

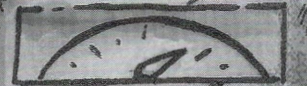
THE LEVEL OF THE LOST

An Adventure
By Michael Curtis

ALPHA

METAMORPHOSIS

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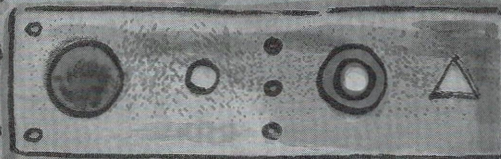
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THE LEVEL OF THE LOST

Th *Level of the Lost* is designed for use with the 1976 edition of METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA and is intended to be played with six to eight player characters. This adventure assumes the PCs to be experienced explorers of the *Warden* and in possession of both powerful artifacts and a broad knowledge of the starship. *The Level of the Lost* can be played with less experienced PCs or with a smaller group, but this greatly increases the chance of death for the party. The referee should either adjust the power of the denizens of the *The Level of the Lost* or allow players to run multiple characters.

The Level of the Lost introduces a formerly sealed section of the *Warden*, now opened for the first time since the catastrophe generations ago. The PCs are amongst the first to explore this new region—a secured preserve home to a myriad of mutated, cloned dinosaurs! If left unchecked, these prehistoric mutants will escape the confines of their preserve and spread about the ship, irrevocably changing the ecology of the *Warden*. The PCs face a great challenge to reseal the dinosaur farm, but in doing so, stand to gain one of the legendary *command rings* of the ship, an artifact that grants unhindered access and control of the *Warden*. But first, the party must not only overcome the mutant dinosaurs, but also rival groups seeking the same powerful device.

BACKGROUND

The 23rd Century was a time of miracles. In those hoary days, scientific knowledge seemed limitless and Man casually performed wonders once solely the province of God, Himself. Of all of mankind's hubris, the creation of artificial life and cloning was perhaps the greatest intrusion into God's dominion.

As cloning become commonplace, it was only a matter of time before mankind sought to revive long extinct species for study. There was no vanished life that held more fascination than dinosaurs, and it was to these extinct animals that science turned its attentions. Using techniques undreamed of by their predecessors, 23rd Century scientists revived the dinosaur under controlled conditions for the benefit of paleontologists and zoologists alike. Study of the cloned animals filled in

numerous gaps in mankind's knowledge of prehistoric life, but also led to an unforeseen discovery. Scientists discovered the dinosaur to be an untapped storehouse of medical miracles. The blood, cells, and other biological components of dinosaur species were utilized in creating medicines to cure hitherto untreatable diseases plaguing mankind. Several dinosaur preserves, secure facilities where only the smallest and most docile prehistoric species were cloned, were established on Earth to provide a steady supply of dinosaur biological materials. Although it was within humanity's power to recreate the largest and most fearsome dinosaurs, the DNA of these animals was kept locked away, but available should science ever be required to resurrect the titans of prehistory.

When the *Warden* embarked on its grand journey, a small cadre of "paleo-medicine" scientists and dinosaur DNA were numbered amongst the colonists. Dubbed "The Crichton Initiative" after a nearly-forgotten author of science fiction, the Initiative's goal was to establish a dinosaur preserve on the new colony world and to maintain a small population of living dinosaurs aboard the ship for the manufacture of medicine as needed. This onboard preserve was situated in a highly secure portion of the ship, accessible only by unique color bands or the omnipotent *command rings*. When the catastrophe struck, the preserve was sealed by emergency protocols and it has remained barricaded... until recently. Explorers encountered a solid metal wall that neatly bisects one of the *Warden's* decks. Legends have sprung up about what lies beyond the Impenetrable Wall, as it has come to be known, and these tales claim a veritable El Dorado of riches, artifacts, food, and other treasures exist behind the Wall.

The dinosaur preserve might have remained sealed forever had it not been for Gurn the Far-Traveled. Gurn the Far-Traveled was a renowned figure aboard the *Warden*. A mutated humanoid, Gurn made a name for himself as a trader, explorer, and adventurer, one able to travel the wilds of the ship with confidence to dispense valuable commodities, knowledge, and rumors. Even the savage tribes of the forest level dealt with Gurn, and his arrival in the scattered communities about the ship, accompanied by his ever-present security robot servant, was cause for celebration as he brought new oddities, medicine, or word of events occurring on distant levels of the *Warden*.

Gurn recently discovered one of the famed *command rings* while investigating a far-flung section of the ship. Realizing the power of the ring to access the entire ship, Gurn, eager to discover what lay beyond the Impenetrable Wall, ventured directly to the forbidding barricade. Placing his hand upon the formidable door, he was elated when the security gate rose open, revealing a dense forest beyond. Commanding his security robot ally to follow, Gurn passed through the now-open doorway...and vanished without a trace.

Although Gurn's fate is unknown, his robotic companion emerged from the reaches beyond the Wall, battered and failing rapidly. His garbled speech unit sputters broken phrases that hint at both Gurn's ownership of the *command ring* and his master's final fate. When word spreads throughout the ship that the Wall is open and a *command ring* lies beyond for the taking, interested parties—including the PCs—rush to explore the now-accessible preserve and claim the artifact for themselves.

What they do not know is that the computer that oversees the dinosaur preserve has been busy since the catastrophe, reviving some species of dinosaurs, their DNA horrifically altered by cosmic radiation, best left extinct. Complicating matters, the door that sealed the preserve from the rest of the *Warden* has malfunctioned and it's only a matter of time before the mutant dinosaurs discover they are no longer contained...

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

The referee can easily begin *The Level of the Lost* in two ways. The first, and most direct, method is to have the party chance upon the open barricade and the broken remains of Gurn's robotic ally. The party may be nearby on other business (traveling to a friendly village, engaged in their own explorations, etc.) and either stumble across the open door or have their attention drawn to the robot by allies or fellow travelers.

Alternately, the party hears rumors of the now-open Wall and the failing robot found close by. It is likely the party will investigate driven by curiosity or greed, but should they need an additional motivation, a friendly shaman may urge the party to investigate for the security of the tribe—especially if the village is close to the Wall. Once they arrive, they discover the damaged robot and the open gate leading beyond the Wall.

Where exactly is the Impenetrable Wall and the dinosaur preserve? If the referee is using the *Warden* as detailed in the 1976 METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA rulebook, he will no doubt be disappointed to see that James M. Ward left it off the ship map (a gross oversight on Mr. Ward's part!). Luckily, this is easily addressed.

The dinosaur preserve occupies approximately half of an average level of the *Warden*, and the referee need only bisect an existing level by placing the Wall on his preferred deck of the ship. Levels Six, Seven, and Eight can easily house the preserve, and Level Twelve also makes a suitable (and appropriate) home for the dinosaur biosphere. Simply ignore any inclined planes leading directly into the level or seal off access with other doors similar to that in the Wall.

If the party has already explored these four levels of the starship, the task becomes a bit more difficult. The referee cannot simply drop the preserve into a previously known deck of the *Warden*. In this case, the referee might create an entirely new deck, hitherto unknown to the party and accessible only via a secret elevator, inclined plane, or other means. The referee may need to expand the material presented in this adventure to cover a full level of the ship, but this challenge might be even more rewarding to the referee than simply dividing a detailed level in two.

GENERAL FEATURES OF THE DINOSAUR PRESERVE

The dinosaur preserve is similar to other "outdoor" levels of the *Warden*. Day, night, and weather are artificially reproduced by the ship, and complex holographic imaging mimics the sun, moon, and stars in the sky.

The physical environment is a mixture of forests, plains, swamps, and rocky hills. The vegetation in the preserve are all species of prehistoric plant life revived through cloning, and stand out even in the mutated environs of the *Warden*. The trees are all conifers, typically ancient species of cedars, redwoods, cypresses, monkey puzzle, and pine trees. Grass, shrubs, and other flowering plants are absent; in their place are numerous species of large ferns that cover both the forest floor and open plains. The air is humid and warm,

averaging 77 degrees Fahrenheit (25 degrees Celsius) and the temperature remains constant during both day-time and evening. Despite the constant temperatures, mist covers the forest floors and lowlands during the morning hours. These moisture clouds are artificially created from concealed mist emitters placed about the preserve.

The preserve is seldom silent. The hum of insects, mostly dragonflies, midges, mosquitoes, and other simple insect life, fills the forests, and the occasional trumpeting of some great beast echoes across the plains or resounds in the depths of the marshes. It is truly an alien world, one not seen for millions of years. Even on the *Warden*, the preserve is a strange place.

The normal color bands encountered throughout the ship are useless inside the preserve. Security and access to the dinosaur environment was of the highest priority and special red and white *bioscience color bands* were keyed to the various doors within the preserve. Only the bioscience color bands, once worn by the Crichton Initiative staff, and the *command ring* opens sealed doorways beyond the Impenetrable Wall.

A Note about Dinosaurs and Incapacitation

The party may possess devices that normally incapacitate their opponents, notably the *paralysis rod*, *paralysis dart*, and the *slug projector*. These devices were designed to affect human-sized threats, not thundering beasts from prehistory. Most dinosaurs, due to their sheer size and body mass, are unaffected by these devices. Only green screamers (see areas 1-4) are small enough to be incapacitated with the above items. Of all the incapacitating weapons listed in the original METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA rulebook, only the *third stage gas ejector* potentially affects the larger dinosaurs, and even that effectiveness is left to the referee.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN THE PRESERVE

The party has 33% chance of having an encounter for every full turn (1 hour) spent exploring the preserve. A result of 5 or 6 on a d6 indicates an encounter occurs. Roll a D10 on the table below to determine the result of that encounter, using the rules on p. 22 of the METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA rulebook to resolve the proximity of the encounter and the potential for surprise.

THE LEVEL OF THE LOST ENCOUNTER TABLE

D10 RESULT	PARTY ENCOUNTERS...
1	1d6+2 raptoids (see area 1-6)
2	1d6+2 raptoids (see area 1-6)
3	2d6 green screamers (see area 1-4)
4	1 thunderbeast (see area 1-9)
5	1 Liar-in-Wait (see area 1-5)
6	1d3 skystalkers (see area 1-8)
7	1d10 humming eaters (see area 1-3)
8	2d4 Omek soldiers (see area 1-7)
9	2d4 androids (see area 2-2)
10	Atmosphere Encounter (see below)

If the party has an atmospheric encounter, they stumble upon a non-hazardous but interesting object or event. Some suggested atmospheric encounters include a collapsed observation tower (see area 1-9), a smashed Round Rover (see area 1-10), the gnawed remains of a recent dinosaur's meal, the songs of humming eaters in the distance, or similar events of the referee's creation.

PART ONE: THE DINOSAUR PRESERVE

The first part of the *The Level of the Lost* begins when the party arrives at the Impenetrable Wall. They quickly spy the open gate (area 1-2) and glimpse a broken robotic unit spouting static-filled noises lying on the ground about 3/4ths of a mile away from the entrance. Aside from the party and the damaged security robot, no other creature is nearby. It's almost as if the natives of the *Warden* are giving the area a wide berth.

AREA 1-1—THE FAILING SECURITY ROBOT

A humanoid-shaped robotic unit lies sprawled in the grass, the victim of obvious physical damage. Its metal form is battered and dented, and one arm is missing. A static-filled voice crackles from the unit's speaker, growing fainter as the robot's power system approaches critical failure.

This unit is a standard *Warden* security robot, formerly under the control of Gurn. Known as XK-One-Nine-Seven-Six, this unit accompanied Gurn on his explorations. When the duo fought the *Cerebusaurus*

rex inside the preserve, X-Six (as Gurn called him) was damaged in the conflict. Its programming scrambled, the unit wandered through the preserve vainly seeking aid for its master. The robot found its way back through the open door gate before its systems entered terminal failure. X-Six collapsed here, its vocal units spouting a fading string of gibberish.

PCs approaching the unit hear the following, "...access granted...*command ring* override...Gurn ring Alpha status...systems online but failing...overhaul...WARNING OMEGA CONTACT...threat assessment 97.023 percent...Gurn master terminated...Gurn master body awaiting recovery...stand by for [static]..." X-Six continues repeating these phrases until its systems fail (which occurs an hour after the party discovers it). The unit is beyond repair, and a close evaluation of the robot reveals its weaponry spent or ripped away completely. Nothing can be salvage from the robot aside from clues to Gurn's demise and a *command ring* up for grabs.

An inspection on the area around the robot uncovers several sets of footprints in the surrounding foliage. A character rolling his Mental Resistance score or less on 3d6 or possessing the *heightened smell* mutation determines that at least twenty other persons, likely in separate groups, have been in close proximity to the robot. Most of these tracks approach the robot's position and then depart towards area 1-2. These tracks were left by the two other groups currently exploring the preserve: the Omek troops and the android salvage party. Details on these groups can be found in areas 1-7 and 2-2.

AREA 1-2—THE OPEN GATE

A tremendous barrier, fashioned from the same resilient metal that encompasses each level of the ship, stands before you, stretching from east to west as far as your eyes can see. This formidable wall rises into the sky, becoming lost amongst the low clouds above. This is the famed Impenetrable Wall.

A single breach breaks the daunting barricade's face. An open portal measuring 40' wide and 50' tall leads beyond the Wall. The gate that once sealed this entrance hangs in its tracks overhead, looming like a guillotine ready to descend. Writing marks the Wall near the entranceway, and one of the ship's ubiquitous color band readers is embedded beneath the lettering.

A pleasant female voice chimes from the color band reading, saying "Alert! Security gate subsystems malfunctioning. Gate operation is disabled."

The writing reads "CRICHTON INITIATIVE: ACCESS RESTRICTED." The color band reader rejects all normal color bands found aboard the *Warden*, being keyed to accept only the *bioscience color bands* and the *command rings*. When Gurn's *command ring* opened the gate, the aging subsystems that operate the door were compromised. The gate cannot be closed again until a system reboot is initiated by the computer in area 2-5, and it is only a matter of time before the denizens of the preserve discover they're no longer contained by the Wall.

The party glimpses dense stands of conifers and lush, large ferns beyond the entrance. If they followed the tracks from area 1-1 here, they discover the trail vanishes into the prehistoric underbrush of the preserve and quickly becomes faint and difficult to follow. Only mutants with amplified senses such as *heightened smell* or *heightened vision* have the chance to pick up the trail. These acute individuals discern trails leading in the direction of areas 1-7 and 1-11. No dinosaur tracks are discernable...yet.

If the PCs return here after exploring the preserve for a day or more, there are signs that the preserve's former captives are escaping. Huge tracks are visible exiting through the open doorway and, if the referee wishes to heighten their paranoia, an engineering robot dispatched to perform diagnostics on the door is found battered and broken, seemingly smashed to pieces by a titanic beast. The longer the gateway remains open, the more dinosaurs escape into the *Warden* proper. Only resealing the preserve stops the exodus.

AREA 1-3—SWAMP HUMMERS

Six towering creatures graze along the verge of a muddy swamp, using their long, sinuous necks to reach the tops the strange trees that grow here. Measuring 60' long and standing on four pillar-like legs, these beasts make eerie, resonating hums as they dine, filling the air with strange songs.

The pod of dinosaurs is composed of humming eaters, mutated *omeisaur*s that have both insatiable hunger for greenery and an intense curiosity for new things. If treated well, the party may benefit from the meeting, but they could also perish if things go poorly.

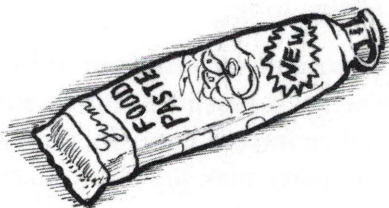
Humming Eaters (Mutant *omeisaur*s): AC: 6, MIS: 5 HP: 120, MR: 13 CON: 20, DEX: 10, STR: 18 Radiation Resistance: 15, Mutations: *mental paralysis*, *new body part* (song pipes), Defects: None.

Appearance: Humming eaters are mutated *omeisaur*s, sauropod herbivores that graze the wide fern-covered plains of the preserve and serve as food for the great predator species. They have beautifully mottled skin of green, blue, and grey, and two 2' long pipe-like protrusions from their snouts that make the song-like humming that gives them their name.

Normal Reaction: Humming eaters have little fear of smaller creatures, and instead possess a cat-like curiosity for things they've never seen before. When they spy the party, they stop grazing and lower their necks to stare at the PCs close to the group's own level. They continue their weird humming all the while. Humming eaters are natural mimics and can easily reproduce any sound they hear. Should the party speak to the dinosaurs, they repeat the phrases, possibly leading to PCs to believe they have some intelligence. After a suitable period of study, sniffing, prodding the PCs with their snouts, and even licking the newcomers, the humming eater's curiosity is satisfied and they go back to grazing.

Although docile, humming eaters are not defenseless. If attacked by the party, the dinosaurs change the pitch of their humming, producing a *mental paralysis* effect. They continue using their humming power until the victim dies or the attacks cease. If their paralyzing hum has no effect, humming eaters can trample opponents (WC 9, DMG 6d6+4).

The humming eaters' curiosity makes them the friendliest dinosaurs the party will encounter. It is even possible for the party to befriend a humming eater either through mental mutations or via a successful recruitment roll (and offers of lots of food). Although humming eaters are herbivores and do not fight except in self-defense, they will allow smaller creatures to climb on their backs and use them as transportation.



AREA 1-4—SCREAMING DEFENDERS

The strange, tall coniferous trees grow in tighter ranks in this location, throwing darker shadows across the ground. Despite the gloom, dense clusters of fern undergrowth cover the forest floor. The ferns rustle abruptly and you glimpse a small, lizard-like head bearing a pair of abnormally sized eyes staring at you from the underbrush.

This area is a nesting site for a clan of green screamers, a type of small mutated dinosaur herbivore. Normally timid, the clan has several nests of eggs gestating amongst the roots of the trees, and are prepared to defend the next generation. There are 10 green screamers present.

Immediately after being noticed, the green screamers start making loud coughing noises to drive the PCs away. If the party retreats or gives the green screamer nests a wide berth, the green screamers allow them to depart. If the party persists on moving into the nesting area, however, three of the dinosaurs attack with their sonic power. Another three use their sonic blast the next round, followed by three more on the third round, and a single green screamer screeches on the fourth round. They continue these staggered sonic volleys until killed or the party flees.

Green Screamers (Mutant *leaellynasaur*s): AC: 5, MIS: 8, HP: 54 MR: 9, CON: 9, DEX: 14, STR: 7, Radiation Resistance: 13, Mutations: *sonic abilities*, *new body parts*, *sonic resistant eardrums* (immune to sonic damage), *poison claws* (Intensity 10), Defects: *Fear Impulse for Types* (Portable Energy Lamps) — artificial illumination such as *portable energy lamps*, flashlights, or even the *light generation* mutation cause green screamers to flee in panic.

Appearance: Green screamers are small, bipedal dinosaurs measuring up to 7' long from tip to tail and standing 20 inches high. Their skin is light green with yellow stripes that allow them to hide in the fern undergrowth of the preserve. They weigh about 20 pounds. Green screamers are the descendants of one of the original, small herbivore species of dinosaurs cloned for medicinal manufacturing on Earth and on the *Warden*.

Normal Reaction: Green screamers tend to be timid. Their preferred tactic is to blast a predator with their *sonic abilities* and then flee. When protecting nests or

hatchlings, however, they stand their ground and emit their sonic screams in staggered blasts so that some of their numbers are always screeching every combat round. If hard pressed or their enemies appear unaffected by their screams, green screamers scratch with their poisonous foot claws.

The area contains five green screamer nests nestled amongst the roots of trees and covered with humus and vegetation. Each nest holds a clutch of 10 eggs. Due to the developing poison glands of the embryos within, the eggs are Intensity 15 if consumed.

AREA 1-5—LIAR-IN-WAIT AMBUSH:

A small reptilian creature moves weakly through the ferns. The animal looks about nervously, its oval head atop a sinuous neck peering above the undergrowth. Limping from apparent injury, the dog-sized animal moves cautiously on four legs, whimpering in pain.

Although a seemingly harmless and hurt herbivore, this creature is actually a liar-in-wait, a mutated *allosaurus* that uses its weird abilities to lure prey to their doom. It transforms into its real shape if the party approaches within 20' of it.

Liar-in-Wait (Mutant allosaurus), AC: 6, MIS: 7, HP: 150, MR: 9, CON: 25, DEX: 13, STR 20, Radiation Resistance: 15, Mutations: *shapechange, teleportation*, Defects: *Poor respiratory system*.

Appearance: In its natural form, a liar-in-wait is a 30' long theropod standing 6' tall at the hip. Its gray-green skin bears yellow and brown stripes and a tooth-filled mouth tears its prey to shreds. Liars-in-wait have the ability to change their shape to appear as 4' long, 2' tall sauropods with large, weepy eyes and dark brown scaly hides. They use this form to attract the predatory dinosaurs on which they dine.

Normal Reaction: Liars-in-wait have weak lungs and cannot exert themselves for more than five rounds before needing to rest. They use their *shapechange* and *teleportation* mutations to attract prey and prevent would-be meals from escaping. In their normal forms, liars-in-wait have bites that do horrible damage to their victims (WC 5, 5d6 damage). They can change shape in a single round.

AREA 1-6—RAPTOID VILLAGE

The dense forest gives way to a broad muddy meadow. A dozen large tents fashioned from leathery hide stand in the eastern half of the clearing. You discern groups of tall, humanoid creatures with reptilian features and crests of brilliant feathers moving about the small village, engaged in daily activities. Beyond the village proper stands a large conical structure of metal.

This small community is home to fifty raptoids, mutated Utahraptors that have achieved both humanoid shape and rudimentary civilization.

Raptoids (Mutant utahraptors): AC: 4, MIS: 7, HP: 72, MR: 12, CON: 12, DEX: 14, STR 14: Radiation Resistance: 12, Mutations: *heightened smell, intuition, smaller*, Defects: None

Appearance: Raptoids appear as reptilian humanoids standing 6' tall. Their heads and arms bear crests of multicolored feathers, and they have 3' tails. Raptoids wear breastplates and leggings fashioned from cured plant fiber to protect them when hunting or in battle. They have vicious-looking foot claws that measure a 1' or more in length.

Normal Reaction: Raptoids are group hunters and have a highly evolved social structure. When hunting or on the warpath, they utilize both spears tipped with dinosaur teeth and their own foot claws against their prey. Due to their intuition mutation, raptoids are +1 on attack rolls and add +3 to damage. Their foot claws are WC 3 and cause damage as swords. There is a 50% chance their spears are coated with Intensity 14 paralytic poison. Raptoids prefer to use ambush tactics when hunting. Half of the hunting party will attempt to drive their prey to a location where the rest of the hunters lie waiting, trapping their quarry between the two groups. Their heightened sense of smell allows them to track prey for days, and once an unlucky soul has a raptoid hunting party on their tail, only crossing water or slaying the hunters will allow them to escape their doom.

Raptoid society is similar to that of lions. Each pride is ruled by a dominant male, but a hunting and warfare party is led by a dominant female assisted by lower status females and males. These lower status raptoids regularly challenge one another to rise in social po-

sition, and both the dominant male and females bear scars gained in battle to keep or achieve their positions. Despite this internal rivalry, raptoids hold the overall health and wellbeing of the pride with utmost importance and quickly rally together to protect the tribe from outside threats. The concept of love is unknown by raptoids, but they have strong paternal urges to protect the next generation of the tribe and ensure the pride's long-term survival. Raptoids do not use fire, preferring to eat raw meat, but do not fear fire either. Raptoids do not speak the shared language of the *Warden's* outside decks due to their confinement inside the preserve. Attempts to communicate with the tribe will either require gestures or telepathy to succeed.

Each of the tents contains 1d6 raptoids along with their weapons, food, and household accouterments. The raptoids' *heightened smell* and *intuition* mutations make it nearly impossible for outsiders to sneak into the village undetected. If the party approaches the village, the entire raptoid population grabs weapons and emerges from their domiciles, ready for a fight.

AREA 1-6A—CHIEFTAIN'S TENT:

This tent is larger than most in the village and dyed rusty scarlet with the blood of many kills. A pile of bones, wood, and preserved hides occupies one end of the shelter, serving as a raised dais of authority. A large reptilian humanoid hisses at you, clearly enraged to find its home violated.

This village is currently ruled by Scar-nose, a massive male raptoid that bears a jagged scar across his snout. His armor is stained crimson with blood and he embellishes his feathers with garish colors obtained from natural dyes.

Scar-nose: DEX 16; AC 4; HD 15; hp 90; MIS 7; #ATK 1 or 2; spear (WC 2; DMG 1d6+4/1d4+4/1d6+4 plus Intensity 14 paralytic poison) or 2 claws (WC 3; DMG 1d6+4/1d4+4/1d8+4); Mutations: *heightened smell, intuition, smaller*; SP +1 to attack rolls, cannot be surprised; RR 12, MR 14, CON 15, STR 15.



Scar-nose rules by being the toughest male in the tribe and has defeated many challengers over the years. If bested in combat, the party earns the respect of the rest of the village, possibly earning a reprieve for their fellow party members if destined for sacrifice. Defeating Scar-nose does not grant the victor dominance over the tribe, however, for only a raptoid can claim the chieftainship.

Aside from his armor and other trophies and totems, Scar-nose owns nothing of use to the party.

Area 1-6B—Nest Tent: *Five 6' diameter mounds of earth and vegetation are spaced about the interior of this large tent. Each mound forms a nest containing a dozen leathery eggs of dirty white coloration. A quartet of reptilian humanoids carefully tends to the unborn brood.*

These 60 eggs are the next generation of raptoids and are defended fiercely by their nurses. Only a portion of the hatchlings will survive their first year despite the pride's protection, and the nurses will die in their defense...but not before unleashing alarm cries to alert the rest of the village.

Raptoid Nurses (4): DEX 14; AC 4; HD 12; hp 72; MIS 7; #ATK 1 or 2; spear (WC 2; DMG 1d6+3/1d4+3/1d6+3 plus Intensity 14 paralytic poison) or 2 claws (WC 3; DMG 1d6+3/1d4+3/1d8+3); Mutations: *heightened smell, intuition, smaller*; SP +1 to attack rolls, cannot be surprised; RR 12, MR 12, CON 12, STR 14.

The embryonic fluid inside each egg is extremely nutritious and rejuvenating. Consuming the syrupy liquid not only provides a full day's nourishment but also heals 2d8 points of damage. Unfortunately, the leathery shells break easily and eggs removed from their nest will only survive 1d4 days (less if roughly handled) before rupturing and spilling the precious liquid.

AREA 1-6C—SACRIFICIAL PLASMA VENT:

A 40' high metal conical structure stands beyond the village. Measuring 30' in diameter at its base and narrowing to a mere 10' wide at its crown, the construction's exterior bears a framework of scaffolding and ramps leading up to its apex. Five 15' tall logs carved into vaguely human-like shapes stand equally spaced about the cone's top. The air is noticeably warmer here.

This structure is a plasma vent linked to one of the many subsystems of the *Warden*. A protective grill once covered the top of the vent, but it has been removed and discarded by the raptoids so they may use it for another purpose: ritual sacrifice.

The raptoids venerate a group of vague gods called the "Whitcots," a corruption of "white coats" that refers to their scientist progenitors. The raptoids regularly sacrifice live prey and the occasional outlaw tribe member to the Whitcots by hurling them into the 10' diameter opening at the top of the conical vent. A 5' wide scaffold runs around the lip of the cone, aiding this process. Any creature falling into the exposed superheated plasma field located 20' below the open top suffers 30d6 points of damage each round of exposure.

Unlucky PCs rendered paralyzed by poisoned raptoid spears may end up sacrificed to the Whitcots. If the party put up a valiant fight, slaying several raptoids before being captured, the tribe deems them worthy sacrifices to their gods and throws them into the vent at sunset. The ritual is attended by the entire village, making rescue a dicey affair.

AREA 1-7—OMEK BIVOUAC

There is a 60' high hill covered with conifers and ferns overlooking the plains at this location. The Omeks, a tribe of militant true humans descended from an elite security unit stationed aboard the *Warden*, claimed the rise as the location of their basecamp while exploring the preserve. There are always three Omek soldiers watching the approaches to the hill from concealed blinds situated 30' up in the trees (granting them a 5 in 6 chance of surprise). At night, they are each wearing *infrared goggles*.

Omek Soldiers (True Humans)

AC: 3, MIS: 5, HP: 96, MR: 12, CON: 16, DEX: 16, STR: 16, Radiation Resistance: 15, Mutations: *equivalent of genius (Military)*, Defects: None

Appearance: When the *Warden* departed Earth, a command of Colonial Rangers was aboard. This group was designated Omega Team and charged with defending the new colony from any hostile indigenous life on the new world. The Omega Team survivors of the catastrophe maintained their closed ranks and contin-



ued their diligent military training. Their descendants still uphold their forefathers' excellence in warfare, although the name of their ancestors has been corrupted.

Omeks soldiers are true humans in excellent physical condition. They decorate their faces with a variety of war paint and adorn their clothing and weapons with trophies from slain victim and totems they believe grant them protection in battle. Omek soldiers dress in flexible body armor decorated with forest-pattern camouflage. This armor provides protection equivalent to thin metal but is only as heavy as leather.

Normal Reaction: Omeks move with military precision, utilizing every possible advantage in battle (cover, staggered fields of fire, hit and retreat tactics, etc.). Due to a lifetime of military training, Omeks possesses the equivalent of the *genius (military)* mental mutation, granting them a +4 to attack rolls and inflicting an extra die of damage. Each is armed with a *laser rifle*, *infrared goggles*, 4 spare *hydrogen cells*, and military-issue combat knives equivalent to normal swords. The sentries around the camp fire their laser rifles at approaching creatures from their blinds, alerting any remaining Omeks in the camp with coded commands ("Alpha contact, sector 6!").

If the party overcomes the sentries and achieves the top of the hill, read the following:

Five dome-shaped structures of mottled coloring oc-

cupy a modest clearing amidst the towering conifers at the hill's apex. A mesh of green, frayed netting hangs suspended 8' above the clearing floor, strung between several of the trees. The ferns surrounding the domes have been tamped down as if by the regular passage of feet. A scorched patch of earth marks the site of a small campfire.

During daylight hours, there are two other Omek soldiers in the camp, resting inside the four-man dome tents. The rest of the group is out exploring the preserve. After dark, there is a 50% chance the bivouac contains a total of ten Omek soldiers recently returned from their explorations. One of the ten is an Omek Commander with a Dex of 17, a Con of 18, 108 hp, and a *protein disruptor* in addition to his listed gear.

The tents contain military-grade camping equipment (sleeping bags, backpacks, three days of concentrated meals in foil packages, etc.) for each sentry and occupant in camp. One tent has a spare medical field kit. This canvas satchel contains a *medical hand analyzer and healer*, a spare *hydrogen cell* for the unit, six pre-medicated adhesive bandages (heals 2d6 damage), and a plastic container holding a gummy resin. The resin is a plant-produced antitoxin that neutralizes up to Intensity 16 poison if applied to a wound or eaten within two rounds of exposure. There is enough resin for four applications.

AREA 1-8—SKYSTALKER EYRIE

Four pinnacles of rock rise above the ragged hills, forming towers amongst the fern-covered uplands. These dark stone spires vary in height, ranging between 20' and 60' above the ground. Each is splattered with grey, chalky excrement and crowned with gathered debris. High-pitched, sibilant noises echo down from the spire tops.

These spires are home to four groups of mutated *pteranodons* known as skystalkers and their hatchlings. Aside from the noises of the hatchlings, the area appears unoccupied as the skystalker's *chameleon powers* makes them nearly impossible to detect. Each spire contains two mated skystalkers and 2d4 hatchlings. Hatchlings have not yet developed their *chameleon powers* or *cryogenics*, making them vulnerable to predators (AC 7, hp 20). The mated pair attacks anyone climbing their spire, with the male taking to the air to use its freezing power on the climber while the female remains in the nest to protect the young. Groups of four or more creatures approaching the base of the spires are treated as a common threat by the colony and all four males take flight to attack.

Skystalker (Mutant *Pteranodon*): AC: 1 (7), MIS: 8, HP: 60, MR: 14, CON: 10, DEX: 15, STR: 8, Radiation Resistance: 10, Mutations: *chameleon powers*, *heightened vision*, *cryogenics*, Defects: *Skin Structure Change* - Skystalkers' skin is extremely photo-dependent making them only active during daylight hours. At night, they fall into a torpid state and cannot act until the sun rises.

Appearance: Skystalkers resemble their prehistoric kin, but are nearly impossible to detect due to their constantly functioning *chameleon powers* mutation. They measure 6' tall at the hip and have 25' to 30' wingspans.

Normal Reaction: Skystalkers automatically surprise opponents unless their prey possesses mutations or technological devices capable of bypassing the creatures *chameleon power*. They glide up to 60' above their victims, using their *cryogenics* power to slowly freeze future meals to death. If pressed into close combat, skystalkers bite with their beaks (WC 3) doing 3d6 damage. A skystalker's AC is reduced to 7 if the attacker can see through its *chameleon powers* mutation.

The nest on the highest pinnacle, in addition to the remains of past meals, excrement, and egg shell fragments, contains a skeletal arm with a *bioscience color band* wrapped around the wrist. The nest on the lowest spire has battered *paralysis rod* with 1 hour left remaining in its hydrogen cell.

AREA 1-9—DAMAGED OBSERVATION POST

Two tremendous beasts graze about the base of a tall latticework framed tower crowned by a small building. The 50' long monsters have armored bodies jutting with spike-like horns. They move slowly about on six stumpy legs and have long tails ending in fearsome looking bludgeons which swing idly behind them. The stilt-like legs of the tower are crumpled and bent, pitching the enclosed structure at its top at a steep angle.

These creatures are thunderbeasts, mutant *ankylosaurs*. Thunderbeasts are extremely dim-witted and prone to panic, lashing out with their intimidating and electrically charged tails at anything they interpret as a threat. By sheer chance, they're grazing at the foot of one of the preserve's observation posts. A bevy of useful items lie inside if the thunderbeasts can be overcome.

Thunderbeasts (Mutant *ankylosaurus*): AC: 2, MIS: 4, HP: 90, MR: N.A, CON: 15 DEX: 6, STR: 14, Radiation Resistance: 8, Mutations: *electrical generation*, *multiple body parts—six legs*, *larger*, *beneficial pea-brain** Defects: *Diminished senses (sight*

Appearance: Measuring twice the size of their prehistoric ancestors, Thunderbeasts are 50' long from nose to tail and stand 12' high at their hip. Six thick legs keep its 13-ton body moving, and the tremors made by its walking helps give the creature its name. Thick armor plating adorned with curved horned spikes cover its rust-colored skin. A knobby tailed ending in a mailbox-sized bludgeon trails behind the animal.

Normal Reaction: Possessing poor eyesight, thunderbeasts interpret movement in their proximity as a threat and react by swinging their massive tails at the believed foe. This huge bludgeon is WC 9 and inflicts 40 points of damage from blunt trauma. Thunderbeasts also possess electricity-generating glands at the base of their tails that cause an additional 3d6 electrical damage to the unfortunate target. Thunderbeasts possesses such tiny minds that they are immune to any mental mutation that directly targets the brain (mental paralysis, mental control, telepathy, etc.).

The tower is 50' high, but 40' of its overall height is composed of four support legs reinforced with cross braces. A winding staircase leads up the exposed interior of the watchtower to reach a short ladder leading to the trapdoor entrance to the observation post. The staircase groans unsettlingly if climbed, but barring further damage to the tower (a single blow by an angry thunderbeast, for instance), it remains intact. The tower struts have suffered battering from dinosaurs over the years and it leans at 20 degree angle. Luckily, damage to the structure has broken the lock on the trapdoor and it is easily opened.

The outlook post building is a simple 20' square room with window on all four sides overlooking the preserve. From this position, observers can see areas 1-7, 1-10, and 1-11. Two storage lockers set underneath the windows contain spare coveralls bearing the Crichton Initiative logo (a DNA helix superimposed over a triceratops' head), a pair of *bioscience color bands*, an *ecology energy tracer unit*, six *hydrogen cells* (three are depleted), and two *paralysis rods* (currently uncharged).

AREA 1-10-ROVER GARAGE

A squat, formidable looking structure stands near the forest verge. Thick walls marked by two metal plates of different sizes show signs of being battered by, but not succumbing to, the blows of titanic beasts. Any signage or other markings the building once held has been eroded by time and the onslaught of rampaging animals.

This bunker-like building served as a garage for the small ground vehicles utilized by the preserve's staff. The two metal plates are sealed doors leading inside. One is scaled for human entrance, while the other measures 15' square. Color band readers are sunk into the walls beside each and accept *bioscience color bands*.

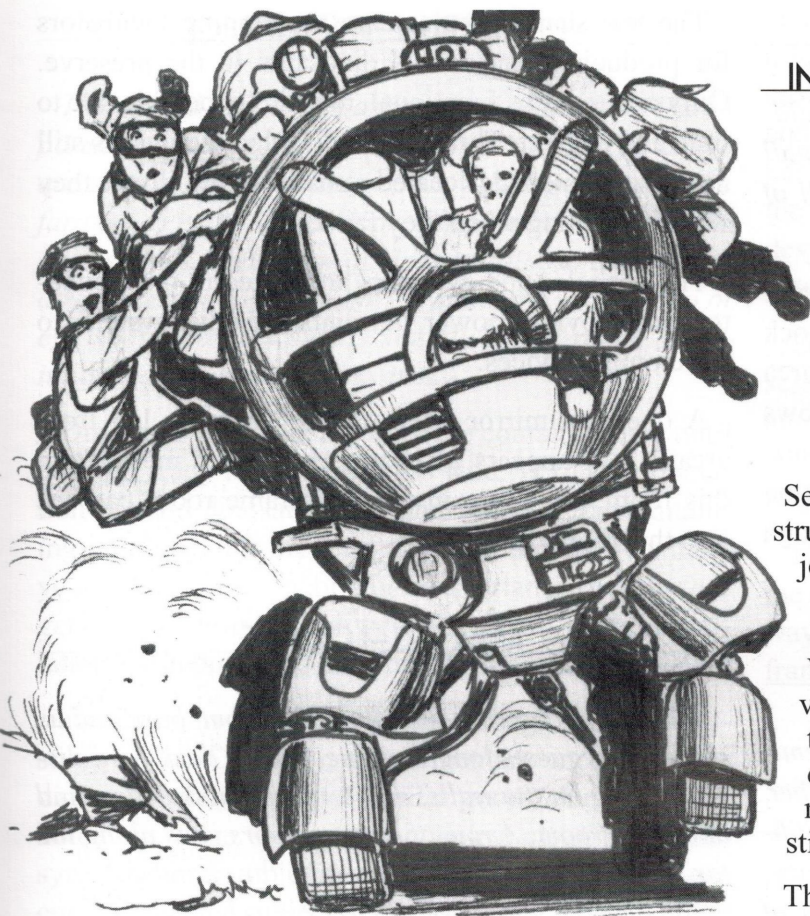
Inside the garage are two vehicle bays containing spent fuel cells, recharging cables, and old grease stains. One bay also holds a fully charged and functional Round Rover model ground vehicle. This vehicle resembles a Plexiglas sphere perched atop four equally spaced wheels that rotate independently, allowing it to turn 360 degrees in place and move in any direction.



**AREA 1-11—THE CRICHTON INITIATIVE
INSTALLATION: SEE PART TWO FOR DETAILS.**

**AREA 1-12—CEREBUSAURUS REX'S NEST:
SEE PART THREE FOR DETAILS.**

**PART TWO: THE CRICHTON
INITIATIVE INSTALLATION**



The hydraulic suspension on each wheel permits the Rover to climb low obstacles, tilt the command sphere up to 30 degrees and pop the all-important wheelie. The spherical interior of the Rover is designed for two occupants, but a third passenger can squeeze uncomfortably inside. Several metal racks along the outside of the Rover are intended to strap equipment to, but daring (or desperate) travelers can hold on tight allowing for an additional three riders.

The Round Rover is complexity class 3 to operate and has a top speed of 40 MPH (20 spaces per hour, terrain allowing). It can operate for 48 continuous hours before its fuel cells need recharging (which can be done at the garage, requiring 5 hours). The Rover is equipped with two 120 candlepower headlamps and can carry up to 600 lbs. of equipment and passengers.

Although the Rover allows quicker travel through the preserve, it also increases the chances of random encounters befalling the party. Increase the chance of a random encounter occurring to a 3 in 6 chance while the party uses the Rover. If necessary, treat the Rover as having AC 5 and 200 hp for resolving attacks against it.

Set amongst the towering conifers here is an odd structure resembling a trio of weathered white domes joined together with a fourth dome surmounting them, giving it the appearance of a cluster of bubbles. The building measures more than 100' across. Windows in the side of the domes once provided a view of the surrounding forest, but are now shuttered by duralloy plates that slammed into place during the catastrophe. Two doorways, a personnel-sized one now ajar, and a second, larger and still sealed entrance, lead into the installation.

The interior of the installation is surprisingly well preserved. Climate control systems keep the rooms comfortable and dust-free. Sensors detect entry into each area and automatically turn on the illumination panels set in the ceilings. Doors, except where otherwise indicated, require a *bioscience color band* to open. The ceilings in the corridors rise 8', and in the four larger rooms, they span 18' in the highest point of each dome.

It was here that the Crichton Initiative monitored their dinosaur charges and cloned additional specimens when necessary. When the majority of the Initiative's staff died during the catastrophe, the project's computer took over the day-to-day functions of the preserve. The cosmic radiation, however, damaged some of the computer's safety parameters and, left to its own devices, the mainframe began expanding the cloning process to include larger and more dangerous dinosaurs to the environment. This stored DNA was itself altered by the radiation cloud and the new clones possessed a variety of unexpected alterations.

The installation has remained undisturbed since the catastrophe. The installation has remained undisturbed since the catastrophe. Now, however, an android salvage party, intent on plundering the installation's secrets and obtaining useful technology and knowledge for their war against humans and mutants, has entered the structure just moments ahead of the party's arrival.

AREA 2-1—INSTALLATION ENTRANCE

An ajar doorway leads to the bubble cluster building's interior. The door bears scorching and a small area has been melted away completely. The smell of seared plastic and cooling steel hangs in the air.

The androids in area 2-2, lacking the proper color band, entered the installation by melting the door lock with an atomic torch. They are currently exploring area 2-2. The door leading to that area is also ajar and shows signs of being cut through by intense heat. An *atomic torch* cuts through the interior doors of the installation in 30 minutes and requires one hour to burn through exterior entrances.

AREA 2-2—CLONING LABORATORY

Six tear-shaped devices bearing transparent hemispheres at their widest points dominate this chamber. Banks of odd consoles, wiring, tubes, and unidentifiable cylinders occupy the majority of the floor space. Standing amongst the weird devices are a group of faceless humanoids dressed in shiny coveralls. Silently, they regard you before bringing their weapons to bear, intent on your destruction!

Eight androids are searching this room for new technology and weapons. They have no intention of letting the PCs survive the encounter, attacking the party immediately.

Androids (8): DEX 14; AC 5; HD 15; hp 90 each; MIS 6; #ATK 1; laser pistol (WC 6; DMG 5 or 15 dice) or protein disruptor (WC special; DMG special) or vibro blade (WC 9; DMG 12+3/10+3/12+3); Mutations: none; SP suffers double damage from sonics; RR 18, MR 13, CON 15, STR 17.

Seven of the androids wield *laser pistols* and *vibro blades*. The eighth owns a *protein disruptor with optional shield attachment*, and a *vibro blade*. All carry three spare *hydrogen cells*. In addition to these weapons, the androids own four *brown color bands*, three *red color bands*, and a *gray color band*. They carry an *atomic torch* with three hours' work time remaining in its fuel cells, four *portable energy lamps*, and six canisters of *chemical acid* (inflicts 6d6 damage to organic matter).

The tear-shaped devices are the cloning incubators for producing the various dinosaurs in the preserve. Only one remains functional, the rest inoperable due to time and neglect. Three of the disabled incubators still have the twisted, desiccated remains of the clones they were incubating when they failed.

The consoles and cylinders are linked to the incubators and provided power, nutrients and other systems to the cloning devices.

A one-way mirror overlooks the cloning lab from area 2-5. It appears as opaque burnished metal from this room, but those in the mainframe room can see into this room clearly.

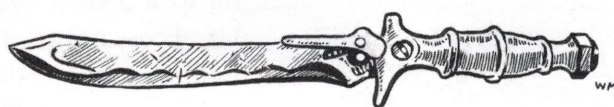
AREA 2-3—LOUNGE

Tables and chairs stand about the room, bare and as if awaiting guests long overdue. Silent, dark tri-d displays hang on the walls, and a trio of bunk beds stand about the room. A row of narrow doors runs along the far wall and two larger doors exits the chamber.

Initiative scientists used this area as a break room and sometimes as an overnight area when conducting operations at the lab. The building's air circulation system keeps it dust-free. The narrow doors are a series of personal lockers. Most contain white lab coats bearing the Crichton Initiative logo, individual possessions such as hygiene products, off-duty coveralls, and other personal effects. Two *bioscience color bands* are also present.

The white lab coats, although mundane, grant a +20% bonus to a true human's chance of successfully recruiting a raptoid as a follower due to that species' ingrained religious awe of the Whitcots. A failure on the recruiting roll, however, results in the raptoid attacking immediately, angered at the PC for daring to impersonate its deity.

The tri-d monitors are non-functional. One of the larger doors leads to a small lavatory with the typical furnishings and functions. The second leads to area 2-4.



AREA 2-4—NURSERY

The curved wall of this area holds two banks of transparent walled cages, each bearing a lock. The cages are empty, but are stained from prolonged use in the far past. A hefty, sealed door stands in between the two cage groups, and a row of closed cabinets, bisected by a ramp leading up, occupy the southern wall. A trio of egg-shaped robots stands silently in the room, seemingly deactivated and forgotten.

Dinosaurs cloned in the lab were contained here until deemed ready to survive in the wild. With the population of wild dinosaurs reaching viable, self-maintaining numbers, this area has not been utilized for many years. The three robot nurses (variants of *standard general purpose robots*) were shut down by the installation's computer and their fuel cells are long depleted.

The cabinets hold a collection of high protein food-stuffs (Dino-Chow™), supplementary medicines for dinosaur hatchlings, and similar goods. A plastic case holds six large syringes containing clear fluid. The syringes are complexity class 8 and with proper use cure an injected subject of disease. They have no effect against poison.

A large metal box inside the cabinets is sealed with both a color band lock and a numerical keypad. Using a bioscience color band in conjunction with a successful roll against complexity 4 unlocks the box, revealing



12 *sonic poppers*. These grenade-like devices produce a loud blast of sound that inflicts 4d6 damage to all creatures in a 30' radius. They can be thrown up to 50' and are WC 5. A missed attack roll indicates the popper falls short of its target, landing 10+d20' away from the thrower and likely catches him in the blast. These devices would be extremely effective against the *Cerebusaurus rex*.

The cages are empty and can be opened with a bioscience color band. The transparent walls muffle sounds and protect against sonics, allowing the scientists to insert a popper through the feeding port to chastise unruly dinosaurs in the nursery.

The larger doorway leads outside the installation and the ramp leads to area 2-5 above. As in area 2-2, a one-way mirror looks down on the nursery from the mainframe room overhead.

AREA 2-5—MAINFRAME ROOM

Bulky computer banks line half the walls of this circular room, several operator's chairs placed in positions before them. A pair of windows looks down on the installation's lower rooms and a transparent panel in the domed ceiling admits natural light to illuminate the space. A glass nodule in one wall sputters to life, throwing a matrix of blue light beams into being before you. The rays coalesce into a ghostly man dressed in outlandish clothing who considers you intently.

The ghostly form is the UI of the installation's mainframe, a hologram resembling a balding, bearded Caucasian man with glasses, dressed in field khakis. The hologram is designed to resemble 20th century paleontologist Jack Horner.

The computer addresses the party via the hologram, stating this is a restricted facility and they are trespassing. If shown a *bioscience color band*, the hologram smiles and apologizes, explaining it's been some time since proper operators were present. The hologram inquires if they're the replacement crew, as the computer has detected a number of anomalies in the preserve that need addressing. If the PCs do not possess or show a *bioscience color band*, the computer activates an alarm designed to summon security, but as security personnel are long dead and the mainframe has no defenses of its own, it is a futile gesture. The computer will not communicate further with the party until shown a *bioscience color band*.

If further information regarding these anomalies is requested, the computer outlines them as the following:

The preserve's entrance has malfunctioned, compromising security of the biosphere and allowing the native animals to escape. The computer can initiate a full reboot of the security gate's subsystem to restore the gate to full operation, but it requires an operator to authorize that step before proceeding.

Unauthorized visitors have entered the preserve due to the gate's malfunction. The computer has tracked four separate security breaches over the past several days. Although the computer is not aware of the identities of the intruders, they are 1) Gurn the Far-traveled, 2) the Omek squad (see area 1-7), 3) the androids (area 2-2), and 4) the PCs. The computer further reveals that some of the intruders have disappeared from its sensors, but that there is no evidence of them departing the preserve. The computer can provide exact dates of unauthorized entry if asked (the referee should use the timeline of events as they occurred in his campaign if the PCs ask for specific dates and times).

The number of remaining intruders depends partially on the PCs' actions during their exploration of the preserve. Assuming the PC encountered and defeated the androids, the computer states that two of unauthorized visitors are no longer detected (Gurn and the androids) and that a third, the PCs, have been upgraded to authorized visitors. If the PC defeated the Omeks, they too are listed as no longer detected by the computer's sensors.

The computer can display a tri-d map of the preserve along with the last known locations of the unauthorized visitors. Blue dots on the map mark the locations of the various groups as indicated in the encounter key (or where the PCs defeated them if elsewhere). One blue dot (Gurn) appears in area 1-12, giving the party a clue to the *command ring's* location.

The computer informs the party that several of the preserve's observation posts have suffered collapse and one (area 1-9) is compromised. It suggested repairs and replacements be authorized.

Finally, it states that one of the preserve's animals is proving to be a danger to the closed ecosystem. This animal should be euthanized or removed to maintain the environment. The computer displays several tri-d pictures of the *Cerebusaurus* and its primary location (area 1-12).

The computer requests permission to implement subsystem reboot to repair the gateway. If a PC with a *bio-science color band* allows it, the hologram goes stock still, and the computer consoles in the room spring to life, flashing lights and spinning their data tape wheels. All seems well at first, but disaster strikes.

In initiating the reboot, the ill-maintained mainframe suffers a full meltdown, forcing auxiliary emergency systems to take effect. This meltdown "kills" the Initiative's mainframe, leaving the preserve without artificial guidance, the party without further assistance, and unstoppable emergency protocols set into motion. Moments after the reboot is implemented, sparks and smoke burst from the computer consoles, data tapes melt, and klaxons blare. The hologram vanishes, replaced by a neutral-toned voice.

The voice announces, "Alert! Catastrophic mainframe failure has occurred. Switching to emergency protocols. ERROR—ERROR—ERROR—Security Gate Malfunction! Rerouting subsystems. Gate reboot initiated. Warning! Security gate sealing in 10 hours. Please evacuate the preserve at once! Have a pleasant day."

Unless the party exits the preserve before gate reboot finished they'll be trapped within the preserve—unless they possess the *command ring*. The PCs now have two choices: 1) Head for the exit immediately or 2) Confront the *Cerebusaurus rex* and hope they can defeat it and gain the *command ring*. The party must choose between caution and avarice, and endure the consequences of their decision.

PART THREE: THE CEREBUSAURUS REX

AREA 1-12 – THE CEREBUSAURUS REX NEST

The stink of rotting meat and spoiled blood befouls the air as you approach a shallow bowl deep in the gloomy forest. The sound of snapping bones and throaty growls ripples through the woods. You spy a towering patch of blue scaly skin through the trees, and gasp in awe and horror as you realize that cobalt hue is just a small portion of the gargantuan monstrosity that lairs in the depression.

Dominating the bowl is a colossal beast measuring 50' long. Bearing three heads atop its six ton body, the

beast tears into the flank of a slain dinosaur, gulping down gobbets of flesh larger than yourselves. Sword-like teeth protrude from its maws, and beady, angry eyes glare at its surroundings. The titan's blue flesh is covered with patches of iron-hard spikes, and, as the wind suddenly shifts, it sniffs the air with all three heads. Slowly, like looming disaster, it looks directly towards you.

This shallow depression is home to most feared predator in the preserve: the *Cerebusaurus rex*. It was this creature that killed and devoured Gurn, and the *command ring* the PCs seek rests inside its massive gut. The party may discover the *Cerebusaurus*' lair through their explorations of the area or by following the computer's directions. In the former case, it's likely the PCs will be woefully unprepared to defeat the Mutant *Tyrannosaurus rex* and win the *command ring* for themselves.

Cerebusaurus Rex (Mutant *tyrannosaurus rex*): AC: 4, MIS: 7, HP: 400, MR: 13, CON: 66, DEX: 12, STR: 30, Radiation Resistance: 13, Mutations: *taller, multiple body parts-three heads, tri-brain*, quills, heightened smell, laser eyes*, reflection (heat),* Defects: *Sonic susceptibility**

Appearance: A giant, three-headed *Tyrannosaurus rex*, the *Cerebusaurus* skin is deep blue in color and bears both scaly hide and clusters of sharp, barbed quills. Its body is bulkier than a typical T-rex to compensate for the additional weight of its trio of heads.

Normal Reaction: The *Cerebusaurus rex* is constantly hungry, attacking anything that has the misfortune of encountering it. The mutant has an arsenal of weapons to bring down prey, and can perform three attacks each round. It can emit laser rays from its eyes equal to a laser pistol. Its teeth can rip a man in two (WC 9, 8d6 damage) and it can bite multiple targets within 20' of one another. The *Cerebusaurus*' quills cannot be thrown, but grant extra protection against melee attacks. Any attacker engaging the C-rex in melee combat automatically suffers 3d6 damage on a missed attack roll against the dinosaur as he is slashed by the creature's quills. The C-rex reflects heat attacks such as those from laser weapons and the *heat generation* mutation. It is also highly resistant against mental attacks due to its three brains. All mental attacks against the C-rex must make three successful attack rolls to have an effect.

Luckily, the dinosaur's three sets of ears make it susceptible to sonic attacks and it suffers triple damage from sound-based assaults.

The *Cerebusaurus* chases fleeing prey until they are caught and eaten. Only its death, or escape by flying, teleportation, or other spectacular means can elude the ever-hungry menace. If slain and its belly cut open, the largely digested remains of numerous meals spill from its stomach...including the corpse of Gurn the Far-travelled. Most of Gurn's mundane equipment has been destroyed by stomach acids, but the following items remain intact: a *red color band*, a *gray color band*, a *white color band*, a *Geiger counter*, a *protein disruptor* (drained energy cell), a *laser pistol* (2 shots remaining), and the *command ring*.

A search of the C-rex's lair discovers only rotting meat, cracked bones, and the occasional mound of mutant dinosaur excrement.



ENDING THE ADVENTURE

If the party decides to flee the dinosaur preserve when the mainframe fails and the security alerts kick in, they should have sufficient time to reach the security gate before it seals—assuming they aren't overly delayed by wandering mutant dinosaurs as they rush towards the exit. The party emerges from the preserve and watches as the security gate closes, sealing the preserve and its inhabitants beyond the Impenetrable Wall once more. As a result of the emergency protocols enacted by the mainframe's demise, the entrance gate enters an enhanced security status and only one of the *command rings* can reopen the preserve. The *bioscience color bands* become no more than souvenirs of the party's expedition beyond the Wall.

The party may choose to ignore the alarms and warnings to confront the *Cerebusaurus rex* in its lair, hoping to slay the apex predator of the preserve and recover the *command ring* before the preserve seals, or else deducing (correctly) that if they acquire the ring, they can depart the preserve whenever they wish. If the party triumphs over the C-rex, they now own one of the most useful devices onboard the *Warden*. If they fail, chances are the security gate closes with them still inside the preserve, trapping them in an environment filled with deadly mutants. This is assuming any of the PCs survived the battle with the *Cerebusaurus*, of course. Unless the survivors have mutations that allow them to bypass the Wall, the only means of their escape lies inside the C-rex's stomach, and they'll have to either kill the titanic monstrosity or remain inside the preserve forever. The referee can expand on the material presented here to further flesh out the preserve and offer the party a chance to restock, make new allies, and avoid yet more new mutated dinosaurs as they seek a means to improve their chances when confronting the *Cerebusaurus* once more.

A party that obtains the *command ring* and departs the preserve successfully discovers a bevy of new possibilities awaiting them on board the *Warden*. With a

command ring in the possession, the party can access nearly every location of the ship, demand the obedience of robots and computers they encounter, and possibly even assume control of the *Warden* and seek out a world upon which to end the ship's ancient journey. It may seem as if the PCs have "won METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA," but this isn't the truth of the matter. It means life just become much more complicated for the party.

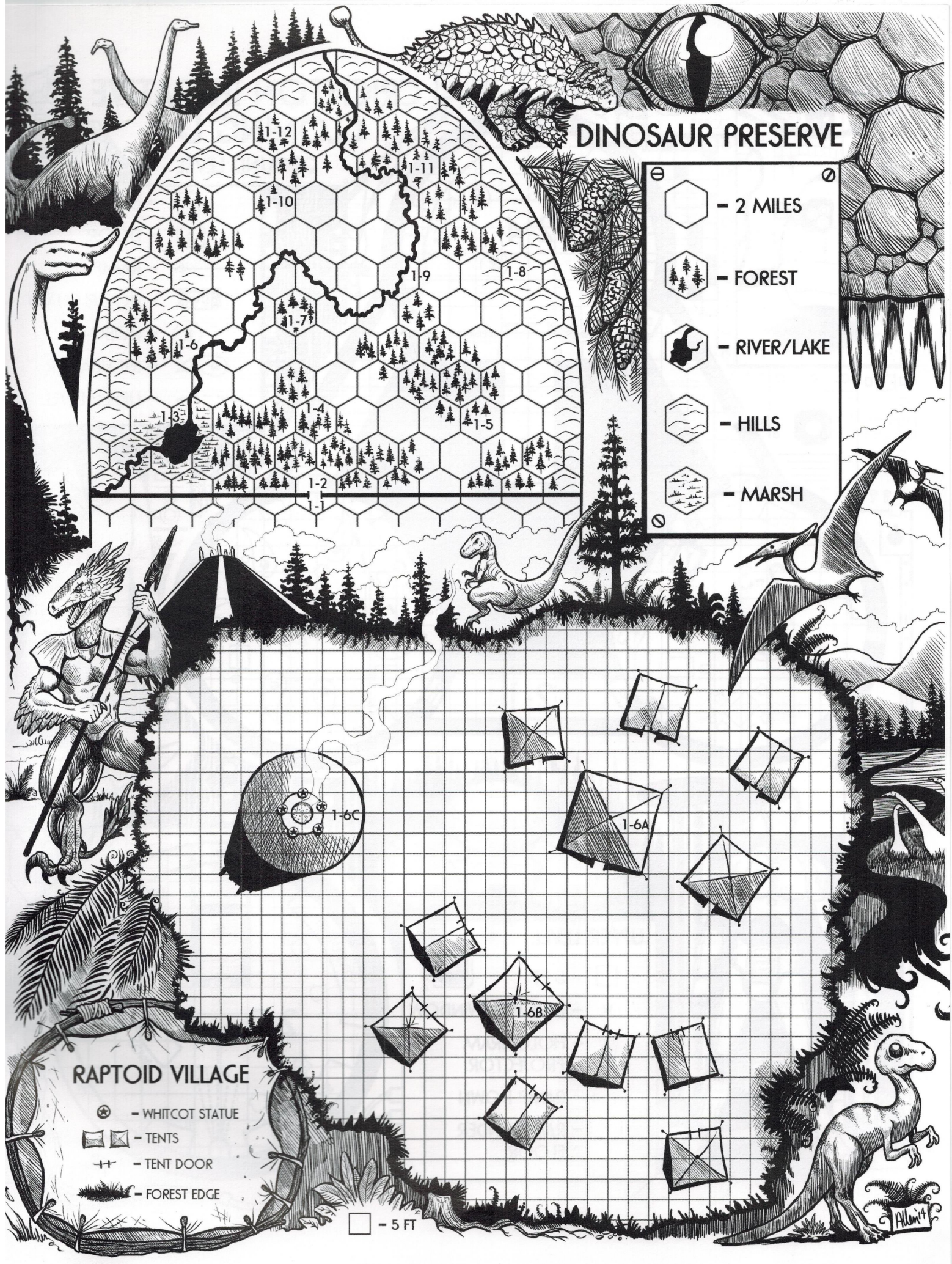
Unless they keep the *command ring* a closely guarded secret, rivals for the ring emerge constantly to attempt to wrest it from the PCs hands. The party finds themselves under constant attack from the androids of the *Warden*, groups such as the Omeks, and any other rival party the referee wishes to throw into the fray. Even the ship itself can rebel against the party as crazed robots and insane AIs, fearing for their independence, attempt to slay the party or destroy the ring.

The *command ring* may also not be as all-powerful as the party expects. The strange cosmic radiation that pervades the *Warden* can defeat even the *command ring* by mutating computer systems, robots, and door locks, making them immune to the *command ring*'s control. The referee has full license to impose limits on the *command ring*, but shouldn't make it completely useless. After all, the party did overcome great challenges to obtain it and deserves a reward for succeeding.

Aside from the problems imposed by owning the *command ring*, the PCs may also discover that dinosaur escapees from the preserve have established a foothold outside of the preserve. A band of raptoids might take up occupancy on the *Warden*'s forest level, liars-in-wait could stalk its corridors, and skystalkers might roost in out-of-the-way locales. The presence of these formerly isolated mutants can have far-reaching effects on the *Warden*'s ecosystem. Introduced species usually play havoc on an environment, and when those new species are mutant dinosaurs, chaos is bound to ensue. Life is never certain aboard the *Warden*, after all, and the exciting world of METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA is never a boring one!

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DINOSAUR PRESERVE



- 2 MILES



- FOREST



- RIVER/LAKE



- HILLS



- MARSH

RAPTOID VILLAGE



- WHITCOT STATUE



- TENTS



- TENT DOOR



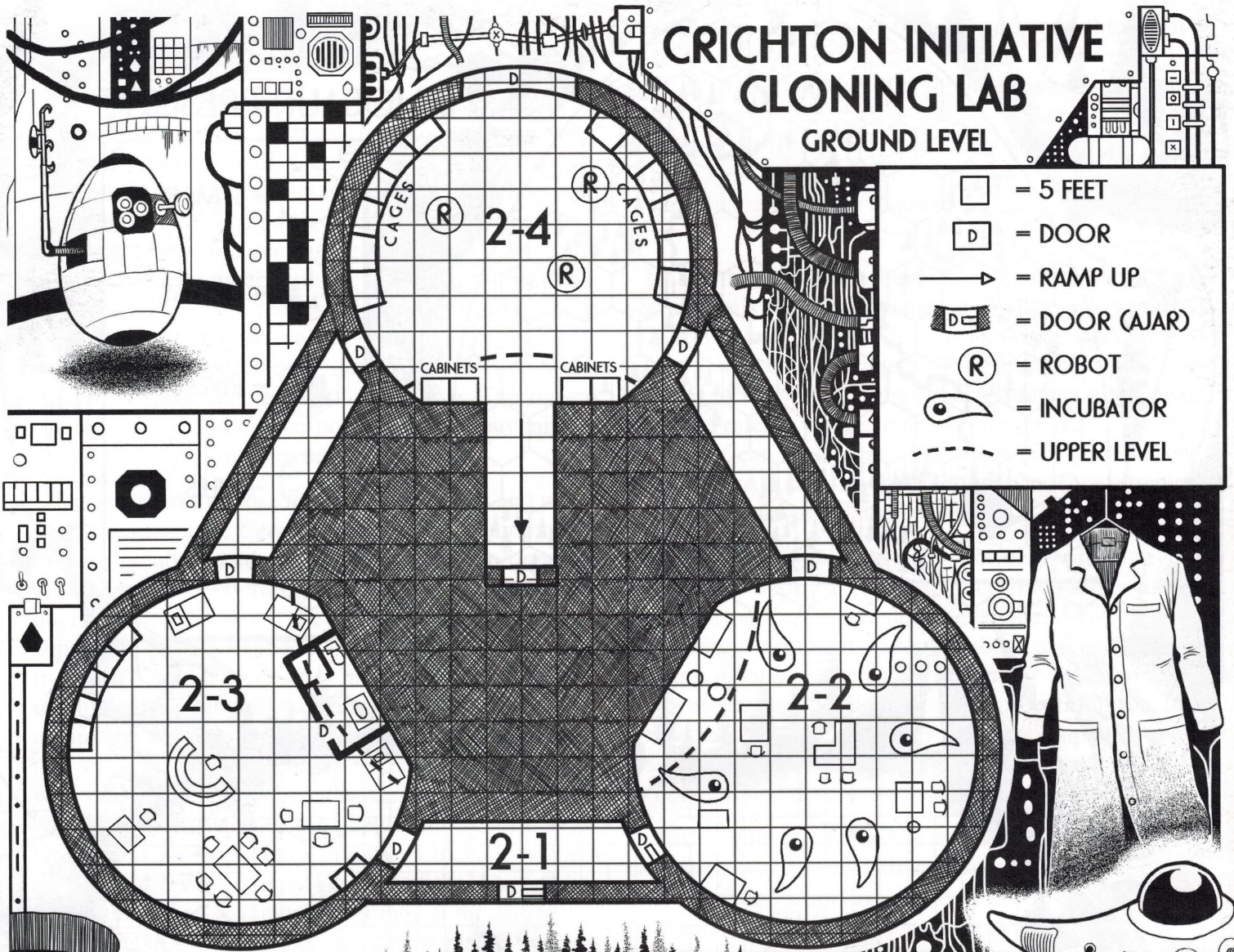
- FOREST EDGE

- 5 FT

CRICHTON INITIATIVE CLONING LAB

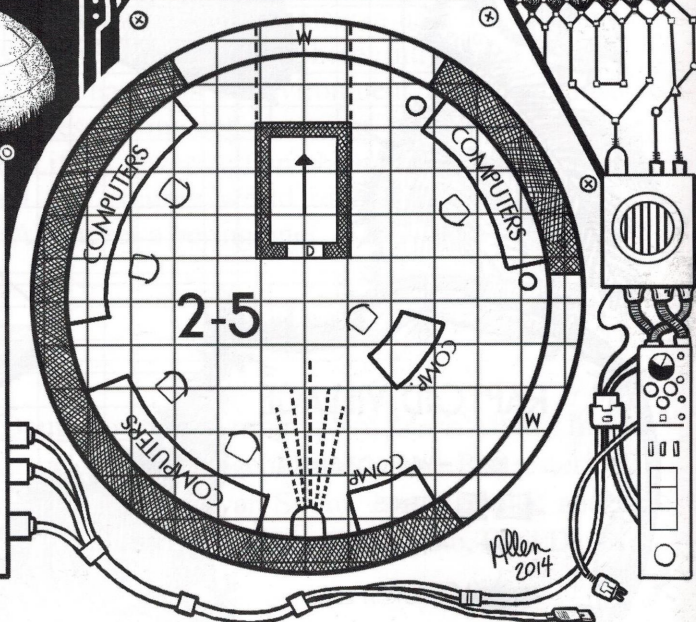
GROUND LEVEL

- = 5 FEET
- = DOOR
- = RAMP UP
- = DOOR (AJAR)
- = ROBOT
- = INCUBATOR
- = UPPER LEVEL



UPPER LEVEL

- = 5 FT
- = ONE WAY WINDOW
- = HOLOGRAM PROJECTOR
- = RAMP DOWN
- = RAMP UNDER FLOOR



Allen
2014