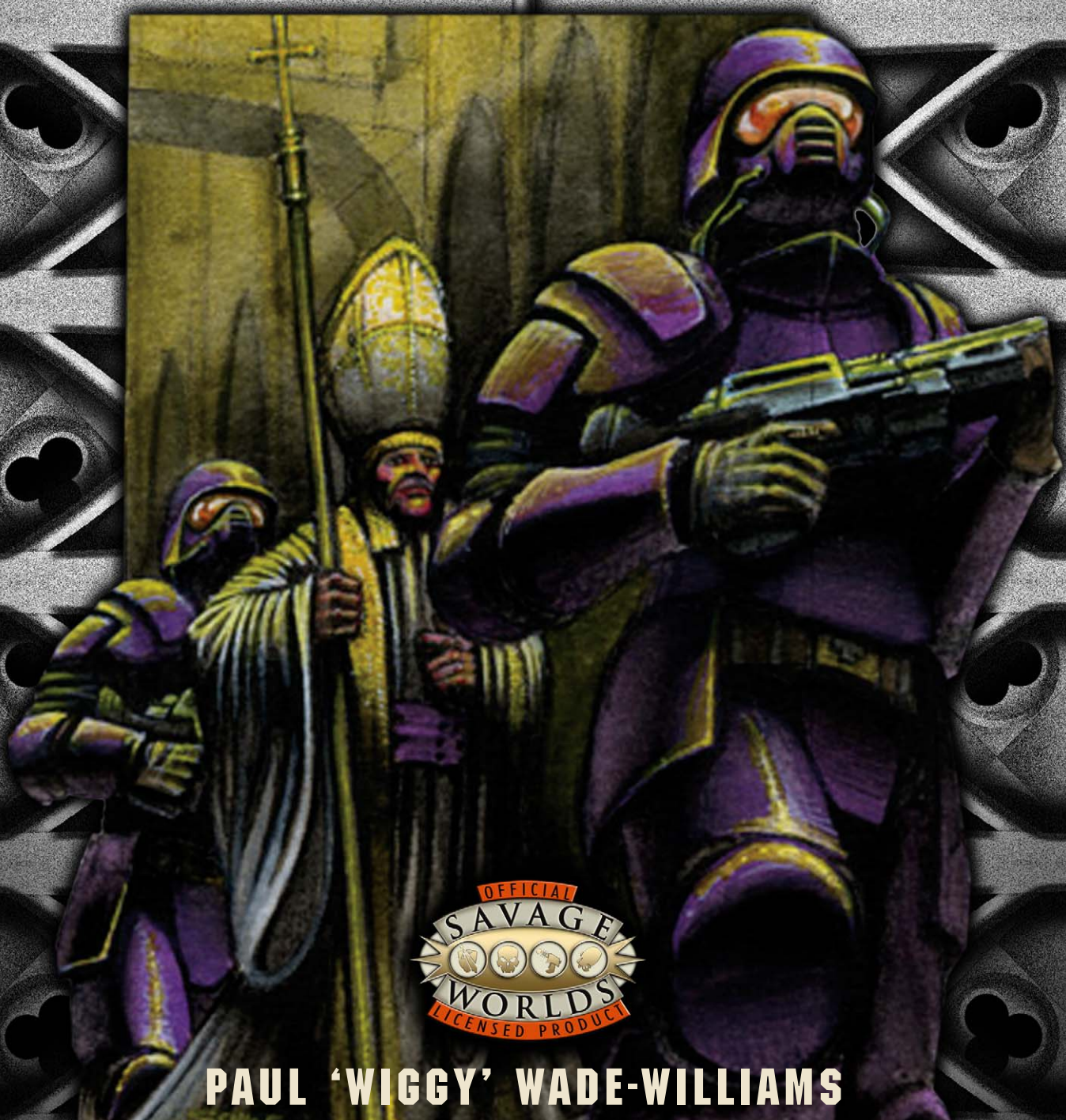


# NECROPOLIS

2350

# THE LONG SLEEP



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# THE LONG SLEEP

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## WAR MASTER'S NOTES

Welcome to *The Long Sleep*, a standalone scenario written for the *Necropolis* campaign setting.

If you intend to play in this adventure, you should stop reading **now**. Advanced knowledge of the scenario will only spoil your enjoyment of the game.

The WM should read the entire adventure before play begins. Knowing the basic flow and details in advance will greatly speed up play and make the game run smoother. The early stages of this mission should not be rushed—allow the heroes a chance to slowly piece together the clues and investigate each building as they wish. Eventually, characters built for combat will get a chance to shine.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

You also need a copy of the *Savage Worlds* rule book and the *Necropolis: 2350* Savage Setting. The *Necropolis Figure Flats* are recommended, though any suitable sci-fi or dark future miniatures will suffice.

## CHARACTERS

This adventure is designed for a squad of four to six Knights from any of the core holy orders. The adventure is designed for Knights with 25–35 XPs, though lower experienced characters should be able to cope if they use their brains. Use any of the archetypes from the *Necropolis* setting. Each has been designed as a starting character. As such, those used should be advanced as the player wishes to bring them to 30 XPs.

For larger groups or more experienced characters, the WM will need to adjust the number and stats of opponents appropriately to create an exciting challenge.

In addition, a lance of specialist sergeants is available. Stats can be found at the back of this book. Cut them out and glue them to pieces of card for rigidity, then deal them randomly to the players, ensuring every player commands at least one Extra.

## CHARACTER DEATH

In any adventure involving combat there is a chance of character death. The nature of this particular mission leaves the heroes cut off from reinforcements.

Should a Wild Card die, the player promotes an Extra of his choice to Wild Card status. All Extras have been built as starting Novice characters, though with only one Hindrance. With the WM's permission, the player may pick more Hindrances and spend the points as normal.

At the end of the mission, the player creates a new Knight character using the normal rules. Experience Points earned for this mission are transferred over to his new character, meaning he hasn't missed out on the rewards.

## ANCIENT EVENTS

Many millions of years ago, when dinosaurs still roamed Earth, the Zal were locked in their final, cataclysmic battle with the unknown alien race whose fury they had aroused. Suffering defeat after defeat, the Zal retreated back across the galaxy, leaving behind shattered solar systems and burnt out stars. As has been previously told, the battle in the Salus system marked their defeat. Or so history recorded.

Not all the Zal were imprisoned that fateful day. Many had already seen the inevitable fall of their empire and took steps to preserve some remnants of the race. In their eyes, the Zal were beaten, but they could return stronger, better prepared to once again wage war on a galactic scale.

On untold worlds they created concealed complexes, sealing themselves away in hibernation until the time was right for their return to glory. Set as guards in each tomb were skeletal robots, the footsoldiers of the Zal. Their form would rise again millions of years later when the Dark Conclave formed their army out of skeletons.

One such hiding hole lay beneath the surface of Salus, then just a backwater world in a backwater part of the galaxy. That the final battle occurred here is one of those great cosmic coincidences.

The Zal lay in slumber, dreaming whatever dreams an alien warmonger has, waiting to emerge, but something went wrong. The final battle ravaged the solar system with weapons of unimaginable force and played havoc with the energy fields maintaining the Zal's life support chambers.

They died to the last (though others may exist on unknown worlds), withering away in their sleep, unable to respond as their life signs faded. Only the skeletal army remained, programmed to

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defend the complex, not administer medical aid to its slumbering occupants. There they stayed, the entrance hidden beneath a landslide, until a recent earthquake revealed the entrance to the tomb.

## RECENT EVENTS

The Ruber Desert lies on Terra Australis and dominates Terra Infernalis. An arid, barren, hostile landscape, it is nonetheless home to dozens of small Church and Union mining and research outposts. One such outpost is “Mars Station,” a Church archaeological facility near the Labyrinthus Angelus.

Eight days ago, the archaeologists uncovered what they believed was an ancient alien artifact—a metallic torso bearing marked similarities to that of a human skeleton. This was one of the skeletal robots. How it came to be outside and “die” remains a mystery. All that matters is that a million years ago its remains were buried beneath a natural landslide and became encrusted with rock over time. Its remarkable construction, which defies natural aging, concealed its true age from the archaeologists.

That night, an earthquake dislodged the surrounding stone, revealing for the first time in countless millions of years the entrance to the tomb. Though they investigated, the archaeologists were unable to enter the tomb complex, stymied by a huge door engraved with alien symbols.

A few days later, they powered up the remains of the robot to see what they could learn. In the deepest recesses of its backup CPU, the robot sensed intelligent life, alien life, enemy life. It activated a warning signal, awakening its brethren to battle once more. That evening, the skeletal robots marched into the camp, slaughtering everyone they could find.

Four days ago, the Church expected a routine signal, but it never came. Despite solar flares blocking much global communication, Knights of the Sacri Ordines are duly sent to investigate the silence.

In the first part of this adventure, the heroes investigate the deserted archaeological facility and slowly piece together events of the past few days. Shortly after their arrival, a massive storm blankets the area, plunging the region into darkness. As the storm rages, an army of skeletal robots responds to the appearance of the Knights’ dropship and marches to the camp, ready to slay everything they encounter.

Once the skeletal horde is defeated, the heroes, cut off from their Preceptory, have little option but to take the war to the robots and explore the ancient tomb. After untold millions of years, the tomb of the Zal will be entered by living creatures.

Note that while the heroes are able to enter, explore, and interact with parts of the tomb, they will not receive all the answers they seek. Even discovering the Zal’s name will take many decades of laborious research. Actually deducing the secrets of their surviving technology could take centuries. As such, the tomb remains an enigma, something the heroes (and players) will never be able to truly understand. For this reason, few true secrets are provided for the War Master (to avoid any temptation to use them).

## THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

Five minutes before the team is due to land, the dropship pilot, Knight Vehicle Crewman Eduardo Gonzalez, contacts the Senior Knight over his headset communicator and informs him there is no response from the facility’s traffic controller, nor is the landing guidance beacon activated. The Senior Knight is given control of the comms, allowing him to try and get through (he can’t).

A few minutes later the base comes into visual range. The pilot switches the gun camera feed through to the passenger bay, where it appears on a small screen.

Have the Senior Knight and two others of his choice (those sat near him) make Notice rolls. Success reveals the base appears structurally intact, with no sign of any major explosion in or around the processing plant. The landing pad is clear, but there is an industrial crawler nearby. However, there is no movement to be seen. On a raise, the Knight realizes the external solar relay doesn’t have its panels extended nor is there any indication the base has power (no landing lights, for instance).

## LANDING

As the dropship begins its final approach, Gonzalez gives a ten second countdown. As soon as the squad has disembarked, the dropship blasts back into the air. Gonzalez radios in that he’ll do a quick sweep of the surrounding area before heading back for the HARD shelter. Orders are

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orders, and his come from a higher authority, so there is no way to persuade the dropship to hang around.

## TIMED ENCOUNTERS

Aside from specific encounters detailed in the Tactical Briefings, there are a number of set encounters which occur during this mission. Each has a number in parentheses, such as (L+120). This refers to the number of game minutes which have passed since the team landed.

Because of this, the WM must keep a secret record of how much overall time passes from the moment the team touches down. Certain activities, such as repairing the power plant, have their time listed in the appropriate section. Other guidelines for how long likely activities take are presented below. Other activities should be determined by the WM based on best guess and real-world actions.

Since the party is likely to divide its forces, the WM should keep track of each group or individual separately. It also allows you to quickly work out how much time remains before a lengthy task is finished. For instance, if one team goes to repair the power station (an hour) and another investigates a single habitat block (probably 15 minutes at most), you can easily see there are 45 minutes remaining before the station may be fixed and the personnel assigned elsewhere.

**Data Retrieval:** Takes 15 minutes and an Investigation roll to search the systems and recover the various logs (see Player Handouts and detailed areas). Logs can only be recovered from specific computers. Apart from these, there is nothing of relevance to the adventure, though the Knights won't know that.

**Healing:** As stated in the main rules, each use of Healing to patch up a wound takes 10 minutes.

**Searching Corpses:** It takes 1 minute to thoroughly pat down a body and rifle through pockets, satchels, or other simple storage items. Unless an item is extremely small or very well concealed, discovery of any objects is automatic.

**Searching Buildings:** Performing a cursory search of a 2" by 2" area takes 2 minutes but gives a -2 penalty on Notice rolls. This involves moving a few objects and looking in obvious places. A thorough search takes 5 minutes and gives no

penalty. Unless otherwise stated in specific area descriptions, there is nothing of use to be found by searching areas.

## ENCOUNTER 1: ALL CLEAR (L+10)

The Senior Knight's headset radio crackles to life as the dropship roars overhead and Gonzalez calls in after performing his sweep.

*"Broadsword to Viper 1, Broadsword to Viper 1. Sweep is clean, sir," Gonzalez says. "There's nothing moving for twenty miles in any direction. Juice is getting low and the burning bush has requested I get back on the yellow brick road ASAP. You guys are on your own for the next few hours. God speed! Broadsword out."*

## ENCOUNTER 2: HUNGRY DOGS (L+25)

Gonzalez's sweep didn't detect any life, but his sensors couldn't penetrate the canyon, wherein are numerous caves. Hiding in these are several dogs, pets, and guard animals for the scientists. They fled during the attack, but their loyalty has caused them to remain near the facility. However, they are half-mad from starvation and thirst, and the sound of the dropship has lured them out.

Forming a pack, the hounds bound into the camp, entering at the north end of the canyon. They head for anything moving outside, intent on tearing it limb from limb. They use Gang Up tactics, to a maximum of four dogs per person. If no characters are visible, they just move around the camp, scratching at doors until someone appears.

After their defeat, a character can perform an autopsy in the medical center. This requires a Healing roll and takes 30 minutes. Success indicates the dogs were starving and dying of dehydration. Don't tell the heroes this was why they attacked—they may come up with a more irrational explanation and should be allowed to believe whatever they want.

## STARVING DOGS (8)

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d4

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d10, Tracking d8

**Pace:** 8; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 3

**Special Abilities:**

\* **Bite:** d6+d4.

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- \* **Fleet Footed:** Dogs roll a d10 when running instead of a d6.
- \* **Go for the Throat:** Dogs instinctively go for an opponent's soft spots. With a raise on its attack roll, it hits the target's most weakly armored location.
- \* **Size -1:** Dogs are relatively small creatures.

## ENCOUNTER 3: WEATHER WARNING (L+90)

After 90 minutes, a brief, heavily distorted message comes through the satellite radio from the Preceptory. The message is not repeated. No response is possible. The storm has been generated as a result of the increased solar activity and is not on any radar systems at the start of the mission.

*"...weather warning. Repeat, this is <crackle, hiss>. Extreme weather <hiss>. Massive sandstorm heading <hiss>. Estimate <crackle hiss> 30 minutes. Batten down the <crackle>. Could last several <hiss>. Repeat, this is..."*

## ENCOUNTER 4: SANDSTORM (L+120)

The storm arrives fast and hard—heroes outside receive five minutes warning before the storm engulfs the facility.

The wind rapidly strengthens to gale force, bowling over small, unsecured items. Thick plumes of red sand are kicked up and swirled around, adding to the particles carried by the winds. Overhead, sheet lightning rips through the sandstorm, briefly turning the sky blood red. The storm continues for the remainder of the adventure.

### EFFECTS

**Movement:** Movement outside is treated as difficult ground due to the strong winds. Movement over already difficult ground is treated as 4" per 1" of actual movement.

**Lighting:** Outside, lighting conditions drop to Dark (-2 penalty and no visibility beyond 10") as the sun is blocked out and Dim within an area illuminated by street lights. (References to streetlights only apply if there is power.) This allows Shooting into an area illuminated by the street lights at a -1 penalty. Unless there is power and the lights are switched on, lighting inside a building drops to Pitch Darkness.

The robots (see **Encounter 6**) halve all bad lighting penalties against living targets and those producing heat—such as a vehicle with the engine running.

**Combat:** At the start of each combat round, deal an extra action card and consult the table below. All effects last for the current round.

Card	Effect
Black Deuce	The sky turns extremely dark and a dense cloud of dust sweeps across the base. Treat all unlit areas as Pitch Darkness this round. Areas around streetlights are Dark.
Black King	A powerful flash illuminates the sky. For a few moments, visibility improves to Dim lighting outside, daylight conditions under streetlights, and Dark inside buildings without lights.
Black Ace	The lightning is particularly powerful. Treat all outside areas as daylight and unlit interiors as Dim.
Joker	The storm dies down momentarily, removing all darkness penalties.
Other	As the main rules for this section.

## ENCOUNTER 5: POWER OUTAGE (L+135)

This encounter occurs only if the power station has been repaired.

Shortly after the storm hits, an intense electrical charge trips the power station's surge protectors, fooling it into shutting off power and plunging the base into darkness. Fixing the problem requires a visit to the power station and a Repair roll to override the surge protectors. Each roll takes one round. Failures may be reattempted.

Unfortunately, at the same instant the power dies, the creatures who attacked the facility before make an appearance (see **Encounter 6**).

## ENCOUNTER 6: ATTACK (L+140)

**WM Note:** When the robots attack, they initially have no idea where the heroes are located. To represent this unknown, the WM should read

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this section and decide where to place the robots *before* starting the adventure. Thus, when they do attack, it is fate which places a Knight in the danger zone, not WM knowledge.

Five minutes after the relay trips, the robots arrive, summoned earlier by remote sensors which detected the Knights' dropship. There are 14 of them. Due to the poor lighting caused by the storm, they can approach quite close before they are spotted. The robots attack in two groups of five and one group of four, each entering from a different edge of the battlefield, as chosen by the WM.

Position all the robots at least 16" from any light source or building. Then move them their regular Pace until one is spotted (this requires someone to be on sentry duty). Run the combat as normal.

Despite their low intelligence, the robots are not stupid. They are programmed to use cover both for protection and to conceal movement. They have the intelligence to shoot distant targets and Aim if targets are in cover. Remember, thermal vision works in the storm, giving them a tactical advantage.

The group is outnumbered by the robots, but they have several advantages of their own. First, they hold the facility, which means they have the luxury of being able to fire from windows or get onto the roofs. Second, they have a lot of ammunition at their disposal, plus any explosives they have salvaged from the stores. Third, they are capable of using more advanced tactics. Finally, if things are going very badly, there is always the illegal SBAC.

## STORM EFFECTS (OPTIONAL)

As seen above, the lighting during the storm is variable. When a robot becomes visible to at least one Knight, place his miniature on the tabletop. Remember, the Knights have headset communicators so they can report sightings to each other. When the robot moves out of range or the lighting conditions prevent him being seen by anyone, remove the figure.

Although this will slow down the combat, it will add far more atmosphere than just telling the players, "There is a skeletal robot there, but you can't see him and therefore can't react to his presence." Having a foe suddenly appear 11" away because it has been illuminated by a powerful flash of lightning should provide an air of excitement and fear.

## SKELETAL ROBOTS (14)

Even before they were imprisoned behind the black hole and transformed into the Rephaim, the Zal were interested in death. Their robot armies were built in the form of skeletal Zal (whose form was close to that of humans) so as to sow fear into enemies.

Robots were equipped with multiple redundant systems and even nannite repair systems, allowing them to continue functioning after taking light damage. Back in their day, the robots were regarded as immortals by less technological races.

Despite their armor and weaponry, these robots are second-rate troops, lacking the energy shields and advanced programming of superior models. Their weapons cannot be used by the Knights—they draw power from the robot's internal power supply, and use encoded electrical impulses to actually fire. The weapon fires a beam of intense energy, which literally breaks down every atom, disintegrating flesh, bone, even metal.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10(4)

**Gear:** Energy rifle (Range: 24/48/96; Damage: 3d6; ROF 1; Shots unlimited in hands of robot; AP 2, HW) with molecular blade attachment (Str+d8+2, AP 4, requires 2 hands)

### Special Abilities:

- \* **Armor +4:** Tough metallic structure.
- \* **Claws:** Str+d4.
- \* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. No additional damage from Called Shots. Immune to poison and disease.
- \* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- \* **Redundant Systems:** A robot is very hard to keep down. Whenever one is wounded by any means other than a Called Shot to the head, area affect attack, or Heavy Weapon, draw a card from the action deck. A red card indicates the robot is disabled as normal and out of the fight. A black card (or Joker) means the robot ignores the damage from the attack.
- \* **Teleport:** When the robot is killed by any means other than a Called Shot to the head or an area effect weapon, an emergency teleporter activates. This instantly transports the thing back to the nearest base (in this case, the tomb). This was a basic safety feature to prevent Zal technology from falling into



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enemy hands. The robots cannot voluntarily activate this system.

- \* **Thermal Vision:** Robots halve all penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets or vehicles with their engine running.

## ENC. 7: BROADSWORD DOWN (L+141)

At the start of the 10th round of combat (that's just one minute after it begins), the character manning the satellite radio receives a transmission.

*“Broadsword to Viper 1, Broadsword to Viper 1. ETA one minute. Repeat, time to landing on the pad is one minute. Be on the ready line!”*

Communication with Broadsword is two-way, so the Knight can appraise the drop ship of their situation. Broadsword intends to make a quick landing and take-off, however—the engines are sucking in too much dust for the dropship to

start engaging in combat, the winds are making flight extremely difficult, and Gonzalez has no wish to shoot any of his comrades. As such, he requests the Knights be on the landing pad when he arrives.

At the start of the 8th round after Broadsword's contact, anyone outside sees the lights of the Angel approaching, it's powerful nose-mounted searchlight cutting through the storm.

At the start of next round, have each character make a Notice roll at -2 (due to the storm). With success, read the first paragraph. Should they all fail, read the second paragraph.

*“As the dropship slows to land, you notice a sickly green glow grow in the north, from somewhere in the canyon. Suddenly a beam of energy lances through the storm, striking Broadsword's cockpit. The pilot likely dead, Broadsword spirals to the earth, engines screaming. Time seems to stand still as the ship crashes nose first into the canyon wall,*





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*erupting in a huge fireball. The shockwave and heat roll over the landing pad as Broadsword disintegrates in a raging inferno.”*

*“You see a bright flash of green light in the sky, then hear the howl of dropship engines straining. Spiraling out of the air some 50 yards away is Broadsword. Time seems to stand still as the ship crashes nose first into the canyon wall, erupting in a huge fireball. The shockwave and heat roll over the landing pad as Broadsword disintegrates in a raging inferno.”*

Without Broadsword, the heroes have no immediate hope of rescue. The storm continues to rage for the rest of the adventure and solar flares prohibit communication. More immediately, however, the Knights may find themselves in the open with skeletal robots still on the rampage.

The energy beam is generated from the ancient Zal tomb. When the tomb was “asleep,” the beam was inert. Now some of the inhabitants have wakened, and the defenses have activated, though the system is faulty (its automatic target tracking system no longer works). The robots at the base sent a visual feed back to the tomb, triggering the cannon to fire on the “incoming enemy vehicle.”

Should all the robots be destroyed, the WM can assume the tracking system worked well enough for a single shot. Isolating the Knights from the outside world at this stage is important.

## AFTERMATH

With no hope of immediate rescue and the storm still raging, the team has only one real option after defeating the skeletal robots—to explore the archaeological site. It should be obvious from the clues that the source of the problems centers there. Leaving a possible threat behind Church lines is an unwise option. Should the Knights not choose this course of action, a surviving Extra points out it is their duty to ensure the safety of the Church at any cost.

Walking to the site through the storm takes around four hours. The crawler isn’t much faster, but at least the heroes have some shelter from the wind and sand.

## THE ADVENTURE ENDS

The mission ends once heroes have finished investigating the Zal tomb in the canyon. As they emerge from the tunnel, the Knights see the storm has died down in a few hours. The solar flares ease up enough for them to broadcast an SOS. A few hours later, three Lazarite dropships appear—one for the heroes and two carrying reinforcements dressed in HARD suits and armed with flamethrowers and laser rifles.

The Knights are shepherded into the dropship. The reinforcements, led by a Knight Commander, refuse to answer any questions, instead simply insisting the heroes vacate the site. Should the characters refuse to play ball, the Lazarites threaten them with deadly force. They are not concerned with the characters and are quite willing to execute them.

Once back at their Preceptory, the Knights are debriefed by their Knight Commander. Within a few hours the Field Master orders them to his office. He asks each of them to take a vow never to reveal what they discovered, promising a lengthy tour with the Penitents should they break their silence.

The entire region is sealed off while Church scientists begin the lengthy process of investigating the tomb and discovering its deeper secrets. The Knights hear nothing more of discoveries, these being kept firmly under wraps.

Note that if the Knights didn’t hand over all the discs, there is a chance they may return to the tomb of their own volition to find answers. The site is crawling with Lazarite scientists, who have commandeered Mars Station as their base. Any more adventures set at the tomb are left to the WM to devise, but he is cautioned the Lazarites have orders to use *any* means necessary to keep its existence a secret.

Should the Knights mention the email regarding the sale of historical artifacts to a private collector, the CIS is duly informed and launches an investigation. Within a week, Cardinal Howe is arrested and his private collection confiscated. Many of the objects are given to museums in Vatican City, but a few vanish. Howe is charged with “heresy and trafficking in forbidden objects” and burned at the stake a month later without being granted absolution. He does not protest his innocence. Davis is posthumously excommunicated for his role in the affair.

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Award each Knight Experience Points depending on how well the mission went. If they fail to enter the tomb or return with out any discs (to allow scientists access), they should receive just a single point, having effectively failed the adventure.

## THE FACILITY

This chapter details the archaeological station. WMs should ensure they know the details of each building, as different clues can be found in these areas.

## GENERAL NOTES

This section details features shared across the base. Differences are noted in the appropriate building description.

**Buildings:** All doors and walls are heavily armored (Heavy Armor +10).

**Corpses:** There are no bodies in the camp. The attacker's energy weapons literally vaporized most of the scientists, leaving no trace. The few left over corpses were taken back to the tomb, standard orders for the Zal's robots.

**Doors:** Once power is restored, doors require an authorized swipe card to open. Some areas require specially authorized cards. Because the scientists treated each other as extended family, any swipe card can open an accommodation block unless a security code has been activated, in which case only the occupants' card or a command card (which overrides all security locks) works.

**Hand Cranking:** Due to standard features designed to keep out the fine dust, the outer door to any structure must be closed before the inner door can be opened. There is no way to override this. Without power, the doors must be hand cranked—a process which takes 10 minutes in total.

**Cutting:** Knights may elect to cut through the doors. This takes a total of 2 minutes (1 minute per door), but leaves the entrances wide open to the wind, sand, and any aggressors.

**Furniture & Fittings:** Free standing low-height furniture and fittings, such as chairs, tables, computer terminals, and beds, may be crossed as difficult terrain. None of it is firmly attached to the walls or floor. Tipping it over is an action. All furniture and fitting are dense plastic and provide +2 Armor if used for Cover.

**Lighting:** Outside it is a clear sky and bright sunshine. Inside buildings with windows, however, the lighting is Dark (-2 penalty) due to the sand-scoured glass. Peering through a window gives -2 to Notice rolls.

**Low Walls:** Crossing a low wall uses 2" of movement. The walls provide +4 Armor when used as Cover.

**Plasma Screen:** (Requires power) Embedded in the walls around the facility are small plasma screens. These allowed the miners to watch Church and Corporate broadcasts when the weather permitted. A data disc player with a collection of movies is located below each screen in habitation and recreation areas.

The system ties into the facility's comms network, acting as a videophone to other sets around the base. The weather conditions are blocking all TV signals except internal ones, which are hard-wired fiber optics. Deducing the workings of the internal system requires 1 minute and a successful Smarts roll.

**Power:** There is no power when the team arrives. The power plant has been damaged and must be repaired (p. 14). Doors must be cranked open manually, a laborious and time-consuming process, thanks to the airlock system in place. Similarly, no lights, air conditioning, computer systems, food dispensers, and the like are functioning.

**Street Lights:** (Requires power) So long as there is power, the lights automatically activate during the storm. Place a Large Blast Template face down under the center of each street light. Details of lighting conditions can be found on page 5.

**Windows:** A few structures have windows. None of the windows can be opened, though they can be shattered (Toughness 8 for breaking, Armor +10). The windows are not very large.

Wriggling through a shattered window takes 3" of movement for Small characters (Size -1). For normal size characters, it takes 3" of movement and is treated as an action. A successful Agility roll at -2 allows movement through as part of a character's regular Pace, though it still uses 3" of movement. Brawny and Obese characters (Size +1) always treat crawling through a window as an action and it uses 4" of Pace. Creatures of Size +2 or greater cannot fit through the small space. Only creatures of Size -2 can move through a window while running.

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## CHAPEL

Being a Church-owned facility, there is a chapel. Once the chapel is located, have the characters make a Common Knowledge roll (+2 for Chaplains). With success, they know the priests sent to these remote outposts are often “problem cases.”

### GAINING ACCESS

The inner door has been sealed with a locking code, which disables even the hand cranking mechanism. Until power is restored, the room cannot be entered, except by cutting the doors. Once power is back on, a hero can make a Lockpicking roll at -2 to run a bypass. This takes one minute per attempt. Alternately, a command level card can be used. The chapel has no windows.

### INTERIOR

Once the Knights gain access, read the following text.

*By the light of myriad candles, the only source of light, you can see the walls are covered in prayers, hastily written in what appears to be ink. Among them you recognize prayers requesting salvation of body and soul. Kneeling before the altar is a figure in priestly garb, his head bowed. He rocks from side to side and a low murmur can be heard. He makes no indication he has detected your presence.*

Should a Knight call out, the figure raises a hand (concealed beneath heavy robes) to signal for silence. After a few moments, the figure rises and turns to face the Knights.

*The priest turns, throwing back his cowl. His skin has been torn away, revealing glistening muscles. A large, ragged gash across his throat indicates a mortal wound. “So,” he hisses, “you have come to ask salvation from your sins? Allow me to bless you!” With that he raises his hands and chants, calling on the powers of Hell.*

Deal initiative cards.

### TACTICS

The Rephaim priest begins by unleashing three *bolts* of necromantic energy, aiming them at any Knights first. He then dives for Cover behind the nearest pew. On subsequent rounds he casts *armor* and then *obscure*, before using

any remaining spell points on more *bolts*. Only when out of Power Points (or attacked first) does he engage in melee.

### FEATURES

**Altar:** The altar provides +4 Armor if used as Cover. Written across the altar in blood are strange runes. Characters who understand Cryptspeak recognize them as Rephaim glyph-words. If translated, they speak vaguely of destroying human life, using blood to give life, and other damnable acts. It is clear to anyone who speaks Cryptspeak the author was not very conversant in the language.

Washing the altar clean takes 10 minutes (and requires water). Using a flamethrower to destroy the desecrated altar takes a single action.

Should the altar be left desecrated, all characters who see it suffer a -1 penalty to Spirit rolls. This lasts until it is cleansed or the Knights leave the facility.

**Lectern:** In front of the altar stands a lectern, atop which is a copy of the Book of Salvation, a common holy tome. Attached to the cover with crude stitches are scraps of human skin (the priest’s facial skin). This requires a Guts roll. Anyone who looks inside sees phrases like, “Lies to enslave the weak,” “I have tasted of His power and was born anew,” and “Blessed be the Darkness,” scrawled on every page in blood.

**Font:** The font is full of thick, congealed blood. The priest tried to save his soul from a fate worse than death by slitting his throat. He failed.

**Pews:** The pews are heavy plastic benches with high backs. They provide +3 Armor when used as Cover. There is enough clearance to crawl under them and move around the chapel.

**Swipe Cards:** Father David carries a command level swipe card.

**Taint:** The dark taint and desecration give heroes with Faith or a Saintly Litany a -2 penalty to arcane skill rolls while in the building. This is removed only when the chapel is cleansed.

### (WC) FATHER DAVID, ZOMBIE NECROMANCER

Father David was a true problem case. Allegations of serious misconduct and even heretical preaching were swept under the carpet and the priest sent to the remote outpost, his superiors believing hardship would be good for his soul.



# THE LONG SLEEP

Father David was one of the first on the scene after the discovery of the tomb. As he studied the bizarre glyphs and images on the walls, he became convinced the structure contained the forces of Hell in material form, and his sanity cracked.

Back at the base, the priest shut himself in the chapel and prayed for salvation. When the firing began, he believed the Devil (a figure the Church no longer recognizes) had come for his black soul. In desperation he began scribbling out prayers, hoping the holy words would prevent the “demons” from entering. As the firing came closer, his desperation grew. He made his peace with God and committed suicide, slitting his own throat, trusting in the Lord to understand his reasons for this mortal sin.

Someone listened to his dying prayers, but it wasn't God. The Dark, always eager for more souls, answered the priest and promised him eternal life at his right hand. With his last gasp, Father David sealed the dark pact, rising shortly afterward as a zombie blessed with necromantic powers. He converted the chapel as best he could into an altar to the Dark and began worshipping in his own debased way.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d10, Spellcasting d8

**Charisma:** +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 7

**Gear:** Molecular knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2).

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Claws:** Str.
- \* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear & Intimidation.
- \* **Powers:** *Armor* (skin turns black), *bolt* (ray of black light), *obscure* (darkness); 25 Power Points.
- \* **Thermal Vision:** Halves penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets.
- \* **Undead:** +2 Toughness. +2 to recover from being Shaken. Called shots do no extra damage. Immune to poison and disease. Piercing weapons do half damage.

## COMMAND HABITATS

The habitat blocks were occupied by the command staff. All are designed around a standard layout, though the former occupants personalized them with photos of loved ones, posters, and such like. The name of the former inhabitant is listed on a plaque screwed to each door.

## FEATURES

**Computer Terminal:** (Requires power) Each habitat has a computer. It contains diaries, work schedules, accounts, emails, and the like. There is nothing of interest on three of the computers, though discovering this takes 10 minutes at the terminal and a successful Investigation roll.

Wright's terminal, however, contains the facility command log. When the Investigation roll succeeds, give the group Player Handout #3.

**Plasma Screen:** In one habitat block, a Corporate music video was left playing on a loop. When power is restored, this reactivates, blaring out at full volume. Anyone in the room when the power is switched on must make a Guts roll or be Shaken by the sudden cacophony. The WM should pick a habitat occupied by one or more characters when power is restored.

**Swipe Card:** Running Deer's habitat contains a command level swipe card on her bed. She left it when she ran outside to investigate the shooting.

## COMMUNICATION SUITE

The facility's communication suite is an outdated wide broadcast system, meaning it pumps out radio waves in all directions rather than through a tight beam. As such, it is highly susceptible to solar flares, as well as general atmospheric interference. It has a range of around 5,000 miles on a good day.

## FEATURES

**Comms System:** (Requires power) Once power is restored, the system begins transmitting a standard SOS signal every 10 seconds. The SOS is non-specific and merely indicates the scientists require immediate assistance.

**Computer Terminal:** (Requires power) An Investigation roll and five minutes checking through the logs reveals an SOS signal was sent late on 22.IV.2351. Selecting a log entry replays the message. It mentions an outbreak of hostilities with unknown assailants but nothing more specific. The log reveals it was sent by Wright, the base commander. The storm caused the signal to become lost in the ether, hence why it was never received.

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## LABORATORY

The laboratory was where the scientists returned promising samples for study. Several tables, some chairs, a small X-ray machine, a chemical analyzer, and two computer terminals are the only items of furniture. On one of the tables is a large object covered in a sheet—wires from a power source outlet run under the covering.

### SPECIAL FEATURES

**Computer Terminal:** (Requires power) An Investigation roll and 15 minutes research reveals some clues about the robot. Give the players Handout #4 at this time.

**Robot Torso:** Beneath the sheet is what at first appears to be a skeleton human torso, complete with arms (but no head). A Notice roll reveals the “bones” are in fact metal.

The robot is the partial remains of a Zal skeletal servitor. When it was powered up, it sent an automatic signal to awaken its comrades and come to its aid. Fortunately for the Knights, damage to the power station caused a total power loss and the robot fell silent once more, its damaged internal power supplies being unable to hold any charge. Unable to locate the beacon and programmed to accept the silence as meaning it was either vaporized or had returned to the tomb through



its teleporter, the robots slaughtered the “aliens” they could find and retreated to await the Zal’s eventual return and new orders.

Should power be restored while the cables are still attached, the robot powers up enough to begin silently broadcasting its signal back to the tomb. This alerts the other robots, who move to investigate. If the Knights detach the cables, then the Knight’s dropship was detected and the sentries alerted.

## LANDING PAD

The landing pad is large enough to take an Angel dropship. Remote facilities such as this one are kept regularly supplied by civilian versions of Pedacl dropships.

### FEATURES

**Computer Terminal:** (Requires power) The computer is a diagnostic system used to help find faults in dropships or vehicles. Once powered up, it grants +1 to Repair rolls when fixing vehicles.

**Guidance Beacon & Lights:** (Requires power) The landing guidance beacon and landing lights are in working order—they just lack power. Once power is resorted they begin working normally.

**Vehicles:** There is one vehicle near the pad—a standard industrial crawler. This is described in more detail below.

### INDUSTRIAL CRAWLER

The crawler is a standard Damocles Industries Model 3000G Industrial Crawler, known affectionately as the “Scoop.” Damocles is a Church-operated firm specializing in manufacturing of construction industry ground vehicles. Any character with the Driving skill has likely operated one—the Sacri Ordines use them as well. Slow but steady, the Scoop is ubiquitous across Church territory.

The Scoop requires a single operator, though there is room in the cab for two people.

The bucket is raised and lowered by hydraulic rams, though it only has a maximum height of a foot. As well as being able to scoop up loose debris, it can be used as a general cargo hauler. Although the operator’s manual states persons shouldn’t travel in the rear bucket for reasons of safety, it can comfortably hold four passengers. Troops hiding in the heavily armored bucket have +6 Heavy Armor when firing from Cover.

# THE LONG SLEEP

This particular Scoop is well weathered but is in good working order. The bucket is currently empty.

## DAMOCLES INDUSTRIES "SCOOP"

**Acc/Top Speed:** 2/8; **Toughness:** 15/15/19 (2/2/6);

**Handling:** -2; **Crew:** 1+1 (+4 in bucket)

**Notes:** Heavy Armor (bucket only), Tracked

## MAIN HABITAT

The main habitat block comprises a number of small rooms, each decorated with personal effects. These housed the non-command staff. Every room houses a bed and a wardrobe.

Each door bares a name plaque. Sex and role are listed in parentheses for the WM, so he can add flavor to individual rooms. The names are as follows.

Davis, P (male archaeologist), Redburn, K (female archaeologist), Baissant, O (male senior technician), Nasamwari, J (male technician), Smith, R (male service Manager), Cooper, R (female services), Boucher, J (male digger), Kowalski, S (female digger), Peers, X (male digger), and Narro, Y (male digger).

## FEATURES

There is little if any of interest to the Knights—just clothes, a little money, photos of family and loved ones, and routine personal logs.

**Computer Terminal:** (Requires power) Each room has a computer terminal. It contains diaries, work schedules, accounts, emails, and the like. There is nothing of interest in most of them (see below), though discovering this takes 10 minutes at the terminal and a successful Investigation roll.

If the heroes don't search Davis' terminal for clues, have it begin beeping loudly and flashing a warning that there are unsent emails at a later point in the adventure. The clues it holds are important.

**Hidden Object:** A strange metallic object is concealed in the second room searched. This room belongs to Davis, one of the archaeologists. In order to find it the heroes must search the computer. A successful Investigation roll reveals an unsent email (due to the flares jamming the comms). Give the players Handout #5 at this point. The disc is hidden in the overhead light (the clue is in the email).

As the email says, it is an inch across, metallic, and has glyphs on both sides. Analysis requires use of the main laboratory (and power). A successful Common Knowledge roll and 30 minutes work reveals the metal is of unknown composition, but matches that of the skeletal torso exactly. Due to its strange composition, no dating evidence can be gathered to confirm Davis' claim.

The disc, once carried by the robot, is a key to open the tomb complex. The heroes will need it for the second part of the mission.

## MEDICAL CENTER

Compared to what most citizens have access to, the medical center is a modern miracle. In comparison, to the Sacri Ordines' facilities, it is lacking. It contains two beds, a blood analysis kit, surgical tools, and standard medical supplies, such as bandages, thermometers, stethoscopes, and so on.

## FEATURES

**Drug Cabinet:** The drug cabinet is locked. Opening it requires a Lockpicking roll and 5 minutes or a command level swipe card and power to the lock. Inside are a variety of filled syringes, bottles of liquids and pills, and a dispensary pad to record stock. These equate to 20 units of supplies for a medikit or field surgery kit.

**Fridge:** (Requires power) Contains 20 ruined units of synthetic blood and plasma.

**General Medicine:** Using the facility grants a +1 bonus to Healing rolls.

**Search:** A successful search around the main console locates a packet of four syringes hidden in a drawer. A Healing roll identifies them as illegal stims, used by miners because it allows them to ignore fatigue and work harder. Like many citizens, miners are paid based on results, not the hours they work.

Each dose instantly removes one level of Fatigue, except those caused by the virus. For an hour after use, they also increase Vigor by one die type.

However, they are also highly addictive. A character using them must make a Spirit roll with a cumulative -1 penalty for each dose taken in the last 4 hours. On a failure, he becomes addicted and gains the Major Habit Hindrance.



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## POWER STATION & SOLAR RELAY

The base's power station makes use of solar energy. Light is converted to electrical energy at the external solar relay (see below) and stored in massive, subterranean, rapid-charge, high-storage capacitors. During storms and at night, the capacitors' stored energy is released, supplying the base with its electrical needs. To conserve power, high-usage areas, such as the processing plant, automatically shutdown during these times.

During the fight, the power station was damaged by gunfire, causing a general system shutdown to prevent extreme feedback. Unfortunately, a secondary fault caused the capacitors to release much of their charge. The capacitors are currently charged with enough juice for just one hour standard use and begin discharging once the main system is repaired.

Repairing the system takes an hour and requires a Repair roll at -2 (with an additional -2 if not using tools). Up to two other persons can Cooperate on this roll. Failures can be re-rolled, but each attempt takes a full hour. With success, power flows again. Systems begin to reboot, lights flicker on, airlocks work properly, and so on.

Once power is restored, a digital readout shows the current storage (1 hour) compared to the maximum storage (168 hours) and the amount of energy being used. Recharging requires one or more solar panels on the relay station to be extended.

### SOLAR RELAY

The solar relay is used to collect solar energy.

A hero with Repair d6+ who spends 2 minutes inspecting the solar relay automatically realizes the solar panels are in "protection mode," stored inside the relay to safeguard them from damage. He knows this is standard procedure during sandstorms or power outages. To allow maintenance, the panels can be hand cranked into the extended position. This takes two minutes per panel and there are four in total.

Any hero with the Repair skill knows how to crank the panels safely. Other characters must make an Agility roll per panel. A critical failure causes the panel to jam, requiring a Repair roll and five minutes work to fix it. The Repair roll may be reattempted.

Once power is restored to the facility, extending the panels takes just a few seconds with the press of a button on the relay, from the power station, or from the operations center.

For each hour a panel is extended in bright sunlight it provides enough charge to the capacitors for three hours of use. Thus, all four panels working together provide 12 hours of energy per hour they are extended.

Given the sandstorm strikes exactly two hours after the heroes arrive and the power station must be repaired before energy can be stored (a minimum of an hour), they will, at best, be able to store just 12 hours of energy. This is enough to last the coming night.

By carefully conserving energy, such as switching off unused computer terminals and lights, and closing down air conditioning in unoccupied buildings, this can be extended to 48 hours.

## RECREATION

The Rec Center was the hub of the facility's social life. The scientists cooked and ate their meals here, played cards and arcade games, listened to music and watched movies, and engaged in the time-honored tradition of brawling. It also houses the communal showers and toilets.

### FEATURES

**Game Consoles:** The game consoles provide +3 Armor if used as Cover. A character who wants to waste 15 minutes and who succeeds at an Agility roll sets a new high score. His Agility roll becomes the target for others wishing to beat him.

**Kitchen:** Contains standard plastic utensils, cutlery, and dishes, as well as heavy-duty plastic cooking pots. The oven, microwave, and deep fryers are all electrical. Heating the fryer takes 10 minutes.

Any creature shoved into the fryer takes 2d10 damage. A thrown pan of hot fat has Range 2/4/8, Damage 2d8. Adjacent targets are splashed for 2d4 damage. This counts as an area effect attack. Treat targets soaked in hot fat as very flammable.

**Pantry:** The pantry contains enough dehydrated and tinned food to last for several weeks. The two large chest freezers (+4 Armor) have no power, and the contents are spoiled.

# THE LONG SLEEP

## STORAGE

**Snack Machines:** The snack machines stock a variety of candy, potato chips, and soft drinks. Acquiring a snack or beverage requires a swipe card or smashing the glass (Toughness 4). The vending machines provide +3 Armor when used as Cover.

**Swipe Card:** The insane worker (see below) carries a standard swipe card.

## SEALED ROOM

The back room, once used as the cinema, has been welded shut from the inside. The only way inside is to cut through or enter via a window. The internal blinds are down, which prevent anyone from seeing into the room.

Inside is a former member of the facility staff (Xavier Peers). During the incident, he welded himself into the room, leaving his comrades to die. As their screams echoed through the building, Peers, already half crazed from seeing the attackers, went insane. He is now homicidally paranoid, convinced the attackers still wait for him.

If the heroes make any noise while outside the door, such as shouting or cutting through, Peers, convinced they are skeletal robots, takes up a defensive position behind the door and prepares to attack. The Knights must check for Surprise when the door is finally opened as the lunatic attacks without warning. Peers attacks in a homicidal rage, from which he cannot be calmed.

Even if taken alive he is of limited use to the Knights—his mind has shattered. A successful Healing roll sedates him for several hours (after which he awakes in a similarly insane state). *Puppet* can be used to draw secrets from his mind, though Peers is allowed a second roll to resist any form of questioning which involves the skeletons. Successful use elicits a single response, “The shining dead came for us!”

## (WC) INSANE WORKER

**Attributes:** Agility d8, Smarts d8(A), Spirit d10, Strength d8+2, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d8+2, Stealth d4

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 8

**Gear:** Molecular dagger (Str+d4+2, AP 2)

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Berserk:** As per the Edge. Modifiers to Traits are included in his stats.
- \* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- \* **Improved Frenzy:** Can make 2 Fighting attacks each round at no penalty.

The storage facility contains everything the staff needed except for food, which is stored in the recreation area (p. 14). Most of the supplies are very mundane, and comprise bedding, clothes, writing paper, specimen bags and containers, chemicals for preserving finds, tape, shovels, and so on. However, there are a few special items.

## FEATURES

**Explosives:** Contained in a locked crate are 10 explosive charges and two remote detonators. A quick glance reveals the crate could hold a maximum of 24 charges. The crate can be opened with a Lockpicking roll or smashing or shooting the lock (Toughness 10).

**SBAC 25mm:** Despite being a civilian organization, the scientists had a SBAC 25mm autocannon. The Ruber Desert is home to many dangerous predators, not to mention Union facilities. There are 3 magazines for the autocannon. The autocannon is concealed beneath a tarpaulin.

## THE TOMB COMPLEX

In this section the heroes enter the Zal tomb and make some remarkable discoveries. It should be noted that aside from the skeletal robots there is nothing to truly link the Zal with the current Rephaim threat plaguing Salus.

## INTERNAL DESIGN

None of the chambers in the tomb are actually touching each other—this is intentional. The tomb is not actually a single locale on Salus, but rather numerous chambers scattered beneath the planet’s surface. The canyon chamber is just the front door, the Zal equivalent of a railway station. The portals in the disparate chambers (see below) are teleporters.

When the base was in full working order, the doors appeared as solid metal, just like the main door. A Zal or robot simply thought about the destination, the metal dissolved to reveal the inky blackness, and the traveler walked through, appearing at his destination instantly. The doors were also capable of accepting multiple passen-

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gers at once—two Zal, each seeking a different chamber, could use a portal simultaneously and would appear where they desired.

Since the great battle screwed up the tomb's power systems, though, the doors have become scrambled and open into a random location each time.

When the characters enter any door, draw a card and check below to see where they appear. If they enter within one round, all the heroes appear in the same location. Otherwise, different groups of characters draw their own card. It may take an age for them to return to the entrance chamber, and there may be rooms they don't visit because of this. Patience and determination will see them through.

It is very easy for the heroes to become separated, as intended, so the WM must keep track of each group's location.

Worse, just because you enter a door in the "north" wall of one room does not mean you'll appear in the "south" door at your destination, as you would in a conventional building. Compass directions mean nothing in the tomb, so never describe doors in terms of cardinal points. If you use floor plans for a battle, put them down in any direction you want. Let the players worry about compass directions and things like, "How did I go north but come out east?"

## Card Result

Deuce	Door malfunctions. Each individual using the door draws a card to see where he ends up, even if the Knights use the door in the same round
3	Entrance Chamber (page 18)
4	Astronomical Chamber (page 19)
5	Hibernation Chamber (page 19)
6	Repair Chamber (page 20)
7	Armory (page 20)
8	Communications Suite (page 21)
9	Conference Room (page 22)
10	Powerplant (page 22)
Jack-Ace	Empty Room (page 23)
Joker	The doors work as intended. If a hero vocalizes that he wants to go to a certain room, even accidentally ("We need to find the powerplant," for example) then that's where the portal leads.

## INTERNAL DOORS

**Communication:** All of the doorways indicated are inky black portals, through which nothing can be seen using low light, infrared, or visible light. Neither do ID scanners penetrate them—within the tomb an ID scanner only works on ID tags in the same room. The blackness defies any form of sensory investigation (natural or artificial). Don't let the characters waste too much time trying to deduce something far beyond their understanding.

The *only* way to communicate with someone on the other side of a portal is through a headset communicator. Visual feedback is possible through a mobile command center. In both cases, the feedback is heavily distorted.

A Knight wishing to use his commander's Leadership Edges draws cards as normal for using the MCC. However, he must then make an immediate Notice roll (based on hearing). With success, he may use the Edges as normal. A failure means he cannot hear the commands properly and does not receive the Edges—he has delayed for nothing.

**Touching a Door:** Touching a door causes it to give slightly, like pushing through thick syrup. To bare skin the blackness feels icy cold (causes no harm) but there is no physical sensation of actually touching anything—the dense fluid gives, but the character cannot feel that happening.

**Walking Through:** A character can walk through a door with only a slight effort. On passing through, the hero is momentarily disoriented, as if he has been deprived of all his senses. He experiences a terrifying sensation of falling before he appears on the other side Shaken. Each door can accommodate a maximum of two people at once.

A character who sticks just a limb through can feel nothing on the other side. Should he stick just his head through to try and see what is on the far side, he feels intensely sick and must make a Vigor roll or be Shaken and suffer a level of Fatigue for ten minutes. This can lead to Incapacitation, but not Death. The Knight also sees nothing—he has total sensory deprivation and the feeling of falling into a bottomless pit of absolute nothing.

Should the Knights rope themselves together, the rope is immediately severed when a person passes through a portal. Likewise, if holding hands, they are pulled apart by an irresistible force once the entirety of the first person is through the door. Holding onto a gun barrel while a comrade holds the butt slices the weapon in half, ruining the gun. In short, there is *no* way to maintain physical contact with folk on the other side of a door.



# THE LONG SLEEP

## THE DOOR

**Temporary Failure:** The system is prone to constant malfunction. Whenever a deuce is actually used for a combatant's action (deuces rejected by characters with Quick and Level Headed are thus ignored), the doors across the entire tomb cease functioning for the entire round. They open at the start of the following round, assuming no deuce is used that round.

While malfunctioning, the doors become totally impassable (though they remain inky black holes) and all communication between separate chambers is lost.

## ROBOTS

The skeletal robots within the tomb are not stupid. If the Knights run away, the robots follow—their orders are to exterminate any non-Zal they encounter. Since there is only a single door in each chamber, actually escaping them is rather difficult if the robots enter the same portal as the Knights during the same round. Otherwise, the sentinels enter a random room when they use the portal, just like the Knights.

## ENTRANCE TUNNEL

The entrance tunnel measures 12 yards by 12 yards (or 6" by 6") and extends for over 20 yards into the cliff face before ending at the door. As mentioned in the logs, there is no evidence of any joins or welds, giving the impression of the tunnel being a single piece of metal. The walls are resistant to any weapons the heroes possess, even Heavy Weapons.

*Along both walls, engravings show a legion of skeletal warriors marching to war, heading out of the tunnel, while overhead fly what appear to be small aircraft or starships of unusual design. Beneath some of the images are lines of strange glyphs, perhaps some form of writing. It bears no resemblance to any language you know or have seen before. A thin layer of red dust, blown in during the storm, covers the first dozen yards of the floor.*

Let the heroes spend time investigating here if they want. There is nothing of interest to discover, though. The dust shows no signs of having been disturbed, being blown in after the robots marched on the camp to combat the Knights.

*After 20 yards or so, the tunnel abruptly ends. The back wall appears to be part of the tunnel, yet it has different markings. Thin, concentric lines, slight ellipses rather than perfect circles, radiate out from a central semi-circular indentation about an inch wide. Positioned along each circle, seemingly at random, is a single semi-circular protrusion. These vary in size but are all smaller than the central one.*

*Scattered across the door, seemingly in random fashion, though perhaps passing for someone's idea of order, are more glyphs, similar to those on the walls.*

The circles and their protrusions represent planets and their orbits, while the central indentation is a star. This is, in fact, the Salus system as it appeared eons ago. Several planets vanished during the war, blown to pieces by the awesome firepower of both races, while several shifted orbit, making the pattern largely unrecognizable.

What is of most importance is the central indentation. The metallic disc found in Davis' quarters, fits neatly into this. When placed in there, indentations face down toward the door, read the following text.

*The disc appears to melt as you place it in the indentation, becoming simply part of the door. Suddenly, the door itself begins to dissolve, starting in the center and almost flowing outward. Within a few seconds, all sign of the door has vanished.*

*Beyond, all is in darkness. A faint musty smell wafts through the air, drawn outward by the howling gale outside. No sounds can be heard.*

The door remains open for just one minute (ten rounds) before sealing again. For the first 9 rounds anyone can walk through. However, on the final round, the metal begins to flow from the walls to seal the passage.

Any character who decides to enter on the round the door is closing must make an Agility roll at -2 to get through in time. With failure, part of him has become trapped in the door. Don't roll for damage. Instead, roll on the Injury Table. A result of Arm (3-4) or Leg (10) means the charac-

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ter's limb is severed and the victim is immediately Incapacitated. Anything else instantly kills the poor sap (no Vigor roll to survive is allowed).

Once the door seals shut, the central indentation is again hollow, the disc they inserted having vanished. Any characters left on the outside must wait until those on the inside learn how to open the door from there.

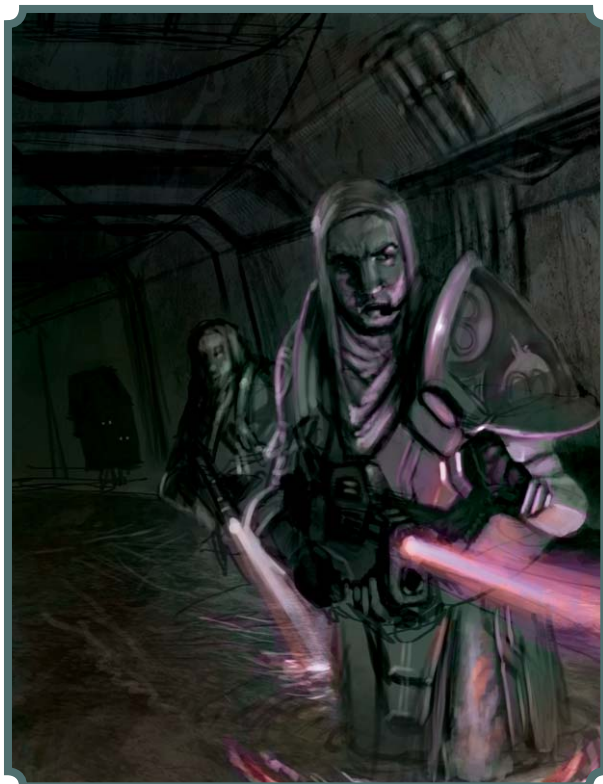
Should no one enter, the Knights have screwed up big time. The tomb becomes nigh impregnable once the door seals (it takes the Church nearly a decade to breach the walls). Finish the adventure now.

Leaving the tomb is easy—simply touching the door causes it to disappear as noted above.

## ENTRANCE CHAMBER

*This large, vaulted chamber lies silent. Standing in the center, reaching to the ceiling, is a large, square, metal pillar. On each face is a door-sized void of inky darkness. The walls of the chamber are engraved with images like those in the tunnel.*

The entrance chamber is quite literally that—a way into the tomb. Of course, the Zal were wise enough to leave guardians. After a few rounds of exploring, read the following.



*As you examine the chamber, several skeletal robots appear from nowhere, as if stepping out of some invisible portal.*

The robots are held in stasis elsewhere (actually in a pocket dimension unreachable by any means in this adventure) and teleport in when sensors are activated. Check for Surprise as normal. Place the robots as equally as possible around the walls. There is little useful cover, save for the pillar. Fortunately, it is indestructible (by any weapons possessed in the adventure), so characters in Cover cannot be attacked through it.

## ROBOT SKELETONS (1 PER CHARACTER)

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10(4)

**Gear:** Plasma rifle (Range: 24/48/96; Damage: 3d6; ROF 1; Shots unlimited in hands of robot; AP 2, HW) with blade attachment (Str+d8+2, AP 4, requires 2 hands)

### Special Abilities:

- \* **Armor +4:** Tough metallic structure.
- \* **Claws:** Str+d4.
- \* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. No additional damage from Called Shots. Immune to poison and disease.
- \* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- \* **Redundant Systems:** A robot is very hard to keep down. Whenever one is wounded by any means other than a Called Shot to the head, area effect attack, or Heavy Weapon, draw a card from the action deck. A red card indicates the robot is disabled as normal and out of the fight. A black card (or Joker) means the robot ignores the damage from the attack.
- \* **Teleport:** When the robot is killed by any means other than a Called Shot to the head or an area effect weapon, an emergency teleporter activates. This instantly transports the thing back to the nearest base (in this case the tomb). This was a basic safety feature to prevent Zal technology falling back into enemy hands. The robots cannot voluntarily activate this system.
- \* **Thermal Vision:** Robots halve all penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets or vehicles with their engine running.

# THE LONG SLEEP

## ASTRONOMICAL CHAMBER

*This chamber is illuminated in bright white light, originating from a swirling globe in the center of the room. The object appears to be a large white star, complete with miniature solar flares erupting. Orbiting it at various distances are eight bodies. A small object spewing a tail of debris behind it, possibly a comet, is approaching the furthest world.*

The spheres are holograms. While the star generates light, it radiates no heat.

The star at the center is a white giant (classification A0 II). The solar system displayed is that of Salus, though the current star which shines in the heavens now is an F2 III. As stated in *Necropolis*, the star underwent some sort of change—the transformation of the white star being a result of weapons of godlike power. The black hole is an artificial creation.

The eight bodies represent the Salus solar system before the final battle. They appear as three small rocky bodies of varying sizes nearest the sun, a large gas giant, a large rocky world (actually Salus), a small gas giant, a verdant world, and a large rocky planet (now an asteroid field).

Back when the base was built, Salus was a hot world with minimal life and water found only beneath the surface. The major inhabited world at the time was actually the second most distant world. The outer world was also colonized, but suffered extensive damage during the battle and is now an asteroid field. The large gas giant (Incus) no longer exists in the form shown here, for it orbits New Sol as a dense, metallic sphere stripped of its atmosphere.

Despite these changes, the system is recognizable through the type of star matching early scientific data and the location of the gas giants. Any hero passing a Common Knowledge roll deduces it is the Salus system in an earlier incarnation, but there is no hope of dating it.

The chamber once served as an early warning system. It mapped the heavens in real time (thus the planets actually orbit the sun in real time and even spin on their axis) and displayed any foreign objects, such as enemy starships or even rogue asteroids. It still functions for this purpose, despite the planets being images of how they were, not how they are. Once back in the world, a Knight who makes enquiries about the comet is told that one is indeed entering the system above

the plane of the asteroid field, but it is currently too faint to see with the naked eye because of its approach vector.

## HIBERNATION CHAMBER

*This hexagonal chamber stands on two levels. The level on which you enter is a raised platform above the ground floor. Markings on the walls are broken down into six distinct zones. Each appears to relate in some way to a single figure, perhaps one of the original builders. The aliens are vaguely human in appearance, though as a stylized representation it is hard to be sure of their true nature. Whoever they are, the figures are obviously important, for they wear ceremonial headdresses and are shown in striking poses.*

*Stairs lead down to the lower level, in which lie six metal sarcophagi arranged in a star formation from a central hexagonal hub. The hub reaches to the ceiling and, like other features you have seen, appears to be part of the ceiling and floor rather than a separate structure. Long cables join the hub to each sarcophagus and winking lights and glowing glyphs can be seen on each face.*

The lights on the hub blink in seemingly random patterns. The sarcophagi are hibernation pods for the Zal. Each one has malfunctioned, and the occupants are long mummified through natural processes.

Opening the pods is an impossible task, but there is a way to see the occupants. The solid metal surface becomes transparent if touched, revealing the grisly contents.

*The instant you touch the lid, the surface becomes transparent. Inside, lying as if asleep, its arms crossed over its chest, is an elongated humanoid creature, perhaps seven feet in height, with a high forehead. It is clearly mummified, though whether from natural processes or some dark necromancy is unclear—it certainly has the appearance of a greater mummy, complete with ceremonial regalia [This assumes the heroes have encountered one of these Rephaim.]*

The heroes have no way of actually checking if the occupants are truly dead, as opposed to Rephaim. Let them worry about this as they continue to explore the tomb.

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## REPAIR CHAMBER

**GM Note:** Any robots not killed by a Called Shot to the head, area affect attack, or Heavy Weapon teleport back to this chamber. There are always two robots present (to shove wrecks into the niches).

Draw a card for each robot destroyed at the archaeological facility. A red card means it is repaired and active. A black card means it is in a niche, awaiting repair (the repair chamber is not functioning as well as it should). Jokers indicate the robot was too badly damaged for the faulty chamber to make repairs.

Note that any Incapacitated robots killed in this chamber disappear for a round and then reappear the next round still in pieces.

*The metallic walls of this chamber are dotted with smooth, man-sized niches, some of which contain robot skeletons. A number of robots are also present. They turn, leveling their guns at you.*

The niches are repair bays for damaged robots. When a robot enters or is placed in a niche, an invisible forcefield activates, pinning the construct inside. Appendages with welders, cutters, and other appliances then “grow” from the walls and begin repair work.

Should a curious human enter one of the niches, he too is trapped by the forcefield. The appendages can't tell flesh from metal, and so get to work repairing him. The victim takes 2d10 damage before the forcefield lifts and he is freed. There is no way to free the victim, the forcefield being impenetrable to any weapons the Knights possess.

### ROBOT SKELETONS (2+)

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10(4)

**Gear:** Plasma rifle (Range: 24/48/96; Damage: 3d6; ROF 1; Shots unlimited in hands of robot; AP 2, HW) with blade attachment (Str+d8+2, AP 4, requires 2 hands)

#### **Special Abilities:**

- \* **Armor +4:** Tough metallic structure.
- \* **Claws:** Str+d4.
- \* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. No additional damage from Called Shots.

Immune to poison and disease.

- \* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- \* **Redundant Systems:** A robot is very hard to keep down. Whenever one is wounded by any means other than a Called Shot to the head, area effect attack, or Heavy Weapon, draw a card from the action deck. A red card indicates the robot is disabled as normal and out of the fight. A black card (or Joker) means the robot ignores the damage from the attack.
- \* **Teleport:** When the robot is killed by any means other than a Called Shot to the head or an area effect weapon, an emergency teleporter activates. This instantly transports the thing back to the nearest base (in this case the tomb). This was a basic safety feature to prevent Zal technology falling back into enemy hands. The robots cannot voluntarily activate this system.
- \* **Thermal Vision:** Robots halve all penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets or vehicles with their engine running.

## ARMORY

*A metallic, egg-shaped dome sits squarely in the center of this chamber. It is covered in glowing symbols. Across the room, four skeletal robots suddenly appear out of thin air!*

The first time the Knights enter this chamber, the guardians activate. The egg makes great Cover, being impervious to all the weapons available in this adventure.

Once the heroes get a chance to examine the egg, they discover an indent in the shape of a thin right hand, with five sensors on the fingertips. Placing the hand of a robot still connected to the torso (the power supply) in the indentation activates the armory.

The majority of the “shell” flows into the floor, leaving being just the part with the hand indentation and a raised dais on which lie 20 small cylinders (warp grenades), 15 plasma rifles (which the Knights can't actually use), and a dozen discs similar to the one they used to gain entrance to the tomb. Used discs reappear here—one of these is the disc Davis found. Taking the discs is important if the Knights ever want to return to the tomb in the future.

Removing the hand automatically reforms the protective shell.



# THE LONG SLEEP

## ROBOT SKELETONS (4)

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

**Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 10(4)

**Gear:** Plasma rifle (Range: 24/48/96; Damage: 3d6; ROF 1; Shots unlimited in hands of robot; AP 2, HW) with blade attachment (Str+d8+2, AP 4, requires 2 hands)

### Special Abilities:

- \* **Armor +4:** Tough metallic structure.
- \* **Claws:** Str+d4.
- \* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. No additional damage from Called Shots. Immune to poison and disease.
- \* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- \* **Redundant Systems:** A robot is very hard to keep down. Whenever one is wounded by any means other than a Called Shot to the head, area effect attack, or Heavy Weapon, draw a card from the action deck. A red card indicates the robot is disabled as normal and out of the fight. A black card (or Joker) means the robot ignores the damage from the attack.
- \* **Teleport:** When the robot is killed by any means other than a Called Shot to the head or an area effect weapon, an emergency teleporter activates. This instantly transports the thing back to the nearest base (in this case the tomb). This was a basic safety feature to prevent Zal technology falling back into enemy hands. The robots cannot voluntarily activate this system.
- \* **Thermal Vision:** Robots halve all penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets or vehicles with their engine running.

## WARP GRENADES

Warp grenades have a Range of 5/10/20 and must be thrown. On impact they generate a dimensional warp field filling a Medium Burst Template. Anything in the template suffers 3d10 damage (AP 100, Heavy Weapon).

Incapacitated vehicles and Extras simply vanish, transported to an alternate dimension (actually the one inhabited by the Dark). Wild Cards must check for Incapacitation as normal. However, *all* injuries are permanent, the affected limb being dimensionally severed. As such, any injury except an Arm or Leg kills the victim outright.

Note that if the Template touches but does not completely enclose an object, such as a large vehicle or a building, only the part destroyed within the template is teleported (though this counts as destroying the vehicle). This can result in the object having a very neat circular chunk missing.

There are a total of 20 grenades, but many are faulty through excessive age. Whenever a grenade is used, draw a card from the action deck. A black card means the device malfunctions. It does not explode, but instead teleports itself to the alternate dimension. There is *no* way to fix faulty grenades or determine in advance which ones are functional.

## COMMUNICATION SUITE

*Dominating the center of this chamber is a floating orb of silvery light about six feet across. Within, you can just make out a reclining chair, molded seamlessly into the floor as if growing from the cold metal.*

The orb is harmless and can be passed through safely. On the right arm of the chair are four buttons arranged in a diamond pattern, while on the left is a single button. None are labeled.

## SITTING DOWN

If a Knight sits in the chair, read the following text.

*As you sit down, the globe alters, losing its silvery appearance and instead representing a star map of the heavens. Dotted across the map are numerous red dots of light. The lights project from the map, stopping a few inches from the chair, and leaving them within easy reach.*

The map is visible from both sides of the globe. A hero making a Common Knowledge roll at -2 realizes the galactic map is from the viewpoint of Salus, effectively placing it at the center of the galaxy.

The diamond-patterned buttons on the chair allow the character to rotate the star chart around the chair. Pressing multiple buttons, such as “up” and “right”, moves the view diagonally in the appropriate direction. Using opposite buttons simultaneously obviously means the map doesn’t move. The left arm button does nothing until a

# NECROPOLIS 2350

planetary view is activated (see below). Pushing it shifts back to the star map. To deactivate the star map, one must simply vacate the chair.

## RED BEAM ACTIVATED

Read on if a red beam is touched.

*The orb changes again, this time showing the surface of a planet. Small golden symbols can be seen on the surface, the light from each again projecting toward the chair.*

The buttons now rotate the view of the planet.

## GOLDEN BEAM ACTIVATED

Should a hero touch a golden beam, read the following.

*Suddenly the quiet is broken by a harsh disembodied voice, which seems to originate from the globe. It speaks for a few seconds before falling silent.*

The language is meaningless to the heroes and, without some sort of key in a known language, cannot be translated.

## TRUE PURPOSE

Each red dot on the star map represents a world formerly controlled by the Zal. The planet is a 3D rotating view of the actual world, though many of these worlds no longer exist—each image is millions of years old. Each golden symbol is a former Zal base or colony on that world.

When one was indicated by touching the symbol, the globe altered again to show the communication suite at the other end. Instant communication across vast distances was possible through dimensional travel, an advanced version of the principles used in FC Drives. However, with the destruction of these bases there is no receiver. The voice is simply telling the activator no communications link can be achieved.

## FINDING EARTH

Heroes who want to find Earth must make a Common Knowledge roll at  $-2$ . With success, they locate the general area of the Sol system. Sure enough, there is a red dot there. Touching it does not produce an image of Earth, though, but of Mars.

At this time, Mars is not the barren red desert men of Earth new. There are oceans, clear signs of major rivers and deltas, and even evidence of forests. Only the presence of Mount Olympus and the red sand gives it away as Mars. There is a single golden symbol on the surface, though it takes a Common Knowledge roll at  $-4$  to know it centers on a region formerly known as Cydonia.

A hero who knows the location can, if the player knows anything on the subject, discuss the ramifications of the “Face on Mars” and supposed pyramids which lie nearby. Although colonists thoroughly surveyed the region and found nothing artificial, rumors of alien life on Mars never truly ceased. Otherwise, it is very unlikely a 24th century holy warrior with more pressing matters knows anything of these old legends. (GMs may look up the visual phenomena on the internet and create a handout if they feel it is appropriate—while interesting, it has no relevance to the *Necropolis* setting.)

## CONFERENCE ROOM

*Aside from a large circle surrounded by smaller circles etched onto the floor, the room is completely barren.*

Anytime a hero moves adjacent to a small circle, a metallic chair grows seamlessly from the floor within the circle. When the first chair forms, the larger circle flows to form a circular table supported on a single pillar. Moving away from a chair causes it to merge back into the floor. When the last chair is gone, the table does likewise. Crossing through a square occupied by a chair or the table counts as difficult ground.

The room was nothing more than a conference center for the Zal before they went into hibernation.

## POWERPLANT

*Rising from a bottomless pit are a pair of gigantic energy coils, which crackle and glow with untold power. Surrounding each is a wide walkway, linked by a much narrower span. The bridge looks very thin and has no support structures. At the far end of the colossal room, beyond the second coil, you can just make out blinking lights.*

# THE LONG SLEEP

*CRACK! Two bolts of electricity suddenly arc from one of the towers, one slamming into the floor nearby and the other striking a distant wall, leaving scorch marks. Fortunately the strange metal is non-conductive.*

*No sooner has the arc struck, you notice a swarm of small beetle-like robots scurry up over the lip of the pit and begin bustling around the tarnished floor. Within seconds, there is no sign of any scorch mark and the swarm scurries away across the bridge to where another bolt of lightning has just struck.*

Despite appearances, the bridge can support several hundred tons with ease. The small robots are maintenance robots. They are programmed to fight only in self-defense, serving otherwise to make repairs as necessary. Unfortunately, the damage the base took millions of years ago is more than they can handle. At best, they are maintaining the powerplant's stability. There are effectively an infinite number of swarms, though only one at a time is ever activated.

The powerplant has a slight imbalance in its energy coils. Each round the squad remains here, deal every hero and the maintenance swarm a card. A black face card indicates he has been struck by electricity, suffering 2d10 damage. Characters who suffer a wound while on the bridge or a square adjacent to the pit must make an Agility roll or fall to their death. Adjacent characters who have not acted (if you're in combat rounds) may make an Agility roll at -2 to catch their comrade. A Strength roll is required to haul them back onto the platform.

In the event a hero is dumb enough to lob a warp grenade into the pit, draw a card from the action deck. A Joker indicates the dimensional bubble severed a vital link and caused a core breach. Alarms begin blaring across the base, the powerplant immediately becomes a high radiation zone, and one round after the grenade is thrown the door seals—permanently. Thirty minutes later, everything within 50 miles of the powerplant's location (which is located beneath the north pole) is vaporized in an antimatter explosion.

Worse, at least for those not in the powerplant room when it detonates, the loss of the power source shuts down the teleport system. The heroes are trapped with *absolutely no hope* of escape. Death comes when the air runs out of the chambers in a few hours.

Anyone who jumps into the pit automatically dies after freefalling for 10 miles into the planet's core, where the actual reactor lies.

## MAINTENANCE ROBOT SWARM

**Attributes:** Agility d10, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d12, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**Skills:** Notice d6

**Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 4; **Toughness:** 9(2)

**Special Abilities:**

- \* **Armor +2:** Metallic structure.
- \* **Attack:** Maintenance swarms inflict hundreds of tiny cuts and burns every round to their victims, hitting automatically and causing 2d4 damage to everyone in the template (victims in completely sealed suits are immune). They only attack in self-defense, though.
- \* **Construct:** +2 to recover from being Shaken. No additional damage from Called Shots. Immune to poison and disease.
- \* **Fearless:** Immune to Fear and Intimidation.
- \* **Split:** These swarms are clever enough to split into two smaller swarms (Small Burst Templates) should their foes split up. The Toughness of these smaller swarms is lowered by -2 (to 7(2) each).
- \* **Swarm:** Parry +2; Because the swarm is composed of scores, hundreds, or thousands of creatures, cutting and piercing weapons do no real damage. Area-effect weapons work normally, and a character can stomp to inflict his damage in Strength each round. Swarms are usually foiled by jumping in water.
- \* **Thermal Vision:** Robots halve all penalties for bad lighting when attacking living targets or vehicles with their engine running.

## EMPTY ROOMS

These chambers are either unfinished or no longer function properly. Either way, there is nothing in them of interest. If the face card which lead them here is black, 1d4 skeletal robots teleports in to attack the occupants.

**(M) Robot Skeletons (1d4):** See page 6.

# NECROPOLIS 2350

## UPDATE: OFFICE OF ANTIQUITIES

The Office of Antiquities (OA) is a minor Curial office appointed to research and catalogue Salus' past. Its main office is located on the Street of Weeping Angels, Vatican City, close to the Office of Information. The serving head of the organization is Cardinal Jean-Luc Beevor.

Note that as far as the current regime is concerned, mankind's history before the advent of the Third Reformation Church is largely one of heretical beliefs and barbaric acts. Only when it suits the interests of the Church is history before 2318 recorded in a positive light (such as when potential relics come to light).

The Office of Antiquities is divided into several smaller offices.

### THE OFFICE OF RELICS

This office (run by First Secretary Lawrence Gilsenan) is concerned with the finding, preservation, and display of religious relics. They control the numerous shrines across Salus and, in part, fund the Sisters of Bradamante, who guard these holy places outside Vatican City (where the Praetorians fill that role).

In order to be labeled a holy relic, an object must have a proven history dating to a religious figure or event, be associated with a miracle, and be subjected to a battery of tests by the Office of the Divine Reckoning (a minor but important office).

### THE OFFICE OF MUSEUMS

The Office of Museums (First Secretary Ruth Ruberto) is responsible for running the Church's museums and raising funds to continue this work. They work closely with the Office of Information

to ensure factual information about artifacts retains the necessary spiritual guidance and does not branch into wild speculation or heresy.

### THE OFFICE OF ANTIQUITY SECURITY

Headed by First Secretary Frederick Johnson, the OAS performs two roles. Originally it hired security personnel for all its museums. Although it still performs this role in backwater areas, within Vatican City it serves as a liaison office with the Praetorians, who now perform this duty. Second, it works closely with law enforcement divisions and the CIS to investigate cases of stolen antiquities and forgeries. Investigators have no powers of arrest.

### THE OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY

Run by First Secretary Paolo Romero, the office forms the fieldwork division. It is divided into four sub-offices.

The Office of Ancient Archaeology (Second Secretary Joachin de Montfort) concerns itself with the history of Salus before human settlers. Their main role is to find fossil specimens and record Salus' natural history. As such, they work with colleagues from the Offices of Geology and Natural History, divisions of the Office of Scientific Research, to piece together the complete picture of Salus' evolution.

The Office of First Settlement (Second Secretary Benedict Tad) has the responsibility of uncovering artifacts dating from 2132 to 2244. The Office of Second Settlement (Second Secretary Umberto Brudhanger) covers 2245 until 2318. The newest office, the Office of the Third Reformation (Second Secretary Daisy Love), works to record modern history.



# PLAYER HANDOUT #1: MISSION BRIEFING

Date: 28.IV.2351, 0630 Zulu.

Good morning, Knights. Take your seats quickly and listen up.

We've lost contact with a research station out in the Ruber Desert in Terra Infernalis. Last routine contact was due four days ago but failed to arrive. Under standard operating procedures, that's flagged an alarm. Technically these guys are in unclaimed territory, but they're Church researchers working for the Office of Archaeological Research, so they're entitled to help. We're near and available, so we get the job of investigating.

Intense solar flares have been plaguing Salus for weeks now, and this is probably nothing more than a fried comms relay. Still, there is a chance of a chemical spillage or outbreak of disease. Whatever the cause, you're to go there and sort things out.

Details about the facility and key personnel are available in a portable aide, which the Senior Knight can collect after the briefing.

Your team call sign is Viper. The Senior Knight is Viper 1. Assign other numbers as you see fit. The dropship call sign for this drop is Broadsword. Despite the comms jamming, you should be able to use your headset radios up to their maximum range. Broadsword's broad-spectrum comms array should be good for up to 50 miles, weather permitting. Anything beyond that is in the hands of the Almighty.

Enemy Forces: You're operating in unclaimed territory, but far behind the frontlines. There've never been any reports of Rephaim activity in our rear zones, but you know the drill—be prepared for anything. At worst, it's a major hazmat incident. Then again, it could be there's some sort of civil disturbance going on, and you'll have a few dozen cabin fevered scientists to pacify. Just remember these guys are on our side.

Support: Rephaim activity along the front and the current solar conditions are severely limiting our resources. You'll be dropped in by Pedael. Only jump seats are installed, so don't expect a smooth ride.

While you secure the site and begin preliminary operations, the Pedael will return to base and collect a HARD shelter, just in case you need it. Round trip should be a few hours, so until she returns you'll be on your own.

Since the Preceptory Master has declared this a rescue operation, a lance of eight specialist sergeants is waiting for you by the dropship. There are two medics, two technicians, and four infantrymen for routine duties. A Sergeant Commander has been appointed to act as your liaison with the squad. You'll find their service records on file.

Equipment: Collect requisition forms for a field surgery kit and one portable welder each. Other than that, it's a standard weapons load. You might want your shields, just in case the locals have gone nuts and started a riot. Damn researchers. Any question? Good, then get your butts moving, people! God speed!

## PLAYER HANDOUT #2: RESEARCH FACILITY DATA

Data Requested: Mining Facility #324-RD-04-Epsilon. Codename: Mars Station.

Authorization Code: IntSec Rating 128n+0, non-secured data. Sec-Encryp accepted.

Commence data stream.

Location: Ruber Desert, Terra Infernalis. Sector 7G, grid Omega-87-Beta.

History: Mars Station is a research facility operated by the Office of Antiquities. Construction completed 31.II.2348 in Ruber Desert, close to the Labyrinthus Angelus (see attached Data Link). Mission plan to survey and record archaeological finds from possible first colony landings, circa 2130.

Key Personnel: Base Coordinator Terrance Wright, facility manager. Father Joshua De Plume, spiritual advisor, dispatched by Cardinal Matisse at request of Archbishop Francis Hawke (Personnel File sealed by orders of CIS). Chief Naomi Running Hare, ex-mercenary cleared to operate in Church dominion by CIS, security chief. Doctor Henrietta Stamp, chief archaeologist, volunteered for service following death of spouse (Car crash, 01.VII.2350).

Other Personnel: 10 other personnel—Facility Services (2), Technicians (2), Archaeologists (2), Diggers (4). Last census posted with Offices of Census and Public Records 042.I.2351. No addenda.

Key Structures: Archaeological laboratory, communication suite, medical center, recreation center, solar power station with enhanced capacitors and external relay station, storage bays, chapel, habitation block, four command staff habitats. Landing pad rated to Category Beta-Six, capable of supporting Angel-class dropships. See attached satellite image, dated 13.III.2350.

All facilities are standard Church prefabricated constructions built in accordance with Statute 19A.41.D4 of the Office of Industry's Codex of Building Regulations (see attached Data Link).

Vehicles: One Damocles Industries' Model 3000G Industrial Crawler. Level 1 Industrial Driving License required for operation. Deemed roadworthy vehicle under Office of Vehicles Statute 125G-99.

### Attachments

Data Link <Labyrinthus Angelus>: Large natural geological structure created by water erosion millions of years ago. Named for the low, singing sound caused by winds blowing from the north. Intersecting valley network studied by Office of Beatification and declared natural, probably caused by rock structure and geological makeup.

Data Link <Ruber Desert >: Barren and arid region of reddish sand and rocks, spanning much of Terra Infernalis. Has many similarities to Old Sol 4 (Mars). Dunes can reach heights of 300 yards. Entrance into desert recommended only by holders of Class 2 Survival skills training.

Data Link <Statute 19A.41.D4 >: Structures are to be shielded against small arms fire and low-impact collisions. Structures must have airlock doors to prevent contamination by particular matter. Structures must be capable of withstanding high winds and particular erosion for a period of 50 Salus years.

End data stream

## PLAYER HANDOUT #3: COMMANDER'S LOG

<18.IV.2351>

Davis and Redburn still digging in Labyrinthus Angelus near ancient rockslide. I think they're hunting for fossils again. Must remind them of our mission brief over dinner.

<19.IV.2351>

Davis and Redburn excited over find in Labyrinthus Angelus. Henrietta informs me it contains bone, possibly of some ancient beast. Strange she said bone and not fossilized deposit. I'll ask her in the morning.

<20.IV.2351>

Minor earth tremor in region last night—no damage. D&R radioed in to report spectacular find but gave no details. Am taking a team to investigate with all haste. Father David has asked to come along—might be of some use, I suppose, the old drunk.

<Supplemental>

Dear God. Found sign of intelligent life from at least a million or more years ago. Earthquake cleared the landslide D&R were investigating, revealing metal tunnel going back into the canyon wall. No visible joints or welds—seemingly molded from a single piece. Fascinating! Solar flares still screwing up radio, so can't call this in. Not sure I want to yet.

Entrance cleared shortly before dusk. Father David stayed behind with two of the team to begin preliminary mapping of tunnel while I returned to formulate proper plan—tunnel engraved with strange runes and symbols, as well as pictures. Clear indications of intelligent life. Images show what appear to be army of skeletons marching to war!

The end of the tunnel sealed with what could be a door. No visible lock or handle, but strange engravings. Dismissed talk of using explosives or cutting torches to avoid damaging valuable artifact.

Henrietta says bone could be of human origin. I've asked her to be 100% sure before we make any announcement. Still no radio comms.

<21.IV.2351>

Father David returned to camp with others this morning for full briefing but promptly locked himself in chapel. Team says he was ranting about "demons" all night and trying to stop them from examining the door. Bad sort—shall request a transfer for him.

Leaving skeleton crew (no pun) in the camp while rest investigate site in more detail. Henrietta's news very exciting, but no time to think about that now.

<22.IV.2351>

All attempts to penetrate door failed, so organized a thorough recording of the tunnels with full IR and UV spectrographs. Densimeter readings indicate metal thin but immensely strong—ideal for more machines of war! Team returned to base. Carter told me he heard strange noises, but none of the others could verify his claims. Idiots left recording gear at the site! Still, we'll be back in the morning. Hell, we'll probably be in this wasteland for years studying this find! We'll be famous!

Meeting Henrietta for dinner in hour to discuss recent events. We need to handle this carefully to protect our reputations and stop any panic in the Curia.

<23.IV.2351>

[Four days ago] No entry

## PLAYER HANDOUT #4: CHIEF ARCHAEOLOGIST'S LOG

<19.IV.2351>

Davis and Redburn returned from the Labyrinthus Angelus today with what may turn out to be a remarkable find. They brought a lump of rock measuring 36" by 19". It is rough and irregular but seems at first glance to match the geological composition of the canyon walls.

At first I was going to rebuke them for wasting my time, but Redburn quickly pointed out a reddish-white protuberance. A quick examination revealed what I had originally thought was crystal, as bone. Not a fossil, but actual bone! It goes back into the rock and appears to be totally encased, ruling out a hoax by my esteemed colleagues.

Davis, a trained geologist, informed me the rock was found under a landslide dated to around a million years ago. Whatever the bone belongs to, it must have been crushed by loose stone a thousand millennia ago and slowly encrusted. Probably some unfortunate animal.

<20.IV.2351>

X-ray analysis has revealed not just a sliver of bone, but what appears to be a complete torso and pair of arms. Preliminary findings indicate it is a close match to our own skeleton! Dear Lord, if this is human, then how did it get here a million years ago? If it's alien, it could indicate life on Earth did not begin as we were taught. Astounding! Better tell Wright.

Wright informs me comms are still down, so he can't get a message to Cardinal Beevor. Thank God—something tells me this will be hushed up and declared a relic so as to avoid those unwanted questions that plague my mind. I must learn more before this find reaches the Cardinal's ears and we lose control.

I shall break away the surrounding rock using a sonic probe and clean up the skeleton (should I call it that?) for study.

<21.IV.2351>

It isn't bone at all—it's metal! Chemical composition defies the spectrograph and densitometer, but it is definitely not a living organism. Some sort of robot by the looks of it, but who built it and why does it resemble a human? Maybe we should contact a Corporation and sell this? The Church sure won't give us a bonus.

Fingers on right hand have electrodes—reason unknown, as the left hand is clear, but it could be a recharge point. Musculature (if that's the right word) would appear to give it similar strength to a healthy human—nothing superhuman, so probably a menial worker droid, but there is an amazing level of redundancy. Suspect it worked in a hazardous environment.

Conclusion based on metallurgy and age—robot definitely not built by human hands, thus leaving aliens as the only possible source. I pity the Curia having to debate this!

<22.IV.2351>

Finally gained access to the torso compartment—the metal casing is tougher than ceramic armor but much lighter. This could open up new advances for our Knights. Chest cavity contains three separate power units of unknown origin—no residual power spikes.

Looks like the power supplies can be fed from our mains supply with some tinkering, though there is little guarantee power will be transferred. A million years is a long time to have a dead battery. Will let it charge while I go for dinner. Wright has promised me a decent meal for a change.

<23.IV.2351>

[Four days ago] No entry



## PLAYER HANDOUT #5: ARCHAEOLOGIST'S EMAIL

To: Cardinal Howe, Office of Sports & Leisure

From: Davis, P; Mars Station

Date: 21.IV.2351.

Encryption: 64E+2, Church standard encryption code

Subject: Collection

Your Excellency,

I've found something of interest you might want to add to your private collection. While digging in the Labyrinthus Angelus I uncovered a metallic disc, about an inch across, marked with strange glyphs. It has a low intrinsic value, but it is undoubtedly over a million years old and crafted by intelligent hands!

As always, you have first refusal on anything of value I find. However, given the unique nature of such a find, I'd like to suggest a price of 1,000,000M. This is subject to negotiation, as always.

May the light guide you!

I remain your servant,

Pete Davis, Archaeologist

Office of Archaeology

# SERGEANT CHARACTER SHEETS

## TECHNICAL SERGEANT AMELIA ZANGOROVICH

Personality: Creative  
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d4, Guts d6, Investigation d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6  
Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 9 (4)  
Hindrances: Loyal  
Edges: McGyver  
Gear: Light armor (+4), molecular knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), flechette pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 2, Semi-auto), 3 mags, ID tag, toolkit

Fatigue: -1 -2 Inc

## MEDICAL SERGEANT WAYNE SMITH

Personality: Young  
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
Skills: Driving d6, Guts d6, Healing d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Taunt d6  
Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 9 (4)  
Hindrances: Loyal  
Edges: Strong Willed  
Gear: Light armor (+4), molecular knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), flechette pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 2, Semi-auto), 3 mags, ID tag, medikit

Fatigue: -1 -2 Inc

## TECHNICAL SERGEANT MAXIMILLIAN VON BRUDER

Personality: Cruel  
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d4, Guts d6, Investigation d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6  
Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 4; Toughness: 9 (4)  
Hindrances: Loyal  
Edges: Technically Inclined  
Gear: Light armor (+4), molecular knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), flechette pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 2, Semi-auto), 3 mags, ID tag, toolkit

Fatigue: -1 -2 Inc

## MEDICAL SERGEANT NATASHA PECHOVA

Personality: Lazy  
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
Skills: Driving d6, Guts d6, Healing d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d4, Stealth d6, Throwing d6  
Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 2; Toughness: 9 (4)  
Hindrances: Loyal  
Edges: Medic  
Gear: Light armor (+4), molecular knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), flechette pistol (Range: 12/24/48, Damage 2d6, AP 2, Semi-auto), 3 mags, ID tag, medikit

Fatigue: -1 -2 Inc

# SERGEANT CHARACTER SHEETS

## SERGEANT DIRK PETARD

Personality: Mysterious  
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
Skills: Driving d4, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6+2, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6  
Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 9 (4)  
Hindrances: Loyal  
Edges: Alertness  
Gear: Light armor (+4), molecular knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), flechette  
SMG (Range: 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, AP 2, Auto), 3 mags, ID tag  
  
Fatigue: -1 -2 Inc

## SERGEANT COMMANDER ELIZABETH STRYDE

Personality: Bright  
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
Skills: Driving d4, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d4, Repair d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6  
Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 9 (4)  
Hindrances: Loyal  
Edges: Command  
Gear: Light armor (+4), molecular knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), flechette  
SMG (Range: 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, AP 2, Auto), 3 mags, ID tag  
Fatigue: -1 -2 Inc

## SERGEANT ALFRED GRANT

Personality: Gung Ho  
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
Skills: Driving d4, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6  
Charisma: 0; Pace: 6; Parry: 5; Toughness: 10 (4)  
Hindrances: Loyal  
Edges: Brawny  
Gear: Light armor (+4), molecular knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), flechette  
SMG (Range: 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, AP 2, Auto), 3 mags, ID tag  
  
Fatigue: -1 -2 Inc

## SERGEANT DAVIS MIRTH

Personality: Heroic  
Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6  
Skills: Climbing d4, Driving d4, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Streetwise d4, Survival d6  
Charisma: 0; Pace: 8; Parry: 5; Toughness: 9 (4)  
Hindrances: Loyal  
Edges: Fleet Footed  
Gear: Light armor (+4), molecular knife (Str+d4+2, AP 2), flechette  
SMG (Range: 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+1, AP 2, Auto), 3 mags, ID tag  
  
Fatigue: -1 -2 Inc



\$8.00

31108

# DEEP IN THE DESERT SOMETHING OLD IS COMING BACK TO LIFE!

An overdue routine communication from an archaeological team operating deep in the Ruber Desert requires investigation, and the Knights are given the task.

What might have been a technical fault caused by recent solar storm activity turns out to be something far worse. The archaeologists have made a discovery, perhaps the greatest discovery in human history. But what they found wasn't dead—it was only resting, waiting for the sign to reawaken.

Now, as a powerful storm sweeps over the archaeologists' base camp, the heroes are about to encounter something not seen in the universe for millions of years.

There is no hope for rescue. There is only victory or death against a foe far more deadly than the Rephaim.

*The Long Sleep* is the first of a new series of *Necropolis 2350* adventures from Triple Ace Games.



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