevent slaves from escaping by direct intervention. They are also to sound the alarm in the case of an attack from the outside or a slave riot, and then hold out until the guard carts arrive.

D. GUARD TOWERS

The guard towers are uninhabited (except for occasional inspections by technicians to test the machineguns). Each guard tower is between eight and 10 meters tall, and fitted with three remote-operated machinegun positions, with an NPC Initiative of 3. Underground cables connect the towers with the Work Shed.

The guard towers are primarily responsible for keeping watch of the outer perimeter (their programming has been instructed to ignore any human inside the wall and more than three meters away from it).

E. GUARD CARTS

"Guard carts" is what the prisoners call the GCUX-1s that patrol the outside of the wall. There are a total of 18 in existence, 12 of which are on duty at any given moment. Of these 12, six are guarding farm work parties of slaves, three patrol inside the Work Shed and the underground complex, and three form a rapid response reserve force in case of attacks. This reserve responds as quickly as possible to act as a pinning force until the other robot vehicles can arrive.

F. ROBOT TANKS

There are two GCUX-2s waiting in the Work Shed. One of these was encountered earlier by the PCs (and has been replaced if they destroyed it). They are both recharging at the time when the players arrive, and will take 10 minutes to ready themselves and move out in the case of an all-out attack. These vehicles will be "briefed" on the situation as much as possible by information gained through all other robot vehicles and from the cameras in the guard towers.

G. THE BARRACKS

These are rough wooden buildings where the workers sleep and where their food is stored and prepared. Only half of the captives will be there at any given time; the other half are in the factory underground (12 hours on, 12 hours off, shifts are changed at noon and midnight). Freed captives from the barracks can guide the PCs into the Work Shed but will not be willing to enter. Workers will also tell PCs about the really big tank being finished down below (the GCUX-3). Only one of the captives will be in any condition to accompany the PCs and willing to volunteer (the rest are too weak or exhausted). This NPC guide should be a Veteran and preferably an ex-soldier, but should have no weapons other than any the PCs choose to supply.

H. THE WORK SHED

This is a large, prefabricated metal building, and unlike the rest of the buildings in the compound, is in good condition. The first floor contains the three "ready reserve" guard carts and a number of workers. This building is the entrance to the underground complex, and is dealt with in more detail on the following pages.

THE WORK SHED: LEVEL 1

The Work Shed is a large, prefabricated metal building and, unlike the rest of the buildings in the compound, is in good condition. It represents the only original building remaining from the secret factory complex. The interior has been modified by the Warlord to suit its present uses.

All walls are 20 centimeters of reinforced concrete unless otherwise specified. All doors are two centimeters of sheet steel unless otherwise specified. Referees should cover this text when copying the page for player use.

Following are brief descriptions of each component of this level:

A. Personnel Doors: People (slaves and guards) enter and exit the building through these doors.

B. Vehicle Doors: The robot vehicles use these doors, which cover most of one side of the building, and are much bigger than the GCUX-1 or GCUX-2 would require.

C. Storage: These are storerooms for material which is required on the surface with some regularity (such as ammo and spare parts for the Guard Towers).

D. Stairs: These are used as a backup for workers in case the elevators are in use or under repair.

E. Personnel Elevators (2): These are provided for use by the slaves and guards.

F. Counterweight Shaft: The elevator counterweights use this shaft. Characters can rappel down it, but it is walled off from each floor except the top (by 20 centimeters of concrete).

G. Small Vehicle Elevators (2): These two elevators are operated by hydraulic machinery on the lowest level, and thus need no counterweight channel. They are separated from the main vehicle bay by an open-work wall of metal bars with large, electrically operated sliding gates permitting access. They are separated from the large vehicle elevator by a wall.

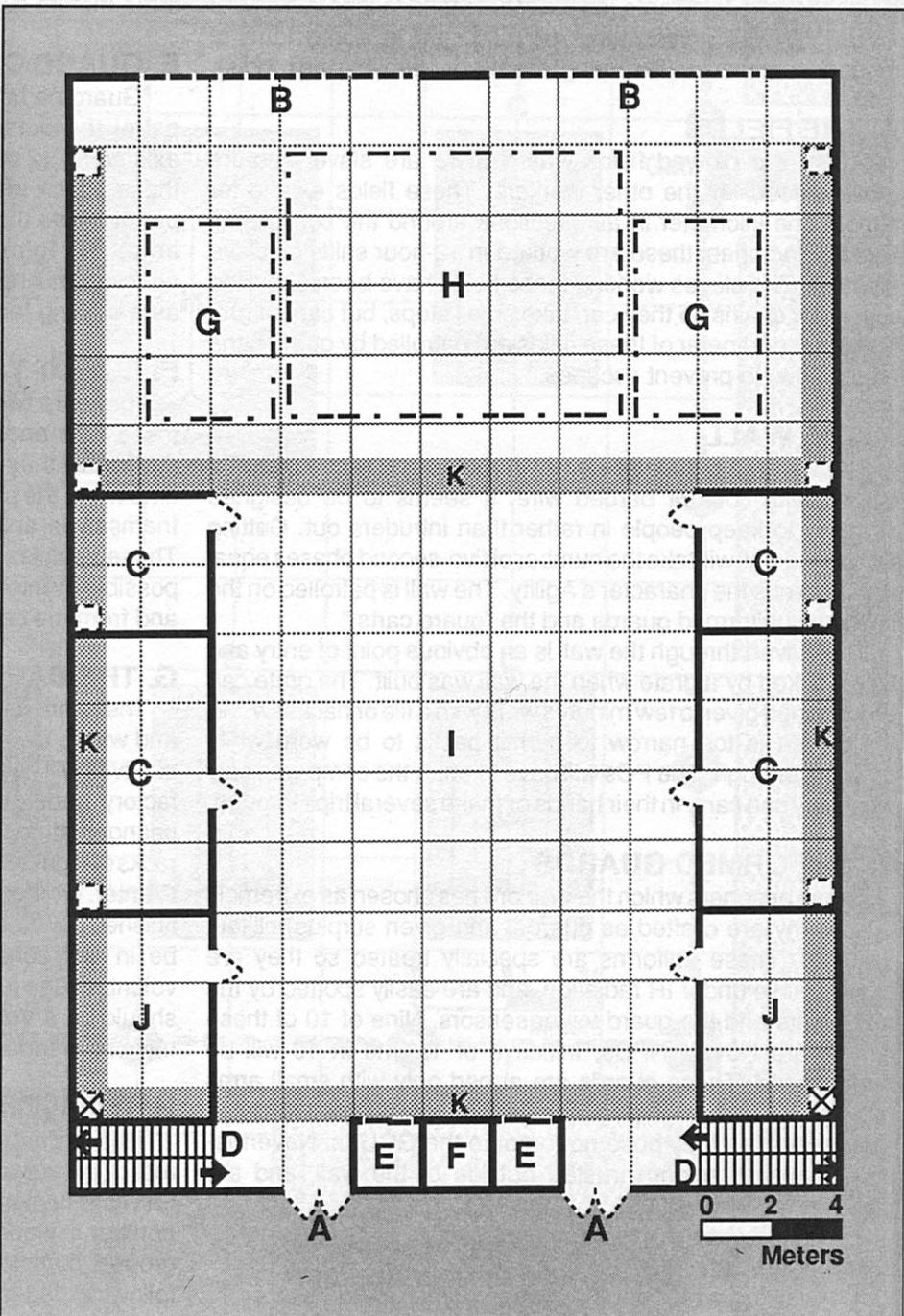
H. Large Vehicle Elevator: This elevator, like the small vehicle elevators, is operated by hydraulic machinery on the lowest level. It is a large platform in the floor, and is separated from the main vehicle bay by an open-work wall of metal bars with large, electrically operated sliding gates permitting access. It is separated from the small elevators by a wall. This elevator is never used, according to the slaves.

I. Vehicle Bay: This is where the off-duty GCUX-1s are parked, hooked to recharge cables. It also serves as a break room for off-duty guards.

J. Ventilation Machinery: This room contains the air circulation machinery for the building complex, and is connected to

numerous ventilation ducts which run along the ceiling of each level and provide access to each room (eventually).

K. Ventilation Shafts: The ventilation shafts of the Work Shed complex are small, but characters can fit inside. Each room has one grill which must be removed (an action requiring one five-second combat phase) before the shaft can be entered or exited. The shafts cannot be used by any character wearing a pack or other bulky equipment, and movement along them is restricted to a crawl. The shafts provide cover from vision and IR viewers, but provide no armor protection. Grills are marked by small squares along the shafts. Descending/ascending shafts are marked by squares containing Xs.



LEVELS 2 TO 9

Levels 2-9 of the underground factory are identical, and are arranged as a giant assembly line for the GCUX vehicles (at the moment). Referees should cover this text when copying the page for player use.

Following are brief descriptions of each component of these levels:

A. Assembly Lines: Each assembly line incorporates lathes, milling machines, and other machinery for the manufacture of parts as well as tools for assembly of subcomponents into the final product. Each assembly line receives input from the floor below (via the small vehicle elevators) and feeds to the line on the floor above (via the same elevator). Each level has approximately 40 slaves, 6-10 skilled craftsmen, and eight armed guards. IR television cameras monitor the assembly line, but not the stairs or the elevator shafts.

B. Tunnels to Component Storerooms:

Storerooms: Each floor has a great number of component storerooms, large, cavernous areas about 80 meters by 40 meters filled with raw materials on the lower floors, subassemblies on the middle floors, and finished products on the upper levels.

C. Storage: These are storerooms where temporary storage of critical components takes place, and where food and water for the slaves on duty are stored until dispensed. Each room has a human guard on duty at all times.

D. Stairs: These are used as a backup for workers in case the elevators are in use or under repair.

E. Personnel Elevators (2): These are provided for use by the slaves and guards.

F. Counterweight Shaft: The elevator counterweights use this shaft. Characters can rappel down it, but it is walled off from each floor except the top (by 20 centimeters of concrete). It has no access on these levels.

G. Small Vehicle Elevators (2): Per previous description.

H. Large Vehicle Elevator: Per previous description.

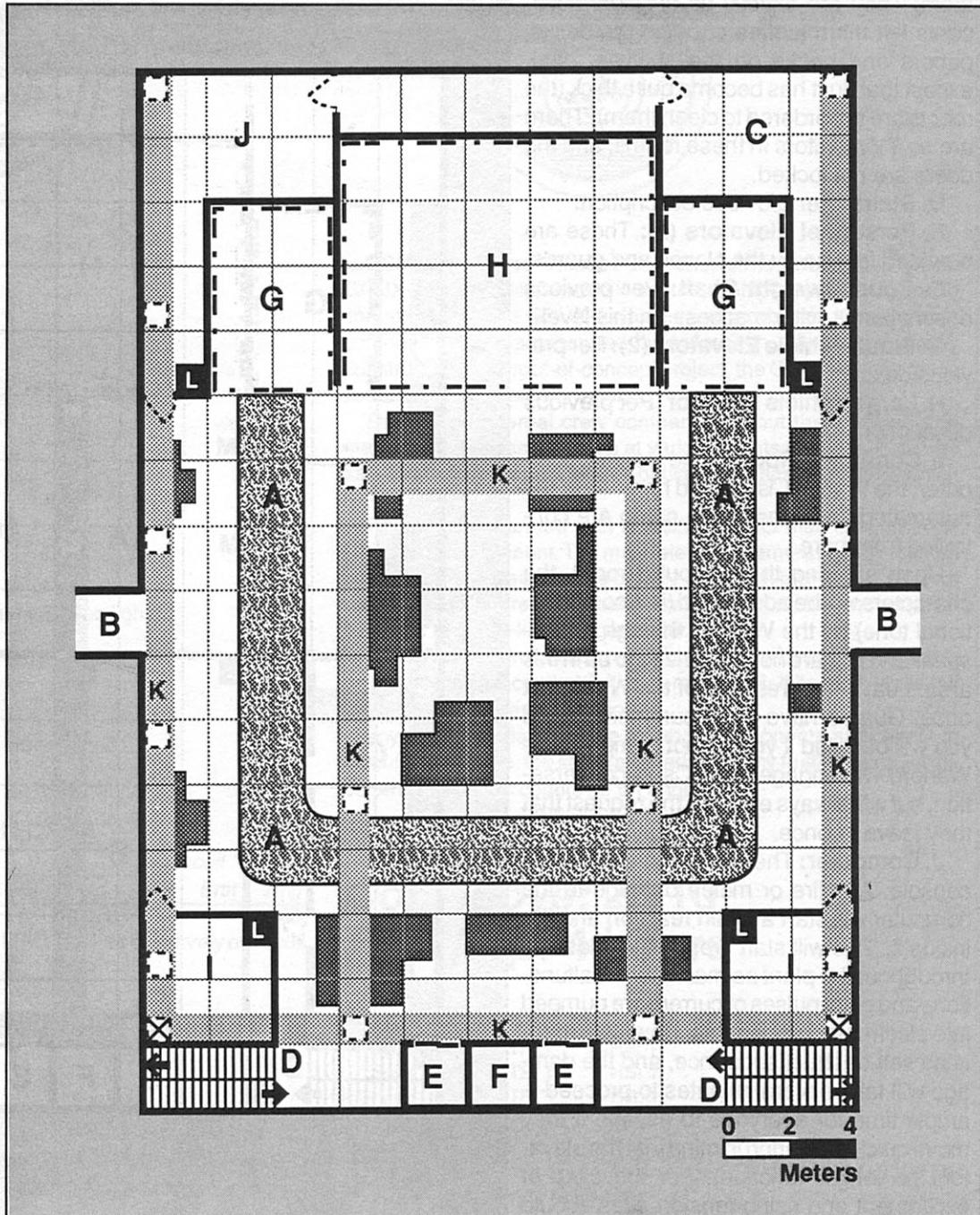
I. Specialty Machine Shops: These rooms contain craftsmen and their tools, and are used for the manufacture of the electronic components requiring skilled labor. They are

constantly monitored by IR television cameras and a pair of armed human guards.

J. Guard Rooms: When off-duty, the guards take shelter here for rest and meals.

K. Ventilation Shafts: These are small, but characters can fit inside. Each room has one grill which must be removed (an action requiring one combat phase) before the shaft can be entered or exited. The shafts cannot be used by characters wearing packs or other bulky equipment, and movement along them is restricted to a crawl. They provide cover from vision and IR viewers, but provide no armor protection. Grills are marked by small squares along the shafts. Descending/ascending shafts are marked by squares containing Xs.

L. Automated Machinegun Posts: These contain twin M60 machineguns, 5000 rounds of ammo in continuously linked belts, automated jam-clearing machinery, IR television cameras, and electronic control equipment, linked to the computer on Level 10. The MGs are behind six centimeters of steel plate.



LEVEL 10

Following are brief descriptions of the components of this level:

A. GCUX-3 Room: This room contains the only example of this vehicle in existence, and it is presently in the final stages of completion. The workers on this vehicle are closely watched by both uniformed guards and by television monitors to assure that the work they do is of the highest quality.

B. Briefing Room: The human guards working for the Warlord receive their instructions from several loudspeakers in this room. All exits from it are locked, and controlled by the central computer (the Warlord). The room can be pumped full of CS gas in 10 seconds, in order to control possible riots.

C. Offices: Formerly the offices of the laboratory complex, these rooms are now unused, as the Warlord no longer requires them. They are exactly as their old occupants left them (coffee cups on the desks, papers and books on the shelves, etc.), except that dust has become quite thick (the robots are not ordered to clean them). There are no TV monitors in these rooms, and the doors are not locked.

D. Stairs: Per previous description.

E. Personnel Elevators (2): These are provided for use by the slaves and guards.

F. Counterweight Shaft: Per previous description. It has no access on this level.

G. Small Vehicle Elevators (2): Per previous description.

H. Large Vehicle Elevator: Per previous description.

I. Computer Room: The central computer, the Warlord, is located here. All of the automated functions of the camp are controlled from here.

Upon entering the computer room, the characters will be addressed (in a conversational tone) by the Warlord through a loudspeaker: "You are not authorized to be in this area. Leave the presence of the Warlord at once. Guards have been summoned, and you will be killed if you do not comply." The Warlord will engage the PCs in conversation, but will always end with the request that they leave at once.

J. Computer: The Warlord is a computer console. Any fire or melee damage to the computer will start a chain reaction and fire inside it. This will start fires and explosions throughout the plant as machinery malfunctions and giant pulses of current are pumped into electronic components. However, there is no self-destruct sequence, and the damage will take several minutes to proceed—ample time for everyone to escape if they move quickly (bearing in mind that the elevators no longer function). For the sake of excitement and rising tension, fires should

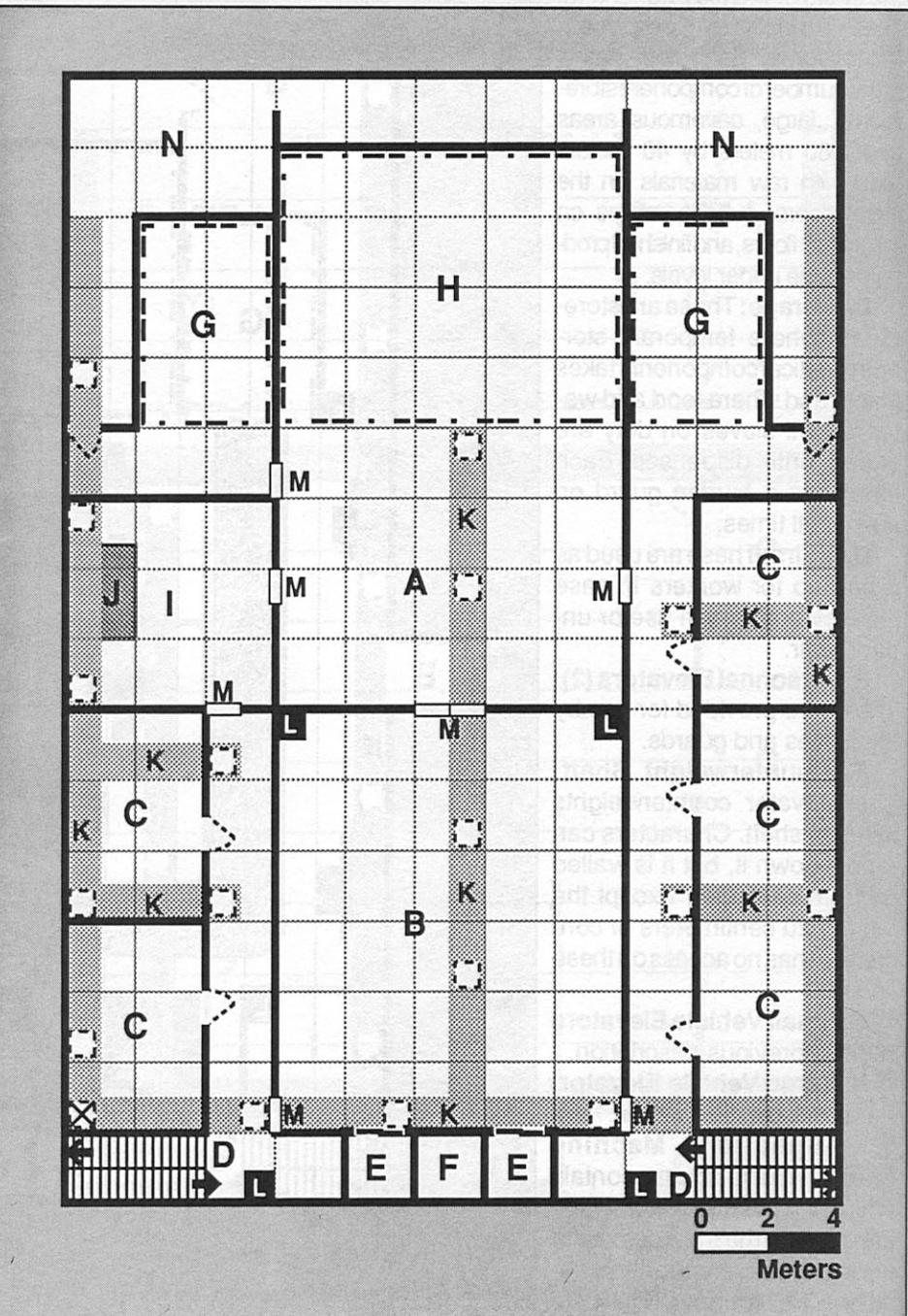
be constantly breaking out just behind the group. Explosions, showers of sparks, and similar events can be used by the referee to keep the PCs from lingering and gathering souvenirs.

K. Armored Doors: These doors are controlled by the central computer (the Warlord). They are made of 10 centimeters of armor plate, and thus have an armor value of 2. Any penetrating small arm round will have one chance in 10 of destroying the auto-locking mechanism. Things like LAW or Armbrust will just blow the door right off its hinges. Conventional doors are unlabeled.

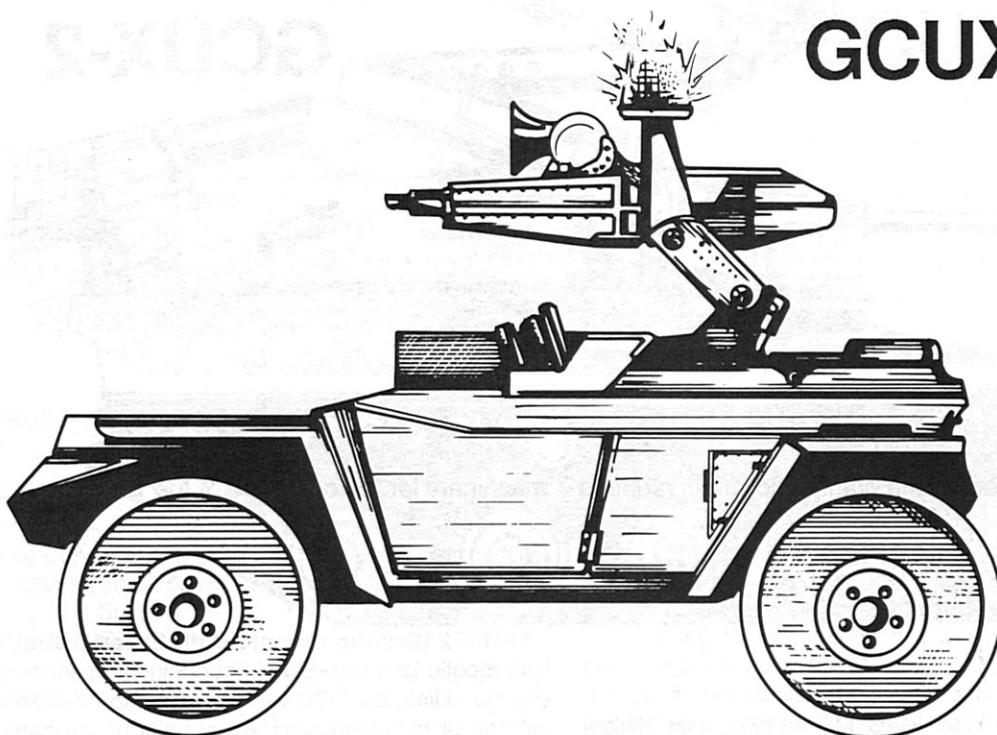
L. Machinegun Positions: Per previous description, except that these are also equipped to fire 40mm CS gas grenades from an integral 40mm autogrenade launcher (100 grenades per position, belted).

M. Ventilation Shafts: Per previous description.

N. Elevator Machinery: These rooms contain the hydraulic machinery for the operation of the vehicle elevators.



GCUX-1



Price: N/A (—)

Initiative: 3

Stabilization: None

Armament: MAG MG

Ammo: 100 7.62mm N

Fuel Type: Battery

Load: 3.2 tons

Veh Wt: 1 ton

Crew: None

Mnt: 4

Night Vision: White light spotlight

Damage Record

Sight/Vision: Gun sight Camera Spotlight

Radio:

MAG MG:

Traverse:

Engine:

Suspension: Minor damage Immobilized

WEAPON DATA

—Recoil*—

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	SS	Brst	Rng
MAG MG	10	4	2-3-Nil	6	100B	—	—	65

* Being in a vehicular mount, this MAG MG has effectively no recoil.

GCUX-1 (Ground Combat Unit, Experimental, Model 1): The GCUX-1 is a prototype robotic security vehicle operated by radio command link. The GCUX-1 was the first production series robotic combat vehicle manufactured by ArAmTech. Although originally constructed as a proof-of-concept project, the GCUX-1 has proven useful as a light security vehicle.

There is no internal crew compartment, but there are several maintenance access hatches at various points on the hull, as well as a small speaker unit, siren, spotlight, and flashing blue warning light.

The vehicle is armed with a 7.62mm MAG machinegun in an elevated remote mount. The main television camera is also mounted coaxial with the weapon. It is battery-powered, and has a sufficient charge for six hours of normal operation. It must then recharge for 12 hours at a 100-kilowatt generator.

The GCUX-1 is in constant communication with a controlling unit, and has a normal combat Initiative rating of 3. If its radio is put out of action, its ceases to function.

Any crew hits damage the internal components sufficiently to disable the vehicle, the same as a radio hit. Any fuel hit destroys the batteries and thus counts as an engine hit.

Tr Move: 100/20

Com Move: 25/10

Fuel Cap: 4 hours

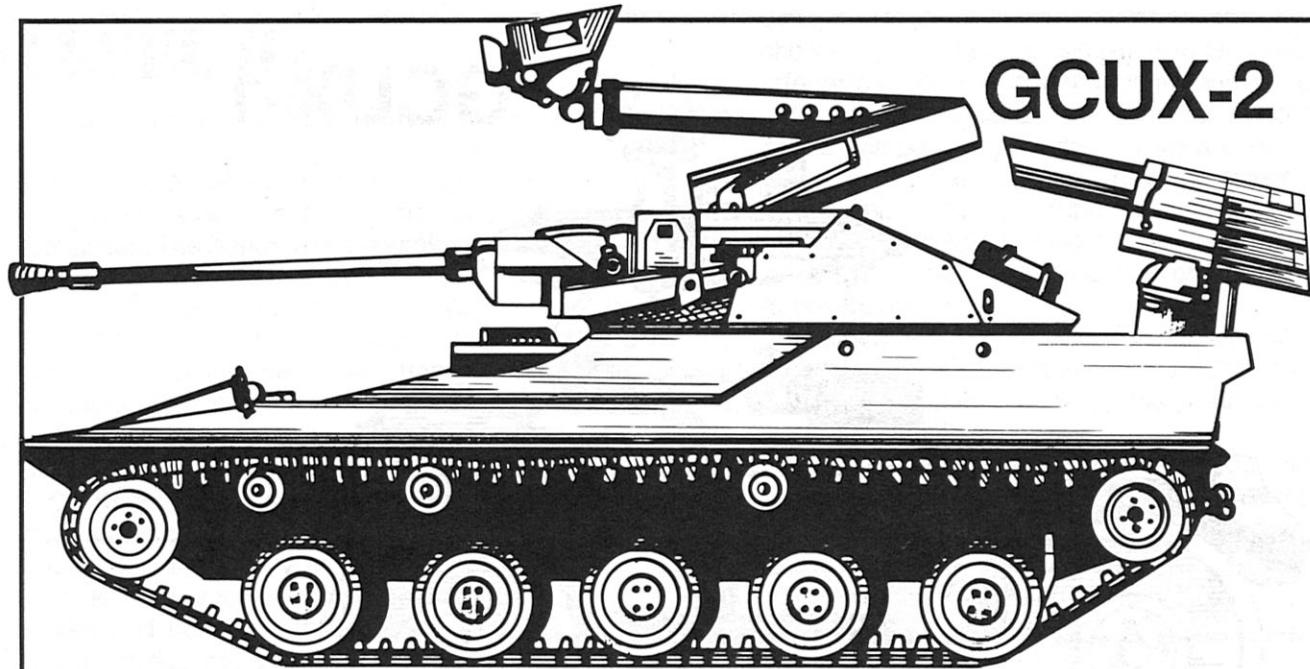
Combat Statistics

Config: CIH	TF: 1	HF: 1
Susp: W(2)	TS: 1	HS: 1
	TR: 1	HR: 1

AMMUNITION

Use standard ammo records on page 253 of Twilight: 2000 2nd edition for 7.62mm N belts.

GCUX-2



Price: N/A (—/—)

Initiative: 3

Stabilization: Good

Armament: 25mm chain gun, MAG MG coaxial, twin Hellfire launcher

Ammo: 200x25mm, 500x7.62mm, 2xHellfire

Fuel Type: D, G, AvG, A

Load: 0.5 tons

Veh Wt: 11 tons

Crew: None

Mnt: 14

Night Vision: Thermal Imaging

Damage Record

Crew (Computer):

Sight/Vision: Gun sight Range finder Main camera Laser designator

Remote Sensor Package:

Radio:

25mm Chain Gun:

MAG MG (Coaxial):

Hellfire Launcher:

Traverse:

Engine:

Fuel (% Consumed or Destroyed):

Suspension: Minor damage Immobilized

WEAPON DATA

Weapon	ROF	Mag	Rng	Ammo	Damage	Pen
25mm	5	100B	250	APFSDSDU	14	13/9/3
			250	API	14	4/0/-2
			250	HE	C:1, B:2	-8C

—Recoil*—

Weapon	ROF	Dam	Pen	Blk	Mag	SS	Brst	Rng
MAG MG	10	4	2-3-Nil	6	100B	—	—	65

* Being in a vehicular mount, this MAG MG has effectively no recoil.

Type	R/d	Rng	Damage	Pen
Hellfire	2	4500*	C:12, B:12	160C

*Minimum range 250 meters.

GCUX-2 (Ground Combat Unit, Experimental, Model 2): A light robotic tank capable of operating independently or by radio command link, the GCUX-2 is intended to function as a scouting vehicle for human-crewed armor units or the heavier GCUX-3. There is no internal crew compartment, but there are several maintenance access hatches at various points on the hull and small turret. There is also a loudspeaker mounted on the turret.

The turret is armed with a 25mm chain gun and coaxial 7.62mm MAG machinegun. The main television camera is also mounted coaxial with the weapons, as is a laser range finder and designator. There is also an additional camera and laser designator on a telescoping arm used to look over walls and around corners. This sensor package is not armored when extended, although it retracts into an armored box when not in use.

Two Hellfire missiles are carried in an armored box on the vehicle's rear deck. These are laser-homing missiles and the GCUX-2's own laser is used to paint the target.

The GCUX-2 is usually in communication with a controlling unit, and has a normal combat Initiative rating of 3. If its radio is put out of action, its Initiative drops to 2. Each crew hit on the GCUX-2 damages its on-board computer and lowers its Initiative by 1.

Tr Move: 155/90

Com Move: 90/25

Fuel Cap: 520

Fuel Cons: 120

Combat Statistics

Config: CIH	TF: 8	HF: 8
Susp: T: 2	TS: 6	HS: 6
TR: 6	HR: 6	

AMMUNITION

Use standard ammo records on page 253 of *Twilight: 2000* 2nd edition for 25mm and 7.62mm belts.

Hellfire Missiles

SEEING IS BELIEVING

The month is October of 2000. Near the end of a long day, the PCs come across an abandoned farmhouse. They set up camp, eat a meager supper and turn in, hoping for a good night's rest.

One by one, they close their eyes, comforted by a warm fire and a roof over their heads.

One by one, they doze, lulled by the sound of the wind against the creaking house frame.

One by one, the PCs drift off to sleep—along with any sentries posted to keep watch.

One by one, they all begin to dream.

GOOD NIGHT, SLEEP TIGHT

The adventure is set just north of an east-west stretch of State Highway 20 in central Oregon. But it could take place on any abandoned farm beside any disrepaired highway in any shattered country in the world.

To head off any suspicions, a few sessions before running this adventure the referee may want to start making sentries check against CON once per half hour or hour to stay awake at night. This entire adventure takes place in the player characters' dreams (*what do you mean, cliché?*). It is imperative that the players believe their characters are awake all along and are experiencing the worst night

of their characters' lives.

Once all the PCs begin to dream (or "to nightmare," if you can imagine that as a verb) roll 1D6 per PC each combat turn. On a result of 6, a PC enters the collective dreamscape, joining any of his fellows already there. Any PCs who have not yet joined the dream will appear to be asleep to those who have. Player characters who are not "awake" cannot be roused by their friends. They will only make groggy, "almost awake" sounds and then fall back to sleep.

So what if people don't normally share the same dream. Stranger things have happened.

A HARD DAZE NIGHT

Outside the farmhouse, the weather has gone sour. The night sky is overcast, a strong wind blows through the yard, and leaves and twigs dance in the night air. The shutters upstairs are clattering against the house. All is dark.

Five turns after the first PC enters the dreamscape, someone will glance out the window. In the woods to the north beyond the farm buildings, glowing red lights are moving through the fields. They look for all the world like pairs of disembodied eyes. (*No, this isn't Dark Conspiracy—let's call it Twilight Zone: 2000.*)

I HEAR YOU KNOCKIN'

As the PCs scramble around in the dark house, a rock suddenly crashes through a window, followed by more rocks and chunks of wood through other windows. Red lights flash over the front and back doors. The PCs can hear shouts all around the house, but can't make out any words. Then whoever—or whatever—is outside bashes on the doors with its fists and what sounds like rifle butts.

A human-looking hand reaches through one window, then another, as someone climbs in on the south side of the house.

Out on the porches is the sound of cocking guns...

If this hasn't degenerated into a save-your-skin firefight by now I must commend your players on their nerves of steel.

SOMETHING WICKED

The PCs' assailants are killer-insane-never-too-many-NPCs-from-heck called Night Creepers. They are Veteran NPCs, wearing flak jackets and steel helmets, carrying flashlights fitted with red filters, and armed with M16A2s with bayonets and four magazines. Night Creepies (*uh...that's Creepers*) have bone-tight, gaunt faces and hands, five o'clock shadow, tattered combat uniforms, worn-out boots, rusty weapons and graffiti all over their helmet covers.

The big trick (*or treat*) is that Night Creepers have hit capacities like the PCs do—20 hits per hit location, not 20 total! There are two Night Creepers per PC, so the number will vary from group to group. If the player characters wipe out all the initial Night Creepers, bring in more! If any player characters try to escape, cut 'em down!

YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE IF IT KILLS YOU

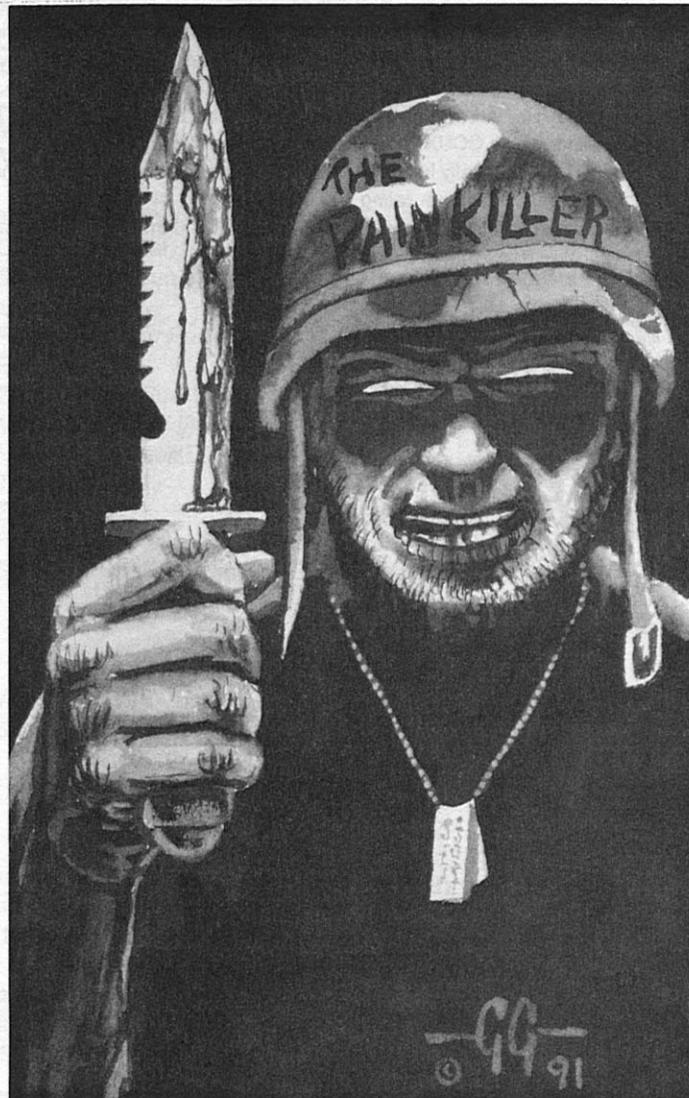
Eventually, all the player characters either die (*yep, you read it right*) or become unconscious. As soon as the last player character is overcome, the Night Creepers will vanish as suddenly as they appeared.

But surprise! Once the last of the Night Creepers goes the way of the dinosaur, the PCs all wake up. Really, this time—the nightmare is over, and everyone is safe and sound. Sweating buckets, but fine.

EPILOGUE

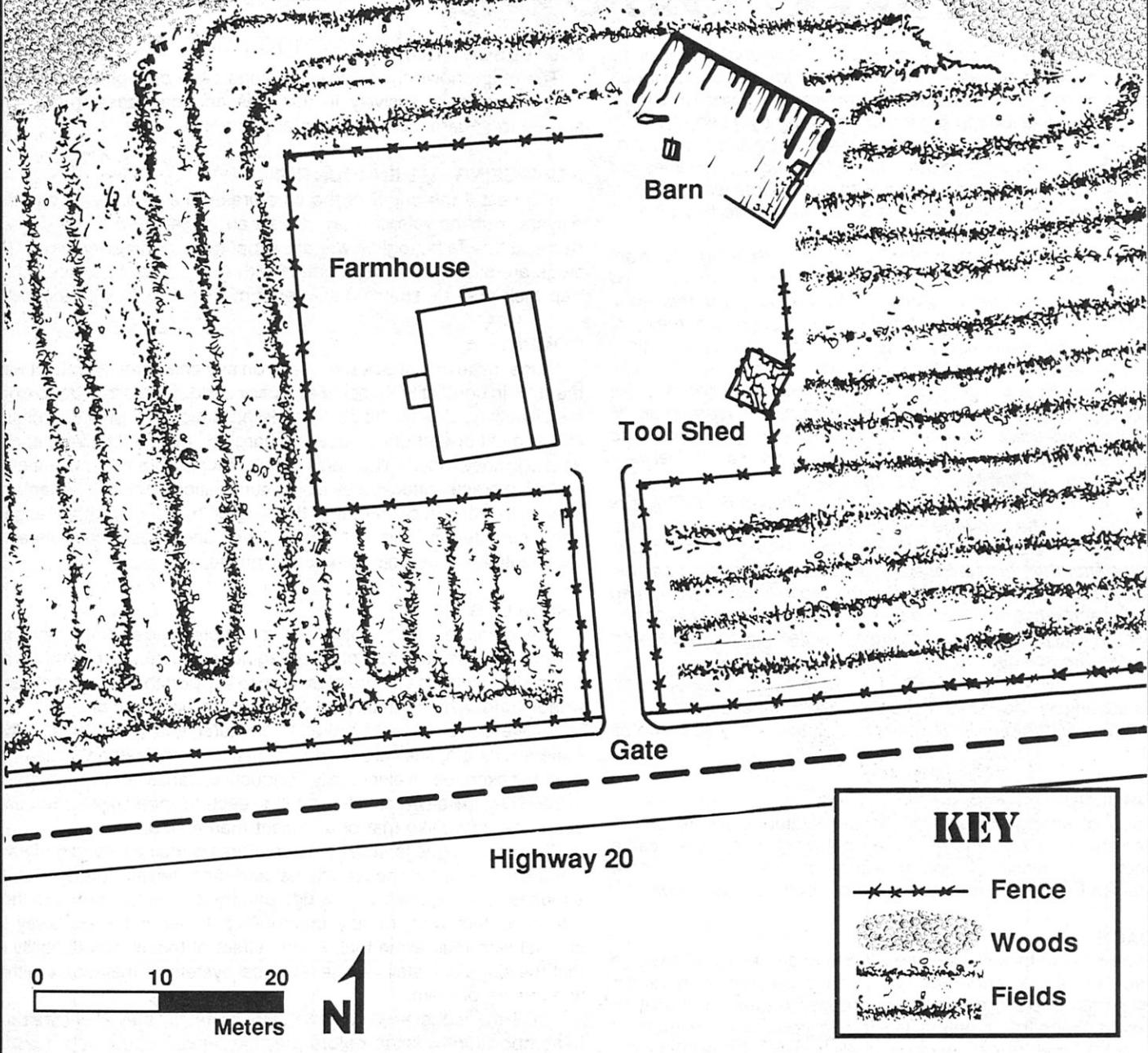
Okay, the party's over. Everybody wake up and go home.

Nothing really happened—it was all just a bad dream. So who left the flashlight on the porch?



-99-
91

ABANDONED FARM



The adventure is set just north of an east-west stretch of State Highway 20 in central Oregon.

The farm is in a sorry state of disrepair. Junk and garbage are strewn about—left by previous stop-over groups and squatters who have long since moved on. A split-rail fence runs along the highway and the driveway and around the farm buildings. The driveway's gate is splintered and broken—it looks like a tracked vehicle ran over it.

A shed contains a few construction tools (see page 60 of *Twilight: 2000*). It is wood-sided, shingled and overgrown with tall grass and vines.

A large barn has been gutted by fire, a few months ago by the looks of it. Inside is 300 square feet of corrugated tin siding that

could be salvaged if anyone so desired.

The farmhouse is a large, once-comfortable two-story affair with a full basement. Broken furniture remains in a few of the rooms. Some of the windows are smashed, mostly on the top floor. A stone chimney runs up the north side of the building, and a single fireplace, on the main floor, is full of ashes.

A sizable porch runs the full length of the front of the house on the east side, and a smaller one graces the back door on the west side. Both front and back doors are intact and still on their hinges.

To the north of the farm is a large expanse of forest of mixed coniferous and deciduous trees. Stretching to east and west between the highway and the forest are what were once fields of grain, now overgrown with weeds.

ELECTRIC SLUGS

We ran across this deserted farm about noon that day. Haines and I drew the short straws and we went into town to scope it out. It was weird as all get-out! Bodies everywhere. Every once in a while you found a hole that looked like it had been dug by a two-foot-wide gopher, and these trails of disgusting greenish gelatin smeared all over—looked familiar, but I couldn't place them right off. Haines got to poking around and found a tunnel with some slime leading out of it that looked fresher than the others, so he decided to shine a flashlight down it.

As Haines is looking down the hole, I start thinking. I'm from Seattle, and up in that part of the world we got these things called geoducks. They are great big, obscenely shaped slugs that leave disgusting trails of slime everywhere. If you step on 'em, they just dissolve into more slime, and you got this gooey stuff all over your foot. Anyway, about the time I think, "Hmmm... these trails look like they were made by a big geoduck... nah," Haines is knocked flat on his back, frothing at the mouth, and kicking his legs. Then he goes still and lays there moaning. As I start over to help him out, so help me, the mother of all slugs... a geoduck that was 10 feet long if it was an inch... rears up out of the hole.

Well, I took the GL off safety and put a forty-mike-mike through its "head." Literally. The grenade didn't have time to arm, and went through the critter's body with a squishy "plup" sound. It didn't look too healthy after that, but I emptied my M16 into it for good measure. That seemed to slow it down considerably, so I slipped a fresh mag into the rifle and emptied that one as well. Then I grabbed Haines by the collar (he was just starting to come to), pulled him to his feet, and we both ran like scalded dogs.

In this adventure, the characters encounter strange, unexplainable creatures. It is suitable for insertion into practically any scenario as a subplot.

BACKGROUND

A group of strange creatures has devastated a village and is remaining there for reasons explained below. Whether they came from another dimension, another world, or are the result of a biological warfare experiment gone out-of-control is not known.

APPROACH

At some point in their travels, the PC group comes upon a village totally devoid of life, and that has been subjected to a recent disaster, judging from the number of corpses (human and animal) lying around. Upon investigation, the PCs will discover a number of small (about 0.5 meters in diameter) tunnels burrowed throughout the village, and lined with a vile-smelling slime.

As the PCs are investigating, a wet, sloppy sound comes from one of the tunnel mouths, and a few seconds later, one of the electric slugs appears.

MAP DESCRIPTION

The map shows the village the slugs have occupied. The slugs have tunneled extensively in the area and can pass freely from square to square, coming up in any area they wish.

REFEREEING THE ENCOUNTER

It is best if the origin of the creatures remains a mystery to the players, but the referee may devise an explanation if the players demand one (a biological warfare experiment gone awry, etc.). The slugs are attracted to any contact with their slime trails, since they trap their prey by stunning it when it makes contact with the trail.

COMBAT

Slugs make one attack per phase on any character in contact with them, or in contact with their electrically conductive slime up to eight meters away, unless the slug made an attack the previous phase (slugs must spend one phase "recharging" before attacking again, although they may stall a vehicle's electrical system at any time).

Any character attacked by a slug automatically takes 2D6 damage in each location in contact with the slug or its slime (if within range). The character is also knocked down, and must roll (Average: Constitution) to be able to rise that phase.

THE SLUGS

The creatures only outwardly resemble slugs. They have an internal support structure of a cartilaginous substance that serves as a primitive skeleton and enables them to support their internal organs without undue hydrostatic pressure building up in any one spot. The slugs are about a half a meter in diameter and from three to five meters in length. They are covered with a smooth, leathery, blue-gray skin that excretes an electrically conductive, translucent bluish-green slime. They have two small eyestalks, each topped by a compound eye rather more like that of an insect than a slug.

The most unique feature of the creatures is their ability to generate electricity (similar to the electric eel and other terrestrial animals) as a means of killing their prey. Slugs can try to stun any creature they are in contact with, or any creature up to eight meters away in contact with their slime trail. A side effect of this electrical ability is that the slugs can stall vehicle electrical systems if they come within two meters of them.

Since the slugs have no jaws and no teeth, they must wait for decomposition to set in before they can feed.

The creatures' statistics are listed at the bottom of the page.

Slugs can move 10 meters per phase underground, 20 meters on the surface, and can spring 30 meters through the air if they spend one phase coiling themselves up first.

ELECTRIC SLUG STATISTICS

Animal	Meat	Move	# Appearing	Hits	Attack	Hit #	Damage	CON
Electric slug	1D6x20kg	10/20/30*	N/A	40	80%	6	2D6†	25

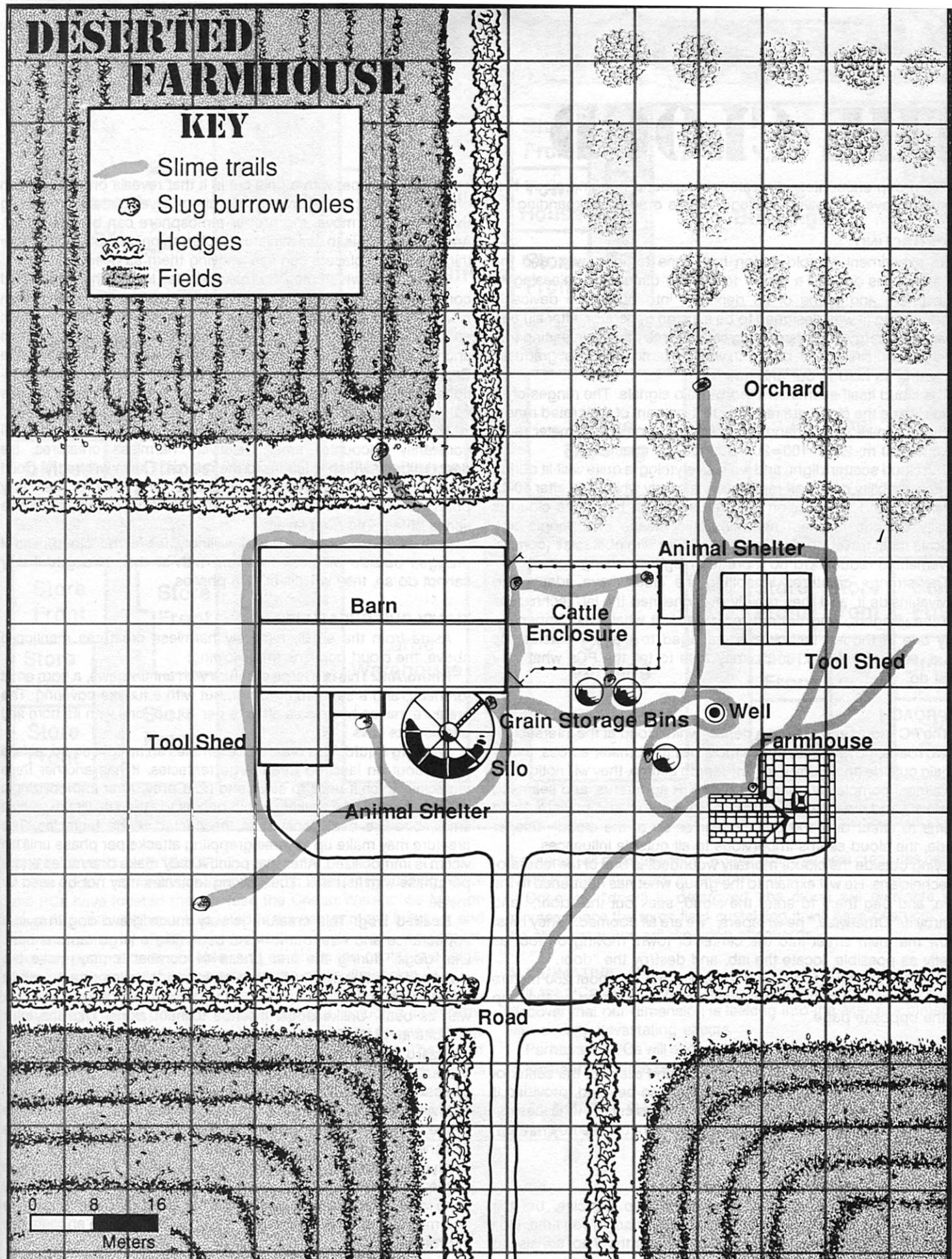
* Move is underground/surface/leap

† Damage is only done every other phase

DESERTED FARMHOUSE

KEY

- Slime trails
- Slug burrow holes
- Hedges
- Fields



THE CLOUD

The group encounters a mysterious, ground-hugging cloud that seems to have swallowed a village, and is gradually expanding.

BACKGROUND

An experiment in cold fusion has gone terribly awry, and the apparatus has opened a "door" to another dimension, releasing its atmosphere and some of its denizens into ours. The device is self-powering (it was designed to be a fusion generator, after all) and generates energy at an increasing rate as time passes, meaning that the field containing the other universe's atmosphere is gradually increasing its hold in our universe.

The cloud itself seems to absorb radio signals. The ranges of all radios inside the cloud are reduced to 1 percent of their rated range, so that a two-kilometer hand radio would become a 20-meter radio ($2 \text{ km} = 2000 \text{ m}; 2000 \div 100 = 20$). Sounds are unaffected.

The cloud scatters light, and while everything is quite well-lit during the day, visibility drops off rapidly into a pearly whiteness after 10-12 meters (IR and night vision apparatus do not help: The cloud is equally opaque to them as well). This means that people and vehicles must travel slowly to avoid colliding with obstacles (combat movement is reduced to no more than eight—walking speed).

The strange creatures inhabiting the cloud have adapted to survival inside it, and they rapidly overwhelmed the lab technicians and the villagers, who did not realize at first what was happening. Only one of the lab technicians managed to make it outside the cloud, severely injured, and barely able to tell the PCs what they must do.

APPROACH

The PC group encounters a dense, white cloud at the intersection of two roads, covering an area almost half a kilometer across. If they remain outside and study it for any length of time, they will notice that it is almost completely opaque, even to IR apparatus, and seems to be slowly and steadily expanding, both outward and upward. Wind seems to affect only the outer meter or so of the cloud—deeper inside, the cloud seems impervious to all outside influences.

Lying outside the cloud, mortally wounded, is one of the laboratory technicians. He will explain to the group what has happened in the town, and beg them to enter the cloud, seek out the "door," and destroy it. "Otherwise," he whispers, "we are all doomed." They must follow the main street into the center of town, moving on foot as quietly as possible, locate the lab, and destroy the "door."

The PCs will have to follow the main street for about 250 meters or so, before they encounter the central area depicted by the map on the opposite page.

MAP DESCRIPTION

The map shows the buildings, streets, and alleys of the center of the village. Any suitable urban street plan can be used, provided it has a single, large warehouse-like building at its center—the location of the laboratory and the "door." The streets are blocked by random crashed and burnt-out vehicles.

REFEREEING THE ENCOUNTER

This scenario needs to be done as a map exercise, but the players can only see a small part of the map at any given time. One way to accomplish this is to make an overlay for the map, consisting

of a sheet of paper with a hole cut in it that reveals only the portion of the map that the players can see at any given instant. By moving this as the PCs move, the proper atmosphere can be maintained. Another method is to use miniatures, placing on the board only those things that the players can see, moving them as need be.

Each turn in which the PCs make a noise louder than whispered conversation (shouts, explosions, gunfire, etc.) or move faster than a walk, the group must roll to see if something has detected them and is moving in. On a 1D6 roll of 5+, something has detected them and will arrive at the edge of their vision 1D6 phases later (roll on the Encounter and Animal Data Chart, page 85). Whispered conversations, movement slower than a walk, or other relative quiet sounds will not attract attention. Any running vehicle engine will, however.

Throughout their sojourn in the cloud, however, the PCs will constantly encounter small, relatively harmless creatures, the description of which is left up to the referee. These will be the cloud equivalent of mice, sparrows, butterflies, and so on. Their only purpose is to add to the sinister, unearthly atmosphere and instill a sense of fear into the players.

The cloud creatures will not willingly leave the cloud, and if dragged outside will seek to return with all their strength. If they cannot do so, they will die in 1D6 phases.

THE CLOUD CREATURES

Aside from the small, relatively harmless creatures mentioned above, the cloud contains the following:

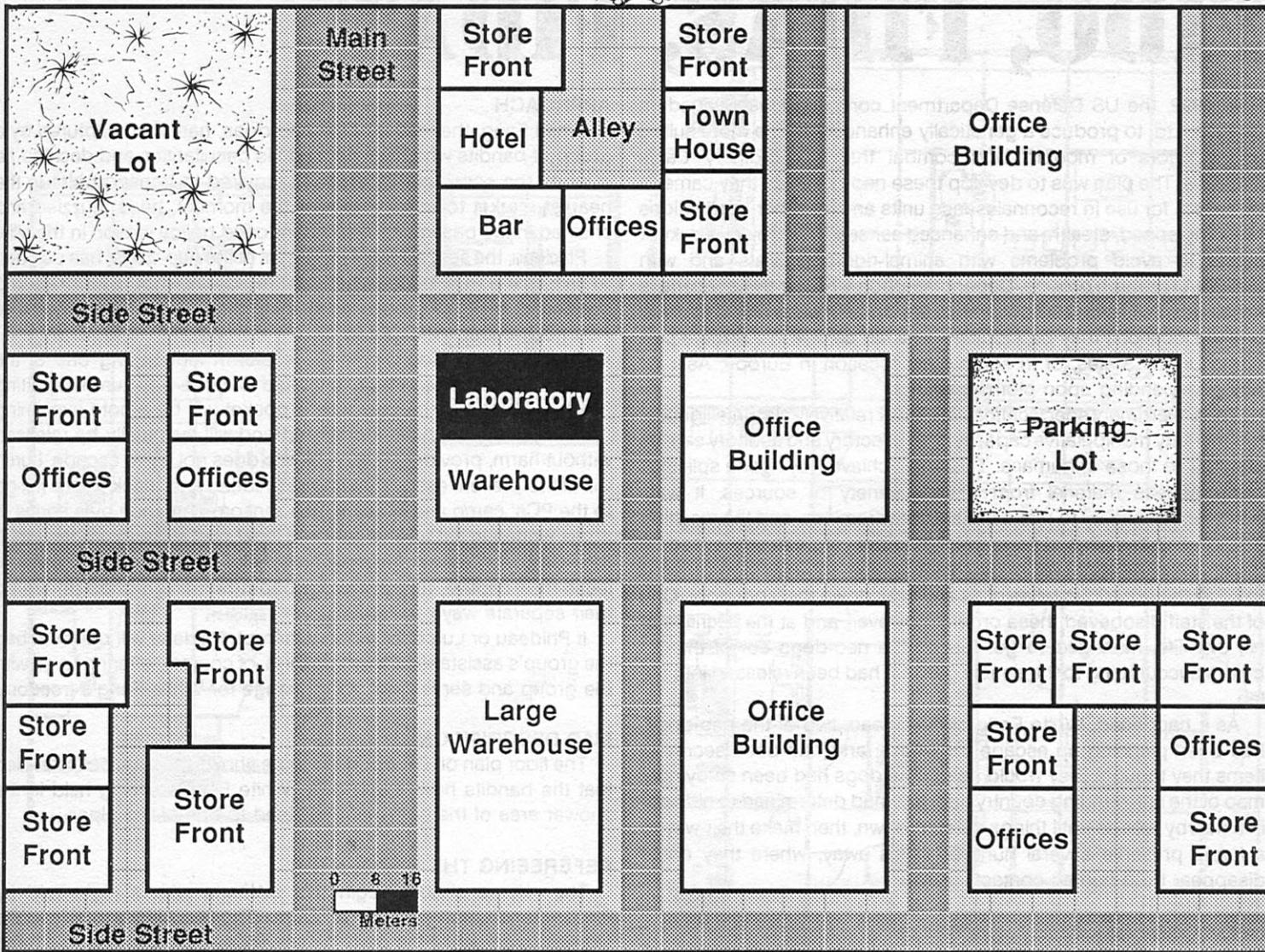
Rhino/Ant: This is a large creature with ant-like jaws, a horn on its forehead, and a segmented body, but with a fur-like covering. This creature makes two melee attacks per round, one with its horn and one with its jaws.

Walking Squid: This creature resembles an upright squid, able to walk about on land on three large tentacles. It has another three tentacles which it uses to seize and hold prey. After immobilizing a victim in its grip, the walking squid begins to shred its victim using a small, bird-like beak located at the center of the tentacles. This creature may make up to three grappling attacks per phase until the victim is immobilized. After that point, it may make one melee attack per phase with its beak. The walking tentacles may not be used for melee.

Beaked Dog: This creature is very much like a dog in overall appearance and size, but it has a beak (like a large raptorial bird). Like dogs, during the first phase of combat it may make two simultaneous attacks (a diving attack and a melee attack with its beak); each subsequent phase, it may only make one melee attack with its beak. Unlike dogs, it tends to hunt alone. Like the other inhabitants of the fog, it hunts by smell and sound.

Lizard: This creature is the only major herbivore the PCs will encounter. It is about the size and shape of a monitor lizard, but it has several large, deadly looking spikes on its tail. It is a plant-eater, and will probably flee unless cornered or surprised. It can do one melee attack per phase, with its tail. These and the flying shrimp are the only creatures the PCs will encounter in groups.

Flying Shrimp: This creature looks like a foot-long shrimp with leathery, bat-like wings, and claws like a lobster. Like a bat, it flies by echo-location and locates its prey by the same means. It may make one melee attack per phase, using its claws. They are encountered in groups.



THE LAB AND THE "DOOR"

The "door" dominates the inside of the laboratory building. Once the PCs have located the lab (use the Cheap Warehouse Map on page 184 of *Twilight*). It is located in the center of the building, and is a six meter by eight meter collection of electronic equipment, motors, pumps, coils of cable, and so on. In the center is a large, glowing sphere which is the entry to the other dimension.

Destroying the "Door": The "door" may be destroyed by subjecting it to 500 points of combat damage, including small arms fire, explosives, burn damage, armed melee damage (taking a sledge hammer to the sucker), or any combination of the above. The "door" is unarmored and will prove difficult to miss; the only drawback is

that noise will draw attention. Remember that new creatures can also come through the gate at random.

Once the "door" is destroyed, the cloud will dissipate within minutes, since the force field sustaining it will have been cut off. All the alien creatures will die soon afterwards.

ALTERNATIVE

If the PCs wish to try to enter the alternate dimension, let them discover that our dimension is leaking into the alternate dimension, with equally devastating effects.

Perhaps the PCs will encounter a team of alien mercenaries, trying to locate the source of their problem and deal with it?

ENCOUNTER AND ANIMAL DATA CHART: THE CLOUD

Die Roll	Animal	Meat	Move	# Appearing	Hits	Attack	Hit #	Damage	CON
1	Rhino/Ant	1D6x20kg	8/15/30	1	40	60%	6	3D6	25
2	Walking squid	1D6x10kg	5/10/30	1	25	90%	4	2D6	12
3	Beaked dog	1D6x2kg	15/30/60	1	5	80%	6	1D6	2
4,5	Lizard	1D6x2kg	15/30/60	2D6	5	40%	6	1D6	3
6	Flying shrimp	1D6x1kg	5/20/80	1D6	3	60%	4	1D6+3	1

FIDO, FIDAS, FIDAT

In 1992, the US Defense Department contracted with Saunders Biotech, Ltd. to produce a genetically enhanced canine more suited to the rigors of modern land combat than the ordinary *Canis familiaris*. The plan was to develop these neo-dogs (as they came to be called) for use in reconnaissance units and for other applications requiring speed, stealth, and enhanced senses. The project was kept secret to avoid problems with animal-rights activists and with anti-DNA research groups. Depending upon whether this scenario is used with *Twilight: 2000* or *Merc: 2000*, the government involved and the locations may be modified. The lab can be in a remote part of the United States, or in some other location in Europe, Asia, or Africa, depending upon plot necessity.

The government specifications called for relatively high intelligence, rudimentary manipulative capacity, and olfactory and auditory senses superior to those of humans. This was achieved by "gene splicing" using genetic material from a wide variety of sources. It was, however, necessary to make certain compromises, and the resulting animal exhibited several flaws which had not yet been addressed by the time the Twilight War began. At that time, the staff was ordered to kill all the experimental animals and shut down the laboratory. One of the staff disobeyed these orders, however, and at the sacrifice of his own life, managed to get four of the neo-dogs out of the lab before succumbing to the deadly gas that had been released into the lab.

As it happened, White Fang and Phideau, two of the neo-dogs, had been planning an escape for weeks, and had been secreting items they thought they would need. The dogs had been studying a map of the surrounding countryside, and had determined to hide out in a nearby woods until things quieted down, then make their way to a forest preserve several hundred miles away, where they could disappear from human contact.

NEO-DOGS

Neo-dogs look like normal dogs from a distance, but upon closer inspection, several differences become apparent. A neo-dog's head looks too wide for a dog, and its nose appears slightly truncated. This was necessitated by the need to increase the size of the skull to accommodate a larger brain.

The legs were left largely unmodified, and therefore the neo-dogs have rather restricted limb movement (they have, for example, no brachiating capacity—they cannot swing from limb to limb, like primates) and they cannot stand on their hind legs for more than a few minutes at a time. Short, stubby fingers on the forepaws (not completely usable as hands, and not very good paws, either) complete the external modifications. Neo-dogs can handle and use almost all human tools, but suffer an automatic drop of one level of difficulty in all tasks requiring the use of human tools, because of their clumsy hands.

It was not possible to modify the vocal apparatus of the neo-dog enough to permit speech, but neo-dogs can understand human speech perfectly (also, one of the neo-dogs can read and write). Neo-dog intelligence is about equivalent to that of an average human (some of them are smarter than others, however, as noted below), but their thought patterns are slightly different.

APPROACH

White Fang, the leader of the neo-dogs, has been captured by a group of bandits who have noticed his peculiarities and decided he is worth the considerable expense required to transport him to the nearest market town for sale. For the moment, he is muzzled and chained in the basement of an abandoned police station in the hills.

Phideau, the second most intelligent of the neo-dogs, has decided to secure the PCs' cooperation in a rescue attempt, by kidnapping one member of the group and holding them captive until the other PCs help rescue White Fang.

If Lurch and Phideau are successful in kidnapping one of the group, that character will wake up tied to a tree with Lurch squatting nearby. Tucked in the character's pocket will be a note explaining that he or she has been kidnapped and will eventually be released without harm, providing that he or she does not try to escape. Lurch will act to prevent escape attempts. Phideau and Black Tooth will go to the PCs' camp and present their ransom demands by a series of notes written in felt tip marker on a legal pad stolen from the lab. If the PCs cooperate and help rescue White Fang, the neo-dogs will release their captive, and the two groups (humans and dogs) will go their separate ways.

If Phideau or Lurch fail in their attempt, Phideau will return to beg the group's assistance (in written form, of course), offering to go with the group and serve them, in exchange for White Fang's freedom.

MAP DESCRIPTION

The floor plan on the opposite page shows the rural police station that the bandits have taken over. White Fang is being held in the shower area of the basement, chained to one of the pipes.

REFEREEING THE ENCOUNTER

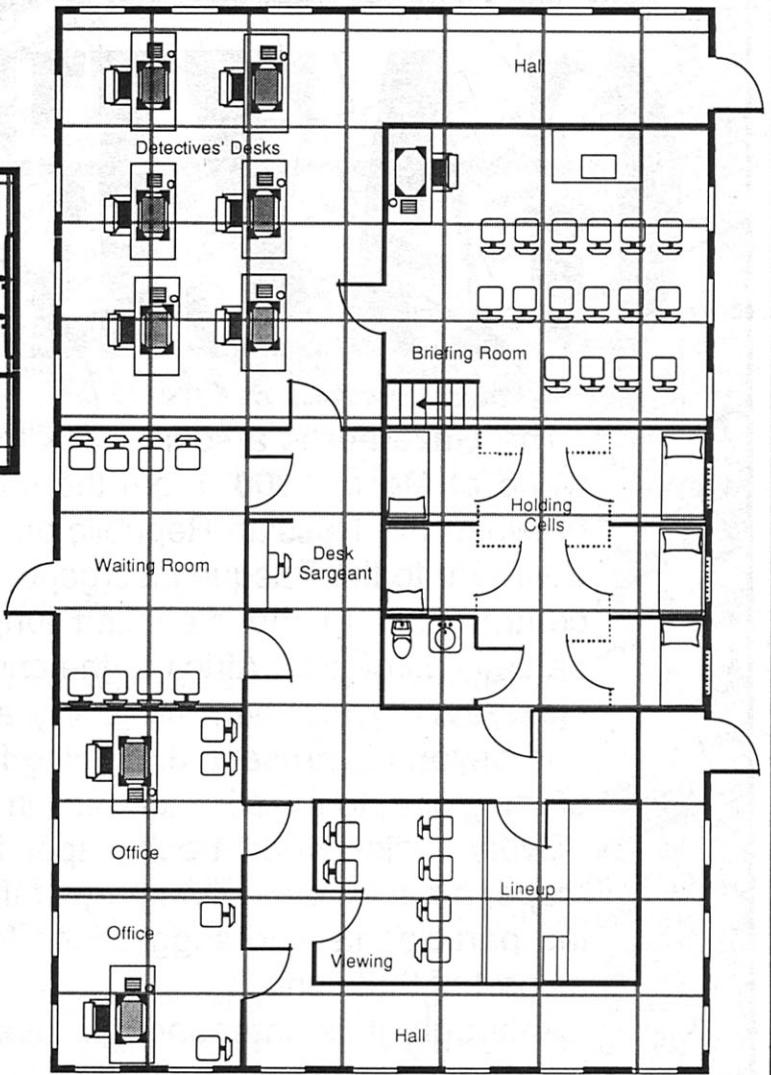
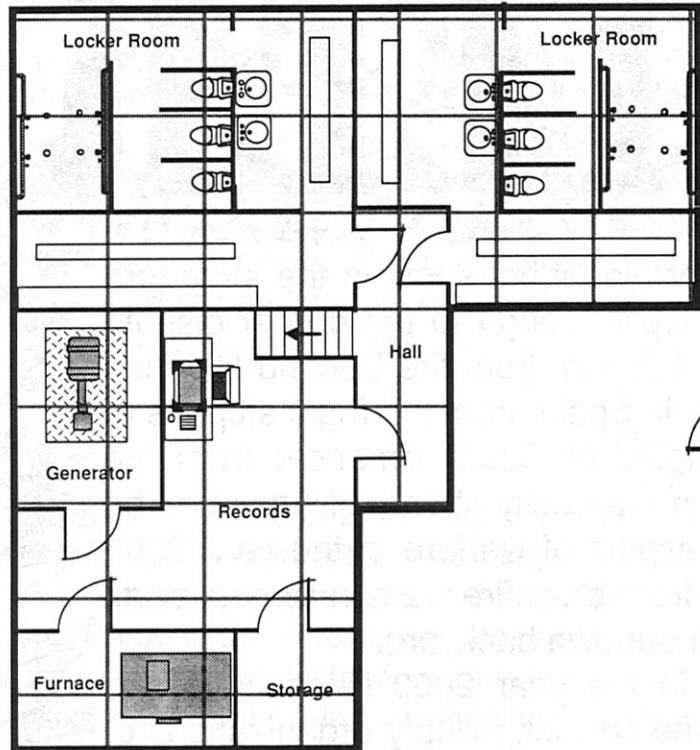
The referee should begin this scenario with a night raid by Phideau and Lurch on the PCs' camp. The two will try to kidnap the smallest member of the party by sneaking into camp, using a tranq autoinjector on the victim, and dragging that person out of camp, strapped into a special harness Phideau has prepared for Lurch. Phideau is armed with a .380 automatic pistol and a total of three tranq autoinjectors stolen from the lab during the escape.

The bandits are a group of three Experienced, one Veteran and four Novice NPCs, armed with assorted military and civilian weapons. They will have only one sentry posted during the day, and two at night, both of them located on the roof of the building.

NPCS

White Fang: White Fang is the leader of the neo-dog "pack," and is a male of mixed Alsatian/collie ancestry. White Fang is the most intelligent of the neo-dogs, and is "the brains of the outfit." Unfortunately, his devotion to Black Tooth caused him to take excessive risks in a recent encounter with a group of marauders, and because of this he was captured. White Fang weighs about 35 kilograms and is a Veteran NPC.

Black Tooth: Black Tooth is a pure-bred female Alsatian, and is White Fang's mate. Black Tooth is also pregnant, but it remains to be seen if neo-dogs are true-breeding. She is slightly more intelligent than Lurch, but less intelligent than Phideau.



Lurch: Based on a mastiff/Norwegian elkhound mix, Lurch is the largest of the neo-dogs to survive, and is certainly the most intimidating. He is also the least intelligent, and the least good with his "hands." Lurch was severely mistreated by a male janitor at the lab, and harbors an almost uncontrollable hatred for all male humans. Female humans he merely dislikes. He will obey Phideau and Black Tooth for the sake of getting White Fang back, but if either one is harmed by a human (especially a male) he will go berserk.

Phideau: The smallest of the neo-dogs, Phideau is a female developed from fox terrier stock (the smallest breed in which intelligence could be boosted by the Saunders lab's recombinant techniques), and is the second most intelligent of the neo-dogs after White Fang. Phideau was the favorite of one of the more humanitarian lab workers (the same one who would free the animals later), who would sneak into the lab at night for special exercise and training sessions. Among other results of this, Phideau can read and

write, though her printing resembles a child's and her spelling is atrocious. Phideau holds the least distrust of humans, and has an almost insatiable curiosity about them. She is the only neo-dog who has been practicing with a firearm, and has achieved Small Arms (Pistol): 2.

NEO-DOG STATISTICS

Name	Weight	Move	DEX	Hits	Initiative	Damage	STR*	CON
Phideau	10	16/32/64	6	3	4	1D6+2	1	1
Lurch	50	12/24/48	2	6	2	2D6	4	4
Black Tooth	20	15/30/60	3	5	3	1D6	3	2
White Fang	22	15/30/60	3	4	3	1D6	3	2

* For recoil purposes. Use the animal combat rules for melee combat.



THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

Press Liaison: Wilhelmina T. Hingarten
7 Dag Hammarskjold Plaza
New York, New York
Headquarters: 41 Avenue Giuseppa Motta
Geneva, Switzerland

Origins

The WMO was established on March 23, 1950. Its original charter made it responsible for promoting international exchange of weather reports and maximum standardization of observations. It also helped developing countries establish reliable weather prediction and initiated research into any meteorological conditions that might routinely affect jet aircraft, satellites, energy resources, etc.

A New Mission

However, as the 20th century came to a close, new turbulent weather patterns—largely caused by environmental mismanagement—were causing increasing numbers of crop failures and natural disasters around the world. Global warming, increasing pollutant levels, and unprecedented deforestation rates became concerns of international importance. However, given the political instability of the late 1990's, international accords to reverse this situation were generally short-lived and ineffectual. Consequently, it was decided that the best approach to these problems would be to make them the responsibility of a truly international body—the UN.

Rather than create a new organization, the General Assembly formulated a new, more ambitious mandate for the WMO: to uphold international accords that were concerned with maintaining the health and balance of our world's biosphere.

A New Force for Fresh Air

Unfortunately, the WMO's new ecological mission cannot always be achieved without the use of force. Many national governments wish to comply with international mandates, but lack the resources to compel obedience among all members of their society. For instance, most rain forests are still located in desperately poor areas, where the inhabitants feel compelled to exploit the rich ecologies of these biomes in order to survive. Consequently, the WMO frequently requests UN security assets and logistical support to protect the environment in such areas. As a result, the "blue helmets" that used to be associated with UN peacekeeping forces are now most frequently encountered protecting rain forests and enforcing conservancy mandates.

MESSAGE BEGINS

Fr: Ms. F. De Cantini
Special Operations Advisor
WMO
41 Avenue Giuseppa Motta
Geneva, Switzerland

Re: Amazon contract

Your inquiry and credentials received. We are prepared to offer \$US 2500 per week, per specialist, for services required. Transport to the area of operations will be provided free of charge.

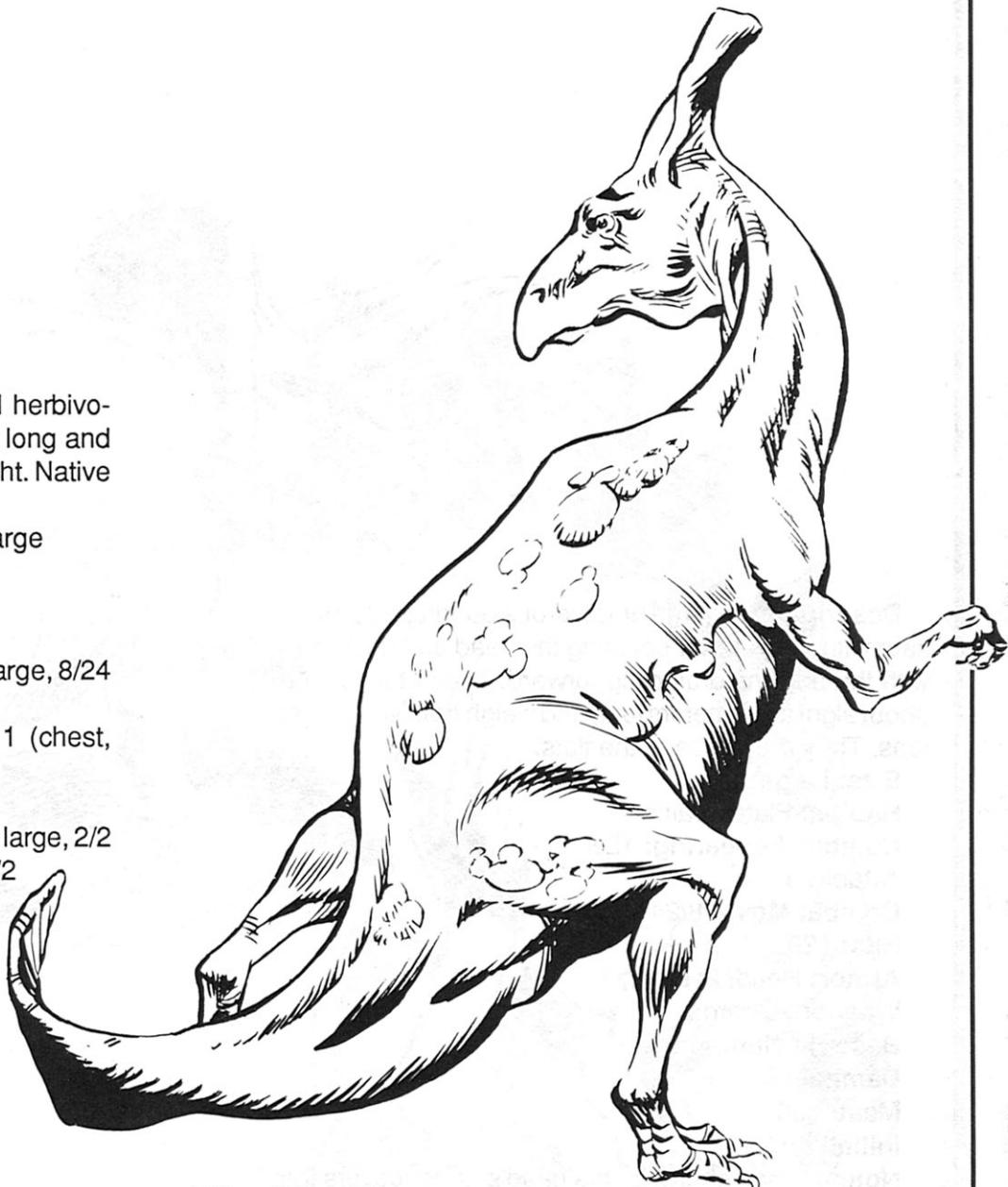
As you may know, the WMO is charged with enforcing a variety of international accords concerning the preservation of rain forests around the globe. Recently, a major operation in Brazil's Tapajos River Basin has experienced major setbacks, due to a series of successful attacks against WMO outposts in that area. The attacking forces remain elusive and unidentified, known only by their local nickname, "Noches Muertes" (Night-Death). Current losses are in excess of 30 WMO troops KIA, 50 WIA. No demands or specific threats have been received, although it is thought that illegal loggers are either conducting the attacks themselves or have hired professional soldiers to do so in their place.

WMO initiated its operations in Brazil by using the Amazon river network as a strategic "highway." Shipments of equipment and personnel originating from the main course proceed into the tributaries that cut through the jungles and the highlands. Having secured the areas immediately around the Amazon itself, the WMO has now begun moving further inland, taking illegal farmers into custody and, if necessary, closing down rogue logging companies by force. It is essential that the Tapajos River Basin crisis is resolved quickly and without further major loss. A disruption of WMO activities in this region could undermine international support for our other operations and possibly reduce troop commitments from participating countries. In order to facilitate freedom of operations, WMO officers in the region will be instructed to offer you all possible assistance, although you will not be subordinate to their command.

Good luck.

Ms. F. De Cantini
Special Operations Advisor

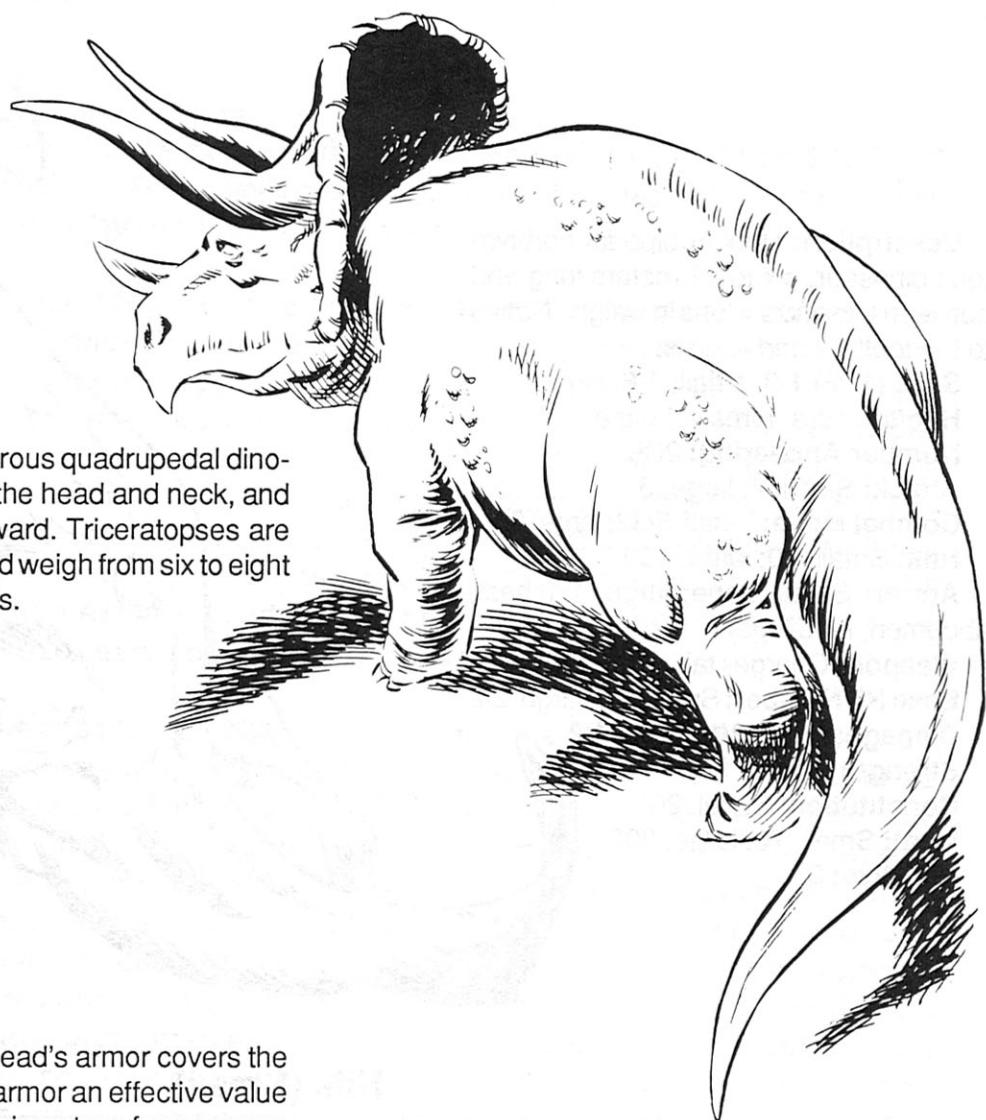
Saurolophus



Hits (Small)

Hits (Large)

Triceratops



Description: A large herbivorous quadrupedal dinosaur with bony armor covering the head and neck, and with three horns projecting forward. Triceratopses are about eight to 10 meters long and weigh from six to eight tons. They are native to the flats.

Size: Large

Habitat: Flats, prairie

Number Appearing: 1D6

Attack: 3

Combat Move: 8/24

Hits: 120

Armor: Head, 2; other, 1

Weapon: Charge

Base Hit Number: 4

Damage: 6

Meat: 250

Initiative:

Notes: Whe

Note: When charging, the head armor covers the chest as well, making the chest armor an effective value of 3. Unless provoked, only one triceratops from a group will attack—usually the oldest male.

Hits

Dead □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□

Stegosaurus

Description: Herbivorous quadrupedal dinosaur about 10 meters in length and weighing four tons. It is notable for its small head and massive body, as well as its characteristic plates and spikes running down its spine and studding its tail. It will usually not attack unless provoked.

Size: Large

Habitat: Forest, jungle

Number Appearing: 1D6÷2 (rounded up)

Attack: 2

Combat Move: 8/32

Hits: 80

Armor: Chest and abdomen, 1

Weapon: Charge+tail

Base Hit Number: 3/2

Damage: 3/3

Meat: 125

Initiative: 3



Hits

-1 Initiative and Base Hit Number

Tyrannosaurus Rex



Description: The largest of the carnosaurs, tyrannosaurs are 10 or more meters long and weigh eight to 10 tons. They are upright bipeds.

Size: Large

Habitat: Forest, hills, flats

Number Appearing: 1

Attack: 7

Combat Move: 8/24

Hits: 140

Armor: Head, 2; arms, 0; all other locations, 1

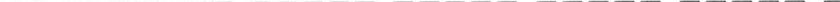
Weapon: Jaws+tail

Base Hit Number: 4/2

Damage: 6/2

Meat: 350

Hits

Dead 

Barminster Enterprises, Incorporated

Re: Philippine Operations

To Whom It May Concern:

Acceptance of this letter and countersign of our matching copy constitutes a formal agreement between the undersigned parties re: the location and (if possible) safe return of Mr. Eric Peyton Barminster and Mrs. Louisa Trapkin-Barminster. Further information re: the financial details of that contract are stipulated in attachment C.

Latest Information:

Mr. and Mrs. Barminster stayed at the Casa Ropas Hotel while in Malabang. Mrs. Barminster had earlier expressed interest in doing research on the negritos of Mindanao island, re: conducting a search for evidence that this largely nomadic society has created enduring artifacts of archaeological note (cave paintings, burial mounds, etc.). Malabang was the town closest to the area she wanted to search—a volcanic region near Lake Lanao. This area is rugged upland jungle, and the Barminsters decided to hire a guide for their journey. Information re: the guide and his background is still unavailable.

The Barminsters took the precaution of hiring the one private helicopter operator in Malabang to pick them up seven days after they began their expedition. On the morning of the seventh day, they were to radio pickup coordinates. No such message was received.

Two days later, a private security contractor and his unit were hired to search for the Barminsters. This unit, under the command of Janosc Hladny, was comprised of seasoned professionals from various European armies; it was never heard from again. Subsequent to this, the local government commander in Malabang sent two squads to search for the Barminsters, with similar results. Government officials suspect that the NPA is responsible, although it is also possible that the Islamic separatist MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front) is responsible. However, no demands or claims of responsibility have been received.

Upon acceptance of this agreement, the undersigned contractors will be flown directly to Metro Manila Airport in the Philippines. After an overnight rest, they will be flown by private helicopter to the town of Malabang to commence search and rescue operations. Clearance for your operation has been secured with General Alfonso Bohol, C-i-C of government forces on Mindanao. His signature appears below.

Good luck.

For the Contractor: _____

A. Raymondson: A. Raymondson

Clearance approved by:

General A. I. Bohol: A. I. Bohol

International Jewel Thieves Caught

The Fasa Boys, an international band of marauders, have found a new home at the Australian National Prison.

All five men gave themselves up to police after hiding out in a local diamond mine. Police say the gang members were glad to be in custody, but are going through psychiatric testing because of the crazed state they appeared to be in after their capture. Their leader, "Knut," said he could only describe it as a dark conspiracy. The only official comment Scotland Yard would offer was that the gang was running from their own shadow, and catching up with them was going to be only too easy.

Dickerson-Fitzpatrick to Merge

In the financial world, Jerry Dickerson and Kevin Fitzpatrick have decided to join forces to make their presence known among the heavy hitters on Wall Street. Dickerson, a veteran of DAAP (the Dickerson, Adams, Aronson, and Parker law firm), and Fitzpatrick, a broker involved in the 1997 Stock Market Crash Recovery Program, came to the decision after exhaustive efforts to save their companies from going belly up.

Both hope that the merger will keep their clients interested with one of the more unusual aspects of the merger. The company will now be able to accommodate both the legal and financial ends of a possible takeover attempt along with other financial related law. Dickerson, a lawyer, has decided to re-enter practice after an absence of five years due to being held in contempt of court for singing the theme song to *Gilligan's Island* repeatedly to try to get a point across to the jury. His client was the late Bob Denver of *Gilligan's Island* and *Dobie Gillis* fame. Fitzpatrick, also a lawyer, defended Dickerson at his contempt hearing. Both are well established as financial lawyers, and plan to pursue their business in Tokyo.

Designer Cardone Releases New Fall Line

Italian designer Anna Cardone has released her first new fall line in three years. Officially named GESSO Attire (pronounced with a soft G), Cardone says that this is the finest work that she has invented so far. The line uses a predominantly white fabric with a touch of blush in the evening wear. Cardone also chose to create her own line of shoes this year, and they are being distributed through Bucci Imports. The designer gave no reason for her absence from fashion, saying only that she is too glad to be back.

Prince Grantsky Rides Again!

Prince Grantsky of Norway has decided to join his country's fight against a hostile takeover. Not known for his courage, the prince has vowed to make a name for himself in his army. Rumor has it that the prince will be inducted as an officer. There has been no deadline set, but it is said that the ceremony will take place on the eve of his wedding to Princess Stephanie of Monaco.

Time is Worth Every Penny

What would you say if you were told that by tomorrow you could be a millionaire? Someone is asking that question, and the person who gives the best answer is going to become very wealthy. Millionaire playboy LaMont Fullerton has decided to share some of his wealth with a lucky person. Fullerton's explanation for this generosity was simple, "It's a tax write off."

BARMINSTERS MISSING

By John Kilpenny

Reuters/API Sacramento — In a tersely worded statement, senior representatives of Barminster Enterprises, Inc., formally announced that owner and CEO of BEI, E.P. Barminster, has been missing for over two weeks. His wife Louisa Barminster (nee Trapkin), is also missing.

BEI Security Overseer Alex Raymondson made the announcement before a gathering of over 100 members of the international press. Barminster's failure to appear at a shareholders' meeting three days ago had spurred speculation that his extended absence might in fact indicate illness or kidnapping. The details surrounding Barminster's disappearance remain sketchy. According to Raymondson's statement, Eric and Louisa Barminster were enjoying a second honeymoon on the Philippine island of Mindanao when the disappearance occurred.

Although no ransom demands or claims of responsibility have yet surfaced, authorities believe that the couple has either been kidnapped or assassinated by the rebels of the New People's Army, the major source of terrorist insurgency in the Philippines.

Eric Peyton Barminster, 60, is a well-known industrialist who earned a reputation for striking hard but fair deals during the petroleum company reorganizations that wracked commerce during the mid-1990's. His wife Louisa, 48, is a respected archaeologist who frequently accompanies him on his trips in order to pursue her own projects.

Raymondson refused to disclose what measures were being taken to locate the Barminsters, saying only that, "We have initiated inquiries in the appropriate circles. But until we have more definitive leads, we don't even have a place to start an investigation."

History Professor to Earn Nobel Prize for Literature

Loren K. Wiseman has been named the 2001 recipient of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Dr. Wiseman was awarded the prize because of his written account of the nuclear holocaust of only one year ago.

The Twilight War went to number one on the bestseller list after only two weeks on the market. Dr. Wiseman credits his colleagues for the achievement, noting only that the horror of the entire period was almost too much to grasp on paper. One particular person that Dr. Wiseman credits is his close friend and colleague Dr. Lester W. Smith, along with Charles E. Gannon and Frank A. Chadwick. Dr. Wiseman was quoted as saying, "Without these three people, the book would never have been written." Wiseman was pleased to be acknowledged with such a large award, and only hopes that he can live up to the name that he has made for himself and his colleagues.

They're Two of a Kind

When two people have as much in common as Julia Martin and Eric Haddock have, there are bound to be a few sparks. Julia and Eric both play games, and they play one game particularly well—chess. In fact, they are both national champions. Haddock resides in Moscow, and Martin resides in London. Next week they will meet in Geneva, and one of them may become the 2001 International Chess Champion.

What makes this tournament even more interesting is the fact that Martin and Haddock both plan to retire from the world of chess and live together in Geneva after the final match. The two met six years ago at the same competition, and it was love at first sight when Martin took Haddock's queen to win that tournament. Good luck next week to these winners, and best wishes on the new life they are beginning in Geneva.

Cure for Baldness Found in Afghanistan

In a Middle East press conference today, an American doctor revealed that he has concluded a 10-year study to find a cure for baldness. Dr. Stephen Bryant, along with his assistant Dr. Kirk Wescom, have come to a startling conclusion. They have found that growing long hair when a person is young has a negative effect on the genetic process of hair loss.

Quoting some of his findings, the world-renowned doctor has found that men especially are treatable this way. He cites the hippy generation of 1960. Follically challenged men in 1980 and beyond dropped a total of 13%. While noting that women can also be follically challenged, he went on to say that this particular form of treatment along with proper care on a daily basis can also slow the process.

Dr. Bryant took his study to Afghanistan 10 years ago because that country has the highest rate of hair loss. Dr. Wescom added that the Afghan people were willing to be tested, and were not used as human guinea pigs. Another reason for this location for the study was the need to understand what petroleum had to do with the problem. It seems that petroleum rich countries have a higher concentration of baldness.

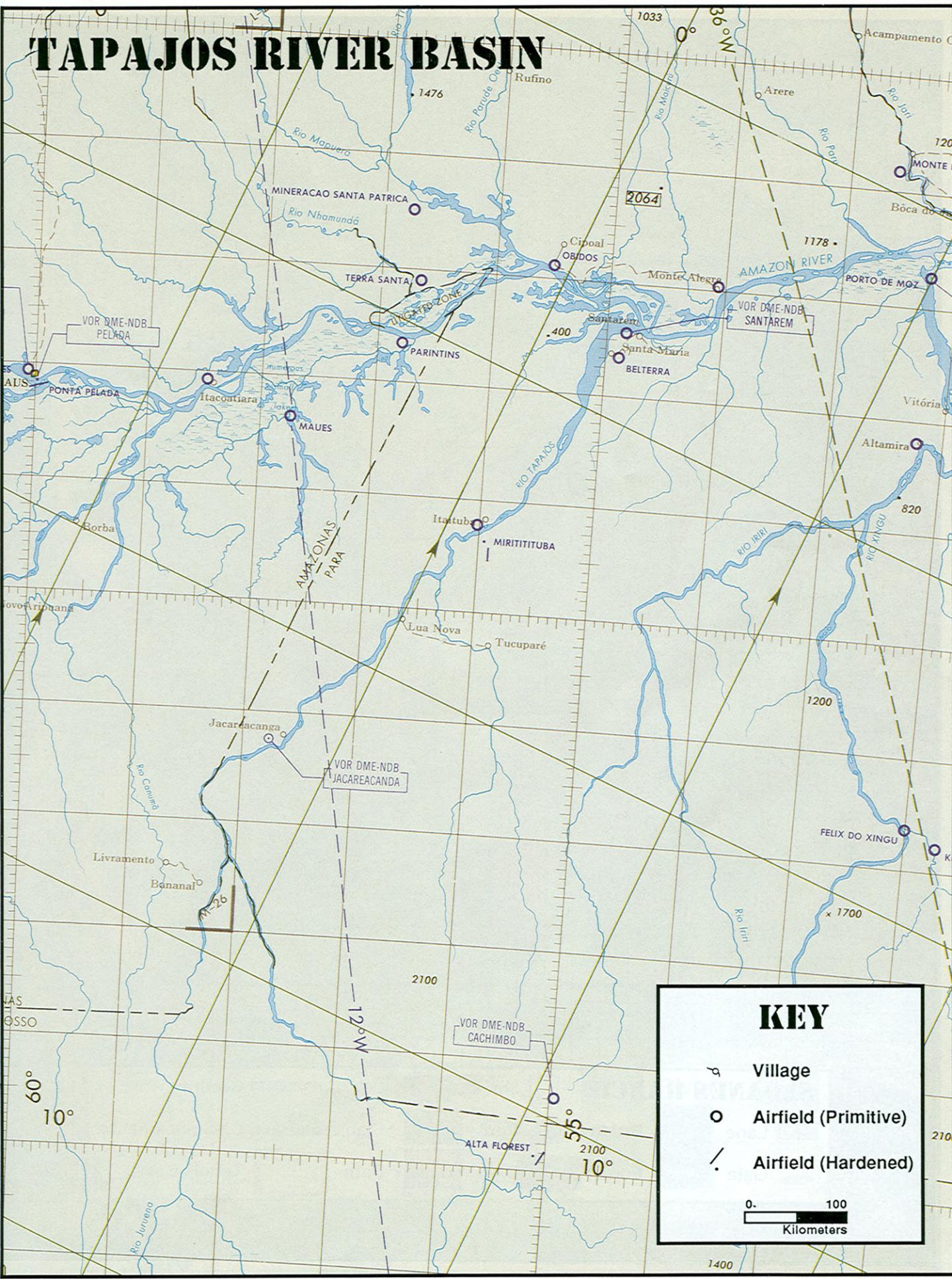
What makes this discovery even more interesting is the use of a special oil found only in the hide of the camel. The camel is not harmed by this process, and it seems to have a remarkable effect on the return of lost hair. Camels are still considered an endangered species, and the doctors are optimistic that with the right amount of careful planning they will be able to start manufacturing the new remedy within the next five to 10 years. Bryant and Wescom have been colleagues since their first year of medical school.

Millionaire-Bradstreet to Host Poker Championship

Timothy R. Bradstreet, founder of the famous Age of Desire Art Museum, has just recently announced his plans to host an international poker championship for private art collectors in London next month.

The championship has been dubbed the first of its kind because, rather than cash, players bet with pieces of original artwork from their private collections. Participants will be allowed to keep one piece that they win, and Mr. Bradstreet plans to hold an auction at the end of the month to sell the rest of the originals for charity. When asked what gave him the idea for such an unusual fundraiser, he was quoted as saying "My luck has always been best for myself and friends when I am holding the Ace of Hearts."

TAPAJOS RIVER BASIN



KEY

- Village
- Airfield (Primitive)
- ! Airfield (Hardened)

0. 100
Kilometers

Trueno Pequeño Creek

SLOANES RANCH

□ 8m



House Security Wall



Lane



Brush



Pool



Stables



Cliff Chain-link Fence



Gate



Forest

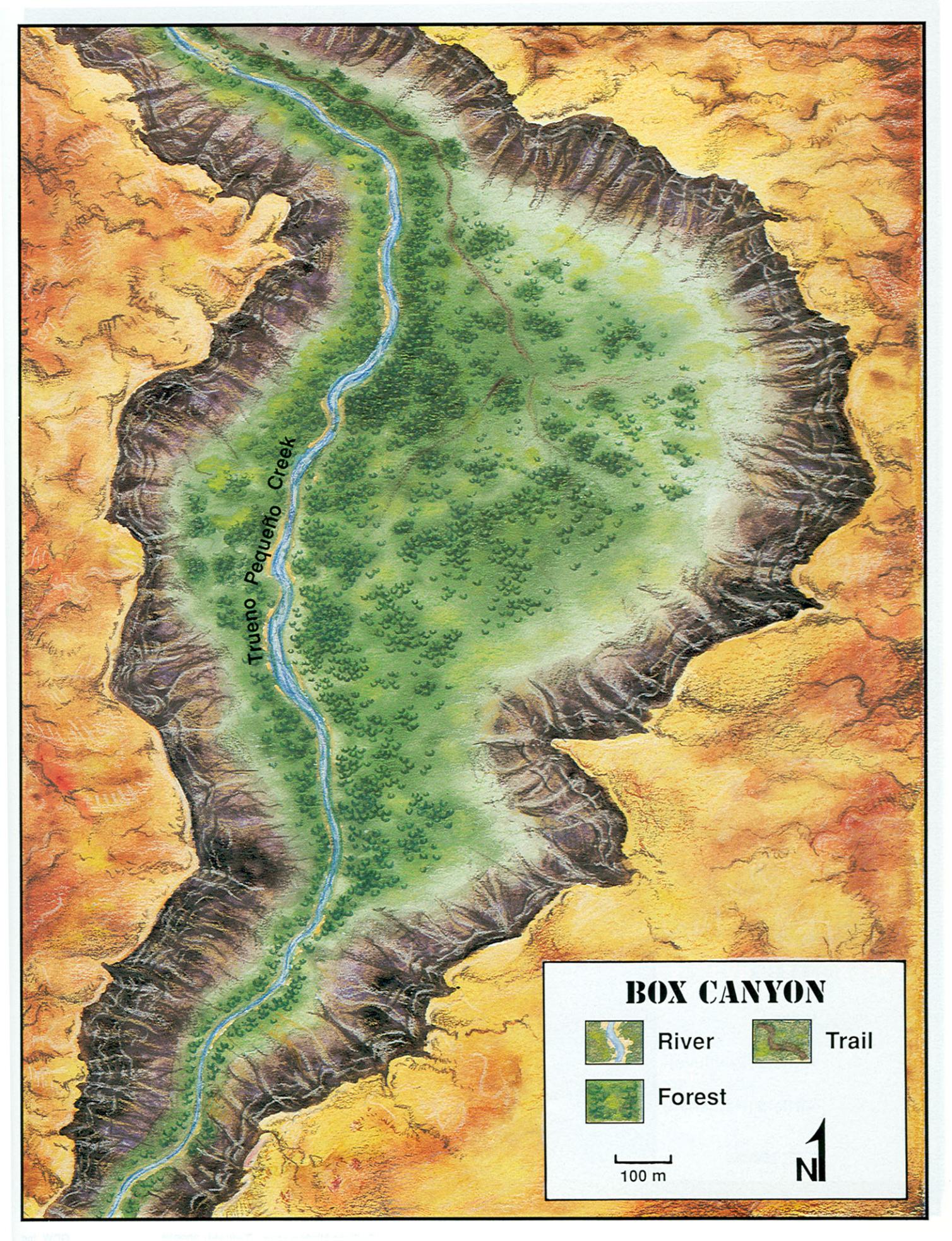


Barn



Tennis Court

N1



A topographic map of Box Canyon. The terrain is rugged with deep, reddish-brown gullies and ridges. A blue line represents a river, labeled "Trueno Pequeño Creek". A green area labeled "Forest" is located in the center-right. A red line labeled "Trail" runs along the right side of the river. The map includes a scale bar for 100 meters and a north arrow.

Trueno Pequeño Creek

BOX CANYON



River



Trail



Forest

100 m



ISLAND OF MINDANAO



> goto gois

accessing "golis"

Global Opportunities Internet Service
A Service of the Geneva Special Contract Agency
Underwritten in U.S.A by
the American Institute for International Involvement
110700-1423Z

Enter keyword at the prompt or type /H for help...

keyword > barminster

accessing "barminster"

¶File: Barminster, EP and Louisa

¶Contract currently available re: recovery of Barminster EP and Barminster Louisa. Contract offers US\$ 65,000 upon agreement, US\$ 550,000 upon successful completion. Transportation to area of operations provided by employers. Relay resumes to acct. no. BARENTINC-890-149, this system.

¶Background: 19 days ago, Barminsters (EP and Louisa) departed Manila after brief stay there. Travelled by chartered aircraft to Cotabato, on island of Mindanao. Stated purpose; pleasure travel and archaeology. Traveled north by road to Malabang one day later. Remained in Malabang for two days before departing with guide into upland jungle. Expected duration of expedition: seven days. Helicopter pick-up for return to Malabang was pre-arranged. No call for pickup was ever received.

¶Search and rescue efforts by private contractors and government troops have resulted in disappearance of all S&R personnel. No traces found, no radio contact after four days of S&R operations. Aerial reconnaissance by government forces indicates nothing unusual in the area.

¶Contract remains open as of: 110700-1200Z.

Cross-Reference(s): Extensive. Access by typing "X-REF Barminster"

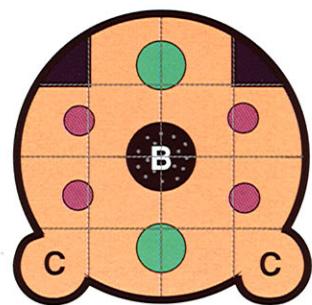
¶End File: Barminster, EP and Louisa W

Enter keyword at the prompt or type /H for help...

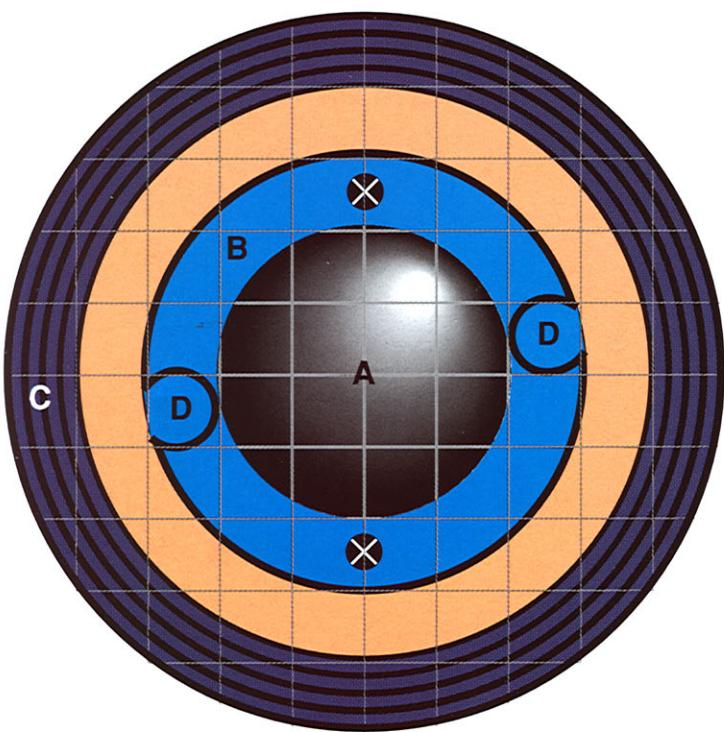
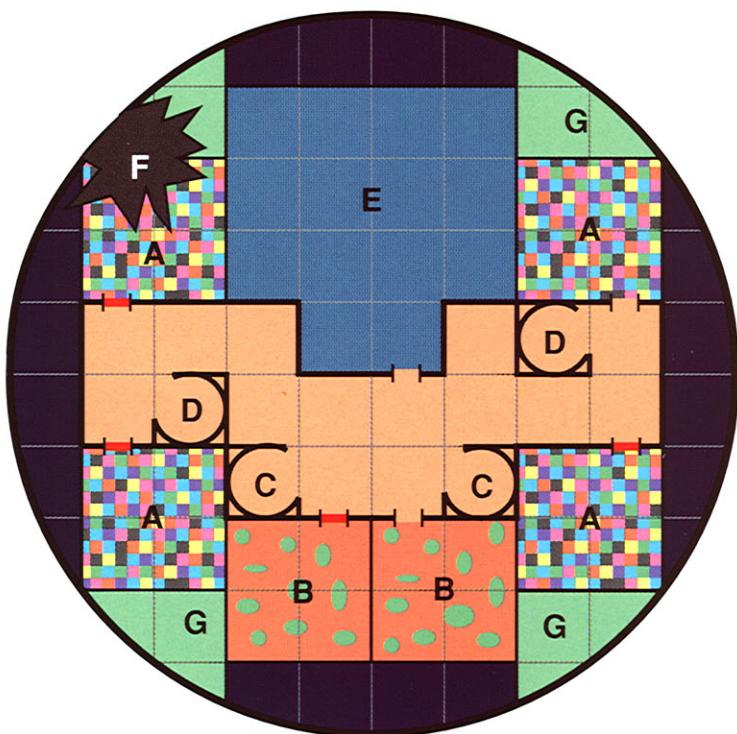
keyword >■



LEVEL TWO



LEVEL ONE

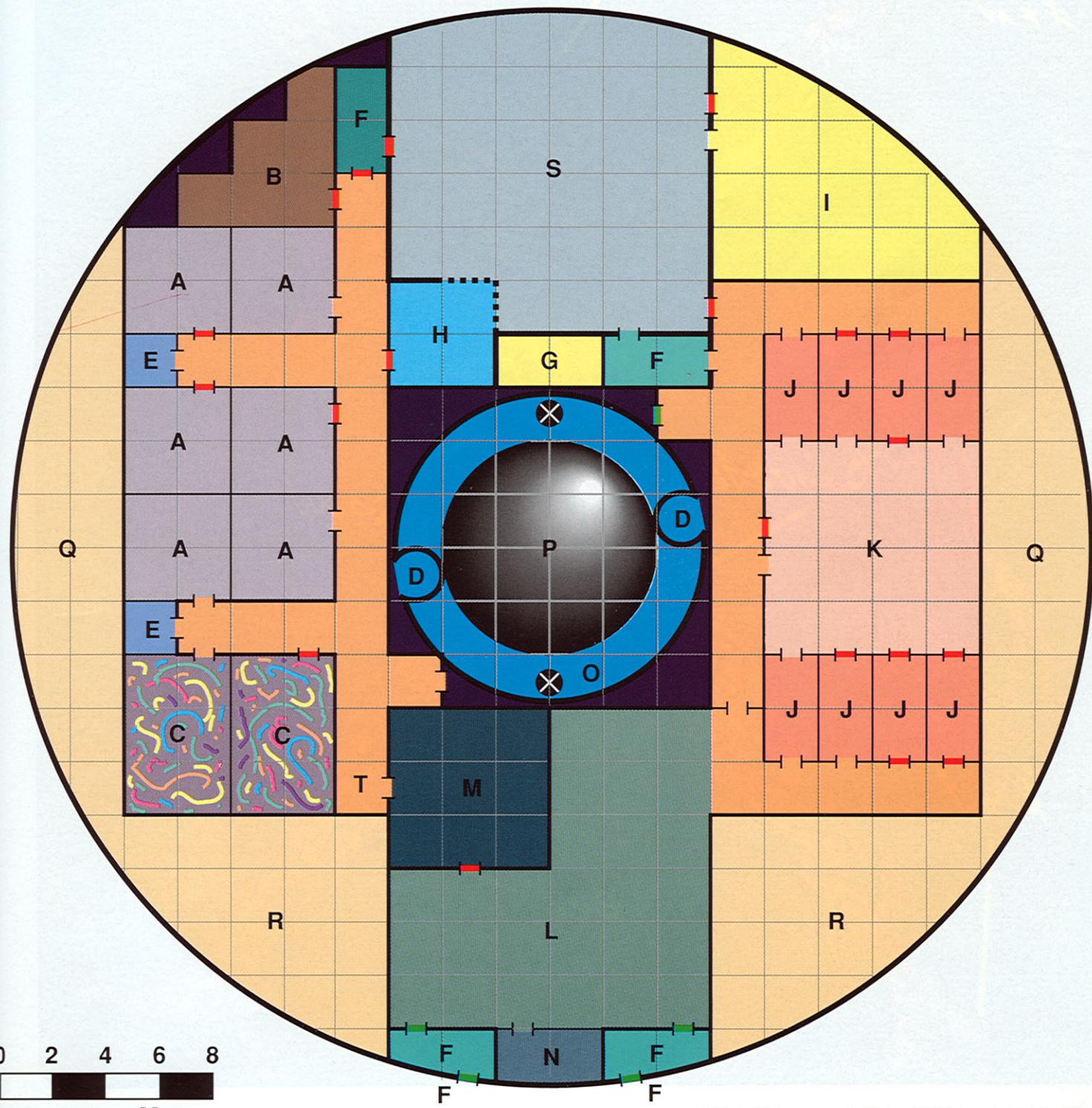


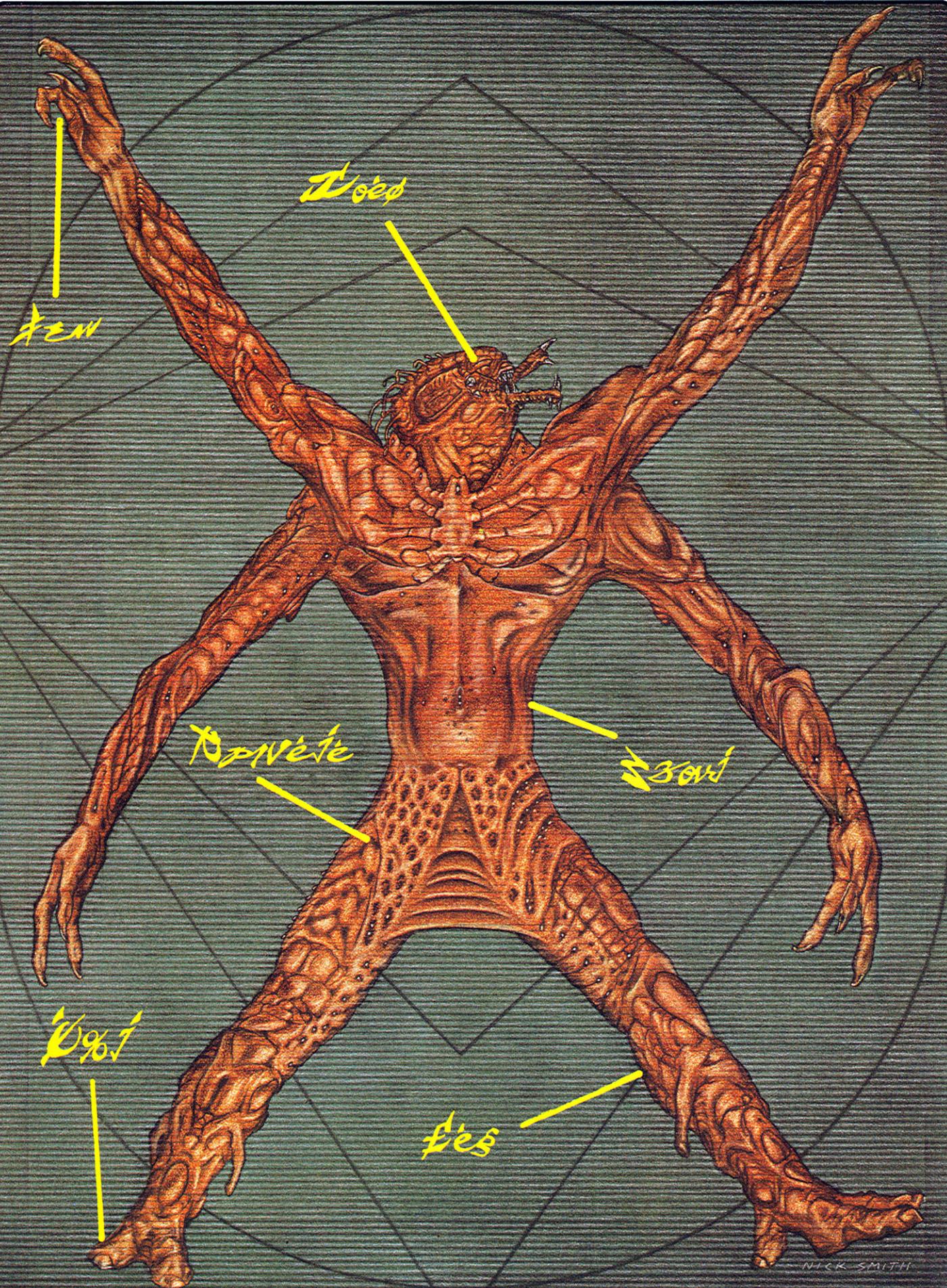
LEVEL FOUR

KEY

- Hull
- Bulkhead
- Interior Wall
- Door
- Door, Frozen Open (red)
- Door, Frozen Closed (green)

LEVEL THREE





TWILIGHT NIGHTMARES™

TWILIGHT WITH A TWIST

Want to wake up jaded players? Drop their characters into one of these adventures, and listen to them gasp. Designed for groups looking for the unusual, these **Twilight Nightmares** are usable in either **Twilight: 2000** or **Merc: 2000** campaigns, whether as "official" episodes or as momentary diversions. The book includes:

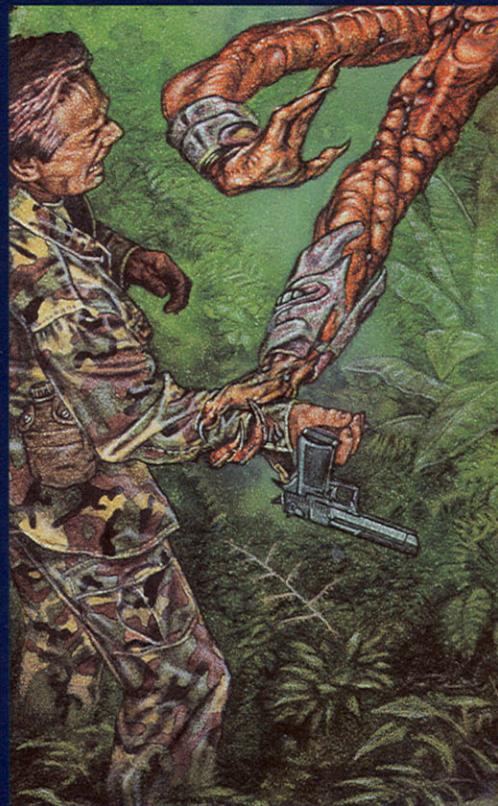
The Rumors of Our Extinction....: Biotechnologically resurrected from a few, faint DNA traces, titanic reptiles from the age of dinosaurs stalk the deserts of New Mexico, searching for something to eat.

The Orpheus Extract: A pair of agents wants your help to free a colleague held hostage. A German intelligence officer holds a captive whom he believes can put a secret base back into operation. Poised between the two sides hangs a deadly secret, and the PCs could tip it toward their own salvation or destruction.

This Ain't No Weather Balloon: On the trail of a lost business tycoon, the PCs discover a crashed saucer from another world, and its mysterious zombie guards.

Warlord: An unseen warlord bent on world conquest, a secret mountain factory using slave labor, and a terrorized village draw the PCs into an encounter with the unexpected.

Twilight Nightmares contains six fully developed adventures and four short scenarios which can be introduced as encounters in almost any other campaign, as well as perforated and color pages containing player handouts to help spice up the adventures and aid the ease of play.



2010 12.00



ISBN 1-55878-095-5

Made in U.S.A.
Printed in U.S.A.
All rights reserved.
Copyright©1991 GDW, Inc.
Twilight: 2000™ is a trademark
of GDW, Inc.



**TWILIGHT:
2000™**