

# TRIPODIA

**Platform Location:** TBD

**Portal Type:** Warp, 35° 1' 7.6" N, 90° 10' 0.7" W (South of Memphis, Tennessee, USA)

**Type:** World

**Atmosphere:** Terrestrial

**Life:** Terrestrial with alien invasive species

**Gravity:** 1G

**Day:** 23 hours, 55 minutes, 57 seconds

**Dominant Language:** None

**Technology:** Remains of 1950's technology, plus alien biotech.

**Description:** This world is where humanity fought an alien invasion in the 1950's and both sides lost for the exact same reason: Disease. Terran microbes infected the alien invaders, wiping them out in a plague of pustules, boils, and dysentery. However, because their biology were so compatible, the alien microbes and diseases spread like wildfire through humanity and most of the primates of the world. Only the Lemurs survived in Madagascar. There may be pockets of survivors living on islands in the Pacific Ocean, but for most part, humanity is dead.

The only survivors of this war were the Tripods. The Tripods are a bioengineered species, created by the aliens and act as living weapon platforms. Chief of which are the chemical laser tails that can burn through a tank at the distance of a mile and cook the crew in seconds at distances up to 5 miles. Or, that's what they did.

These days they are the top predator of Earth, scouring the world looking for food or *Metal Nettles*, and alien plant that extracts and concentrates various metals in it's leaves. They also prey on terrestrial creatures and other Tripod species.

The state of man's creations are poor. Almost all human cites are in ruins, with nature quickly reclaiming them. Memphis, for example, consists of several kudzu and *metal nettle* covered mounds, each plant fighting the other for dominance of the terrain.

The Mississippi has over the years jumped its banks more than once, so now a good portion of Memphis is river bed, with rusted and twisted I-beams sticking up out of the water, catching whatever debris has flowed downstream.

However, for the most part, the Earth has recovered and is prospering in this new age of after man. Dogs are mongrelizing into a hardy breed, while cats have secured a niche as a small predator, staying mostly in the forested areas hunting birds and small prey.

Most cows have died off, as they were not well equipped for life outside of a ranch. The few survivors are quickly returning to their feral state and increasing their

number. Pigs have fully returned to their feral states and crossbred with surviving wild hogs. They are another predator to contend with in the forests.

The roads are more or less overgrown, the three bridges that cross the Mississippi are down, though their remains poke up through sediment of the old riverbed. All the rails that pass through Memphis are rusted or gone, eaten by the Tripods. The remains of civilization jut through mounds of kudzu or metal nettles, and not much else remains.

## THE TRIPODS

The Tripods were the only survivors of a failed invasion of an alternate earth now designated as Tripodia. They are semi-sentient creatures, engineered by an unknown alien race as war beasts. They have three sexes: Alpha and Beta males and the Female. It takes one of each to create up to 6 offspring, which are laid as eggs.

They naturally form “triads” with either a dominant male or more often, female in charge. If the triad has any offspring, they will keep the pups in the center of a triangle formation. Woe to anyone that tries to attack their children. The triad will guard any eggs the female lays until they hatch 30 days later. There will always be at least two Tripods guarding the eggs at any one time.

They have multiple eyes, one dominant eye, and several “aiming” eyes along the sides, top, and bottom of their body. Each one is trilobed into red, green, and yellow lenses.

They have as natural armament a chemical laser and long tentacles with grippers at the end. They are true omnivores, as they will eat rock, metal, waste products, as well as carbon-based organics. As a species, they have many variations and come in both a “pusher” and “puller” variety:

- Pushers have two front legs and one larger leg in the rear.
- Pullers have one large leg in front and two slighter legs in the rear.

Their legs are multi-segmented, with most of the segments locking into position when upright. However, they can “fold” their legs, each segment bending and lowering themselves enough so that their undersides touch the ground. Because of this ability, they can get back up if they are knocked over and can flip themselves over if they are flipped on to their top.

Their chemical laser is organic and can function on the Fringepaths. It consists of many small chemical laser organs, they radiate in the infrared portion of the spectrum. Individually they can cause burns on exposed skin, but when they all focus on a single spot, they can burn through inches of steel. If they use a soft focus, and create a spot 50 centimeters in size that can set fire to anything flammable and provide enough heat to raise the temperature in most combat vehicles to lethal levels.

This laser is at the end of a segmented limb that allows the laser to be pointed across an arc 120° wide and 200° front and back. From its design and placement, this limb used to be a leg, but it was modified into a laser tipped weapon by its alien designers.

They range in height from about 120 meters for the Grand Tripods, to as small as 5 meters for the Trykes.

Their body is covered in an organic ferro-ceramic armor much like chitin crossed with bony plates. As they grow from an adolescent, they will shed this armor and grow into a new shell. Pups and youngsters under 5 years of age do not form a shell of armor. Instead, their chitin is soft and sheds easily. This is because it is during these first 5 years that a Tripod will do most of its growth. A Grand Tripod or Tripod pup is barely 1 meter tall, Tryke pups are just under 30 centimeters when hatched. If properly fed, they will grow to 90% of their final height. In the next two years they will shed their shells 6 more times, until they hit 7 years of age. That's when they stop growing and enter adulthood.

As they get older, along the top of the body, they develop fat sacks that function much like beanbag chairs, and can accommodate several people. They also grow a drivers bench, where the Tripod's driver can recline and control the Tripod.

If the tripods are fed titanium, high-end polymers and pure silicates as well as a side of beef and five hundred pounds of vegetables a day, their natural armor will improve immensely. The Grand Tripod's armor once improved can stop modern day tank rounds and withstand direct hits by their own chemical lasers for up to 15 seconds.

Their intelligence is a little bit less than the great apes, but more than other primates, enough that they can be trained, and are loyal to the person who trained them. They live for about 30 years, and can only be used during their prime adulthood, from 7 through 25 years of age.

It must be noted that most Tripods of any species, have a "sweet tooth" for alkaline or lithium batteries. They will go out of their way to eat them specifically. Because of this sweet tooth and their tendency to nosh on things like sulfur or phosphorus containing material, alkaline metals, or even alkali metals, their waste products are consider toxic waste and potentially explosive. The theory is that they use these elements to power their lasers.

## ***Grand Tripods***

**Size:** 120 meters tall, up to 5 meters thick.

Puller: 10 meters wide at the front and 5 meters wide at the rear.

Pusher: 6 meters wide at the front and 11 meters wide at the rear.

**Armor:** Natural Armor: Stops small caliber weapons fire up to .50 caliber rounds.

Improved Armor: Stops modern tank rounds.

**Speed:** Walk at 1.8 kph, run at 3.5 kph.

**Diet:** It needs to eat once a day a meal consisting of 180kg organic matter and at least 5kg of metal, mostly iron.

**Organic Chemical Laser:** Equivalent to a large vehicle mounted energy weapon or laser weapon.

**Tentacles:** They have several feeding tentacles that can reach to the ground and gather up any foodstuffs. If they lose one, a new one will grow back after a month's time. There are smaller manipulator tentacles around its tripartite mandibles. The large tentacles are swift and can strike out doing significant damage or grabbing moving objects.

**Tripartite Mandibles:** The triangular mouth of a Grand Tripod. These mandibles are quite capable of biting through centimeter thick metal. It makes short work of animals parts.

**Reproduction:** A female Grand Tripod can lay up to three eggs once a year.

**Behavior:** The Grand Tripods are the apex predator of Earth and act like it. They will attack lesser Tripods and Trykes, as well as other animals.

**Domestication:** No one yet has tried to tame a Grand Tripod. It is possible if you can secure either some eggs or pups under 6 months of age.

**Passengers:** One driver, three gunners, and 20 passengers

## ***Tripods***

**Size:** 50 to 100 meters tall, up to 3 meters thick.

Puller: 8 meters wide at the front and 3 meters wide at the rear.

Pusher: 4 meters wide at the front and 9 meters wide at the rear.

**Armor:** Natural Armor: Stops small caliber weapons fire up to .45 caliber rounds.

Improved Armor: Stops modern medium tank rounds.

**Speed:** Walk at 2.1 kph, run at 3.9 kph.

**Diet:** It needs to eat once a day a meal consisting of 150kg organic matter and at least 4kg of metal, mostly iron.

**Organic Chemical Laser:** Equivalent to a medium vehicle mounted energy weapon or laser weapon.

**Tentacles:** They have several feeding tentacles that can reach to the ground and gather up any foodstuffs. If they lose one, a new one will grow back after a month's time. There are smaller manipulator tentacles around its tripartite mandibles. The large tentacles are swift and can strike out doing significant damage or grabbing moving objects.

**Tripartite Mandibles:** The triangular mouth of a Tripod. These mandibles are quite capable of biting through 50 millimeters of thick metal. It makes short work of animals parts.

**Reproduction:** A female Tripod can lay up to three to six eggs once a year.

**Behavior:** The Tripods are the second best predator of Earth. They will attack weak Tripods, Trykes, other animals, and wounded Grand Tripods.

**Domestication:** Like the Grand Tripod, no one yet has tried to tame a Tripod. It is possible if you can secure either some eggs or pups under 6 months of age.

**Passengers:** One driver, three gunners, and 15 passengers

## **Trykes**

**Size:** 5 meters tall, up to 1.5 meters thick.

Puller: 2 meters wide at the front and 0.5 meters wide at the rear.

Pusher: 0.75 meters wide at the front and 2.5 meters wide at the rear.

**Armor:** Natural Armor: Stops small caliber weapons fire up to .45 caliber rounds.

Improved Armor: Stops modern light tank rounds.

**Speed:** Walk at 3.2 kph, run at 12 kph.

**Diet:** It needs to eat once a day a meal consisting of 40kg organic matter and at least 1kg of metal, mostly iron.

**Organic Chemical Laser:** Equivalent to a small vehicle mounted energy weapon or laser weapon.

**Tentacles:** They have several feeding tentacles that can reach to the ground and gather up any foodstuffs. If they lose one, a new one will grow back after a month's time. There are smaller manipulator tentacles around its tripartite mandibles. The large tentacles are swift and can strike out doing significant damage or grabbing moving objects.

**Tripartite Mandibles:** The triangular mouth of a Tryke. These mandibles are quite capable of biting through 25 millimeters of thick metal. It makes short work of animals parts.

**Reproduction:** A female Tryke can lay up to six eggs once a year.

**Behavior:** Trykes are minor predators. They will attack wounded Tripods and Trykes, as well as other animals. They also scavenge a lot from the kills of greater Tripods

**Domestication:** You can easily domesticate Trykes. They will imprint on the person who raises them forming a lasting bond for the rest of their life. Some trainers can teach Trykes to accept other drivers beside themselves. This is special skill or aspect of the trainer. But if push comes to shove, they will protect the trainer.

**Pyramiding:** Trykes will form what's called a "pyramid": a group of 3 to 6 triads, all working together under one matriarch Tryke. As a group, a pyramid of Trykes is a force to be reckoned with.

**Passengers:** One driver, two gunners, and 4 passengers

## **THE TRICORNER**

Built around the warp, which was slowly moved to a new location on solid ground, is the UNIDA Tripod Research Base. Nicknamed the "Tricorner," this square compound houses the dedicated research facility and Tryke ranch.

In charge of this facility is Ethel Helga Talisen, 30 years old, but a top trainer and leader of Alpha Pyramid. She rides one of the first Trykes ever tamed, Twilight Laser. There's a tendency to use names from a certain TV show about ponies.