

James M. Ward, Christopher Clark and Tim Kask's

Dark Colony



ENT 26005



**A generic sci-fi role-playing adventure for
use with most space travel role playing games**

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CHRISTOPHER CLARK, JAMES M. WARD, TIM KASK
AND

ELDRITCH ENTERPRISES

present the final chapter in the DARK series of adventure modules

DARK COLONY



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James M. Ward Dedication: I dedicate this work to all the talented people I worked with at TSR. We held greatness in our hands for many years. I still think fondly of that brave band and was happy to have led them for a bit.

Tim Kask Dedication: I dedicate this adventure to gamers everywhere that are not afraid to wield the most powerful weapon we humans possess: imagination. Never having written for space-opera before, I was tricked into doing this, but I'm pleased with the final collaboration. Energy weapons beat the hell out of swords and arrows.

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ALERT**WELCOME TO THE PLANET KASK COLONY!****ALERT**

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT YOU ON PLANET KASK!

We have discovered a new planet with water, rudimentary life and space to grow in all directions. Only moderate terraforming is required to the atmosphere; pressure and gravity are near Earth normal, and a rudimentary scientific colony is already in place.

Primitive plants already grow within the fertile soil of this new world, and the opportunities for food production are enormous. Vast mineral wealth has also been discovered, much of it lying just below the surface (report available from the Fleet Mining Survey upon request). Water is readily available, and in abundance.

...and it only gets better!

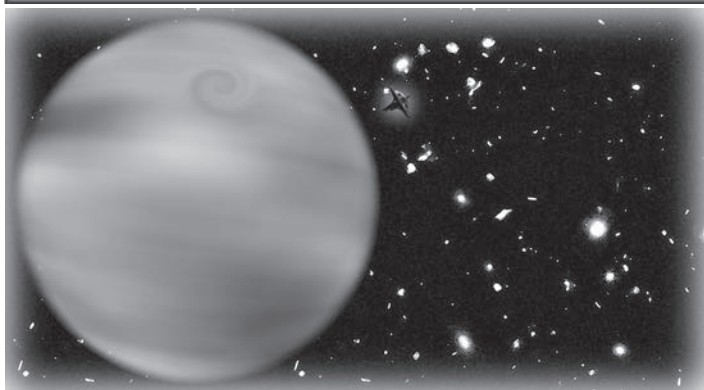
Fleet will outfit you, train you, and provide you with whatever materials you need with no credits down! Land grants are available for food production and manufacturing concerns, equipment is available, in advance, for many hundreds of commercial concerns (and with no interest fees applicable — you pay us when the planet pays you!), and domes will be provided free of charge until the atmosphere is purified of all current toxins.

Imagine walking in the free air of planet Kask, the master of your own business; your own destiny!

All we still need is YOU.

Report now to your local Fleet office and tell the recruiter that YOU want to help colonize planet Kask.

Certain restrictions apply. Felons and those accused of racketeering violations need not apply. Corporations are ineligible. Void in Rhode Island. Contact your local recruiter for a complete list of eligibility requirements.



ABOUT THIS ADVENTURE

Dark Colony is an adventure that takes place on a recently discovered planet. This planet may exist at the very fringe of our own solar system (and has an earth-like environment due to a rare and unusual set of circumstances) or within a nearby solar system, but its technology is not greatly advanced beyond our own. Fear not concerning the scope of this adventure either. Although there is an entire planet to explore, *Dark Colony* takes place within a newly constructed (and therefore relatively small) plastic bubble that shields the colony from the still-toxic air outside (see the next section, *Planet Kask Data*).

As a great majority of this planet is defined only as terra incognito (unexplored), it should be entirely suitable for use with any science fiction role-playing system that includes space travel, and any campaign you might be running. Statistics and simple role-playing details are given for the creatures, equipment, and encounters. In every case the referee is encouraged to replace these details with those specific to the game system he uses, and for ease of conversion, a brief description of this “generic” system is provided on the next page.

If possible, consider running your players through *Dark Outpost* & *Dark Visitor*. While it's not necessary to own those two products to enjoy *Dark Colony*, your player characters are more likely to survive the encounters here if they have been exposed to the encounters found in the first two products. Several themes connect the three adventures, and the clues provided within the rest of the *Dark* series should instill the need for caution when exploring the ***Dark Colony***. When your players do not tread so lightly, try not to kill them out-of-hand—simply make them believe you might. Fear of the unknown, anticipation, and yes, the potential for ultimate risk are the core aspects that make a role playing experience unforgettable.

THE ‘DARK’ STORY

The Dark Outpost—The planet Kask was scouted and it was determined the planet was ripe for terraforming. Manzakium, a rare element crucial to starship drive manufacture, was also detected, catapulting the colonization of this planet to a ‘first priority position’ with Fleet. A massive orbital support station was built and placed into a geosynchronous orbit some 23,112 miles above the proposed colonization site. It was crewed by independent automatons, as well as simple robots, and given a state-of-the-art Artificial Intelligence (AI) in order to ensure a self-sufficient operation. Training, equipment, temporary lodging and even entertainment are provided by this station in an effort to speedily develop the planet below. Unfortunately, nearly three weeks after it began operations, the station went dark. No telemetry, no reports; in point of fact no communication of any kind, was received from the station for a week.

In this adventure, quite by accident, an alien fungi scout ship rammed the colony outpost. Fungal spores spewed out from the alien ship, eliminating life where it provided resistance to the intrusion, adapting it where it did not. Soon, no people remained aboard the colony outpost; the fungus had taken over. Federation marines (or perhaps the character party?) were needed to eliminate the problem.



The Dark Visitor – A few short weeks after the Kask Outpost was cleared of alien lifeforms, a moon-sized fungi mother ship entered the system looking for its lost scout (the one that impacted the space station). Marines (or perhaps the character party?) were again sent in and the mother ship eventually retreated from the Kask system in fear for its existence.



The Dark Colony – Having discovered the planet Kask on a routine deep-space scouting mission, Fleet immediately did a fly-by planetary survey. The analysis revealed not just a habitable Class M planet, but the presence of Manzakium; the decision to colonize became a foregone conclusion. Work began posthaste to construct the Planet Kask Outpost Station, and scout ships were sent to the surface for an in-depth analysis.

A colonization dome was erected in record time, and a sealed landing bay built to facilitate transit to and from the surface. An atmospheric purifier was then constructed to begin the process of removing the ammonia from the atmosphere so that it might one day be experienced without environmental containment. Finally, a research station and habitat were added so that the process of identifying and solving any further challenges the surface might present to colonization could be researched, and eventually solved.

Planet Kask was ready for colonization.

Since that time, dozens of colonists have emigrated to the surface, a small farming operation is in place to provide a degree of self-sufficiency, and a corporate mining concern has begun operations to retrieve the valuable Manzakium. Fleet was prepared to count its coup, and its profits.

Progress was proceeding apace when a transport loaded with supplies arrived from the Planet Kask Outpost Station covered in a strange, black dust. The dock handlers in the landing bay were rapidly afflicted by a strange black fungus-like growth that rapidly began to cover their flesh. They were immediately quarantined, but despite the best efforts of the colony's medical team, they have not recovered. Given the quarantine, the laboratory at the colony was certain that they had contained the outbreak, but still uncertain as to how it might be eradicated.

All of this was duly reported to Fleet.

The fungus was insidious, and it was soon obvious that the quarantine of apparent victims was insufficient. It spread to other facilities within the colony dome, and ever-more colonists exhibited symptoms of infestation. For safety, at least until such time as Fleet might send help, the colony commander ordered an immediate lockdown; all personnel were ordered to sequester themselves within locked buildings until such time as the threat of infection was mitigated.

This was not reported to Fleet.

Joe Galligear, chief engineer for the colony and head of all mining operations on the planet, ensured that news of the continuing outbreak never left the colony.

Concerned that the planet might be quarantined as a whole, and that no help would be forthcoming, he has hijacked the colony's communication system. The only message being received by Fleet is one that confirms that the fungal outbreak is not serious, but that they need some help from Fleet in order to eradicate the strain. Joe continues to send urgent, impatient messages that a "...team should be sent with all alacrity to mitigate this potential threat."

Joe is also unaware that not all is well within the Manzakium mine. Remote scanners have disappeared. Capital assets and equipment have been damaged. Strange and as-yet undiscovered creatures threaten the mining operation, and even the miners are exhibiting strange behaviors.

So intent was Chief Galligear on ensuring that Fleet not abandon the colony to the fungal infestation that none of this information reached him while the colony was still operative. There are survivors, hiding in various locations that have been fortified against entry, but all operations are currently at a standstill.

Other than a repeating daily statistics report, and a request for scientific help to analyze the fungus, the colony has gone dark. Worse still, neither Fleet (nor therefore the characters), nor the colonists realize the most important threat they face: Planet Kask is alive.

STATISTICS USED

All statistics are expressed as a percentage (0 being low, 100 being high), and should be easily convertible to any game system. When using a d20 base, for example, each 5% represents one such 'pip'. The term **AH** gives the rating for an Average Human, for baseline purposes. Those statistics include:

Power (Pow) describes the overall skill rating of a creature or encounter, *i.e.* the comparative level. AH Power is 1-5%.

Health indicates the amount of damage a creature can withstand before dying, normally 1-4 per point of Power. AH = 6.

Defense is the relative ability of a creature to protect itself against attack. A defense score of 50% indicates that only a perfect unmodified roll of the dice would indicate success. A Defense rating of 100% would require any attack to have significant bonuses in order to succeed. AH defense is 0-5%.

Init indicates the bonus a creature receives due to the speed of attack, to determine whether its attack would occur prior to that of an opponent. In many systems this is referred to as an initiative bonus. As usual, 100% is the largest bonus available, reserved for those who are blindingly fast in their attacks. AH init is zero.

Demeanor describes the general attitude and intelligence of the individual(s).

Damage is the amount of damage caused when the creature successfully attacks an opponent. Multiple numbers indicate more than one type of attack, and parenthetical numbers, *e.g.* (x2), indicate multiple attacks of the same type. AH damage with fists or feet is 1-2 points.

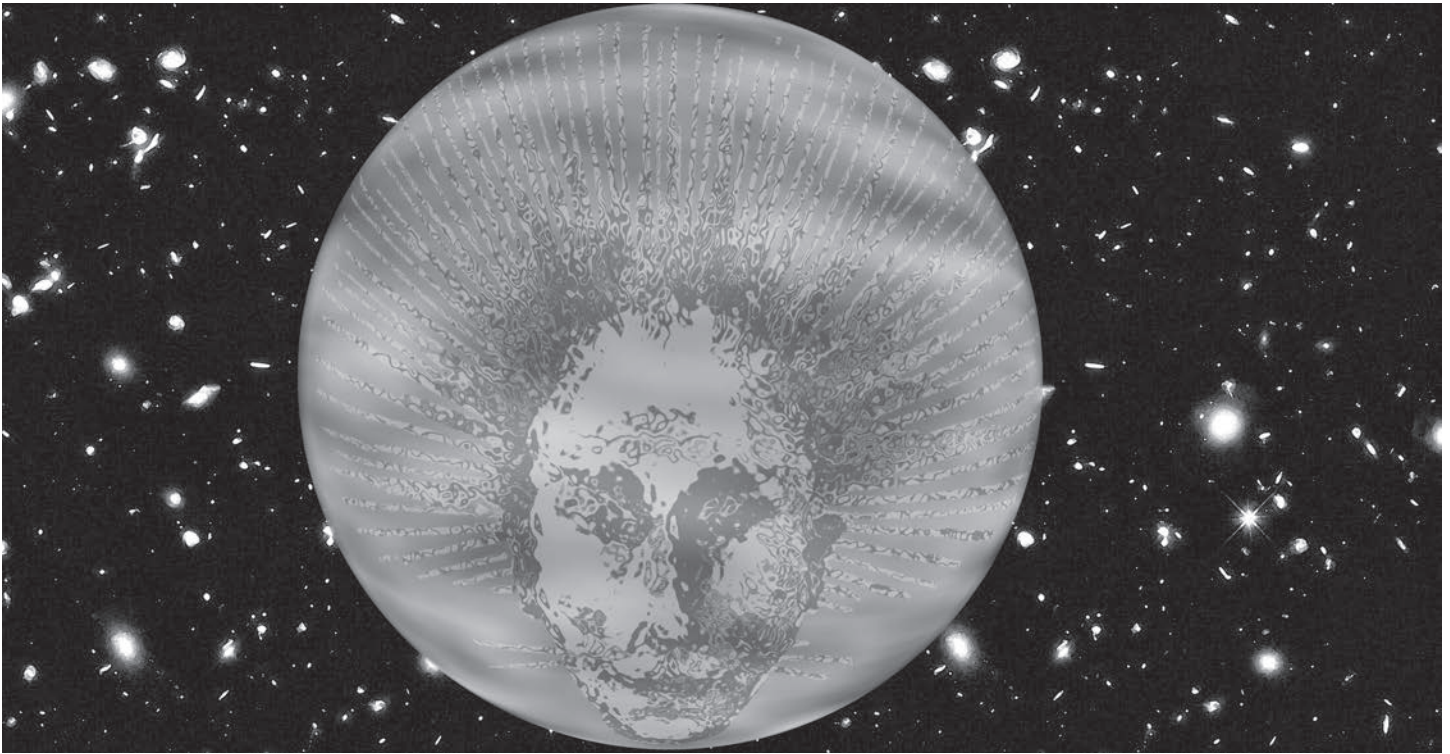
Special, as a category, itemizes any special abilities, attacks, or defenses that apply, always to be used at your discretion. A superlative expert in any special ability listed here would have a score of 100% in that ability. AH has nothing Special.

Move is the rate of movement, in feet per second. AH is a range of 8-12.

Other Aspects of this Presentation

The term 'Fleet' is often referred to in the descriptions found in this adventure. 'Fleet' refers to whatever organization sponsors space travel and exploration in your campaign/gaming system, and the Game Master should feel free to replace the word with whatever term best fits his campaign.

Material in bold is meant to be read aloud to the players. All other text should be reviewed by the Game Master prior to play. Note: no rigid solutions are offered for the various problems *Dark Colony* presents to the players. Reward the characters for innovative problem solving, thought-provoking plans, and the wisdom to retreat when necessary.



THE ENTITY

All human thought occurs in a meat-based calculating machine: the brain. When reduced to its simplest form, the nerves are firing/non-firing, off or on, or granted a closed value (1) or an open value (0). Human brains, like it or not, function using their own unique form of binary.

The entity known by humans as the Planet Kask differs only in the materials that comprise its gigantic brain; its thought processes work in roughly the same fashion as our own. Various naturally occurring minerals and crystals within the mantle and crust of the planet Kask, connected by veins of power-enhancing manzakium ore, have by mere chance achieved the exact configuration required to allow data processing, reasoning, and learning— in short, life. All that was lacking for millennia was a spark, a slight nudge of energy to start the process. The initial planetary scans provided this spark, initiating a cascading piezo-electric effect which spread throughout the planet by the interlaced veins of Manzakium (Mk127) which girdle most of the planet.

The Planet Kask Entity is a child. It thinks like a child, reacts like a child, and learns with the incredible speed of a child. In its few short weeks of life, it has discovered how to manipulate its own mass, and has an almost instinctive knowledge of its own chemistry. It has also discovered that it is not entirely alone.

When construction of the colony dome began, Kask could sense the beings making changes to its outer skin, but the changes were tertiary and engendered only curiosity. These tiny creatures were doing little that affected Kask, and so it studied them for a while, manipulating the environment closest to them in subtle ways so as to judge the response from them, much the same way you or I might disturb an anthill to see how the insects react. Kask became rapidly bored with what appeared to be mindless parasites.

...and then the mining operation began.

Kask sensed the mining first as a discomfort, and then as its version of pain: an invasion of its being that demanded attention. It reacted as would a child swatting a fly. To say that mining operations were completely disrupted would be a vast understatement (we'll explore this further later). As the entity matures, however, it will, eventually, decide whether those upon its surface represent friends or foes.



HOW THE ENTITY REACTS (*Game Master's Notes*)

The planet is learning very quickly; in mere weeks it has evolved intelligence equal to that of a bright twelve-year-old human. Its personality is far less developed, and Kask is not innately belligerent. So far, it has only reacted to outside stimuli, those that it found unpleasant, such as the 'itch' caused by the mining operations.

The invading fungi have done their best, through the use of their Yellow Fungus (see Bestiary listing for details on this invasive strain), to invade the awareness that is planet Kask through the exposed veins of Manzakium found in the colonial mining operations. Kask considers the fungus (all strains) a mortal enemy.

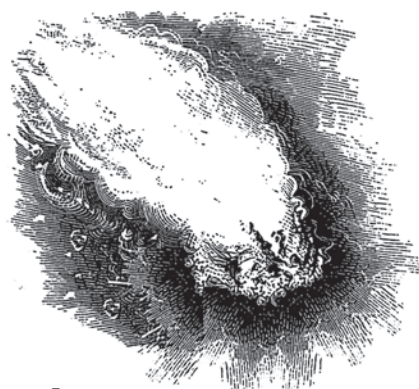
The colonial miners, for their part, and unwittingly, have ceased operations after Kask reacted to their intrusion and 'painful' removal of the small amounts of Manzakium already mined. They also have removed the fungus from several of Kask's 'more sensitive' areas. Kask currently feels that the colonists, in its extremely limited understanding of what they are and represent, might prove to be allies. In short, Kask has not, as yet, placed the colony or its inhabitants within the 'mortal enemy' category.

With the speed of a child learning the purpose and function of its own fingers and toes, the entity has developed a thorough knowledge of how to create and manipulate static electric charges, electro-magnetic fields, tectonic plates, gravity fields, and the chemicals and gasses trapped within its very being. As a result, any significant intrusion into the planetary surface, such as a small but full-scale mining operation, may meet with any of the following responses (as examples, you may add your own at a whim). I recommend that you use them sparingly, and only if the characters are extremely belligerent (to the planet, not you).



Methane Gas Ignition

Planet Kask is familiar with the pockets of methane gas that are found commonly no more than a foot or two beneath its surface. It is aware of how this gas may be easily released into the atmosphere, and then ignited by a small static charge. This causes a small but lethal explosion of the unstable methane. The blast covers a diameter of 30', and all within suffer 2-40(2d20) points of damage to both themselves and any impact or heat-sensitive equipment. Flammable materials catch fire, and clothing is scorched, and both equipment and the character using it should receive an avoidance roll. Those successfully avoiding the main brunt of such a blast suffer only half damage to themselves and any equipment on their persons.



Minor Kaskquake

By manipulating its internal gravitational field, and simultaneously its electro-magnetic field, the planet Kask is able to generate shifts within its own crust; quakes that affect all beings within 1 mile of the epicenter. Normal beings are unable to engage in any normal activity for five minutes, but may avoid any further negative effects if they manage to keep their feet (a check against Agility or like statistic). Those falling suffer 1-4 (1d4) Health damage. Buildings are subject to potential collapse, especially those made of rigid material (steel or stone vs. the plastic domes used by small entrepreneurial concerns). Buildings made of rigid materials collapse 55% (1-11 on 1d20) of the time, while those built of more flexible material fare better and collapse only 25% (1-5 on 1d20) of the time. The damage to materials and residents within is left to your discretion, but is doubtful any would survive such a calamity. Lastly, it is also possible, should the entity choose this response to extreme stimuli, that characters, equipment, vehicles, and even buildings are swallowed by fissures (never to be seen again) that open suddenly in the crust. Suffice to say that this response should only be used by the planet in cases of extreme discomfort.



Lightning Strike

The entity is also capable of changing the electrical potential of the electro-magnetic field of both its crust and its atmosphere. These changes cause an imbalance that is released as a static electrical discharge of several hundred thousand volts in strength (a minor lightning strike). The strike affects a 10' diameter area, and those failing to avoid it suffer only 1d12 damage to their Health. Electronic equipment, except in rare instances where significant anti-static shielding is used, is generally destroyed.

Electro-Magnetic Pulse

Although Kask generally causes these only as the result of an error in its understanding of communications, it occasionally uses an electro-magnetic pulse as a means for disabling electronic equipment that is either interfering with its own communication, or that is irritating it in some way. Living beings are unaffected by this response, but any electronic equipment is rendered useless if it is within 300' of the epicenter of such a pulse. Only 'hardened' equipment, that made to withstand nearby non-fatal nuclear blasts, has a chance of remaining operational.

Mind Insinuation/Compulsion

Given its ability to project electro-magnetic fields, Kask has also discovered a means for rendering Mk127 (manzakium) into an aerosol. In this form it is readily ingested by any species that is breathing the atmosphere without the assistance of an environmental suit (such as colonists within a dome). Kask is then able to compel these minds to complete simple tasks (attack, approach, etc. — its knowledge of human physiognomy and capability is extremely limited) by using the power-enhancing properties of the aerosol MK127 to overload the neural synapses (thought processes) of its victims. Only one type of command is possible at any given time, no matter how many succumb to the MK127 gas. No avoidance of this effect is possible, but the effect is blocked by any apparatus which provides a sealed environment.

Kask has also sensed a number of forms of electro-magnetic radiation, and has noted that some types, especially those in the radio-frequency band, seem to form patterns. It has studied these patterns, and is on the brink of being able to create its own, mimicking those it 'hears'.

The Planet Kask has discovered communication.

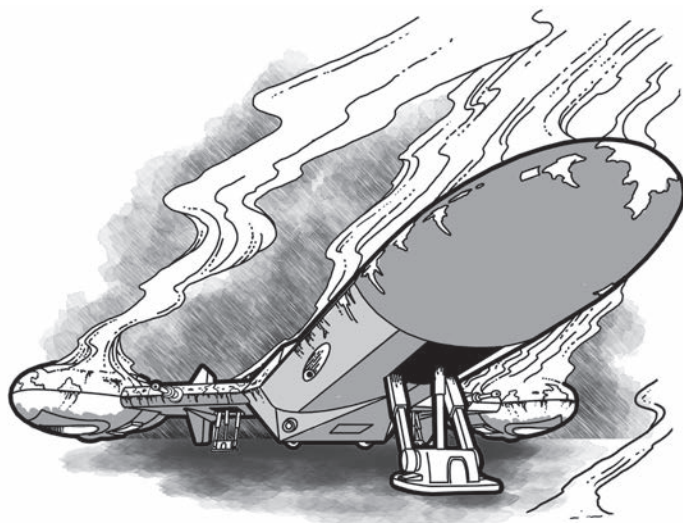
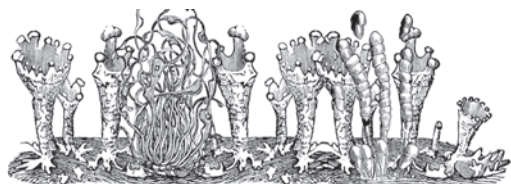
PHYSICAL DETAILS OF THE PLANET KASK

In the event that your players scan the planet, or ask Fleet for background information of a scientific nature concerning the environment, a brief discussion of what Fleet knows of said environment is here provided.

Planet Kask is a Class M (Earth-like) body that is an almost perfect sphere. With a diameter of 8071 miles, it is slightly larger than Earth and has greater mass (6235×10^{21} kg) with correspondingly greater gravity (approximately 105% of Earth normal, or 1.05G). None of these differences are significant enough to be noted by the average visitor unless scientific measurements are taken.

What is significant is the magnetic field of the planet, which fluctuates in both its intensity and orientation. Planet Kask has no 'true north' as its magnetic poles shift as much as 5%, and the intensity of its electromagnetic shell/field varies from 20 to 115 microteslas (0.20 to 1.15 gauss). This variance plays havoc with electronics, navigation, and, at its worst, electromagnetic machinery such as electric motors and compressors. These variances are currently considered anomalous by Fleet, and an intense study is being conducted of the phenomenon at the surface. As Game Master, you already know the cause: Planet Kask is alive, and is able to manipulate its own electromagnetic field.

The atmosphere and pressure of the planet also differ greatly from that found on Earth. The atmosphere is currently rich in Nitric Acid (HNO_3), a highly corrosive chemical that rapidly oxidizes most metals and ceramics. The slightly higher pressure of the atmosphere (average between 16 and 18.2 PSI) has little impact on human life, but makes the sealing of domes and apparatus, all equipment exposed to the atmosphere of the planet, more difficult. Atmospheric transformation, to remove the excess nitrogen and use it as fertilizer, has already begun. Plant life found upon planet Kask, as a result, is highly acid resistant, and some strains are suspected of changing nitric acid into nutrient solutions such as ammonia or fixed nitrogen that the plants then use for propagation and growth.



Under current Fleet restrictions, no spacecraft is allowed exposure to the planet's atmosphere for longer than 16 hours to prevent severe oxidation and possible failure of equipment. Characters and equipment exposed to this atmosphere suffer the loss of one Health point damage per minute (or the cumulative increasing chance of equipment failure at the rate of 1% for each to minutes of exposure for unshielded electronics and 1% per ten minutes exposure for hardened equipment like vehicles and space suits if this method better fits your gaming system).

ADVENTURE GOALS

The character party may have any number of goals when arriving at Planet Kask, but two are of paramount importance to you as the Game Master. First, Fleet wants the characters to eradicate the fungus infestation, and re-secure the colony so that mining operations might be re-established. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the characters need to discover the true nature of Planet Kask (that it is a living entity) and to find a way of communicating with it. A truce is possible, but ignorance of its nature, a 'business as usual' attitude on the part of the colony, will lead only to an escalation of hostilities, and the eventually destruction of the colony. After all, short of a planet-splitting thermonuclear device, how does one fight a planet?

Where this story line takes your intrepid players is left to you, but mutually beneficial solutions are possible, as is all-out internecine strife, and the utter destruction of the colony.

INCIDENT REPORTS

As your players investigate the various installations within the colony, they discover previously thwarted attempts to provide updates to Fleet concerning the evolving nature of the problems being experienced. These ‘incident reports’ are found on various devices (and are fully listed in *Appendix B, Incident Reports*); cached but never transmitted to Fleet (due to Joe’s machinations with the communications system). As the characters uncover these reports, Galligear’s plan for controlling outgoing information begins to unravel.

These reports can be used in several different ways. Each carries a ‘time stamp’ and clever players may organize them chronologically. The juxtaposition of the incidents should alert the players that whatever is causing the vandalism is growing more capable and effective. With a bit of coaching on your part, the characters should be able to follow the development of the entity’s awareness and abilities. As the reports conclude, and given the encounters found within the colony, the characters should conclude that the entity is attempting to communicate directly.

You may also use these reports as blueprints for encounters and incidents of your own devising should the actions of the players warrant. They provide a framework for new encounters and the reactions of Planet Kask to any unexpected actions by your players.

Finally, these reports point unequivocally to the fact that not all is well within the colony; that the problems here reach far beyond those known to Fleet. Finding a way to share this information with Fleet, and revealing the deceit of Galligear, engenders enormous gratitude from Fleet and those friends the characters have within her ranks.

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS

As this adventure begins, Fleet has requested that the unique skills of your player’s characters be applied to the situation they believe is hampering operations on planet Kask. They received word that the fungus once thought contained aboard the Planet Kask Outpost, and then driven off during the repulsion of the Dark Visitor, has again reared its ugly head within the colony on the surface of the planet below. There are three reasons that they have decided to employ the character party rather than simply sending a contingent of brutally efficient Fleet soldiers.

- 1) Fleet command suspects that something is amiss as the repeating report and request for aid being received from the surface (Joe Galligear’s false message) does not vary in its content. In short, the message appears to be automated. They suspect that the fungal infestation has gotten out of hand; that the fungus is using its abilities to manipulate data processors to send this false message. They do not wish to announce their suspicions as this would adversely affect investment, the recruitment of additional colonists, and their potential profits. It also creates a need for an ‘unofficial report’ to be later interpreted by Fleet for public viewing— a report that can be sanitized to protect profits. Unofficial reports require that non-Fleet personnel be sent as a response team.
- 2) Any damage caused to equipment or installation hardware is explained only with difficulty (and at no small cost) if said damage is caused by Fleet personnel. Damage caused during an investigation by an independent contractor sent to check on colonial personnel (a list of colonists is provided, see Appendix D) provides the arm’s-length distance greatly desired by Fleet’s Risk Management department. Fleet would appreciate as much information on listed colonists as might be garnered as well.
- 3) Fleet command knows that the character party has encountered this fungus during previous investigations on the Planet Kask Outpost (Dark Outpost) and the Dark Visitor. If anyone might be considered a ‘veteran’ in dealing with this problem, your player’s characters are found at the top of such a list.

These factors, and any others you might find germane to your own unique campaign, resulted in an invitation being sent to your player’s characters by Fleet; an invitation to a meeting on board the Fleet’s main vessel in the quadrant (Star Cruiser EF2112, or you may substitute one more suited to your ongoing campaign), also known as the Enforcer. This adventure presumes that your players have agreed to this meeting, and are awaiting the arrival of the Fleet’s representative in a comfortable lounge aboard the vessel.

A MISSION FROM FLEET

The adventure, as mentioned, starts in a comfortable lounge aboard the Fleet Cruiser Enforcer.

The lounge in which you currently reside is typical of Fleet décor. Comfortable but plastic furniture, unadorned white walls and hidden lighting surround you, while a light buffet covers the top of a table at the rear of the room. You grab a few snacks as you wonder when the meeting will begin. You don't wonder for long.

A sharply dressed Fleet Commander enters the room, conspicuously alone, and locks the door behind him.

"If you have any electronics that might be harmed by a low-frequency EMP burst," he comments nonchalantly, "I suggest you pull their power sources now." He then removes a small square device from his pocket that has five red LED indicators flashing on its surface. "Once I activate this, anything that is powered is likely to fry."

He stares at each of you individually, and then openly presses a button on the device, holding it down until all five indicators change from red to green.

"That should take care of any unauthorized listening devices; what we discuss here today is strictly confidential. Even should you refuse the mission I am about to request your assistance with, no mention of our discussion may pass beyond these doors without serious, even fatal consequences to any revealing such information. Is that understood?"

As Game Master, you should allow the players to nod or acknowledge this statement before proceeding.

"Very well," the commander begins, pulling forth a small sheaf of papers from within his uniform. He places them on a small, low table in the midst of your group.

"One week ago we received a request for scientific aid from Kask Colony. They reported that an Enigma Class transport had arrived from the Kask Support Outpost covered in a clinging greyish-black dust. It was later discovered that this dust was some form of fungal spore as the two docking bay workers became rapidly infested with some form of growth, and the bay itself, as well as the workers, had to be quarantined. We have received no further scientific reports since that time."

Pause a moment in the event that the characters wish to interrupt with questions.

"Our science boys down on the surface didn't have the equipment — they were basically set up to fight new bacteria and to identify geologic samples — they didn't have an incubator for the production of anti-fungals. We were prepared to send a team down with the needed equipment once they gave us the all clear that the fungus had been completely isolated. Instead, for the last week, all we have gotten is the standard colony status report that everything was fine and within acceptable parameters. You'll find copies of all of this in your mission briefing."

For your convenience there is a copy of the mission briefing included in this adventure (see Appendix A). If you wish, pass a copy of this to the players for their perusal.

"We found it rather strange that there was no further mention of a fungus problem, and the science station on the surface is not responding to our request for further information. It might be nothing, but it was at this point that I demanded some specialists that wouldn't be bound by Fleet regulation in their investigation. In short, it's why I asked for you. Questions?"

At this point you should have enough background information to answer nearly any question your players might ask. Remember what Fleet knows, and does not know, at this time.

Should any player ask if Fleet has done a short range surface scan of the colony since the 'incident', the commander will be both pleased and surprised.

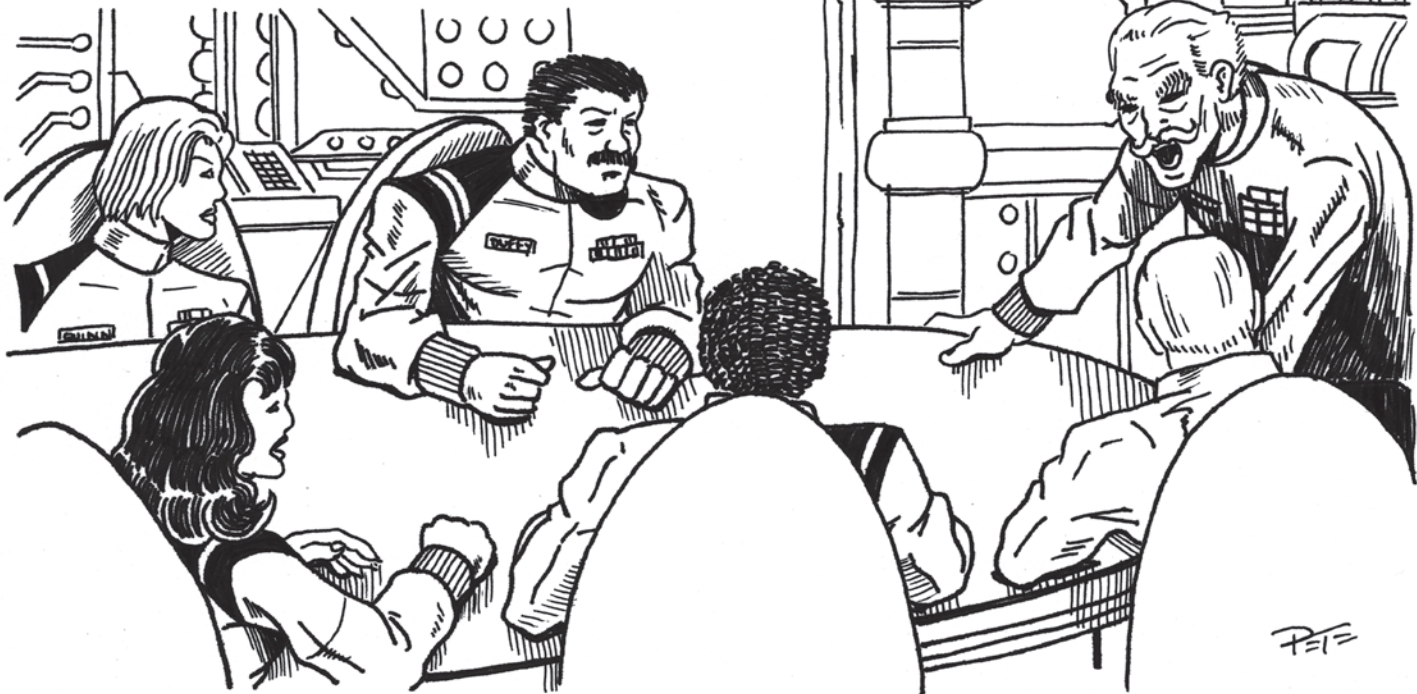
"We haven't," the commander replies, "but that's an excellent idea." The commander pulls a communicator from his pocket as you watch. "Who's OD today?" he asks impatiently. A muted voice responds in a low voice. You can't understand the reply. "Well Wally, it's your lucky day. Take a Sigma and go run a short range pass over the colony. Have the data transferred to Intelligence and tell them to bring the scans ASAP." This time you hear the reply. "That's a Roj."

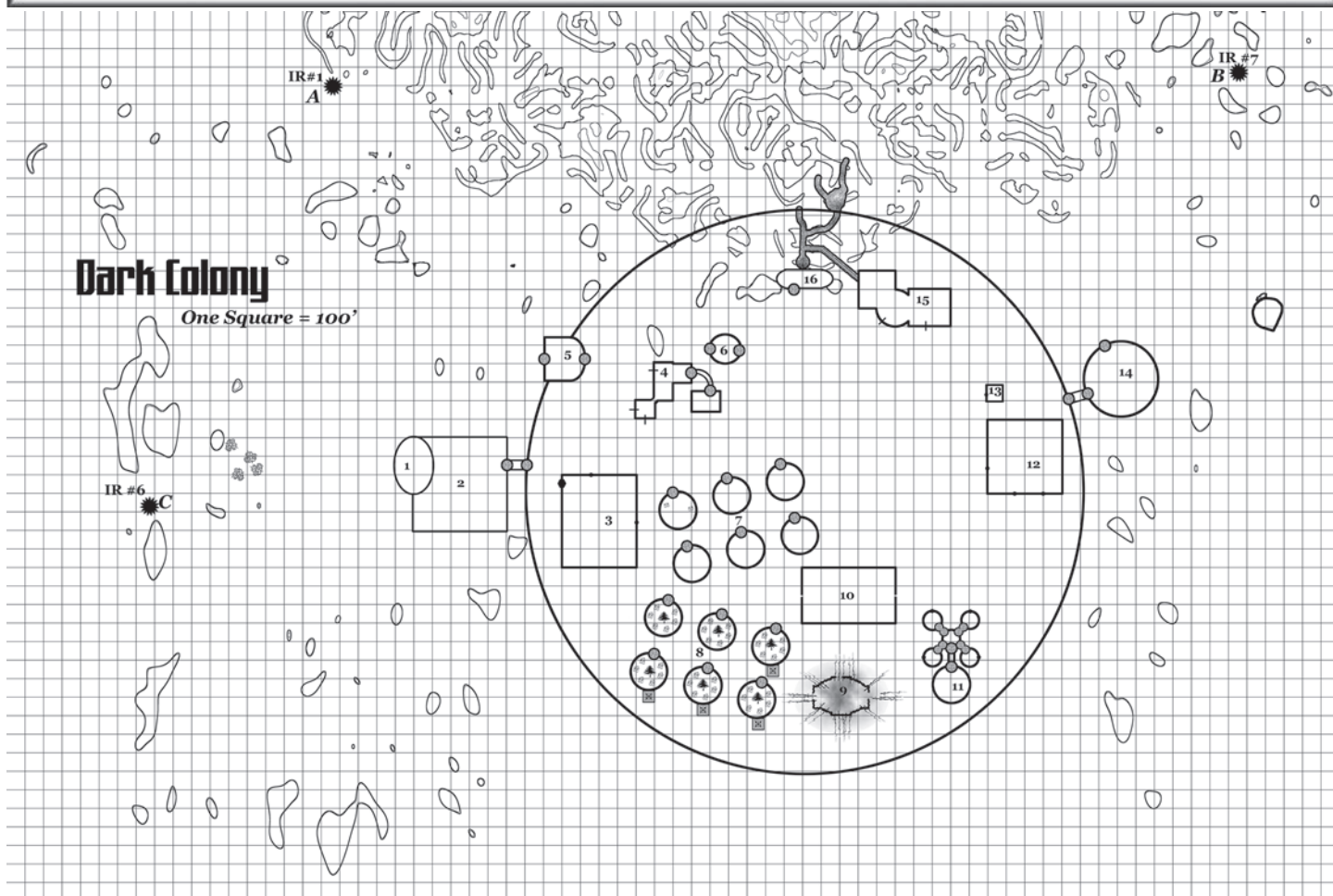
You should now provide the players with the player Map (Appendix C) if they indeed requested this close range scan. They might notice several anomalies (Incident Report Areas) on the scan, but all of this is news to the commander, and while he will likely agree with any assessment the players make as to the surface conditions shown in the scan, it only increases the urgency of the commander's appeal to the character party.

"We really need you on this one, and we'll provide any equipment you might need. There's also a sizeable reward for success, although that's unofficial. Can we count on you?"

If the players agree (and of course they will), the commander is serious, and Fleet provides any gear they might request. The details regarding this equipment are left to your judgement as they need to match your system, and your campaign. Be generous, but do not allow your players to become ridiculous in their requests. The characters are meant to save, and secure the colony below... not tear it to shreds with weaponry too powerful for a clandestine operation.

Once they are fully prepared, Fleet provides the characters with a Sigma Class Scout ship capable of landing on the uneven surface of the planet below (most transports and other Fleet ships require a level, stable surface for safe landings, hence the landing port for the colony). If they have the need, Fleet also provides a pilot for this craft, although the pilot will refuse to leave the ship after it lands, and so should have little effect on the adventure as a non-player character (NPC).





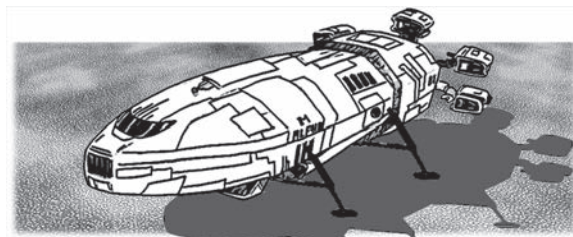
LANDING ON THE SURFACE

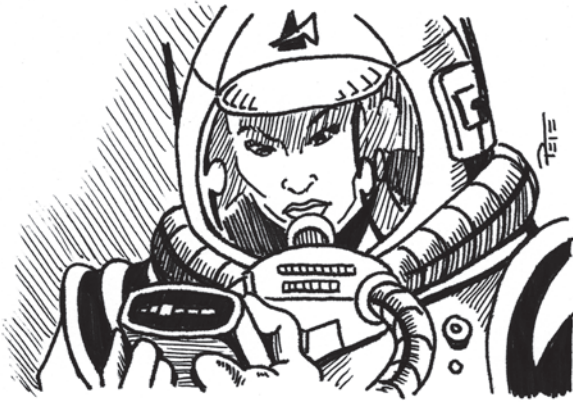
Normal day-to-day operations on Planet Kask use a docking area that is smooth and level and where the transport ships arriving and leaving are assisted by a robotic docking arms and clamps. Landing on the uneven surface of the planet is still relatively easy, but should require either a skill or statistic check from any character that might be piloting the scout ship. If the Fleet non-player character pilot is landing the scout ship, the landing is bumpy, but safe. Allow the characters to land anywhere they wish, but with the understanding that the native environment of Planet Kask is corrosive to their gear and the hull of the scout ship, and deadly to unprotected humans.

As previously mentioned, the atmosphere of Planet Kask contains a large amount of gaseous nitric acid. This damages human tissue, and gear deteriorates if exposed in an unprotected environment within days. Space or environmental suits, unless specifically designed to resist an acidic environment, lose 1% (1d4 for ease of use) of their integrity for every ten minutes of exposure to this atmosphere.

The Sigma Class scout ship must therefore leave the surface within 16 hours of its arrival or it suffers catastrophic hull failure. A standard space suit lasts only half this long (8 hours of exposure) on average before suffering a critical failure. Characters breathing this atmosphere suffer 1d8 Health damage per combat round.

Due to the increased pressure of the environment, a fully enclosed protective suit is necessary. All protective gear will be 'flat' — it will not be inflated (per se) due to the higher pressure of the atmosphere. This increased pressure otherwise produces no ill effects.





The entity is largely unaware of the presence of the characters unless they:

- Make use of electronic equipment — as the entity is able to easily sense these fields.
- Take core samples or otherwise disturb the surface of the planet in some meaningful way.
- Come into direct contact with a vein of manzakium ore.

As the ship comes to rest on the planet's surface, describe it to your players. Skip this description if they decide to land in or near the Docking Bay (Area #1) and proceed directly to the description for that encounter area (page 15).

The ship settles with a decided bump onto the surface of Planet Kask, and alarms begin to sound within your ship.

If the characters have been flown to the surface by a Fleet pilot, he describes the next bit of news. If not, change the description below to reflect that one of the characters has discovered the source of the ship's automated alarm.

"It seems there's quite a bit of Nitric Acid in the atmosphere outside gang. From what I am reading here, all electronics, even weapons, should be bagged, and both our suits and the hull of this scout are going to suffer for every minute we spend here. I don't think we can stay too long."

As previously mentioned, the ship must leave within 16 hours to avoid a catastrophic amount of damage to the hull.

ENCOUNTERS OUTSIDE THE COLONY

Two sites that were being scouted for future mines were completely disrupted by planet Kask when it first felt the pain of the mining operations. These incidents were dutifully reported (*Incident Reports* #1, #6, #7) but were never transmitted to Fleet as they were blocked by Joe Galligear. The characters might learn of these areas from these Incident reports once they are recovered, or they might also scan these areas from low orbit and discover that something is indeed amiss. Whenever and for whatever reason they decide to investigate these sites (if at all) remember that they are fully exposed to the atmosphere and its corrosive effects.

REMOTE ENCOUNTER AREA A: THE BOWL (Logged in *Incident Report* #1)

A large, 90' (27 meter) depression in the shape of an almost perfect inverted bowl may be seen here from some distance (500' or more if conditions are right. You may also decide that atmospheric conditions limit visibility to 100 or so feet.) It is surrounded by rocky ground, with frequent outcroppings. Once the area is in visual range:

The rocky ground below is interrupted by a smooth bowl-shaped area some 90' in diameter. It slopes gradually downwards toward its center, but dips only a couple of feet overall. It looks unnatural.

This is one of the first clues that all is not as it may seem in the case of Planet 10249 (Kask). If the characters investigate, and have the means, consider letting them locate a destroyed piece of equipment (see IR#1) about 600' below the planet surface. The entity felt what we might consider a vexing irritation (such as a toothache); it removed the source of the irritation in the most expeditious manner at its disposal; it opened the ground and swallowed it until it ceased to "hurt".

The VOLE had discovered a surface vein of manzakium and had begun sampling it, eliciting a response akin to poking into a sore tooth.

In terms of game-play, this incident can be crucial to the direction of any character-driven investigation. Care should be taken to let your players draw their own conclusions (it may later save you from howls of indignation).

REMOTE ENCOUNTER AREA B: SUBSIDENCE
(Logged in Incident Report #7)

This area is harder to spot as it is a vertical hole set amid a larger area of ridge-like rocky outcroppings. A rough shaft 98' (30 meters) in diameter leads straight downwards into the planet for more than 400 meters. The rock is soft in this area other than a vein of manzakium that forms a perpendicular intersect with the shaft at a depth of 93 meters.

The vein had been discovered by a remote scanning apparatus, and Chief Galligear had ordered a pilot hole (3-meter sample bore) drilled using automated equipment. A 10-meter protective dome (pressurized and shielded from the outer atmosphere) was erected to protect the robotic drill, which was then programmed to dig to a depth of 100 meters to locate and verify the valuable vein. Colonists arriving to check on the equipment as the completion time of the project drew near found only the rough shaft previously described. No sign of the robotic drill, or even the protective dome, were found.

Given the soft rock of the surrounding substrate, the disappearance of the sampling drill and dome were originally thought to be the result of subsidence in the substrata (a sinkhole). Given the rocky surroundings, the shaft is hidden until an observer comes to within 40' of its location.

Up ahead, nestled between two short 30'-35' rocky cliffs, the black opening of a fair-sized cave mouth can just be discerned amid the shadows. From this distance, it appears to lead downwards into the planet.

This response was triggered 6 hours after the incident described in Encounter A. The entity is learning. This particular set of machinery was especially "painful" and triggered a drastic, but more controlled, response. The narrower shaft and more natural collapse of the substrata here leave less indication that something unnatural occurred. In addition, there is no residual EMF of any significance in this area.

Characters might descend via rope or other climbing gear to the bottom of the shaft where the ruined robotic drill and shards of the protective dome lie. With any luck, the players should see the connection between the mining/extraction activities and the Mk127 deposits.

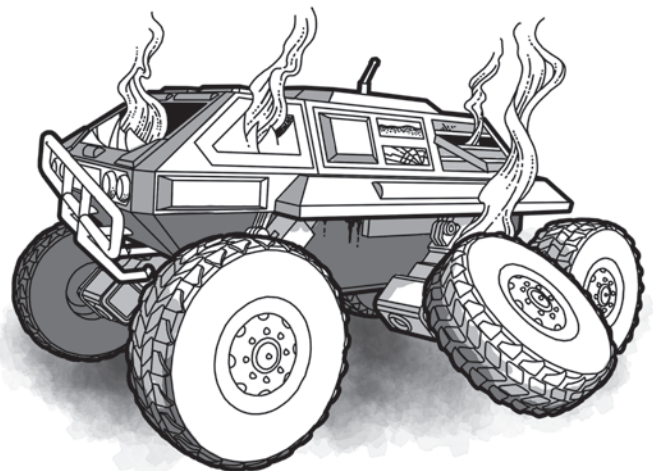
REMOTE ENCOUNTER AREA C: SCORCHED
(Logged in Incident Report #6)

This event is much more recent, but provides further indications of the increasing developmental skills and overall awareness of the Kask entity. A new type of Yellow Fungus (mutated to endure the acidic atmosphere of the planet) had colonized an exposed Manzakium node at this location, and the planet reacted to it at the same time that it was being analyzed by a team of colonial scientists. Kask destroyed the fungal colony by accumulating (from various spots beneath its outer crust) and then igniting (via electrical discharge) pockets of explosive methane gas. The transport used by the scientists was inadvertently caught in the conflagration and destroyed.

A section of the surface some 60' ahead of you is blackened, perhaps burnt, almost as though an intense fire had scorched the area. The blackened and burnt-out hull of an MP6-ATV transport (statistics on page #33) rests on its corroded frame at the edge of this area.

If any of the characters have encountered the fungus in any other part of the colony before exploring this area, they are likely (at your discretion) carrying fungal spores. If these spores make contact with the exposed manzakium node present here, the planet will react by once again creating gas fumaroles to attack the hated fungus. How devastating that attack might be I leave to you.

Characters not causing a reaction with the planet that scan this area easily discover the presence of the manzakium node here.

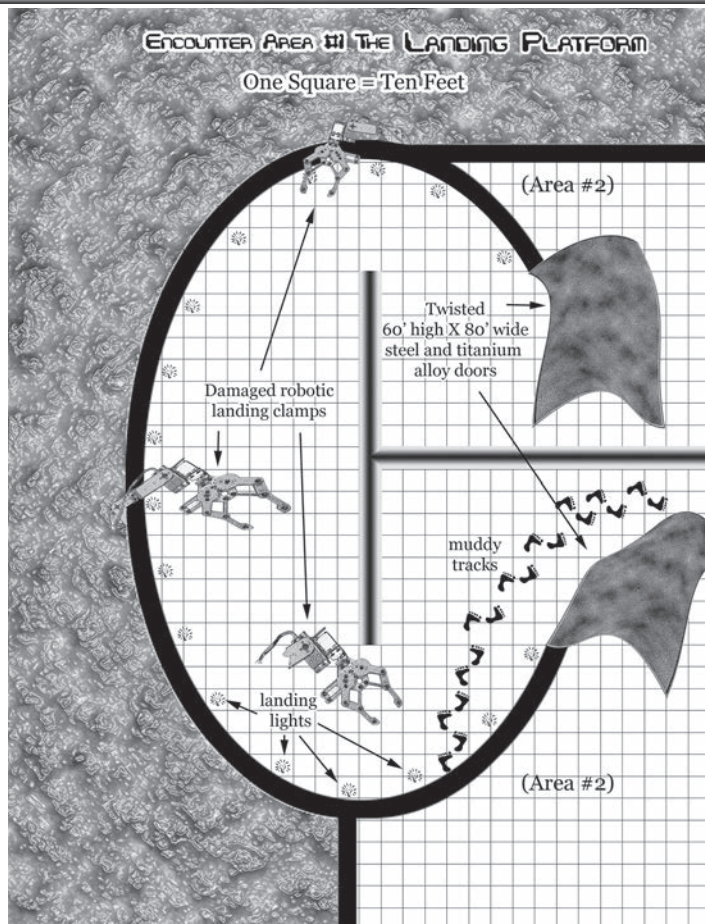
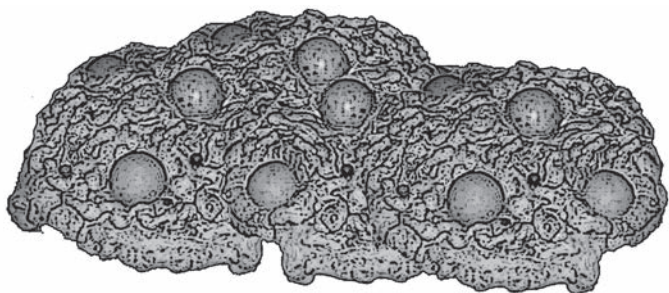


ENCOUNTERS WITHIN THE COLONY

The colony is covered by a fluorinated ethylene propylene dome which both shields the colony from the nitric-acid rich atmosphere of the planet and allows for a slight reduction in air pressure. Characters investigating those areas that are exposed to the atmosphere, however, suffer damage to themselves and/or their equipment.

The encounter areas described hereafter are numbered on the map, with each number corresponding to a description here. Other areas within the dome are generally uninhabited, but a check for a random encounter should be made for each 100' explored within the dome (one square on the big map). An encounter is indicated if 19-20 is rolled on a d20, or a 0(10) on a d10. If an encounter is indicated, roll 2d6 and consult the following chart; statistics are provided in Appendix F: The Bestiary.

Die Roll Result	Creature Encountered
2-3	Cabbage Fungus
4	Magic Mushrooms
5	Pod Fungus
6	Drop Fungus/Green Mold
7	Black Fungus
8	Zap Fungus
9	Zoombee
10	Medium Spongoid
11-12	Yellow Fungus



ENCOUNTER AREA #1: THE LANDING PLATFORM

Characters approaching this area from any distance closer than 100 yards immediately note that something is amiss.

The smooth plastic of the protective colony dome towers to near 120' in height to your right as you approach the space dock, still some distance ahead. Even at this range, you can tell that something is wrong: the docking arms hang askew, as though wrenched by some titanic force, and the haze of the atmosphere seems to hide a portion of the platform.

Observant (or lucky) characters will note that this obscurity is due to the space dock lights not functioning. These beacons are always lit, and it portends a serious problem that they add no illumination to the haze of the atmosphere. Once the characters approach the base of the space dock, continue.

The platform's foundation now stands before you; 8' of solid foundation that rises to the level surface above. It looks like you'll have to climb.

TIM KASK, JAMES M. WARD AND CHRISTOPHER CLARK – DARK COLONY

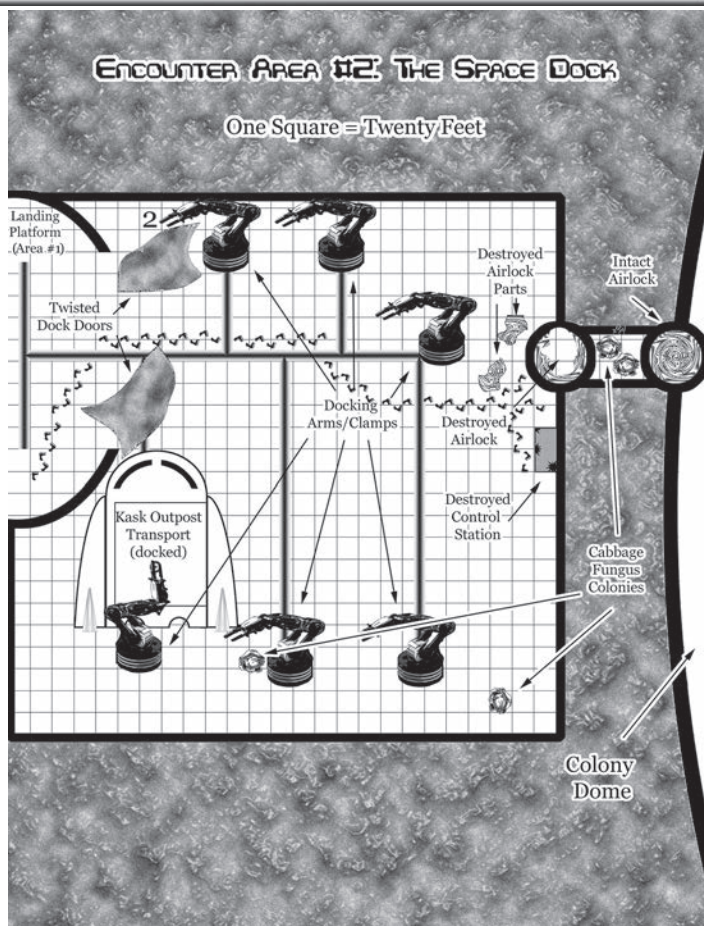
The climb is an easy one, and due to the variations of the planet's surface, portions of the foundation are only 4' from the ground in the event that shorter characters exploring the base have trouble with the 8' height. Once the characters arrive on the platform, the full nature of the catastrophe is apparent.

The landing platform is a mess. Pieces of the landing clamps and their robotic arms lie strewn about, and muddy footprints lead to the two large steel and titanium alloy doors that used to shield the space dock shelter area. These doors lie within the dock itself, twisted from their hinges by unimaginable forces. The landing lights that dot the periphery of the landing platform are unlit – either the power is out, or the system, made not to fail, has somehow failed, and the space dock beyond is shrouded in darkness.

If any of the characters have tracking ability or like skill, and check carefully, add:

The muddy footprints appear to be from a number of creatures, humanoid perhaps, but unless the colonists have taken to walking barefoot in a nitric-acid environment, definitely not human.

There is nothing else of import on the landing platform.



ENCOUNTER AREA #12: THE SPACE DOCK AND PASSAGE TO THE COLONY DOME

The space dock is a parking area for vessels arriving on the planet. Only minor repairs are done here, and the ships are parked by large robotic arms and a conveyor track that is set into the floor. To protect the parked craft, the dock area is completely enclosed, although it is not pressurized nor air locked. Given the pressure of Planet Kask, characters might normally traverse this area without benefit of a space suit or other controlled environment. While not strictly controlled, the air within the dock is also filtered, and supplemented by 'dome' air that is cycled through the air locks, and so the presence of nitric acid within is normally minimal. Given the low oxygen content of the atmosphere, however, supplemental oxygen or a breathing mask/filter is recommended in this area, although a full environmental suit is not required. Now that the dock doors have been destroyed, characters exposing themselves to the atmosphere here suffer as in the same fashion as any other unshielded area of the planetary surface.

Currently, the space dock is dark, although like the landing platform, it is meant to be well lit at all times. The creatures that destroyed the two dock doors also destroyed the automated control station here, and the multitudinous electrical short circuits caused by this damage have created a complete failure of power. Only one ship remains within the dock: the transport ship that arrived from the Kask Orbital Station covered in black fungus spores. It has been disinfected, and remains untouched in the far southwest (lower left) corner of the space dock. There was not time to fully disinfect the space dock, however, as the characters are about to discover.

Given the risk of unknown pathogens, or even potentially hostile macro (but difficult to discern) life forms, the space dock is completely locked down and disinfected every ten hours. This process had yet to be completed when the planetary entity, upset by the radiation being generated in the connecting passage (which has its own disinfecting equipment), launched an attack against what it perceived to be an irritant to its 'skin'.

The attack was carried out by bio-genetically controlled constructs formed from the Manzakium mud expelled in tailings piles by the mining operation. Although of low-level concentration, this mud carries enough Manzakium particles that the entity is able to form and control it much as you or I would control our own hands.

The manzakium present in the drive of the transport, then still active as the ship cooled down, inadvertently transmitted a horrific and unintelligible signal to the planet, not unlike the mindless screaming of a terrified child. The constructs formed and attacked in the brief minutes it required for the space dock porter to disinfect and park the transport craft.

Although they vary in size dependent upon the needs of the Planet Kask entity, the six constructs sent to halt the mind-numbing (from Kask's point of view) irritation were of great size (8'+ tall) and each weighed several tons. They threw themselves in concert against the dock doors until they eventually deformed and collapsed under the assault.

The constructs then proceeded to attack anything emitting an electro-magnetic signature, destroying the docking arms and clamps, and then the data processor unit that managed the space dock power, docking assistance, and sterilization procedures. This, however, was insufficient to halt the irritation.

The corridor that connects the space dock to the colony dome is made entirely of fluorinated ethylene propylene which suffers no ill effect from the presence of the nitric acid-rich environment outside. It has a level 20'-wide floor, and towers overhead to nearly 30' in a hemispherical shape. The airlocks at either end measure 20' in width, and 30' in depth and height. Within the corridor, high intensity ultra-violet lamps provided a final barrier to viral and microbial penetration of the colony dome. Unfortunately, these same lamps generate a significant electro-magnetic field; an additional 'itch' felt by the Planet Kask Entity.

The constructs destroyed the lights within the Docking Bay connecting corridor and then their mission accomplished, disintegrated into a fine powder that now covers the floor of this passage. Unfortunately, the lack of sterilization equipment allowed several small fungal spores to grow into new colonies which cover the floor of this passage as well. They grow in profusion throughout the corridor and in several patches within the docking bay as well, but are unable to survive in those areas where the nitric acid from the atmosphere outside has precipitated through tiny fractures in both the connecting corridor, and the docking bay.

As the characters view the docking bay from the landing platform, they see:

Blackness lies beyond the twisted remains of the Space Dock doors as the dim light from the Landing Platform extends for perhaps 20' in a semicircle into the interior. Other than the twisted remains of the great dock doors, the area appears empty. It's unfortunate that the lights that normally illuminate the interior of a standard Space Dock are evidently absent here.

If the characters are exploring with external light sources, add:

Your footsteps echo as you enter the Docking Bay. Your lights play along the walls and ceiling, washing over perfectly preserved lighting fixtures, and robotic docking arms that stand like silent sentinels. A Fleet Transport stands in one of the docking bays, its hull gleaming under your lights as though it had just been polished. All is as it should be other than the huge, twisted doors that lie on the floor here, the lack of light, and a trail of muddy prints that leads deeper into the darkness.

If the characters approach either of the two Cabbage Fungus patches add the description below. If they head for the ruined airlock at the far end of the Docking Bay, skip this description until they encounter the fungus.

Ahead you see what appear to be cabbages growing from the smooth epoxy resin of the floor. The central heads of these cabbages are spherical and about 1' in diameter, while the outer leaves lie almost flat upon the floor and extend for 2'-3' in all directions.

There is but a single Cabbage Fungi colony in each of the two locations indicated by map icons within the Docking Bay.

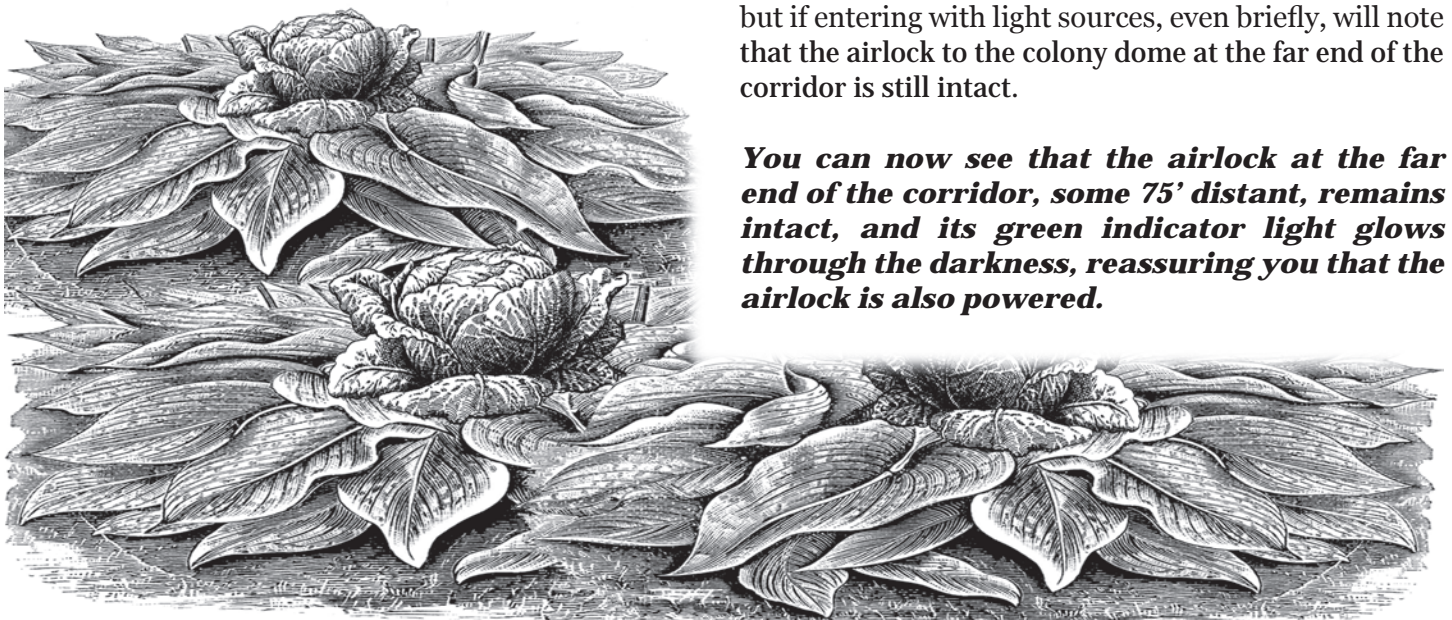
As the characters approach the destroyed control center, add:

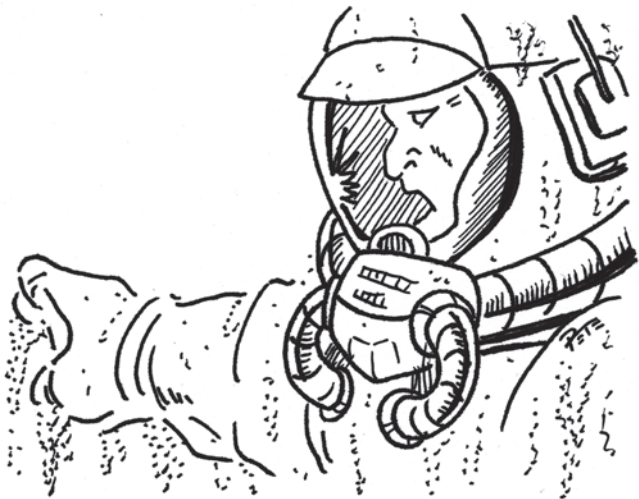
The reason for the power failure is now obvious: the control center for the assistant robotic arms and docking clamps, the lights, in fact all functions of the entire Docking Bay, lies in ruins before you. The airlock leading to the decontamination corridor, and the colony dome beyond, is also smashed, and portions of its iris hatch lie twisted upon the floor. Beyond the airlock you can make out some of the decontamination passage as some dim light penetrates its interior. The light, however, comes not from the high-intensity ultraviolet lamps used for sterilization but instead seems to be infiltrating from the outside environment through cracks in the outer corridor walls. The floor within the corridor is covered in mud, and some sort of strange plant growth that looks much like a cabbage patch. The patch grows in profusion for as far as you can currently see.

Characters scrutinizing the corridor from the Docking Bay side of the destroyed airlock see no further than 10' into its interior. Those entering are immediately attacked by three Cabbage Fungi (see below). A total of 23 Cabbage Fungi inhabit the corridor should the characters become determined to 'fight their way through'.

Characters within the corridor also suffer from exposure to the atmosphere (as previously outlined) but if entering with light sources, even briefly, will note that the airlock to the colony dome at the far end of the corridor is still intact.

You can now see that the airlock at the far end of the corridor, some 75' distant, remains intact, and its green indicator light glows through the darkness, reassuring you that the airlock is also powered.





Cabbage Fungus (3 or more)

Appearance: This strain is made of 4' long and 3' wide, black leaves of fungi, with a central mass that looks like nothing so much as a head of cabbage. The mass rests on the floor of the chamber, completely covering the area.

Demeanor: This alien fungus is not sentient, but has adapted to the high nitric acid environment (and is therefore highly resistant to acid-based attacks, and the atmosphere). Characters contacting through touch or tread the leaves of these fungi cause them to snap upwards at the characters; leaving chunks of the fungi sticking to their suits, equipment, or skin. Each fungus colony has 6 of these leaves (and therefore gets six attacks).

Power: 15% (3)

Health: 8 per leaf

Init: 10% (2)

Damage: Contact with this fungus causes a slow decomposition of all nitrogen based compounds. Rubber suit seals (and other rubber equipment) suffer 1 point of damage per turn, while exposed flesh contracts the fungus as a disease causing 1d6 per turn.

Special: This fungus turns normal rubberized compounds (both rubber and artificial rubber-like compounds) to powder over a period of minutes. Infections caused by direct exposure are cured by the application of medical cures (like chemotherapy), or by the application of flame. Cabbage Fungus is immune to cold, acid, and physical attacks, but incurs double damage from fire and caustic (base) attacks. Environmental gear that has no rubber or nitrogen compounds in its makeup suffers no damage, but may transport the damaging spores of this fungus to other locations if not (eventually) sterilized.

Defense: 15% (3)

Move: 0

Should the characters attempt to repair any of the damaged equipment in the Docking Bay, many of them can be mended, with varying degrees of difficulty. Considering that 50% is an 'average' repair, repair to other damaged systems is possible with the bonuses/penalties listed below:

Docking Bay Doors: irreparable — insufficient materials available

Landing Platform Lights: 40%

Docking Bay Lights: 30%

Robotic Docking Arms/Clamps on the Landing Platform: 50% (2 of 3 may be repaired by scavenging parts from the third)

Docking Bay Control Center: 75% — repair of this unit allows the retrieval, if the characters check message logs, of Incident Report #5 (see Appendix B, Incident Reports)

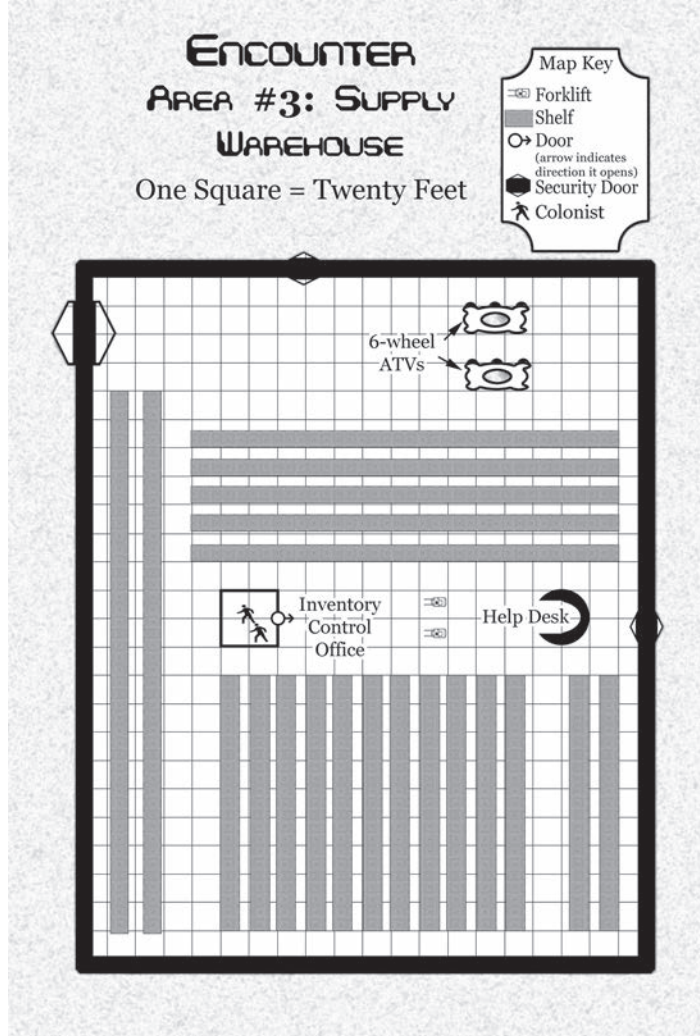
Airlock to Decontamination Corridor: 90% — if this airlock and the corridor are repaired, the corridor can be re- and de-pressurized (for various reasons)

Decontamination Corridor leaks: 75%

High Intensity Ultraviolet Decontamination Generators: 65% — reactivation of this unit kills all fungal growth within the corridor (including any present on characters and equipment) within 30 seconds, but the system shorts out within 5 minutes if the Decontamination Corridors remain unrepaired as nitric acid saturates the freshly repaired equipment.

The transport ship is empty, but has full fuel tanks. The functioning robotic arms/clamps within the Docking Bay may move the twisted doors out of the way, and the transport to the Landing Platform for launch if the Docking Bay Control center is repaired and functional, or if another means is found to 'hack' into the controls for these robotic arms. The transport may not be flown out of the Docking Bay (it does not maneuver that well in planetary gravity). It has also been exposed to the atmosphere for the last 14 hours, and while somewhat shielded by the remains of the Docking Bay, its hull is already compromised, and although it flies, it cannot be pressurized, and making any docking attempt using an airlock is impossible with this craft.

The cargo bay of the transport ship is currently empty.



ENCOUNTER AREA #3: SUPPLY WAREHOUSE

All supplies provided by Fleet are packaged for use in space; in a zero atmosphere and zero gravity environment. As such this building is large, of sturdy construction, and protected by security doors, but is not air-locked.

A large 400' x 500' building towers to some 30' in height before you. Its straight corrugated metal walls have no windows, and its heavy steel door is accompanied by a key-pad lock indicating that this building requires security clearance at some level for entry. A large sign above the door reads, 'Supply'.

There are three means of ingress to this building: two sliding steel doors measuring 10' high and 5' wide, and a large steel dock door that spans 45' in width and is 22' in height.

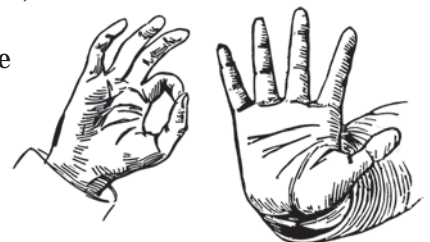
All are secured by security locks that must either have the proper code input (known to Jim Tallenger in Area #6, available from the Data Core in Area #6F and Hal Snyder located within this very building) or be hacked by a character with appropriate skills. The doors are 2"-thick steel that will withstand 250 points of impact or heat damage (suffering no ill effects from other forms of damage) before deforming to the extent that they open. If the characters approach to either attempt a hack, or to assault the doors physically, add:

You hear the sound of a small servo-motor activating. Glancing upwards you see a small box-like shape with a red indicator light. It seems your party of stalwarts is on camera! As you ponder the nature of who, or what, might be observing your endeavors, a concealed speaker beneath the camera barks to life.

"We have the doors wired, and weapons trained upon you. Identify yourselves or we open fire. If you're here for supplies, we're fresh out, so just move along."

A pair of humans has sought refuge within the security of the Supply Warehouse. Several of their friends have sought entry while under the influence of the fungus, while still others have, under the influence of the Planet Kask Entity, have cut the power to the building. The air within the dome, due to the shutdown of the Atmospheric Regeneration Station, has become increasingly foul, and these two, Hal and Nora, are in no mood to trust unknown visitors. They still await rescue, but have abandoned hope that such might be forthcoming. They have begun to formulate plans of their own to make a break for the Docking Bay in hopes that a ship there might be capable of reaching orbit using automatic pilot (as neither of them has any piloting skills). They have no knowledge of the conditions in the Docking Bay or Landing Platform.

It is possible to convince these two colonists to allow the characters to enter, but is extremely difficult (-30% to any normal negotiation or charisma-based skill). If your players are clever, however, and come up with an innovative idea, grant them a commensurate bonus as you see fit.



ALERT In the Supply Warehouse with Nora and Hal ALERT

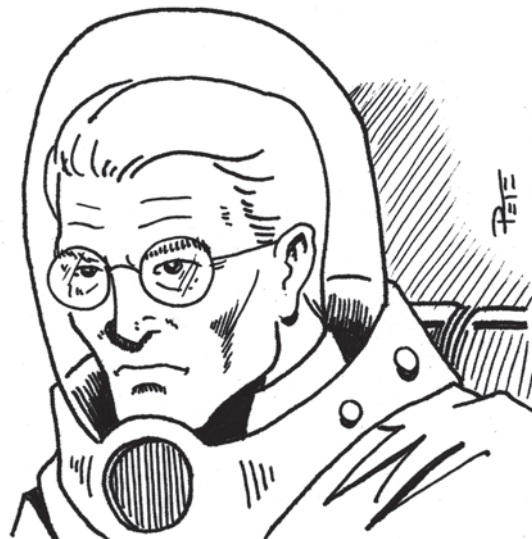
If the players identify themselves as agents of Fleet, and show credentials (they should have none as this is meant to be a clandestine mission), the chances of successfully convincing Hal Snyder to open the door rise from -30% to +25%. Word will reach Fleet that credentials were shown, and this reflects badly upon the characters at mission's end with their employers at Fleet. How that might affect their characters in the future is left to your discretion, but it should not be a cost-free scenario.

Nora is convinced that Fleet will attempt to hide this under the rug by sending a death squad of non-uniformed Fleet personnel to kill all of the colonists. She only accepts the characters as rescuers if they have other rescued colonists with them when they arrive at the Supply Warehouse.

Once the characters open the door and step inside, the two colonists greet them with plasma rifles, and ask them to remove all of their gear as the door closes behind them.

To your surprise the door opens to reveal two colonists armed with plasma rifles, and a dimly lit warehouse filled to the bursting with shelves full of equipment. Two six-wheeled ATVs are parked at the far end of an open area that extends 400' in front of you, and that measures 100' in width. "Come in and remove your gear," the female of the pair demands, "if you want to see tomorrow."

The air in the warehouse is a bit stale, but palatable, and causes no damage to characters removing self-contained environmental suits. At this point, the characters must decide whether to combat the colonists, or attempt to convince them that theirs is a rescue mission; that they are here to save the colony. If the characters indeed remove all of their gear, they have a standard chance (using charisma-based abilities or statistical checks) of convincing Nora and Hal that they are friendly. If they remove their gear but fail to convince the pair, Hal ties the characters up while Nora covers them with her plasma rifle. Nora can only be convinced with great difficulty (-50% to any standard check using a charisma or diplomatic skill) unless the characters have with them other colonists they have rescued.



Hal Snyder (Computer Engineer Colonist)

Appearance: Hal is a 5'10" male human in his late 40s, and weighs 170 pounds. He has a slim physique but is in decent shape for his age, and is capable of standard feats of strength. Hal is wearing an emergency pressure suit designed for use with spacecraft that withstands a mere 20 points of damage (of any kind) before failing. He wears wire-frame glasses.

Demeanor: Hal is a bit shaken by the entire ordeal with the fungus, and had received several reports that there were unexplained problems with the mining operation as well, although he had no time to investigate those reports further before the various fungus infestations began cropping up around the colony dome. He is worried that Nora has 'lost it', that she has become paranoid, and will do his best to signal the characters that they should use caution in speaking and reacting to her if he feels that at any time they might antagonize her. Hal only fires his plasma rifle as a last resort, and would prefer to believe that the characters have arrived to help.

Power: 15% (3)

Defense: 10% (s) (0% if Hal' suit takes 20 points or more damage)

Health: 21

Move: 12

Init: 0

Damage: Plasma Rifle 4d20 Heat damage + 4d20 Electrical damage and 2d20 Impact (explosive) damage. The energy from this rifle always hits something, and it will easily blow a basketball-sized hole through a shelf of supplies, or the warehouse wall, if Hal misses.

Other: Hal is skilled at both Hacking Computers (55% chance for success) and Repairing all types of Electronic Devices (35%)

Nora Underwood (Psychologist)

Appearance: Nora is a physically fit and attractive female human in her early 40s that stands 5'10" tall and weighs 150 pounds. She is both lithe and strong, and wears a heavy duty Hazmat Suit that will withstand 75 points of chemical (acid or base) damage and 35 points of any other physical damage. Her long black hair is tied back in a ponytail to keep it out of her way.

Demeanor: Nora has been pushed to the edge of her sanity by the fungal infestation, as well as the somewhat-less-than-helpful reaction of some of her fellow colonists (particularly Joe Galligear — "I know that weasel has gone to ground somewhere!"), and suspects that the characters might be a death squad made to ensure that no witnesses survive the crisis at the Kask Colony. Any ideas or suggestions that do not allow her to 'call the shots' (place her in charge) are met with anger and often violence. If the characters actually yell at her more than once, refuse to follow her plans, or fail in their attempts at diplomacy, she attacks.

Power: 10% (2)

Defense: 2% (5) (0% if Nora's suit takes more than 75 points of chemical (acid or base) damage or more than 35 points of any other physical damage.

Health: 17

Move: 14

Init: 5% (+1)

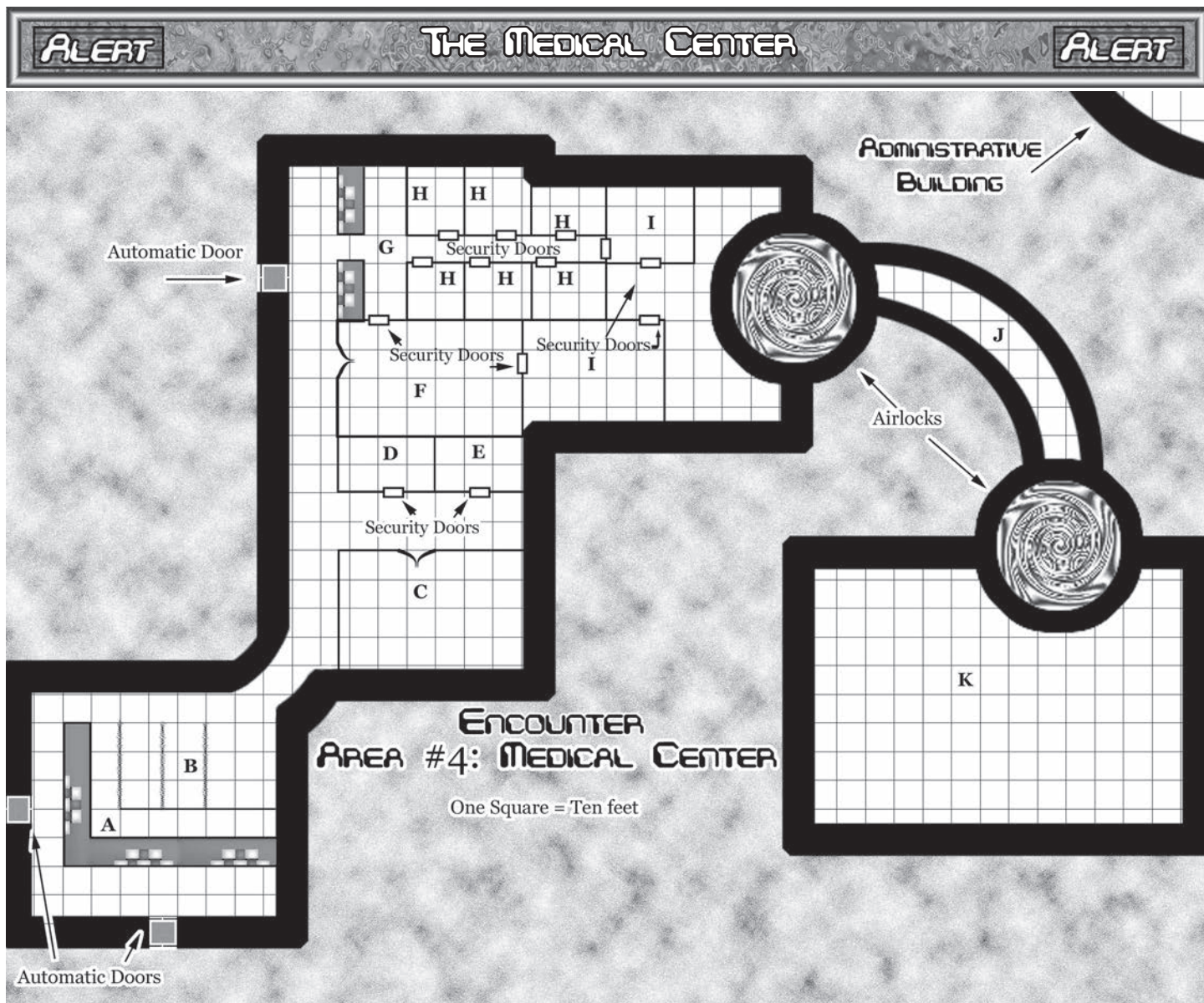
Damage: Plasma Rifle 4d20 Heat damage + 4d20 Electrical damage and 2d20 Impact (explosive) damage. The energy from this rifle always hits something, and it will easily blow a basketball-sized hole through a shelf of supplies, or the warehouse wall, if Nora misses.

Other: Due to her Psychology background, Nora is able to detect lies 90% of the time.

If Nora is drugged or otherwise incapacitated (but not killed), Hal is relieved, and works with the party in any fashion they prefer. He will not surrender his plasma rifle to the party, but he allows them to use Nora's. Further, (if asked) Hal can access some of his files from the Inventory Control Office computers, including Incident Report #2. He can also hack the Inventory Requisitions which provide him access to Incident Report #1 as there is an order for an additional VOLE unit. Finally (although it will take some convincing), if the characters convince Hal to hack into Nora's files, they discover an email to PHD Phyllis Liteman (colony psychologist) asking for her professional opinion on a matter of behavior. Attached to that email is Incident Report#9.

The warehouse is filled with finished and useful equipment suitable for use by the miners and colonists. Although no military gear or weapons are available, any other gear you might deem fit for use by the colony may be found here, as well as extra oxygen canisters, batteries, and sundry supplies. If the characters are able to gain access to the interior, they can retrieve highly useful equipment from this area.





—ENCOUNTER AREA #4: MEDICAL CENTER

The Kask Colony Medical center is a combined trauma center, doctor's office, and hospital recovery center for the colonists. It is staffed by two doctors (both with surgical skills), three nurses and an administrative assistant, and has private rooms for up to 6 patients at any given time (roughly 8% of colony population). It has an emergency trauma unit, a state-of-the-art surgical unit, three examination rooms, and a two treatment rooms/surgeries with full quarantine capability. In the event of a pathogenic outbreak, it also has a complete quarantine ward secured by airlocks and the latest anti-bacterial and viral technologies. The Medical Center is a fully-stocked, professional facility that should be able to handle nearly any medical issue a new colony might develop. Nearly...

When the fungus-infected workers were originally brought here from the Space Dock (the workers having come into contact with the fungus on the hull of the transport vessel), they were exposed to the air and the interior of the Medical Center. Although they were sent immediately to one of the sealed quarantine treatment stations (labelled *I* on the map), and their path through the center thoroughly disinfected, the pervasive fungal spores found several safe havens and rapidly began to assault the center and its personnel. The receptionist in Area #4G, and the nurse that later destroyed the operating theater at Area #4C were infested, before the workers from the Space Dock were stabilized and sequestered in the quarantine recovery building (labelled *K* on the map).

Doctor Ashley Sonian was the doctor on duty at the time.

Doctor Ashley prepared several cultures of the fungus and had them sealed and sent to the Science Lab (Area #11 on the full scale Colony map). She and her prep nurse, Wendy Swanson, administered broad-spectrum anti-fungal medications to the two men, bathed them in an anti-fungal ointment (a lanolin-base mixture) and had them moved to the Quarantine Care facility (labeled *K* on the map). They were running computer growth simulations in the Quarantine Treatment Unit (southern *I*) when the first of the outbreaks occurred.

Doctor Sonian and Wendy have always been meticulous concerning infection protocols, and so they were in 'glove suits' at the time of the outbreaks in the hospital. She and Nurse Wendy Swanson barricaded themselves in the southern Quarantine Treatment Unit (the southern *I* on the map). The computers in this unit still function, and Ashley and Wendy have done their best to monitor and care for, robotically, Sam Weich, Eran Chenault and Aisel Farnor, the space dock workers first infested by the fungus. They have also been doing their best to contact Fleet, but long-range communications have been down for the entire time. Attempts to contact others within the Medical Center have also failed, although the system seems to work faultlessly — there simply is no answer from any other portion of the facility.

As the party approaches this group of buildings:

A group of 20' tall buildings lies 60' ahead, and you can just make out the sign over the door that is no longer lighted: Medical Center. Its automated sliding door must have hit an obstacle as it stands open. You see no obstruction, but the black impulse-switch-pad in front of the door is intact, and if anything appears both clean and in good order.

The Medical Center was one of the first installations to be attacked by the fungus, and so none of the more evolved spores were deposited here. The black switch-pad appears clean because it is covered (and in fact has been extended to a full 10' square) in a Black Fungus Colony. This colony only presents a threat to the characters if it is touched. If it is eliminated by fire or chemical anti-fungal agents, the characters may freely enter as the door is stuck in the open position, and the power is out.

Black Fungus

Appearance: Black Fungus appears as a shapeless black furry mass covering a large area (based on the size of the fungus — from 1' square to 100 square meters).

Demeanor: This alien fungus has no sentience and responds only to base stimuli.

Power: 5% (1)

Defense: 0% (see Special)

Health: 24

Move: n/a

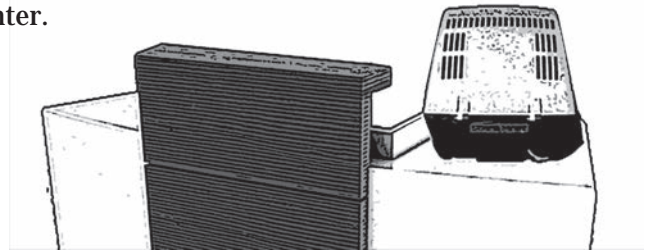
Init: 0

Damage: special

Special: when touched, Black Fungus affixes itself to any non-ceramic surface. If that surface contains nitrogen or oxygen compounds (like human skin, space-suit seals, or any other organic material) the fungus begins growing into the material. In the first hour this growth and decomposition only inflicts 5 Health points of damage, but this damage doubles every 15 minutes if the fungi are not carefully cleaned off. Black Fungus is susceptible only to heat damage and caustic (base) chemical anti-fungal agents. Even in death, Black Fungus acts as an amplifier and line repeater for chemical (smell-based) signals.

One of these colonies has grown to cover the switch-pad in front of all three automatic doors.

Details pertinent to the rest of the facility are here provided so that you may add said detail to your descriptions as the players investigate the Medical Center.



Area #4A: Reception

This area is deserted other than six computer terminals that show no signs of damage and would likely function if the area had power.

This dark area must be the reception area for walk-in patients. Several dark computer screens sit idle atop a long L-shaped counter which has an opening at its far north-western end. The floor just inside the door is covered in dust that gradually recedes with the distance. A second door, also stuck in the open position, beckons from the other end of the counter.

Area #4B: Examining Rooms

Each of these rooms contains an examination bed/gurney, and a tray containing a stethoscope, a bio-life scanner (checks for microbes), a sphygmomanometer, an infra-red ear thermometer, and a clipboard and pen. All are deserted.

This appears to be a standard doctor's examination station. A small cart contains a tray with various medical instruments, while a gurney/bed stands in the center of the room. A small metal stool stands next to the cart.



Area #4C: Standard Operating Theater

This operating theater became a scene of unmitigated horror when the first of the nurses (Kawanee Zalar), wearing only scrubs, and infected when helping to bring in the Docking Bay workers, succumbed to the fungal spores during an operation on an injured miner some six hours after the transport landed at the colony. She became a Fungus Zombie, killed the other attending nurse (Loyd Metcliff) and doctor (Phyllis Liteman), and then proceeded to infest their corpses with spores. The now deceased Doctor Phyllis Liteman managed to raise the alarm before expiring, which allowed Nurse Swanson and Doctor to secure the doors to the southern Quarantine Treatment Unit. As the characters enter this area they find that both deceased nurses, and the deceased doctor (Phyllis Liteman), are still here in the Operating Theater.

The doors push open easily revealing a scene of pure horror. Blood spatters the floor and the operating table, and a portion of what must have once been a colonist lies upon the table, covered in black ropes of something resembling Spanish Moss. You have little time to reflect on this, however, as three zombie-like creatures with tentacles for heads move to attack!

Fungus Zombie (3)

Appearance: This creature appears to be a human upon which black Spanish moss grows in profusion. In particular the heads of these beings retain almost no human characteristics but instead appear to be comprised of tentacle-like strands of lichen or fungus.

Demeanor: These creatures are fully intelligent and have cultivated the black fungus colony currently inhabiting the operating table in order to better communicate.

Power: 30%

Defense: 15%

Health: 35

Move: 7

Init: +10% (+2)

Damage: tentacle (X3 each) 1d6 +1 and chance of infection (25%)

Special: Energy weapons do not damage these creatures. If wounded, it exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe in a 20-foot area around it. Anyone infected by the spores of the fungi gradually becomes a new colony of fungi in 6 hours to 3 days. The only remedy is to cut the infected flesh from the victim, or to douse the victim in caustic fluid (which harms the fungus for 4-24 points of damage).

And on the operating table:

Black Fungus

Appearance: Black Fungus appears as a shapeless black furry mass covering a large area (based on the size of the fungus – from 1' square to 100 square meters).

Demeanor: This alien fungus has no sentience and responds only to base stimuli.

Power: 5% (1)

Defense: 0% (see Special)

Health: 24

Move: n/a

Init: 0

Damage: special

Special: when touched, Black Fungus affixes itself to any non-ceramic surface. If that surface contains nitrogen or oxygen compounds (like human skin, space-suit seals, or any other organic material) the fungus begins growing into the material. In the first hour this growth and decomposition only inflicts 5 Health points of damage, but this damage doubles every 15 minutes if the fungi are not carefully cleaned off. Black Fungus is susceptible only to heat damage and caustic (base) chemical anti-fungal agents. Even in death, Black Fungus acts as an amplifier and line repeater for chemical (smell-based) signals.

The doctor has a keycard attached to her lab coat which allows access through all of the security doors in the Medical Center. It must be searched for, and is covered in fungus (although it is hopeful simply debris by the time the card is unearthed). Although intelligent, the fungus zombies had no idea that the card might be used as a door key.

Area #4D: Doctor's Shared Office

This room has been locked during the crisis, and so is completely untouched. The lock to this door is electronic but may be picked/hacked (normal chance) by any character with appropriate skills. A nameplate on the door reads, "Doctor Sonian" and below that "Doctor Liteman". Once it opens:

The dark room beyond the locked door contains two upholstered chairs, a table with a coffee maker and several books on medicine, and a large desk with a computer. This was obviously the doctor's office, if the nameplates on the door weren't evidence enough.

There is little of value here unless the characters check the desk drawers, which are locked, or manage to power up and then hack the computer. The desk contains:

A bottle of fine Scotch

A small laser pistol

A piece of paper on which is written one word, *kaskoid*

A small bottle of excellent scent

Various paper clips, pens, pencils, rubber bands, and blank papers.



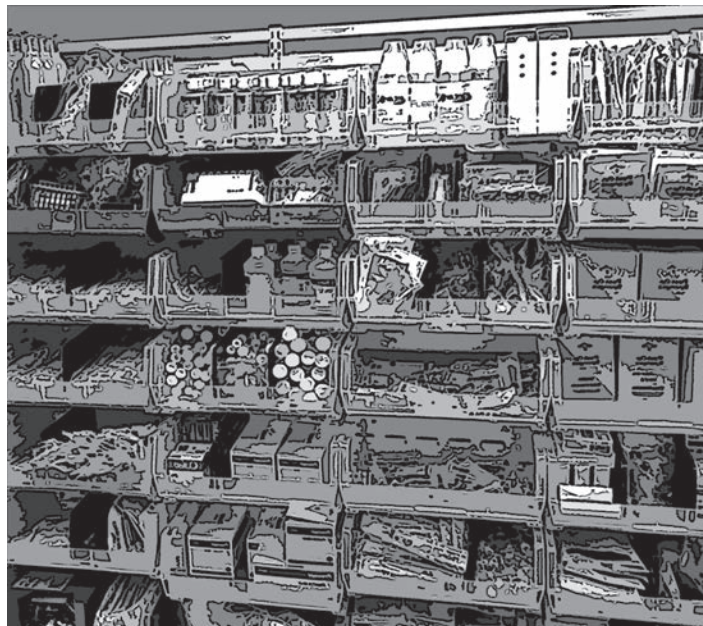
If by some means the characters manage to both power up and hack the computer (Doctor Sonian's password is 'kaskoid' — it might just be why she survived) they gain access to patient records as well as Incident Reports #3,8,9, &10.

Area #4E: Pharmacy and Supply Room

This room has been locked during the crisis, and so is completely untouched. The lock to this door is electronic but may be picked/hacked (normal chance) by any character with appropriate skills. A nameplate on the door reads, "Supply". Once it opens:

The dark room beyond the locked door contains shelves filled with glass vials, gauze, medical tape, syringes, and other medical supplies.

Use your discretion here, but no one, not even Fleet, will complain if the characters help themselves here. Selling such goods on the black market does, however, incur the wrath of Fleet. The characters should be able to find any standard hospital supply item in this room.



Area #4F: Secondary Operating Theater

As this room was not being used during the crisis, it too is completely untouched, although its doors open with the mere push of a hand.

A pristine operating theater complete with a respirator, table, various monitors and a number of lights lies behind the easily opened doors.

Again — allow the characters to retrieve some items if they wish, but do not allow them to completely denude the hospital of supplies. There are no anesthetics or other sundry supplies in this room — just the monitoring equipment and respirator.

Area #4G: Hospital Resident Area Reception Station

This area was the 'sign-in' area for those visiting friends or relatives that required extended care and were therefore housed in one of the areas marked "H" on the map (Hospital Rooms).

There is a surprise awaiting the characters at this location as the receptionist that once worked here has been completely consumed by the Black Fungus that has covered the door actuator. She has become a Fungus Zombie.

A 3' tall and 3' deep counter of plastic stretches for 30' to your left and 20' to your right, with an 8' opening at its center to allow passage to the hospital wing beyond. Several computer terminals, all facing away from you, sit atop this counter, and several metal stools occupy the empty 15' of space behind the counter. Several signs on the wall behind this space advise visitors to be quite, refrain from smoking, and to 'please be courteous to all residents'. It appears that the reception station here is still manned by a stalwart colonist as well! His back is to you, but he still wears a full set of blue hospital quarantine gear, including the plastic head covering. Evidently some folks just don't know when to take a day off.

The Fungus Zombie resides within the quarantine suit, using it to camouflage itself and to help provide structure to its mass. It attacks if spoken to, or touched, but characters attacking immediately (especially with ranged weaponry) should receive one free round of attacks as the zombie is caught by surprise. In any other case:

The attendant whirls around to face you. Behind the clear plastic facial covering of his quarantine suit you see what appears to be a writhing mass of tentacles. If this was once a colonist, it is no longer!

Fungus Zombie

Appearance: This creature appears to be a human upon which black Spanish moss grows in profusion. In particular the heads of these beings retain almost no human characteristics but instead appear to be comprised of tentacle-like strands of lichen or fungus.

Demeanor: This creature is fully intelligent and hopes to provide a source of food for the black fungus colony in front of the entrance door.

Power: 30%

Defense: 15%

Health: 35

Move: 7

Init: +10% (+2)

Damage: tentacle (X3 each) 1d6 +1 and chance of infection (25%)

Special: Energy weapons do not damage these creatures. If wounded, it exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe in a 20-foot area around it. Anyone infected by the spores of the fungi gradually becomes a new colony of fungi in 6 hours to 3 days. The only remedy is to cut the infected flesh from the victim, or to douse the victim in caustic fluid (which harms the fungus for 4-24 points of damage).



After the battle, characters attempting to hack any of the computer terminals here for information discover that all of these data processors have been invaded by Yellow Fungus. While the fungus is currently intent upon taking over the medical center, it will sense any character approaching with electronic data processing equipment (anything with a computer chip), and extends a pseudopod to infiltrate this gear once a character approaches to within 5' of any of these terminals.

Yellow Fungus

Appearance: Yellow Fungus appears as a film that covers 4 to 8 square feet. It extrudes a pseudopod that is about 3 inches in diameter, and that also appears to be made of the powdery yellow fungoid material.

Demeanor: Yellow Fungus always seeks out data processors to control in order to maintain control of its immediate environment. It views all moving objects that are not fungus as enemies.

Power: 10%

Defense: 10%

Health: 1

Move: 3

Init: +75%

Damage: electronic takeover of equipment

Special: Yellow Fungus can form a pseudopod that extends for up to 20 feet, seeking out any equipment that has a data processor. A successful hit indicates that the fungus has gained control of the equipment, and the game master should then use whatever attack seems appropriate to simulate the equipment attacking the character. Yellow Fungus can cause no harm to actual humans without the intervention of a data processing device. Yellow Fungus is unaffected by kinetic (impact based) attacks.

As a result of the Yellow Fungus intrusion, no data may be gleaned from the computer terminals in this area. Note that it is possible that a Yellow Fungus colony has infested some item possessed by a character, but that if a thorough 'cleanliness check' is not made before they proceed further into the adventure, this fungus may cause that equipment to attack at an unexpected, and perhaps horribly inconvenient, time.



Area #4H: Hospital Rooms

The Medical Center hospital rooms are somewhat Spartan and each contains little beyond a roll-away bed tray, a bed, and a chair for visitors. A table is provided next to the wall farthest from the door as a place for gifts, flowers, and cards.

The room beyond the door is spotlessly clean and contains a bed, a table, a single upholstered chair, and a roll-away bed tray. This is obviously a hospital room.

Characters checking all of the rooms find that none of them appear to have been (as yet) used, yet one of them has a "Get Well" card upon its table. The card front reads, 'Get Well Soon' and inside is written, "Doctor Sonian, these cards are great! When does the first batch arrive from the orbital outpost?"

Characters discovering this card receive +1/+5% to any charisma or diplomatic negotiation rolls when encountering Doctor Sonian as they now (at least seem to have) some knowledge of the hospital and its staff.

All of these rooms are otherwise empty.



Area #4I: Quarantine Treatment Units

As unknown pathogens (and other varied life forms) are the most common hazard on unexplored planets, all colony medical centers are equipped with facilities for handling patients whose very presence might present a danger to their care givers. These rooms are designed to minimize the risk presented by these pathogens. Sterile collapsible plastic rooms bathed in high-intensity UV light provide a changing area for any medical personnel, and completely sealed durable plastic quarantine suits, complete with a 4-hour air supply, are stocked in abundance on shelves within these areas. Chlorine is further added to the air of these rooms to prevent the spread of any contamination proof against the harsh light, and they have their own 'scrubber' system for recirculating the air that removes all particles smaller than O2. The activated charcoal in these scrubbers supports up to eight individuals for 24 hours before it must be exchanged for a new filtration unit.

Full surgical kits, plasma and sutures, anti-biotics and anti-toxins are stored in air-tight cabinets in these areas, and the medicaments held in this fashion may only be accessed via glove box to prevent any cross contamination of these stores. The gurneys on which these patients are treated also contain collapsible hoods with an individual air supply (good for ½ an hour) so that they might be safely transported, once treated, to the Quarantine Recovery Unit (Area K). Here they remain until any danger their exposure to other colonists might represent has been eliminated.

Behind the security-locked door lies a room resembling a strange mixture of a plastics factory and a surgical unit. A large portion of this area is cordoned off in plastic (the area nearest to the door by which you entered), and harsh white lights, the first you have seen in operation throughout the colony, shine down from its 10' ceiling. A shelf filled with folded plastic garments, one-piece coveralls with helmets and oxygen bottles attached, stands nearest the wall. On the far side of this enclosure is a door whose latch is a vertical zipper that forms a T-shape floor. Beyond the plastic is what appears to be a standard operating theater, although there are a few monitors that seem redundant, or at least out-of-place.

If the characters are entering the southern of the two Quarantine Treatment Units, they also notice Doctor Sonian and Nurse Wendy, each wearing a blue quarantine suit, within the operating theater.

Two figures are also present. Both are wearing the plastic suits you found neatly folded on the shelves, and they turn as you enter. "Stop right where you are!" demands one of the two, holding out a suited hand, palm forward.

Doctor Sonian has demanded that the characters stop as she is worried there might still be active fungal spores in the Quarantine Treatment Unit (there are not). If given the chance (if they do not immediately attack or otherwise act aggressively), she explains this to the characters. She further explains that she and Nurse Wendy have remained behind as there are three patients in the Quarantine Recovery Unit that she had been monitoring — the treatment unit has its own power supply — until about three hours ago, after which only the audio was functional.

The doctor is concerned as her three patients were reporting in regularly, and submitting their vitals, until about ½ an hour ago. It has been silent since then. She refuses to accompany the party unless they agree to check (with her) on these three patients before leaving. She does instruct the characters to don quarantine suits (over their space suits if necessary as the suits are stretchy) if they wish to help, and to simply leave if they do not.

Quarantine Suits take very little damage (6 points before disintegrating) but prevent 99% of molecular sized particles from reaching their wearer.

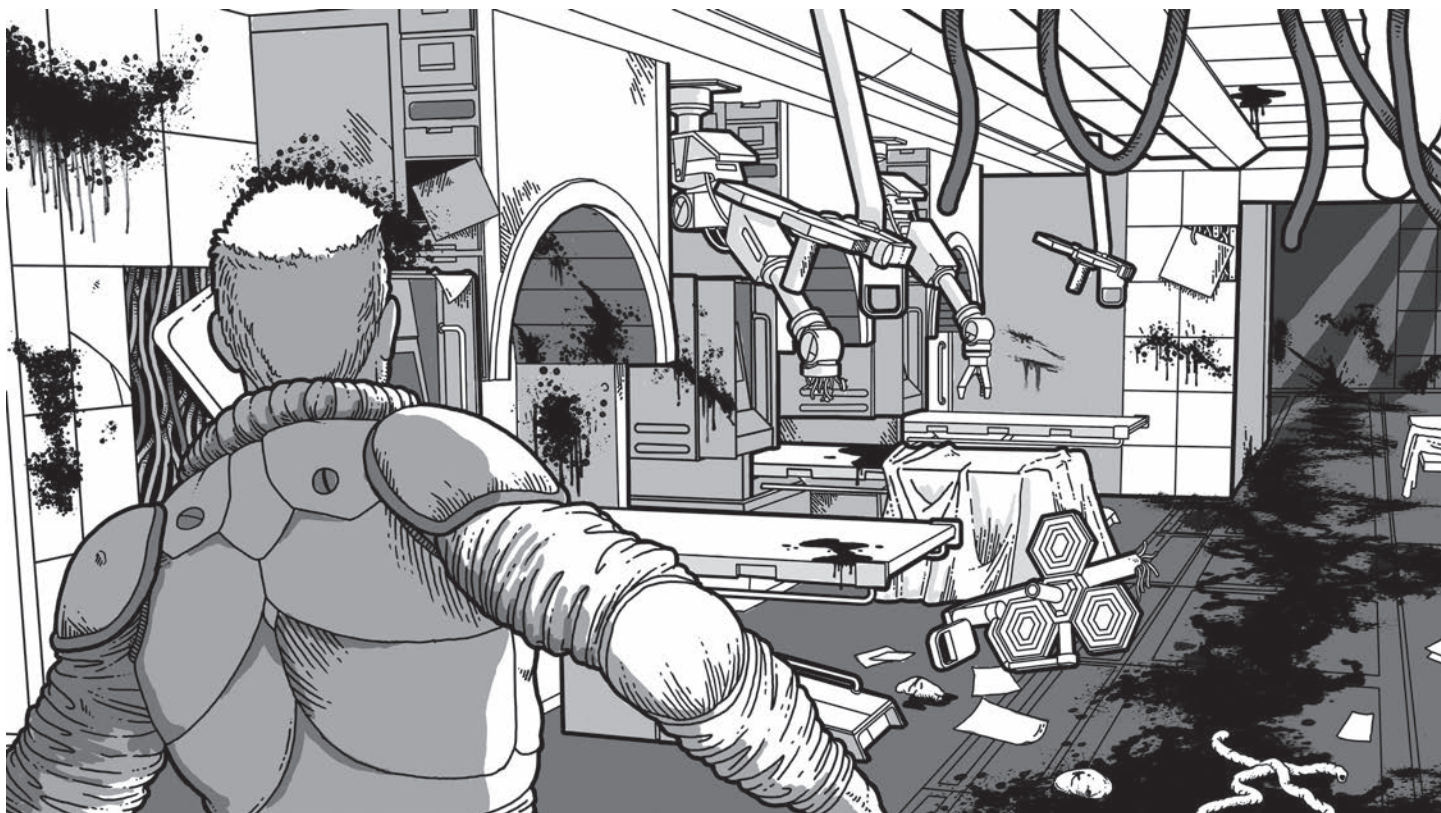
The three patients have in fact become Fungus Zombies, and a strain of Yellow fungus caused both the video, and eventually the audio, failure. The UV lights have indeed, over time, eliminated any active fungal spores, and so all of Area #4I is 'safe' from fungus infestation.

Characters requiring medical assistance are healed for 2d8 points of Health by Doctor Sonian, if they but ask nicely. Such healing does not cause a character to acquire more health than the full health of their character.

Area #4J: Decontamination/Sterilization Walkway

This area is designed to keep any contamination from spreading as the constant exposure (in this entire curved hall), to high-intensity UV lighting eliminates any pathogens that might be cast off in this area, given time. Characters passing through this area that have unknown fungal spores or colonies upon their persons or equipment have these fungal entities killed by these lights, although they may not realize it at the time. This hallway also keeps the fungus Zombies (and Yellow Fungus colony) in Area #4K from escaping the Quarantine Recovery Unit. The doors into and out of this area are small airlocks capable of holding no more than one gurney and two attendants, or 8 upright humans. They cycle any air received from either side of the lock through an incinerator that is meant to further reduce the risk of pathogen escape.

As the airlock opens you see a 10'-wide curved hallway illuminated by intense white light. So bright is this light that you shield your eyes from the intense glare, although it likely will cause no permanent loss of vision.



Area #4K: Quarantine Recovery Unit

The recovery unit was originally designed as an automated care facility for the treatment of those with infectious diseases, or easily migrating toxin contamination. Robotic arms within this room are able to minister to patients, checking their vital statistics, feeding, clothing, and bathing them, and operating all of the treatment machinery within this area via external control. Control panels for the operation of this equipment are found both outside the air-locked door that leads to this area, and within the Quarantine Treatment Units (Area #4I) described earlier. It is this control panel that the characters see first.

The light dims to a normal level as you near the end of the corridor. An air lock bars your further progress, although a control panel and a viewing screen are mounted in the wall near it. This must be a work station as a chair attached to the wall by a swivel arm is also present.

The view screen is split; the top displays the interior of the recovery unit, while the bottom functions as a monitor for control panel commands and messages. If the characters study or attempt to operate the control panel:

The display is only partly functional. The top half of the viewing screen displays only some strangely clouded images in a reddish-brown environment. The bottom half has a command prompt that actually reads 'Command:' with a blinking cursor.

Characters with medical or biological skills might (at your discretion) recognize that the display at the top is functional, the camera lens within the recovery area is simply coated with some foreign substance — dried blood by the color shown on the display.

Characters attempting to open the airlock find that it functions normally. What they find once the air lock opens is far from normal.

The air lock opens revealing a scene of devastation. Blood and entrails spatter the walls within this 130' x 110' ward. Wires hang haphazardly from several pieces of electronic equipment, and plastic bottles and other discarded containers lie upon the floor. Several of the treatment stations are covered in gore, and the remains of their human occupants form trails that nearly cross the floor of this large area.



By contrast several of the treatment stations are completely undisturbed. Prim sheets and coverlets remain neatly in place on adjustable hospital beds surrounded by medical analysis equipment. Large robotic arms, obviously for the treatment of quarantined patients, depend from the 20' ceiling overhead, currently inactive but ready for immediate use. Several of the cameras mounted throughout this enclosure at intervals of 30' likewise remain untouched, but their red monitor lights are dim; they are not currently functional. Wheeled carts containing various medical supplies and sundry materials also stand at the ready, undisturbed. Perhaps this is only a minor incident, and all might be returned to functionality with a bit of clean-up?

Such thoughts are rapidly dispelled as with a grunt, three humanoid figures, their bodies covered in a thick ropey tendrils of a growth that strongly resembles Spanish moss, lurch towards you.

Fungus Zombies (3)

Appearance: This creature appears to be a human upon which black Spanish moss grows in profusion. In particular the heads of these beings retain almost no human characteristics but instead appear to be comprised of tentacle-like strands of lichen or fungus.

Demeanor: These creatures are fully intelligent and seek both to propagate their kind by infecting the characters, and to escape the sealed quarantine area.

Power: 30%

Defense: 15%

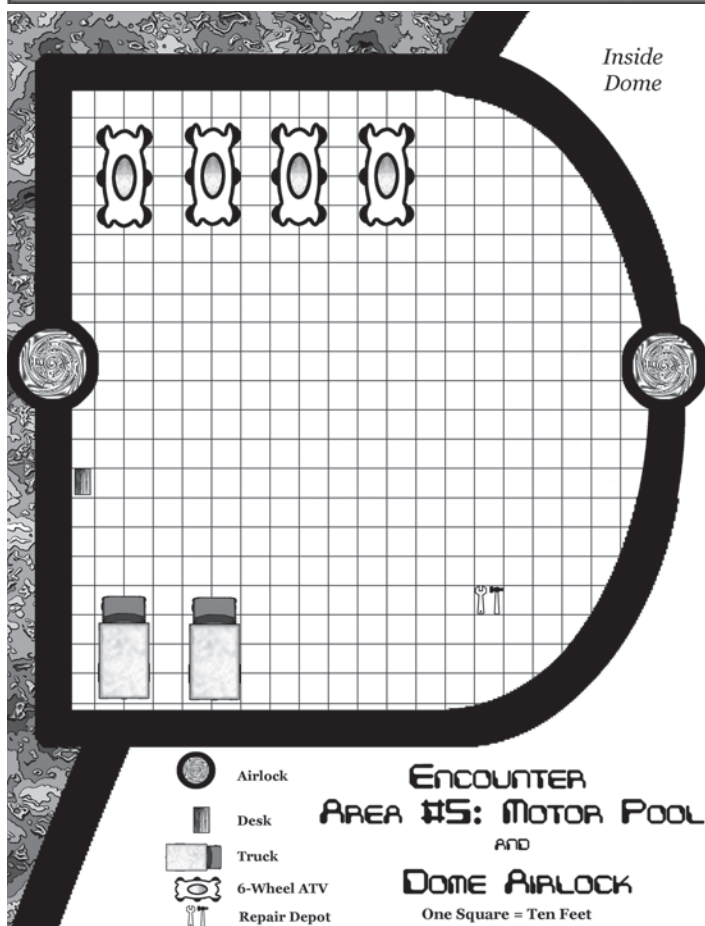
Health: 35

Move: 7

Init: +10% (+2)

Damage: tentacle (X3 each) 1d6 +1 and chance of infection (25%)

Special: Energy weapons do not damage these creatures. If wounded, it exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe in a 20-foot area around it. Anyone infected by the spores of the fungi gradually becomes a new colony of fungi in 6 hours to 3 days. The only remedy is to cut the infected flesh from the victim, or to douse the victim in caustic fluid (which harms the fungus for 4-24 points of damage).



ENCOUNTER AREA #5: MOTOR POOL AND DOME AIRLOCK

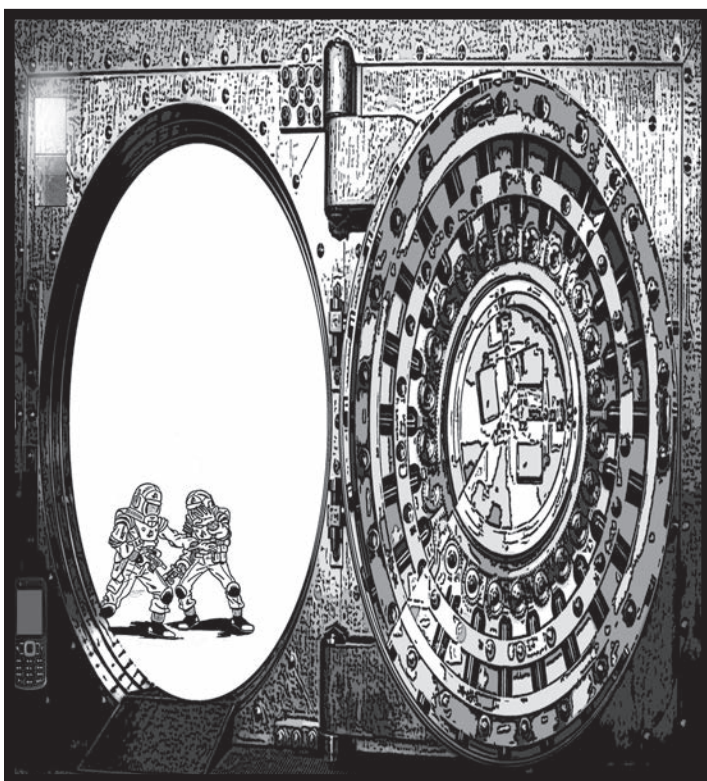
The motor pool airlocks were designed as a safe holding area (out of the atmosphere) for larger self-propelled equipment and various means of transport to be used in exploiting the surface of Planet Kask. As a result the airlocks that service this area are large, and take a full five minutes to cycle. As the characters approach either the planet-side or dome-side airlock to this area, they are likely to note this increased size.

A truly massive airlock door stands 30' in front of you. It is a rectangle measuring 20' in height and 30' in width and it appears to separate at its center, with each of the two half-doors sliding into the sides of the lock. A large keypad with three indicator lights is mounted in the wall to the left of the door. Its LED readout glows as though it is active, but only the large red indicator is lighted.

Once news of the fungal infestation reached the administrators of the colony, they wisely chose to restrict access through the dome's exterior airlocks.

This lock now has restricted access, and a special code must be input to its keypad before it will function (~25% chance to any lock picking or hacking-related skill). The code is known to *Administrator Tallenger* who is holed up in Area #6, and if the characters have gleaned this information (or are able to circumvent the security), this lock functions normally for them. Once it opens:

A stadium-sized room lies beyond the airlock. 210' separate the airlock you have just activated from a similar lock which lies at the far end of the 120' wide room. A domed ceiling rise overhead to a height of nearly 30'. Several large 6-wheeled multi-passenger all-terrain vehicles lie parked on one side of this expanse, while on the far wall two more mundane dual-axle delivery vehicles lie dormant. A computer terminal, filing cabinet and desk lie closest to the one airlock, while the entire southern corner near the dome-side airlock is occupied by a mechanical service station. Several steel shelving units and roll-away toolboxes in that area confirm that it is intended for the maintenance and repair of the vehicles found here.



Neither Kask nor the fungus have taken notice of this area, and so it is one of the rare opportunities that the characters might find within the entire colony to rest and take stock of their situation. The vehicles are fully functional, and those characters with appropriate skills may operate them, but they will need to open the airlocks in order to drive them out of this area. Note: The airlock system is designed so that only one of the two airlocks may be open at any given time.

CDU4

4-ton Colony Delivery Vehicle

Cargo capacity: 4 tons

8216 lbs/3727 kg total including driver

Passenger capacity: driver only

Gross weight: 4922 lbs. (2233kg)

Top Speed: 50 mph (80 kph)

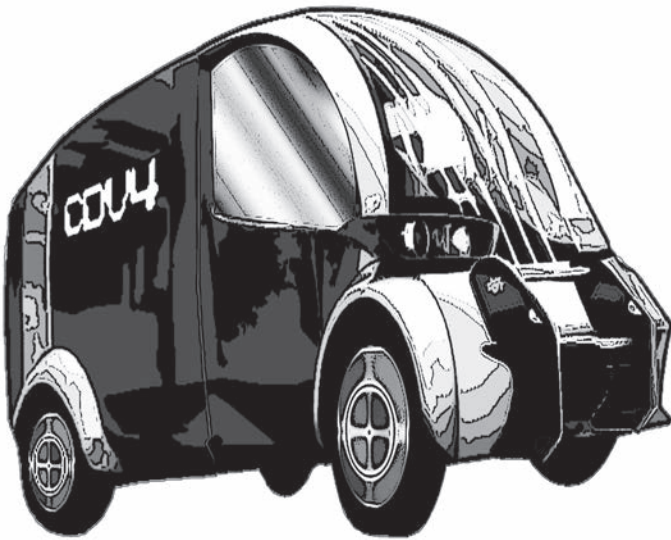
Special Features: Short Wave Radio

Broadband transmitter (5 mile/8 kilometer range); Air Filtration (8 hours 1 person); and

Climate Control (temperature and pressure);

ECA(Encapsulated Cargo Area – hermetically sealed from passenger compartment).

Must be driven on a smooth, level surface.



MP6-ATV

6-wheeled multi-passenger all-terrain vehicle

Cargo capacity: 1 ton

2054 lbs/931 kg total including passengers

Passenger capacity: 6

seating for 6 adults with safety restraints

Gross weight: 5316 lbs. (2411kg)

Top Speed: 45 mph (72 kph)

Special Features: Short Wave Radio

Broadband (5 mile/8 kilometer range); Air Filtration (8 hours maximum usage for 6

people); and Climate Control (temperature

and pressure); ECA(Encapsulated Cargo

Area – hermetically sealed from passenger

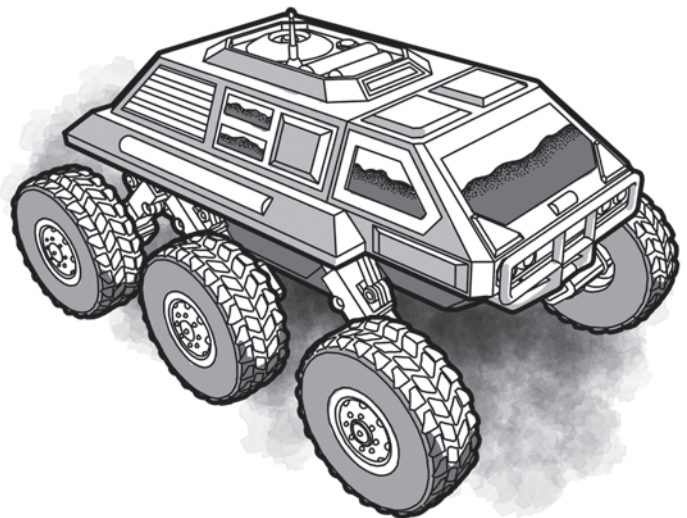
compartment); Electro-Magnetic Scanner

(picks up all EM bands – scans for energy

sources including radiation); Independent

Axles (able to climb up to a 25° slope and

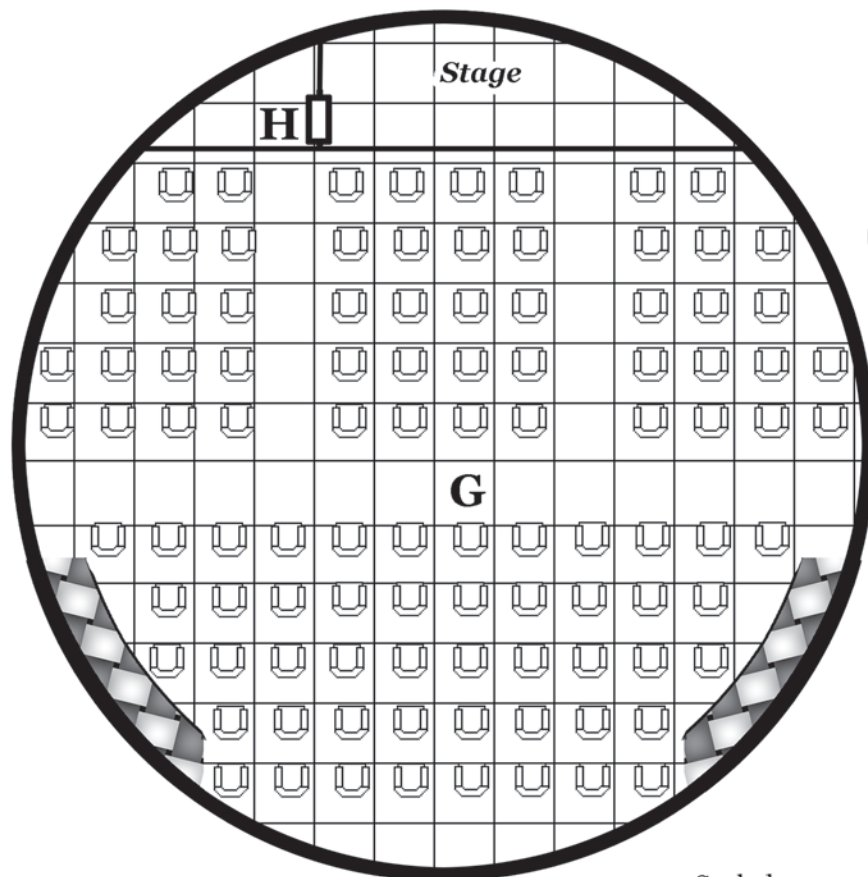
navigate rugged terrain).



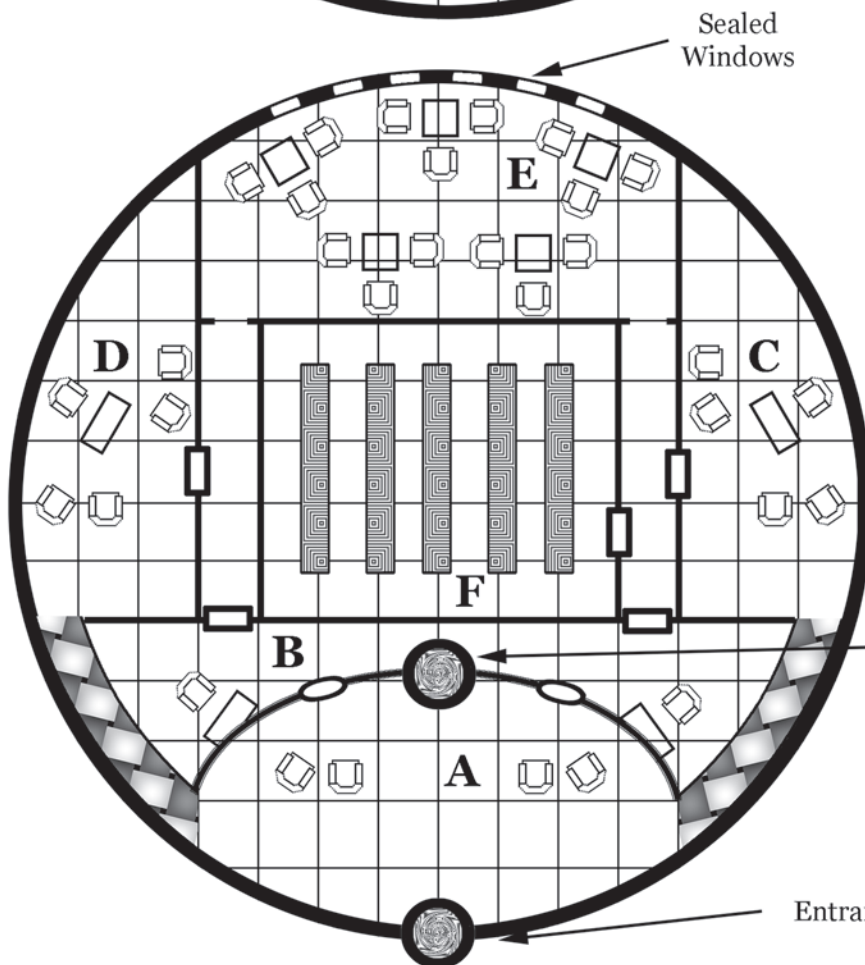
The mechanical repair stations here are fully equipped and may be used for repairing character equipment by any character with appropriate skills.

ENCOUNTER AREA #6: ADMINISTRATION

Upper Floor



	Staircase
	Table
	Data Bank
	Door
	Desk
	Chair
	Airlock
	Window
One Square = Ten Feet	



Ground Floor

Secondary
Security
Airlock

Entrance Airlock

ENCOUNTER AREA #6: ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

This large, 2-story building is tube shaped with a domed top. It houses both the mining and general colony administrative offices, and provides digital data backup for the entire colony. Due to the delicate nature of the data housed here, this building has but one entrance, and a double-airlock to ensure that this data is preserved in the event of a catastrophe. As the party approaches:

A 35' tall tube shaped building with a domed top made of dull grey metal rises before you. It is 160' in diameter and appears to have but one entrance: a massive airlock capable of handling your entire party at one time.

Security clearance of administrative level is normally required to use the airlock control keypad (this can be a code, an ID badge, or whatever best fits your campaign) but once the characters approach to within 25' or less, they easily note that the airlock is no longer functional.

The airlock is heavily damaged, almost as though it had been hit by a vehicle or repeatedly pummeled with a small wrecking ball. The bottom portion has been prized open several feet, and with a bit of squirming, any of your party might easily gain access to the interior.

Should any character take the time to study the airlock more closely, they also note:

The security camera has also been heavily damaged and is obviously no longer functional. A black trail of dust leads away from the shattered lock.

The opening created by the wrenching open of the airlock door is indeed large enough to pass any character, even one wearing a space suit.

Area #6A: Reception and Waiting Room

For security reasons, the administrative offices in this building are shielded from the public meeting area on the second floor, and the staff offices on the first. A heavy grey partition pierced by only a single airlock actual seals the back half of the building from the reception area to ensure a second layer of security for both irreplaceable personnel and the valuable data stored here. Colonists requesting an audience would enter this area after gaining access through the airlock and speak with a receptionist through a window of pressure-treated glass on either the right side of this partition (for general inquiries and access to the Colonial Administrator) or the left side (for inquiries about mining operations and access to the Chief Engineer). Colonists arriving for meetings would mount either of the curving staircases that follow the outer wall of the building from this area to arrive at the second floor.

The alien fungus has already ascertained that control of the colony might be garnered by invading the colony's artificial intelligence which is located in Area F on the lower level. Fungus Zombies, over a period of days, managed to hammer away at the outer airlock door until it deformed sufficiently to grant them entry. They now fill this area and are attempting to batter down the inner airlock door as well in order to gain access to the colony's artificial intelligence.

As you crawl through the ruined outer airlock, the cause for its current condition becomes immediately apparent. The room that lies beyond is crowded with humanoid figures that are pounding relentlessly on a second airlock door that lies 40 feet from your position in the middle of a curved wall that runs from floor to ceiling. Several comfortable armchairs lie scattered about the room as though they have been simply tossed aside, and a curved staircase leads upwards at the far left and the far right. The area here is a hemisphere some 75' wide and 40' deep, terminating ion the staircases which are 10' wide. The back wall contains two 5'wide windows of thick glass in addition to the airlock that stands at its center. These windows are spaced 10'-12' on either side of the airlock and the figures attempting to smash the lock show no signs of having noticed them.

The airlock is already showing signs of heavy damage, but the large red light on its control panel, indicating that no access is to be gained, demonstrates that it is still functional, and still sealed. Further scrutiny will have to wait, however, as the figures seem to have noticed you, and move to bar your further progress.

The Fungus Zombies have been alerted via scent from the dust trail that the intruders might interfere with the plans of the Alien Master Fungus colony. They have been tasked with the elimination of the characters.

Fungus Zombies (6)

Appearance: This creature appears to be a human upon which black Spanish moss grows in profusion. In particular the heads of these beings retain almost no human characteristics but instead appear to be comprised of tentacle-like strands of lichen or fungus.

Demeanor: These creatures are fully intelligent and seek to destroy the characters so that they might complete the task of invading the colony's artificial intelligence using Yellow Fungus.

Power: 30%

Defense: 15%

Health: 35

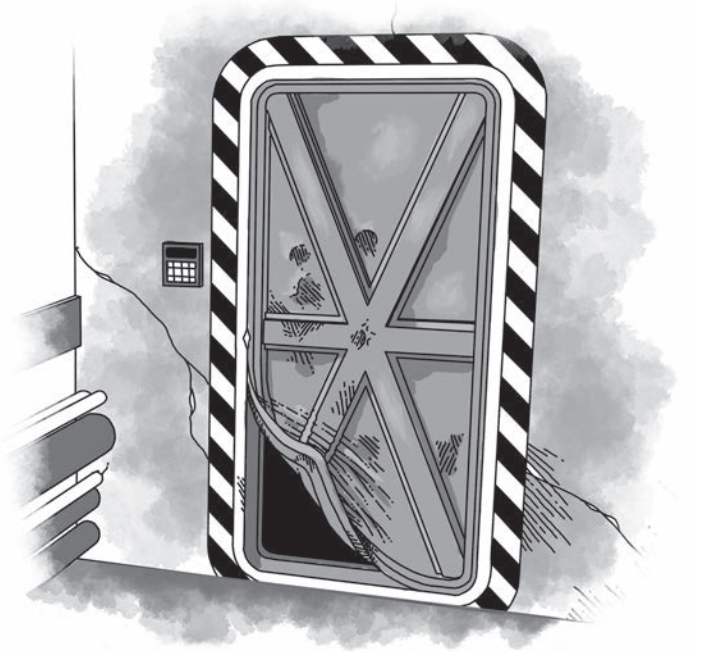
Move: 7

Init: +10% (+2)

Damage: tentacle (X3 each) 1d6 +1 and chance of infection (25%)

Special: Energy weapons do not damage these creatures. If wounded, it exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe in a 20-foot area around it. Anyone infected by the spores of the fungi gradually becomes a new colony of fungi in 6 hours to 3 days. The only remedy is to cut the infected flesh from the victim, or to douse the victim in caustic fluid (which harms the fungus for 4-24 points of damage).

Once the Fungus Zombies have been destroyed, characters may readily access Area G by simply climbing either staircase. The inner airlock that leads to Area B requires security clearance of administrative level to make use of the airlock control keypad (this can be a code, an ID badge, or whatever best fits your campaign).



Area #6B: Secretarial

Although currently deserted, normally 2-3 administrative assistants work in this area. There are two active computer terminals here which allow access to colony records, and the colony's artificial intelligence. Much like the inner airlock, security clearance is required to make any use of these materials (although they might be 'hacked' by characters with these skills).

A long 10' wide hallway lies on the far side of the airlock. It leads to both the left and the right, and rapidly expands in width as you move away from the airlock, forming the back side of the half-circular wall you saw in the reception area. Two desks with active terminals lie beneath 5' wide and 3' tall glass windows on either side of the airlock. Two doors with keypad entry locks lead further into the complex. The air is stale in here, old.

Characters that are able to 'hack' (break) the security on these terminals gain access to all files of the colony and should be given all Incident Reports to peruse if they ask for them. Colonists ID (badges, tags, bracelets, whatever works best for your campaign) are also generated by these terminals if the characters have the skill to understand and use the system (your discretion). The characters could, conceivably, grant themselves access via an appropriately generated ID, to all areas of the colony.

Area #6C: Colonial Administrator's Office

The Colonial Administrator is the undisputed leader, the 'boss' of the entire colony. His office is well-appointed but not opulent, and he supervises all colony activities from this office for 12-16 hours a day. When the Fungus Zombies breached the outer airlock 6 days ago, the Administrator, Jim Tallenger, sealed the inner airlock to prevent any spores from penetrating to the data core. An internal monitoring system has informed him that the inner airlock has been operated (if the characters are preparing to investigate his office) unless the party has used extremely unorthodox means for accessing the building interior (explosive, metal-cutting torches, or the like). Administrator Tallenger hopes that a rescue party is approaching, but given the unusual occurrences of the past week, he has armed himself, has blocked the door with the chairs in his office, and has made of his desk a stalwart barricade. Jim is prepared for any eventuality as the characters open the door.

The door ahead is slightly ajar. As you move to open it, it seems stiff, possibly jammed. You force it opens only a few inches before a voice from its far side causes you to pause.

"Are you guys the rescue team? I've been waiting for days and the air is starting to go bad. Answer me if you are, 'cause I'm armed!"

Jim is indeed armed, and attacks if fired upon.

Jim Tallenger (Human)

Appearance: Jim is a 5'10" tall male human of medium build. He wears an official Fleet Mining Colony Uniform (description at your discretion) and usually carries a clipboard and pen. A laser Pistol is strapped to his right hip.

Demeanor: Jim is very intelligent but is, at this time, slightly paranoid due to recent rather dramatic events. He parleys if not fired upon, and can be a useful ally.

Power: 35%(7)

Defense: 20%(4)

Health: 25

Move: 12

Init: +10% (+2)

Damage: Laser Pistol (2D20 at +25% to hit) or punch 1d3

Special: Jim's Laser Pistol must be reloaded with a new battery after 10 shots. Jim has three spare batteries.

Jim is unaware that his message for help was intercepted and that it has not been received by Fleet. He is, however, completely familiar with all incident reports, and finds those that pertain to abnormal behavior on the part of the colonists particularly disturbing. Jim is convinced there is more going on in the colony than just a fungal invasion. If the characters plan to depart, he accompanies them, but otherwise remains in the Administration building to safeguard the data core (Area F).



Area #6D: Chief Mining Engineer's Office

This is the office of Joe Galligear, the colony's Chief Mining Engineer and the manager of all mining operations. The office door is locked as Joe has sequestered himself in *Area #13, The Communications Array*. Joe plans to remain there until rescue arrives, after which he cares not if the facility is mothballed.

The locked door to this office opens only if Joe's personal password code (BigCheese, no spaces) is keyed into the pad, or if a character with appropriate skills manages to defeat the locking mechanism. The door is substantial, but may be broken open by a total of 35 or more points of impact-type damage. If the party manages to open this door:

A well-appointed office with a desk, a luxurious office chair, and four comfortable-looking armchairs lie beyond this door. Two filing cabinets with keypads rest against one wall. Other than that, the office appears deserted.

Characters rifling through Joe's desk find:

- A bottle of 12-year old Scotch
- A false Identification (wristband, badge, or card, whatever best fits your campaign) that gives his name as Tom Tuttle.
- A notepad and pen
- A charged electric Stun Stick (must be used as a club, causes 3d12 electrical damage and the possibility of rendering the victim unconscious for 3d6 minutes. This chance is based upon the mass of the target and is equal to 100% - (2% per 10 pounds or 5 kilograms of target's mass). An average human target weighing 160 pounds, therefore is stunned 68% of the time. The Stun Stick operates for 24 uses before requiring a battery change.

Characters searching through the filing cabinets carefully discover a file marked both 'Classified' and, "Exit Strategy". The file outlines the mining company's preferred method of closing down the mining operation in the event of any disaster that might lead to company liability: namely, the orderly destruction of the facility and any that might bear witness to the corporation's liability-incurring actions. One particular paragraph is highlighted; the one describing the potential for abandoning a mining sight to alien invaders should such ever occur.



Area #6E: The Break Room (and meeting hall)

This room is a cafeteria-like area with upholstered chairs and discussion-group seating. Vending machines with packed dry foods line the left and right-hand walls, while one-way windows (tinted on the outside to appear as just a part of the outer wall) make this a bright, sunny room. Normally used for both breaks during the workday, and small less formal meetings, this room is currently deserted.

The hallway opens onto a small break area complete with several chair and table arrangements obviously designed for discussion-group seating, and several vending machines mounted near the right and left-hand walls. Tinted glass windows of great thickness mounted in the wall farthest from the entrance allow a view outside the building. A second exit doorway can be seen at the far end of the room mounted on the same wall as that through which you entered.

The food in the vending machines is dry goods, and is fully palatable should the characters attempt to use these machines.

Area #6F: The Artificial Intelligence Data Core

There is only one entrance to this area, and it is protected by a durable metal door with a high-security lock and keypad entry (security clearance of administrative level is normally required). Stored within are the complete records of the colony, and the processors that constitute the colony's artificial intelligence. The data processors here control the air and water purification, communications, dome pressure — virtually all functions that keep the dome and mine running, and habitable by humans.

Due to the nature of the equipment stored within this room the doorframe contains a degaussing coil that de-magnetizes all electronic equipment. This always prevents the functioning of scanners, weaponry, and electronics that pass through the doorway unshielded, and occasionally (50% chance) renders them permanently non-functional (although they might be repairable). The keypad may be hacked (lock-picked) by a character with appropriate skills, but the door is built to withstand 240 points of impact/concussion type damage, and is near-impervious to cold and heat (no appreciable affect between -150° and 1200° F, although damage may occur if these parameters are exceeded).

Note: If the characters have gained Jim Tallenger as an ally, he opens this door for them if the characters provide him with a reasonable (your discretion) reason for doing so.

If the characters manage to open this door:

The air within this room is cooler, almost chilly, and it is filled with the barely heard hum of electronic equipment. Computer data cores stand here, row after row of them, along with a small table, a Spartan un-upholstered chair, and an active computer terminal with both a monitor and keypad.

Should any of the characters decide to examine the monitor at the computer station, add:

A blinking cursor winks at you repeatedly from the screen, insisting that there has been a 'Fault Detected' a highlighted box below this cursor reads:

"Atmospheric pressure loss in filtration facility. Power loss in filtration unit. Atmospheric incursion to atmospheric filtration unit. Filtration and Power building airlock sealed to prevent exposure to inner dome atmosphere."

Any character with computer skills that attempts to ascertain further details of the 'fault' discovers that the computer shut down the air supply to the dome 32 hours ago, and that roughly 4 hours remain, if all colonists are still active, before the air within the colony begins to turn stale. Further, if filtration is not restored, the dome becomes uninhabitable (without pressure suits) within 12-14 hours.

Area #6G: Colony Meeting Space

The entire second floor of the administration building is devoted to a theater-like meeting space used for entertainments, demonstrations, and presentations of scientific findings, new equipment, and like topics. A raised (3' tall) stage faces seating for more than 100, and a 15' square pod mounted to the ceiling above the stage provides state-of-the-art lighting and audio enhancement to any presentation made here.

An Alien Master Fungus has recently taken up residence on the stage in preparation for a Yellow Fungus assimilation of the artificial intelligence resident in the data core (Area F) below. The Master Fungus has just begun the generation of the spore cloud that it uses to enhance communication, feeding, and growth.

As you reach the top of the staircase, you enter a large auditorium like area with theater-style seating for at least 100 people. A stage at the far end of this circular seating area is a stage that is shrouded in black mist making the entire area indistinct. Although you can see the edge of the stage, anything that might be present on it is obscured by this translucent cloud.

The Alien Master Fungus is concentrating on the generation of its spore cloud and has no peripheral awareness of the characters unless they attack or approach to within 10'.

Characters approaching to within 15' are able to discern the door leading to area H.

At stage right you can make out a wall and a door with the words “Audio/Visual” stenciled upon it in large red letters.

The door to Area H is unlocked, and any character able to operate the lighting from this area (if they manage to get past the Alien Master Fungus due to a diversion or distraction by other party members, at your discretion), may activate the UV setting on the stage lights. This operation bathes the stage in ultra-violet light causing 1d6 points of Health damage to the Alien Master Fungus for every ten seconds it remains upon the stage. After thirty seconds exposure, the fungus attempts to flee.

Alien Master Fungus

Appearance: Master Fungus colonies resemble lacy ropes of dark green Spanish Moss coiled into a 10’ tall mass. Four tentacles protrude from this mass to 30 foot range, and are constantly in motion. Bits of fungi are constantly falling from the main body and floating to the ground.

Demeanor: This Master Fungus colony is intent on preparations for a long stay in the administration building and takes no notice of the characters until they either attack or approach to within 10’. This colony then reacts to destroy the threat unless it takes more than half its Health in damage in which case it attempts to flee down the staircase to area A below.

Power: 10%

Defense: 10%/(2)

Health: 14

Move: 3

Init: 0

Damage: Tentacle Strike 1d10 (x4), range 30’

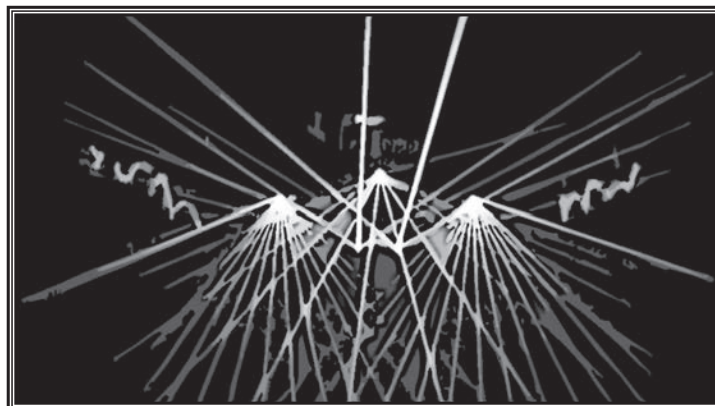
Special: This alien emits a cloud of fungal darkness in a 5’ radius, making it impossible to see the alien or detect it with any type of gear. The fog can be dispersed by a strong wind. If wounded, the fungus exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe within 20’ of its location.

Area #6H: Audio and Lighting Controls

This small area is packed with electronics equipment and contains the audio and visual controls for the stage in area G.

Behind the door marked Audio/Visual you find a host of electronic equipment. The room has

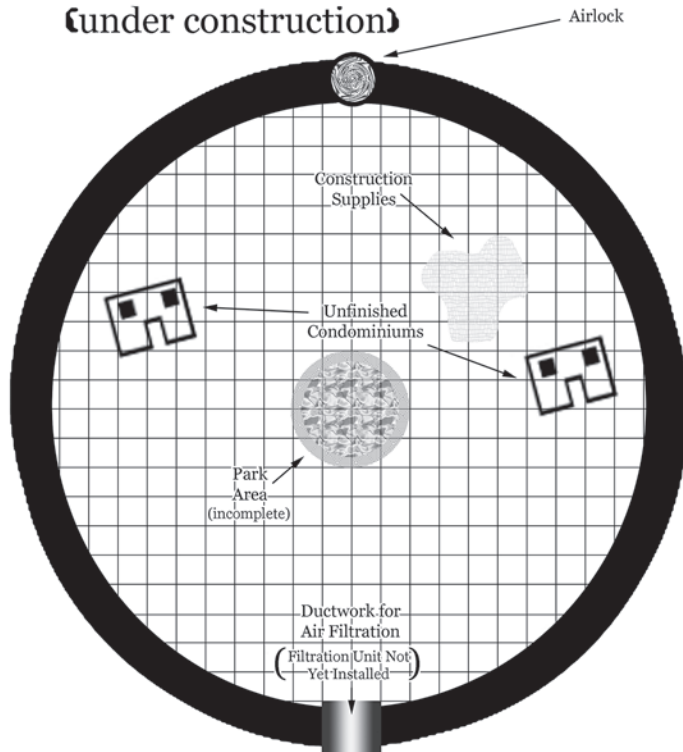
only an aisle for accessing the controls here; the rest of this area is filled to the rafters with wires, circuit boards, transformers and other electronics.



Characters with knowledge of our skills in electronics have no problem identifying the proper controls to activate whatever visual or audio enhancements to the stage they might wish. Characters unfamiliar with electronics are likely to be lost, and activate any of the controls listed below at random (or at your discretion).

- Sounds on stage amplified (tripled in intensity)
- Mirror-ball effect floods the stage
- Black light floods the stage
- Infra-red light floods the stage
- UV light floods the stage (causing 1d6 Health damage to funguses and bacteria)
- Strobe Lights emitted at a rate of 1 per second. All other area lighting extinguished
- Strobe light frequency doubled
- Strobe light frequency halved
- Laser sounds floods the stage
- The sound of applause floods the stage
- Introduction music plays
- Kaleidoscopic colors flood the stage

ENCOUNTER AREA #7:

HABITATION DOMES
(under construction)

One Square = Ten Feet

ENCOUNTER AREA #7: FUTURE HABITATION
DOMES (under construction)

Once the Planet Kask Outpost Station became fully functional, Fleet expected a number of additional colonists to arrive, burgeoning the population of the colony. As at least temporary housing would be required for these colonial hopefuls, additional habitation domes, complete with a sequestered air supply (in the event of an emergency) were scheduled for construction. These new habitations were being built to handle a higher density population than the original habitation domes (see Area #8) as they were meant to be transient domiciles rather than permanent residences. At the time of the fungus invasion, and the planetary entity's response to colonial incursion, these 'colonial condominiums' were only partially complete, and their air purification units have yet to be installed.

A 6' diameter ductwork, currently empty, pierces the otherwise impervious outer shell of these habitation domes. This empty ductwork, presently, provides an unintentional access tunnel that the invading fungus quickly exploited. As a result, no trace of the original construction workers is to be found within these domes, only the tools and building materials they left behind.

Domes #1-#5

Five of the six domes are populated by various fungus colonies.

As you gaze into the space beyond the clear dome surface, you see a large pile of building materials, a central area with overturned dirt, perhaps being prepared as a garden of some sort, and several half-finished apartment buildings. You see no sign of movement.

Characters scrutinizing the interior of one of the domes from its exterior may see movement, or the unusual presence of one of the various fungus types listed hereafter if they take special care, and at your discretion. Remember that the fungus colonies are almost exclusively ambush predators, and do their best not to draw attention to themselves until it is time to attack.

Perched over the inside of each dome air lock are:

Pod Fungus (6 pods)

Appearance: Each pod is totally transparent (invisible). The pod is ten feet long and wide with two forty-foot transparent tentacles extending from the bottom of the pod. Any bodies that are scooped up by the tentacles are placed in the pod for digestion. These bodies appear stuck to the wall as the acids of the pod dissolve the victim.

Demeanor: The pods are motion sensitive and can easily grab most things coming through the hatch. The instincts of the pod are such that just poking something through the hatch won't fool the pod. It waits until there is something larger and worthwhile to grab and eat. The reflexes of the pods are such that nothing human is fast enough to escape its grasp. These pods have attached themselves to the upper walls of the dome over the air lock.

Power: 45% (9)

Defense: 70% (12)

Health: 14

Move: 0

Init: +25%/+5

Damage: Tentacle squeezing 3d6, Acid dissolving 25 points a minute

Special: Because the fungi are totally translucent it isn't seen by normal optics. There is no heat signature or radiation footprint.

All of the following fungi appear (at your discretion as to frequency and location) somewhere (perhaps multiple times) within the five domes.

Black Fungus

Appearance: Black Fungus appears as a shapeless black furry mass covering a large area (based on the size of the fungus – from 1' square to 100 square meters).

Demeanor: This alien fungus has no sentience and responds only to base stimuli.

Power: 5% (1)

Defense: 0% (see Special)

Health: 24

Move: n/a

Init: 0

Damage: special

Special: when touched, Black Fungus affixes itself to any non-ceramic surface. If that surface contains nitrogen or oxygen compounds (like human skin, space-suit seals, or any other organic material) the fungus begins growing into the material. In the first hour this growth and decomposition only inflicts 5 Health points of damage, but this damage doubles every 15 minutes if the fungi are not carefully cleaned off. Black Fungus is susceptible only to heat damage and caustic (base) chemical anti-fungal agents. Even in death, Black Fungus acts as an amplifier and line repeater for chemical (smell-based) signals.

Fungus Zombies (3 only)

Appearance: This creature appears to be a human upon which black Spanish moss grows in profusion. In particular the heads of these beings retain almost no human characteristics but instead appear to be comprised of tentacle-like strands of lichen or fungus.

Demeanor: These creatures are fully intelligent and seek to destroy the characters so that they might complete the task of invading the colony's artificial intelligence using Yellow Fungus.

Power: 30%

Defense: 15%

Health: 35

Move: 7

Init: +10% (+2)

Damage: tentacle (X3 each) 1d6 +1 and chance of infection (25%)

Special: Energy weapons do not damage these creatures. If wounded, it exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe in a 20-foot area around it. Anyone infected by the spores of the fungi gradually becomes a new colony of fungi in 6 hours to 3 days. The only remedy is to cut the infected flesh from the victim, or to douse the victim in caustic fluid (which harms the fungus for 4-24 points of damage).



Mesmer Mushrooms (in groups of 6-36)

Appearance: These harmless-appearing fungi appear to be nothing more than common (although large) 12" tall mushrooms. They vary in color from dead-white to medium brown, and have caps 1"-16" in diameter.

Demeanor: These fungi are a new experiment by the Alien Master Fungi, and they are designed to allow the control of other sentient creatures. While the mushrooms themselves respond only to specific stimuli (they have no reasoning capacity), they automatically discharge their spore cloud if approached more closely than 10'. They may also be triggered by Alien Master Fungi if black fungi spores are present nearby to allow communication of this sort.

Power: 10% (2)

Defense: 5%(1)

Health: 8

Move: 0 (stationary)

Init: +10% (+2)

Damage: Spore Cloud (see special below)

Special: If approached more closely than 10', or if triggered by a scent-cue (like those used for communication by other alien fungi) Mesmer Mushrooms emit a dense cloud of psycho-active spores that cause any inhaling these micro-particles to become highly susceptible to suggestion via smell/scent communication. Those of particularly stout constitution occasionally spurn this effect (Avoidance is possible), but others become susceptible to the thoughts of any nearby (black fungus within 50') Alien Master Fungus colony for 10-60 (1d6 x10) minutes. *Note:* Unusual chemical combinations/smells in close proximity to a victim can both interfere with fungus control, and/or send unusual, often nonsensical and deadly commands (at your discretion).

Medium Spongoid

Appearance: Appearing as a 10' diameter, irregular, gray, sponge-like mass Medium Spongoids move by extending portions of their body mass (like pseudopods) forward and then drawing the main body mass after.

Demeanor: Mindless, Spongoids are drawn to non-electro-magnetic sources of power/radiation. Each alien spongoid is also drawn toward activated Zoombees.

Power: 40% (8)

Defense: 10% (2)

Health: 100

Move: 15

Init: 0

Damage: special — enveloping

Special: A successful attack by a Spongoid indicates the fungi creature has enveloped its target (or some portion thereof — these Spongoids are large enough to envelop a human character's limb, torso, or head, but not an entire human). The enveloped target may then attack from within the Spongoid, but suffers 3d8 damage per turn as the Spongoid exudes rhizomes (root-like tentacles) into the enveloped target which digest the victim with a highly corrosive acid. Medium Spongoids ingesting an entire human-sized opponent may grow to become Large Spongoids.)

Zoombee

Appearance: These 6" rubbery spheres are blue in color and move forward by rolling and bouncing unerringly towards their target.

Demeanor: Zoombees are able to identify materials that are foreign to the Dark Visitor. They pursue all foreign materials in an effort to make physical contact with any foreign object. Zoombees are similarly attracted to any object coated with Pink Fungus.

Power: 5% (1)

Defense: 30% (6), 60% (12) when activated

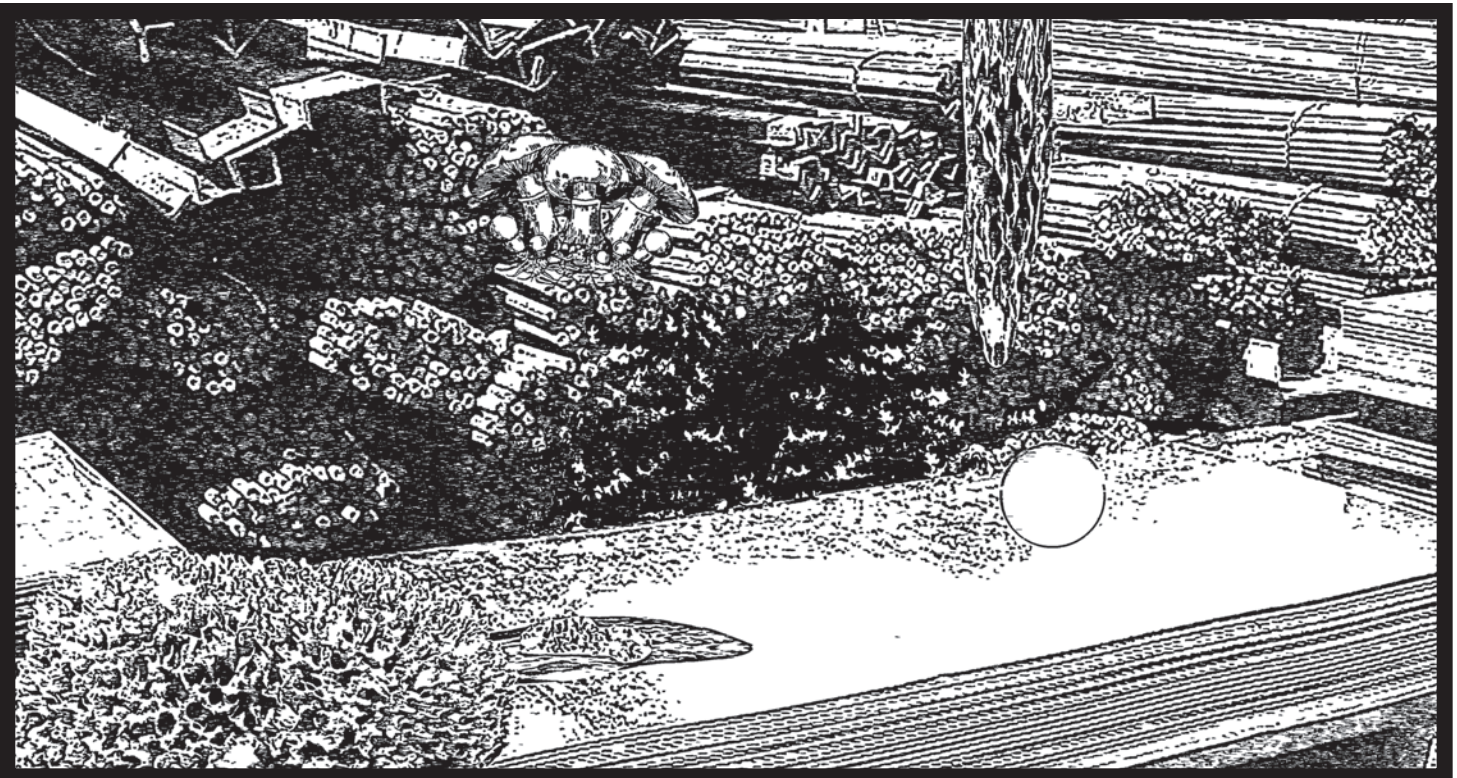
Health: 15

Move: 9

Init: +5%

Damage: special

Special: Zoombees attack by making physical contact with an object. Once contact has been established, they quickly activate, inflating to eight times their original size (about 2' in diameter), and enveloping a portion of their target when possible. The Zoombee then becomes rock hard (its defense becomes 60%) and inert. Equipment successfully attacked by a Zoombee becomes quickly useless (unless freed from the Zoombee) while characters lose 4" of movement and a degradation of 20% (-4) to any attacks, movement, or abilities used per Zoombee so attached. Activated Zoombees often whistle loudly in an attempt to attract other nearby Zoombees. This whistling can be heard for hundreds of yards if the conditions are favorable.



Dome #6

The sixth dome is inhabited by three Kask-controlled manzakium mudmen that are attempting to communicate via pictograms with the colonists. They are in the center of the dome, re-arranging the plowed dirt there to form a pictogram that they hope conveys the need for greater communication between the colony and the Kask entity, and the need for all manzakium mining to cease. A Yellow Fungus colony is stealthily approaching these three mudmen in hopes of gaining control of their actions.

***Note:** If the characters happen upon this dome late in their investigations (at your discretion), the Clay Constructs have finished their task and dissipated, having avoided the attack of the Yellow Fungus. Only the pictogram message remains in this case.*

As you gaze into this dome, a strange sight surprises you. Three anthropomorphic, 6' tall creatures appear to be moving dirt around in the center of this dome, to all appearances mimicking children playing in a sandbox.

Due to its relatively small size, the characters are unable to see the Yellow Fungus until they actual enter the dome and approach to within 50' of the mudmen. Should this occur, add:

The figures appear to be either men or women; it is difficult to tell, covered in layers of mud. They continue to move the dirt around without seeming to have noticed your entry into the dome. A strange yellow mass sends forth a pseudopod that it uses to pull itself silently forward towards the figures playing in the dirt. It does not appear that those playing in the dirt are aware of the approaching yellow mass either.

As the characters approach (to within 50'), the Yellow Fungus is preparing to strike at the first Clay Construct. The fungus attacks the following round, with a 50% chance (due to their less-than normal electronic nature) of gaining control of each construct (one/turn) and then causing them to attack the characters. Constructs not controlled by the fungus ignore the characters unless attacked by them, instead attacking the Yellow Fungus. Once the fungus has been defeated, the constructs silently continue their work on the pictogram for five further minutes (if unmolested) before surreptitiously disintegrating before the character's eyes.

Yellow Fungus

Appearance: Yellow fungus appears as a film that covers 4 to 8 square feet. It extrudes a psuedopod that is about 3 inches in diameter, and that also appears to be made of the powdery yellow fungoid material.

Demeanor: This Yellow fungus seeks to control one or more of the Clay Constructs as it senses they contain a mineral-based data-processing system (the manzakium operating within their forms). It ignores the characters unless they attack, but shifts its (attack) focus to the party in the event they do so.

Power: 10%

Defense: 10%

Health: 1

Move: 3

Init: +75%

Damage: electronic takeover of equipment

Special: Yellow fungi can form a psuedopod that extends for up to 20 feet, seeking out any equipment that has a data processor. A successful hit indicates that the fungus has gained control of the equipment, and the game master should then use whatever attack seems appropriate to simulate the equipment attacking the character. Yellow fungus can cause no harm to actual humans without the intervention of a data processing device. Yellow Fungus is unaffected by kinetic(impact based) attacks.

Clay Constructs (mud men)

Appearance: These manifestations of the Kask Entity are mud mannequins formed in the rough shape of humans in bio-suits; their appendages seem to flow as they flex and grow, then shrink. They range in size from 5'-8' and are bulky and wide.

Demeanor: These constructs are slow but implacable in their movements and intent; they are controlled and directed by the entity. If "defeated" or otherwise subdued, they will simply melt back into the soil from which they emerged.

Power: 35%

Defense: 10%

Move: 20'

Health: 60

Init: Very slow -10%

Damage: 5d4

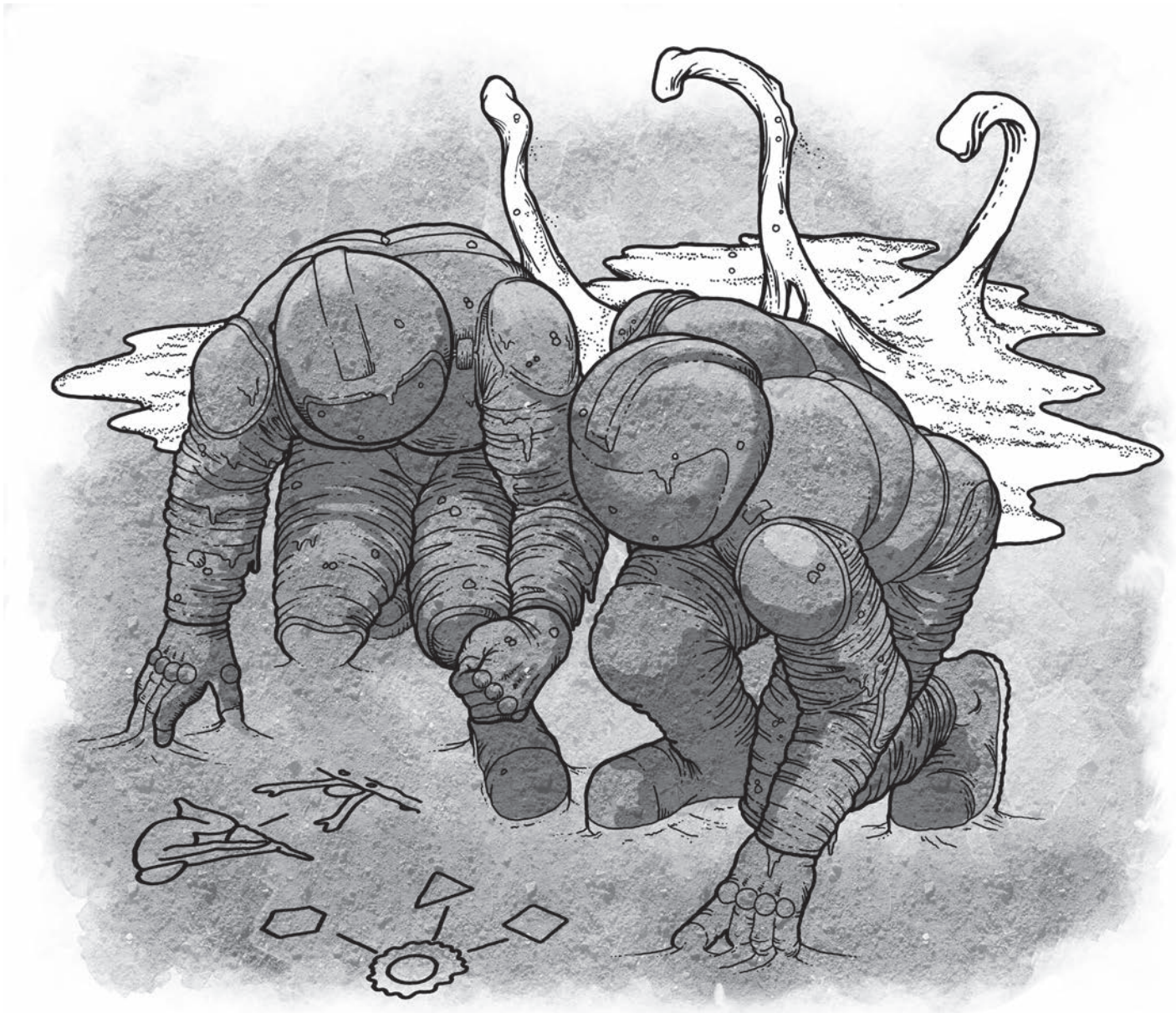
Special: Projectiles or thrusting weapons have no effect upon clay constructs; they are simply absorbed into the body. If a clay construct is able to grasp a PC long enough and is of sufficient size, the construct could attempt to absorb the PC, leading to its inevitable demise from suffocation.

Once the constructs have either been defeated or have disintegrated, only the message remains. If any character bothers to so much as look at the area where the figures appeared to be playing in the dirt:

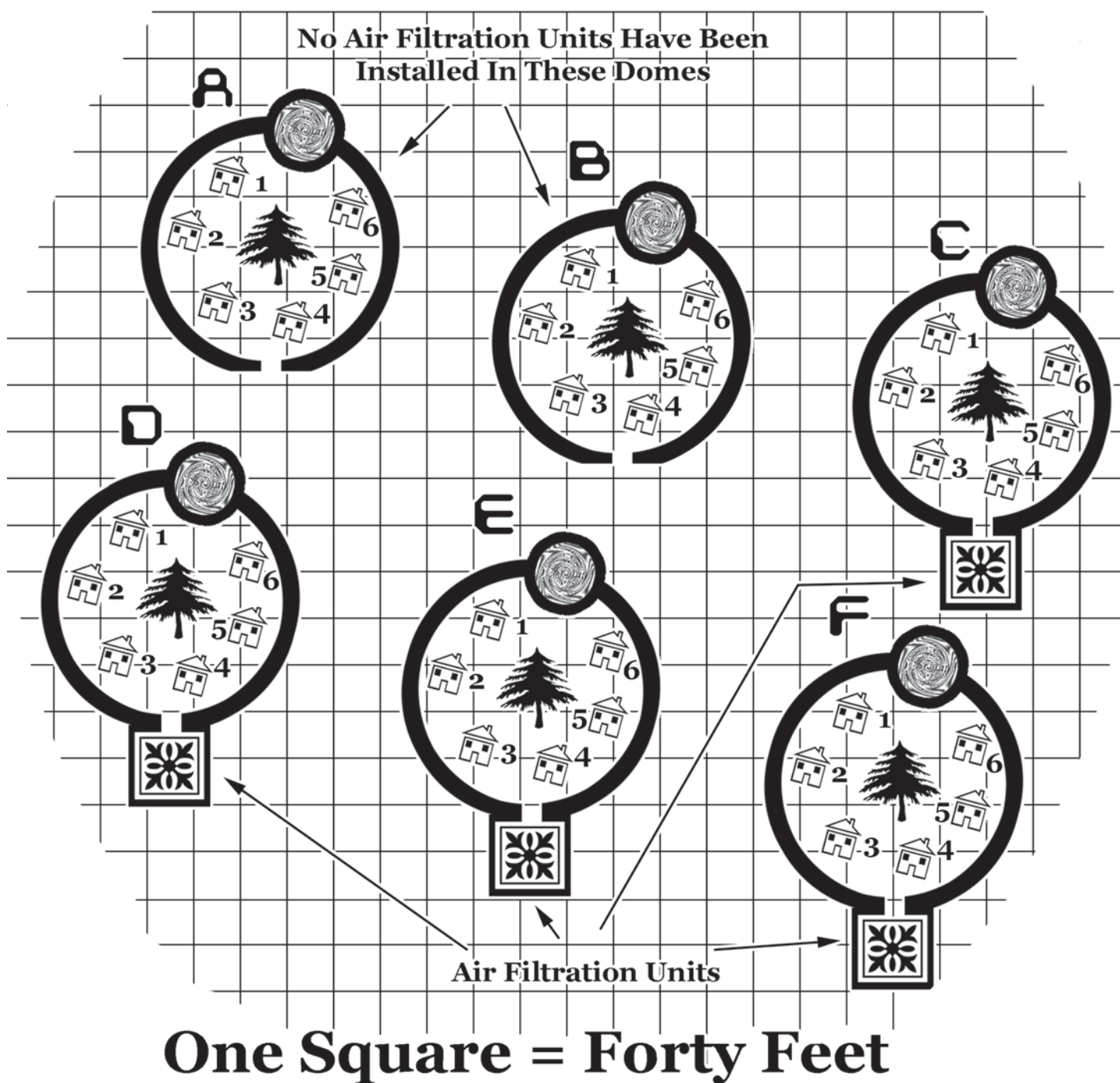
The mud figures seemed to have formed a crude set of drawings in the loose dirt. The first appears to be a round object with a halo or force field around it. Several lines connect this round, halo-enshrouded object to several pictures of geometric shapes. There is also a picture of a humanoid digging with his hands, and a line leads from that to a picture of a humanoid drowning in either quicksand or mud.

Characters that discover a means for preserving these images (taking a picture, for instance) receive a handsome reward (\$2000 suggested) if this picture is presented to Fleet upon the party's return. It also allows the players to study the images later if they wish.

Characters may be able to salvage various metal-working and wood-working tools from these under-construction habitation domes, at your discretion.



ENCOUNTER AREA #8: PERMANENT HABITATION DOMES



ENCOUNTER AREA #8: PERMANENT HABITATION DOMES

The permanent residence domes found in this area are complete, although two of them (due to a shortage of equipment — a long overdue delivery from the Planet Kask Outpost) are still missing their air filtration units. These two domes are still accessible without using an airlock as an empty 6' diameter ductwork left to accommodate these air purification units provides ready access for those wishing to make alternate entry.

Each of the finished domes contains 6 four-bedroom houses complete with three bathrooms that are designed for family or small group use. These domes are currently occupied by all colony residents (hence the need for Area #7) although these domes are intended for use only by either long term or permanent residents of the colony. These domes are only accessible through the lengthy removal of the outer protective housing of the air filtration unit (6 hours) or via the air locks that are meant to provide access to these domes. These airlocks require minor security clearance (registered colonist level) to use the airlock control (this can be a code, an ID badge, or whatever best fits your campaign).

As any character approaches one of these domes:

A group of smaller domes some 30' in height and 200' in diameter lie directly ahead, some 50'-60' from your current position. Each of them has an airlock with a keypad providing an obvious means of entry.

If either of the domes without air filtration units (Domes A or B) are approached, they are as yet uninhabited and appear almost as though they were constructed as an advertisement for colonial housing. The domes contain pristine new homes, with a tree-filled garden occupying the center of each, but with no signs of movement or habitation. If the characters peer through the outer dome surface or manage to gain entry through either the open air filtration duct or the airlock:

All is quiet within the dome. Six modern 2-story houses, each approximately 2400 square feet in layout, ring the periphery of the dome, while the center is occupied by a well-tended flower garden with several trees at its center. Nothing moves, and stillness lies like a blanket across this area.

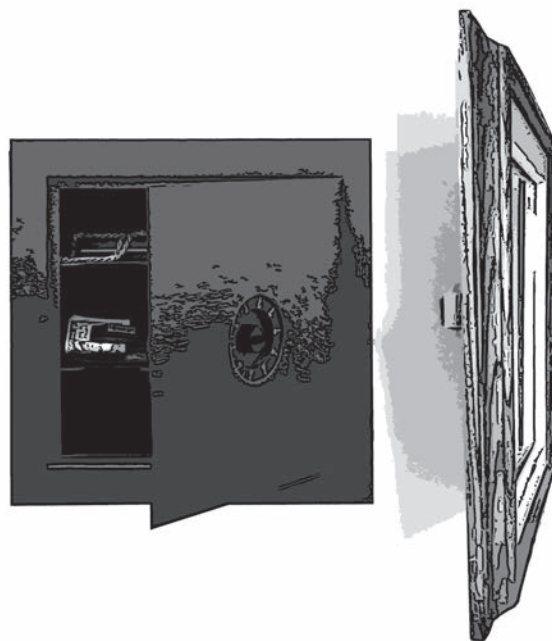
The other domes might be similarly described, but each contain homes being used by current colonists, and several have had fungal spores tracked into them by frightened colonists, thus inadvertently contaminating their otherwise secure inner environments. The relevant aspects of each are listed below, by house number (see map). The more generic aspects, such as their somewhat sparse furnishings (it is a new colony, after all) are left to your discretion, but feel free to add aspects of your own campaign to these domiciles.

Domes A&B are deserted, as described previously.

The contents of the inhabited domes, their homes and tenants, are listed below.

Dome C contains the homes of the administrative staff. No non-colonists encounters are present in Dome C.

House #C1: is the home of Colony Administrator *Jim Tallenger*. He is not at home right now but is holed up in his office in Area#6. A safe behind a painting in his bedroom, with a keypad lock, contains a bank card worth 12,000 credits/dollars, and a file containing evidence incriminating Fleet Commander James M. Warden in a smuggling operation. He also has two bottles of fine liquor in his refrigerator.



House #C2: is the home of the administrative staff and is shared by Logistics Expert Clark Turbo (*deceased – one of the Fungus Zombies in Area #6A*), and Resource Specialist Rafael Khomeni who has barricaded himself in his bedroom with a laser pistol and attacks anyone attempting to enter that he does not recognize as a colonist.

Rafael Khomeni (Human)

Appearance: Rafael is a 5'8" tall male human of medium build. He wears an official Fleet Mining Colony Uniform (description at your discretion) and usually carries a clipboard and pen. A laser Pistol is strapped to his right hip.

Demeanor: Rafael is very intelligent but is, at this time, slightly paranoid due to recent rather dramatic events. He parleys if not fired upon, and is a useful ally.

Power: 20%(4)

Defense: 10%(2)

Health: 9

Move: 12

Init: 0)

Damage: Laser Pistol (1D20 at +15%/+3 to hit) or Punch 1d3

Special: Rafael's Laser Pistol must be reloaded with a new battery after 10 shots. He has no spare batteries.

Rafael might be persuaded to come out of his bedroom peacefully by a charismatic party (at your discretion) but this should be no easy task. Diplomacy, rather than intimidation, is key to this negotiation.



House #C3: is the home of Chef Michael Wave (deceased, became a Fungus Zombie in Area #9, but is found in Area #6A), and his two assistants (also deceased – both are Fungus Zombies in Area #6A) Nutrition Specialist Gregor Andreav and Nutrition Specialist Urda Goloski live in this house. Gregor and Urda have obviously been sharing a bedroom. A jeweled scimitar is on display in an otherwise empty bedroom.

House #C4: is the home of Computer Specialist Hal Snyder. He is not at home right now but is holed up in his office in Area#6. A complete programmers kit (provides 20% to all 'hacking' and computer security skill checks) is in his 2nd floor closet.

House #C5: is the home of Deck Engineer (space dock manager) Eran Chenault. She was exposed to the fungus during the initial shuttle landing and is now a Fungus Zombie in Area 4 K. She shares this house with her two subordinates: Deck Specialist Aisel Farnor and Deck Specialist Sam Weich who both suffered fates identical to her own. Hanging on a hook in their kitchen is a master key that starts all vehicles in the colony.

House #C6: is shared by Habitat Engineer Ted Giovanni (construction supervisor), Life Support Engineer Jeff Goswell (internal and electrical systems supervisor), Fabrication Engineer Chip Meyers (in charge of manufacturing new materials as needed). Ted has become a Fungus Zombie in Dome D, while Chip has barricaded himself in his workshop (Area #12) where he is diligently working on several problems. LSE Jeff Goswell became a Fungus Zombie in Area #4C while trying to fix reported problems with the building's quarantine protocols.

Dome D

Dome D has been compromised, although it appears as though all is normal, if a bit quiet. Habitat Engineer Ted Giovanni, doing a routine check of the occupied domes, tracked fungal spores into his home which converted him into a Fungus Zombie as he slept. This Fungus Zombie then opened the airlock to see why it had been separated from the rest of its kind, and received spore cloud (the normal method of fungus-to-fungus communication) instructions to allow a new strain of fungus to migrate into the dome as a means for laying a trap for any remaining humans. Dome D is heavily infested with this new ambush predator developed by the alien fungi: Drop Fungus.

Drop Fungus

Appearance: Drop Fungus appears as a gelatinous mass 12"-18" in diameter with several short but thick 6" long tentacles protruding from a slightly bulbous center. It mimics the colors of whatever surface it rests upon. These fungi tend to rest in elevated areas from which they can drop upon unsuspecting targets.

Demeanor: This alien fungus has no sentience and responds only to base stimuli. It senses chemical signatures through pores in its outer membrane and attacks due to erratic air movement, warmth, or if it senses organic carbon compounds.

Power: 5% (1)

Defense: 5%

Health: 9

Move: n/a

Init: 0

Damage: Digestive Acid 1d6

Special: When an attack by this fungus is successful, it indicates that the fungus has adhered itself to its target with a strong digestive acid glue. This glue both makes the Drop Fungus difficult to remove (70# pressure or more is required) and allows the fungus to digest whatever it has dropped upon (1d6 per combat round after an initial hit is indicated, until such time as the creature is either destroyed or removed). As the digestive acid of this creature is sulfuric in nature, it has no effect on ceramics or silicon (glass, for example).

Drop Fungi tend to form clusters of 2-12 colonies that all hide themselves within a 20 square foot area.

This dome also contains the Fungus Zombie that was once HE Ted Giovanni.



Fungus Zombie

Appearance: This creature appears to be a human upon which black Spanish moss grows in profusion. In particular the heads of these beings retain almost no human characteristics but instead appear to be comprised of tentacle-like strands of lichen or fungus.

Demeanor: These creatures are fully intelligent and seek to destroy the characters so that they might complete the task of invading the colony's artificial intelligence using Yellow Fungus.

Power: 30%

Defense: 15%

Health: 35

Move: 7

Init: +10% (+2)

Damage: tentacle (X3 each) 1d6 +1 and chance of infection (25%)

Special: Energy weapons do not damage these creatures. If wounded, it exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe in a 20-foot area around it. Anyone infected by the spores of the fungi gradually becomes a new colony of fungi in 6 hours to 3 days. The only remedy is to cut the infected flesh from the victim, or to douse the victim in caustic fluid (which harms the fungus for 4-24 points of damage).

The homes in this area contain foodstuffs and minor items of value (like jewelry), and should be populated as you see fit.

HE Ted Giovanni (the Fungus Zombie) remains motionless awaiting further orders from the spore cloud within whichever of the six dwellings you decide. The Drop Fungus is found within all six houses. Again, apply them as you see fit.

Dome E

Dome E is, at the time of the characters' arrival, the scene of a heated debate among the 'at-home' residents of Domes E and F. Once the characters have opened the inner airlock (due to the sound-deadening intervention of the dome), the sound of raised voices is heard by all.

Note: The colonists here have been 'trapped in their homes' for days now, out-of-touch with occurrences within the colony as Joe Galligear is currently jamming all communications, even those within the dome. It is no surprise that Russel Ank decided to check up on his friend after having worried about her for that length of time. All of the colonists are nervous, 'on edge', and react with less reason than they might otherwise display.

This habitation dome appears identical to the others, with six modern 2-story houses, each approximately 2400 square feet in layout, ringing the periphery of the dome, while the center is occupied by a well-tended flower garden with several trees at its center. What makes this dome unusual is that you hear the sound of human voices engaged in an obviously heated exchange.

The group is within House #2 of this dome debating the wisdom of securing their dome and awaiting rescue, attempting to make it to the space dock to secure transit off the planet, or fighting back against the fungus invaders. All in the group are aware of the fungus incursion into Dome D, and that the interior of the colony dome outside their current secure habitation dome, is likely unsafe.

If the characters listen carefully for a while, they discover that Thor E. Myerson (Survey Team Leader), Tatham Glass (Survey Team), Bruce Lightner (Chemist), and Trixie Montoja (Lab Assistant) think the group should 'shelter in place', while Russel Ank (Mining Specialist Team Leader), Nueller Pfill Canwyne (Mining Specialist), Emma Nignon (Mining Specialist), and Eldin Looper (Physicist) feel the chances of survival are better if they make a run for the space dock. In any event, if the characters decide to enter the house (#2), the colonists there are quite surprised.

As you open the door to the house, all talking immediately ceases. "Who's there?" a frightened voice from an unseen room asks, accompanied by the sound of a chair being pushed back and approaching footsteps. As you prepare to reply, a human armed with a Laser pistol rounds the counter and demands, "Stop right where you are!"

The human is Russel Ank, a man of action who has been pushed to the limits of his courage by recent events. If the characters take any action that might be construed (or misconstrued) as aggressive, Russel opens fire. If the characters all act very carefully and calmly, Russel eventually realizes that the party might very well be the rescue for which they have been waiting.



Russel Ank (Human)

Appearance: Russel is a 6'1" powerfully-built male human. He wears an official Fleet Mining Colony Uniform (description at your discretion) and carries a laser pistol in his right hand.

Demeanor: Russel is very intelligent but is, at this time, highly paranoid due to recent rather dramatic events. He can be calmed, but only through dint of effort.

Power: 20%(4)

Defense: 10%(2)

Health: 9

Move: 12

Init: 0

Damage: Laser Pistol (1D20 at +15%/+3 to hit) or punch 1d3

Special: Russel's Laser Pistol must be reloaded with a new battery after 10 shots. He has no spare batteries.

If Russel is attacked, half of the other colonists also attack after the second combat round, and all are armed with laser pistols or knives. The other half of the colonists in attendance surrender.

Colonists (4) (Human)

Appearance: The colonists vary in height from 5'8" (Trixie) to more than 6' in height. All wear an official Fleet Mining Colony Uniform (description at your discretion) and carry either a knife or a laser pistol.

Demeanor: Most colonists are specialists in their field and have unique skills (that you should assign). All are slightly paranoid due to recent rather dramatic events. All parley if not fired upon, and can be a useful allies.

Power: 20%(4) **Defense:** 10%(2)
Health: 8 **Move:** 12
Init: 0)

Damage: Laser Pistol (1D20 at +15%/+3 to hit) or knife 1d6

Special: Laser Pistols must be reloaded with a new battery after 10 shots. This group has no spare batteries.

In this eventuality, Bruce Lightner, Eldin Looper, and Tatham Glass surrender, and are the only survivors (unless the character party is instead defeated).

If the characters instead manage to peacefully introduce themselves, the colonists in attendance inform them of the new Drop Fungus that has invaded Dome D, and that the entire colony is supposed to be in 'shelter-in-place' lockdown by order of the Administrator, Jim Tallenger' as of seven days ago. Russel went to Dome D to see if his friend Shara Leeson ever made it home following her shift at the medical center, and discovered the fungal infestation, barely escaping with his life. He resealed Dome D, and proceeded to Dome F where he asked Bruce, Eldin and Trixie to come to an impromptu meeting at his house in Dome E. He then rounded up everyone that was within Dome E and started the meeting that the character party interrupted.

In talking with the colonists, it emerges that Bruce remembers that two of his other dome-mates, Angela Parrette and Laura Sherwood, were planning to head over to the science labs (Area #11) to investigate a new flower that they had read about in recent incident reports. Bruce also remembers that they gave him the reports in an effort to solicit his help as well...

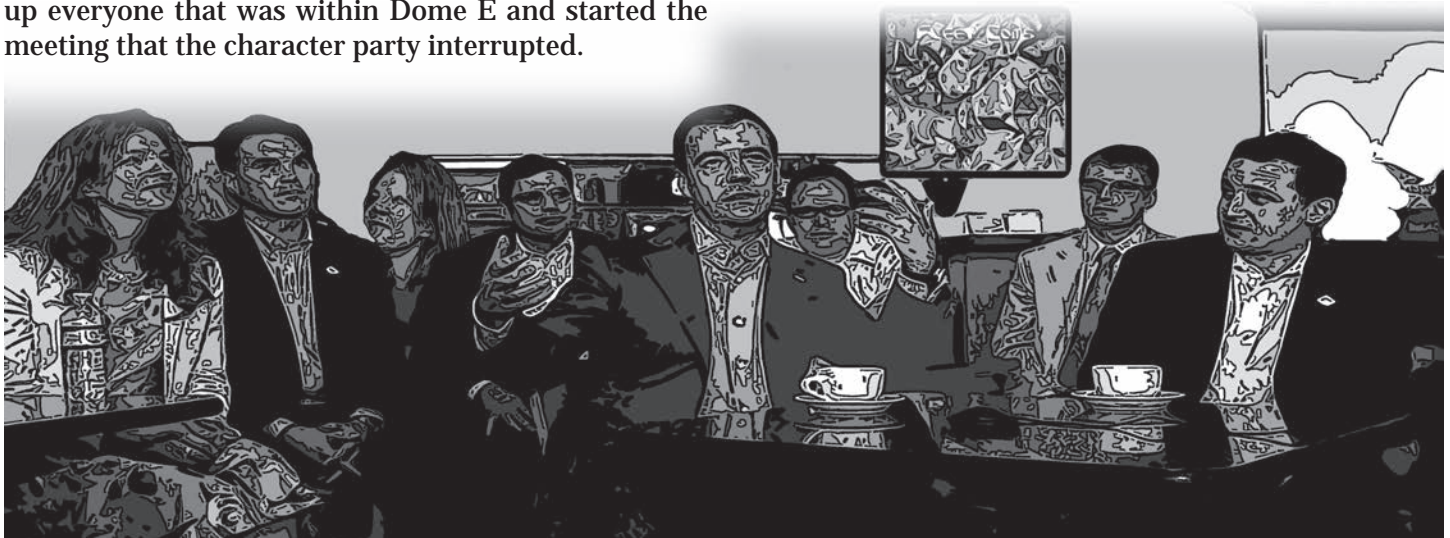
...and that these Incident Reports are now atop his coffee table in Dome F, House #2.

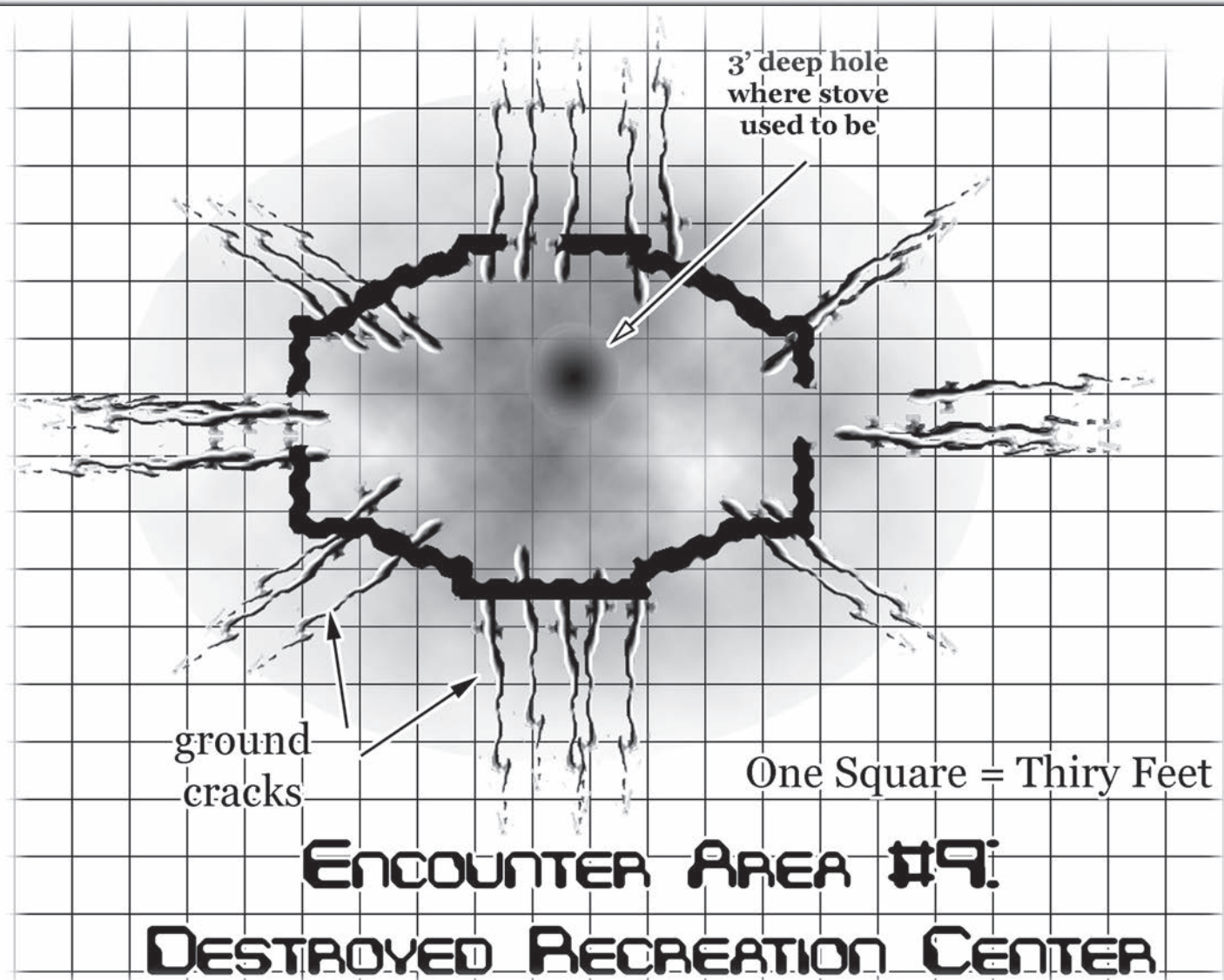
If the characters decide to bring the colonists with them (to protect them) these additional add-on members to the party slow their movements, and complicate combat in ways that only you as Game Master might determine. If they help the colonists to fortify the house, and the dome, to 'shelter-in-place', the colonists eventually suffocate (in 26 hours as the air supply begins to stale in 20 hours). If they manage to rescue the colonists in some manner before they leave the colony, however, their reward from Fleet should be quite substantial.

None of the colonists that live in Dome F are 'too keen' on allowing the characters to enter their homes unaccompanied, nor are the colonists happy if the characters investigate the homes within this dome (E).

Dome F

The homes in this area contain foodstuffs and minor items of value (like jewelry), and should be populated as you see fit. House #2 does indeed contain printed copies of Incident Report #8 and Incident Report #9.





ENCOUNTER AREA #9: RECREATION CENTER

The Recreation Center was the colonists' place to relax, eat a communal meal, or perhaps watch a movie with friends. It had a pool table, computer games, a ping-pong table and a large kitchen and eating area. Fueled by a new state-of-the-art manzakium stove (designed by Chip Meyers), it was a comfortable hangout that was now prepared to serve comfort food... until the manzakium stove was first turned on.

The activated manzakium caused the Planet Kask Entity great irritation; almost as though it had gotten sand in its eyes. Its response was immediate, the results, catastrophic. A localized kaskquake struck the building at the same moment that a large pocket of methane gas was both gathered beneath the building, and ignited. Characters approaching this area see the devastation at a distance of 150' (or more at your discretion). Incident Report #4 describes this event.

In the distance you see the twisted and burnt walls of what might once have been a building. Great cracks spread outwards from its blackened base across the ground, narrowing with distance. Some of these cracks stop only 20' from your current position.

Characters investigating the ruined building discover no trace as to the cause of the disaster, but scans with electronics yield both trace particles of manzakium and a stable electro-magnetic field. If this field is analyzed by characters with either linguistic or computer skills, it is quickly discovered that the field forms binary patterns. Particularly skilled characters (multiple successful skill checks, or at your discretion) might actually uncover the message left by the Kask Entity:

"Leave Me Alone!"

ALERT HYDROPONIC FARM HOME OF THE MAGIC MUSHROOM ALERT

ENCOUNTER AREA #10: HYDROPONIC FARM

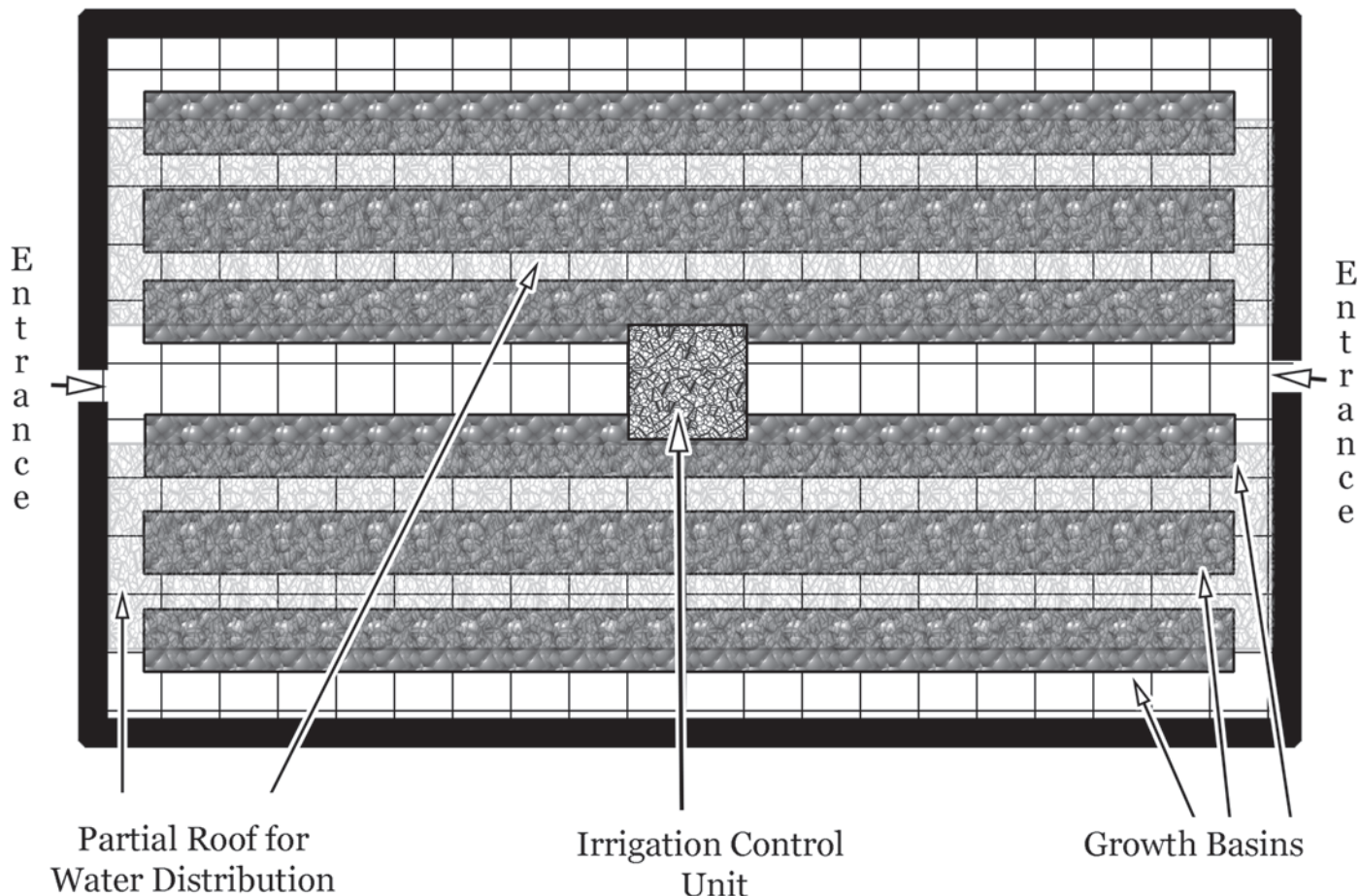
Intended both as a means for helping to filter carbon-dioxide from the dome's atmosphere, and as a means for providing provisions to the colonists in the event of interruptions to normal resupply, the hydroponic dome is an open-air building with no doors and only a partial roof comprised of an irrigation network. Although planting is performed by colonists, watering operations are entirely automated.

This building has thick but transparent walls, and seems to contain shelves filled with plants. Its roof is made of a translucent, fibrous material that covers only a portion of the building; near its outer walls the building is open to the air of the colony dome.

You can also see a colonists working within the building.

The fungal invaders have taken over this building, and the plants now being grown within are Mesmer Mushrooms. A Fungus Zombie, once Micro-biologist Wilhemena Rheingeld, is painstakingly planting ever more of these mind-altering fungi as the Alien Master Fungus in Area#6 hopes to use them to convert the rest of the surviving colonists to the fungal cause. Some of this becomes apparent to the characters as they enter this building.

ENCOUNTER AREA #10: HYDROPONIC FARM



One Square = Twenty-Five Feet

Upon entering, you readily identify this building as a hydroponic farm. An overhead network of fibrous material constantly drips water into basins below, feeding the plants growing there. Strangely, the entire farm seems to be producing mushrooms at this time. A colonist in a yellow hazardous material body suit is attending these plants.

Any characters able to notice this are now close enough to become subject to the psycho-active spores of the mushrooms here. Any failing to avoid their effect immediately, and wordlessly, move to help the colonist (seen from outside the building and now near the center next to the irrigation control unit) that appears to be planting still more mushrooms. Once any character that has avoided the effect of the Mesmer Mushrooms approaches this colonist, they discover that it is in fact a Fungus Zombie.

As you approach, the figure turns towards you and you now see that its yellow hazardous material suit contains not the smiling face of a colonist, but instead the writhing tentacles of a mutated fungus!

Note: Due to the Mesmer Mushrooms, those characters failing to avoid their psycho-active spores fight on the side of the Fungus Zombie, attacking their fellow party members.

Mesmer Mushrooms (in groups of 6-36)

Appearance: These harmless-appearing fungi appear to be nothing more than common (although large) 12" tall mushrooms. They vary in color from dead-white to medium brown, and have caps 1"-16" in diameter.

Demeanor: These fungi are a new experiment by the Alien Master Fungi, and they are designed to allow the control of other sentient creatures. While the mushrooms themselves respond only to specific stimuli (they have no reasoning capacity), they automatically discharge their spore cloud if approached more closely than 10'. They may also be triggered by Alien Master Fungi if black fungi spores are present nearby to allow communication of this sort.

Power: 10% (2) **Defense:** 5%(1)
Health: 8 **Move:** 0 (stationary)
Init: +10% (+2)
Damage: Spore Cloud (see special)

Special: If approached more closely than 10', or if triggered by a scent-cue (like those used for communication by other alien fungi) Mesmer Mushrooms emit a dense cloud of psycho-active spores that cause any inhaling these micro-particles to become highly susceptible to suggestion via smell/scent communication. Those of particularly stout constitution occasionally spurn this effect (Avoidance is possible), but others become susceptible to the thoughts of any nearby (black fungus within 50') Alien Master Fungus colony for 10-60 (1d6 x10) minutes.

Note: Unusual chemical combinations/smells in close proximity to a victim can both interfere with fungus control, and/or send unusual, often nonsensical and deadly commands (at your discretion).

Fungus Zombie

Appearance: This creature appears to be a yellow hazardous materials suit filled with writhing tentacles of black Spanish moss.

Demeanor: This creature is fully intelligent and seeks to destroy the resisting characters so that those who are now its thralls (due to the intervention of the Mesmer Mushrooms) might help complete the task of subjugating the entire colony, and planet.

Power: 30% **Defense:** 15%
Health: 35 **Move:** 7
Init: +10% (+2)
Damage: tentacle (X3 each) 1d6 +1 and chance of infection (25%)

Special: Energy weapons do not damage these creatures. If wounded, it exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe in a 20-foot area around it. Anyone infected by the spores of the fungi gradually becomes a new colony of fungi in 6 hours to 3 days. The only remedy is to cut the infected flesh from the victim, or to douse the victim in caustic fluid (which harms the fungus for 4-24 points of damage).

Beneath the hazardous material suit worn by this Fungus Zombie there is a name tag identifying the original owner of this garment: Micro-biologist Wilhemena Rheingeld.

Should any character utterly destroy this building, and its fungal contents, the Planet Kask Entity views this as a positive sign that the colonists (and their human ilk) might actually make worthy allies.

ENCOUNTER AREA #11: SCIENTIFIC LABORATORIES

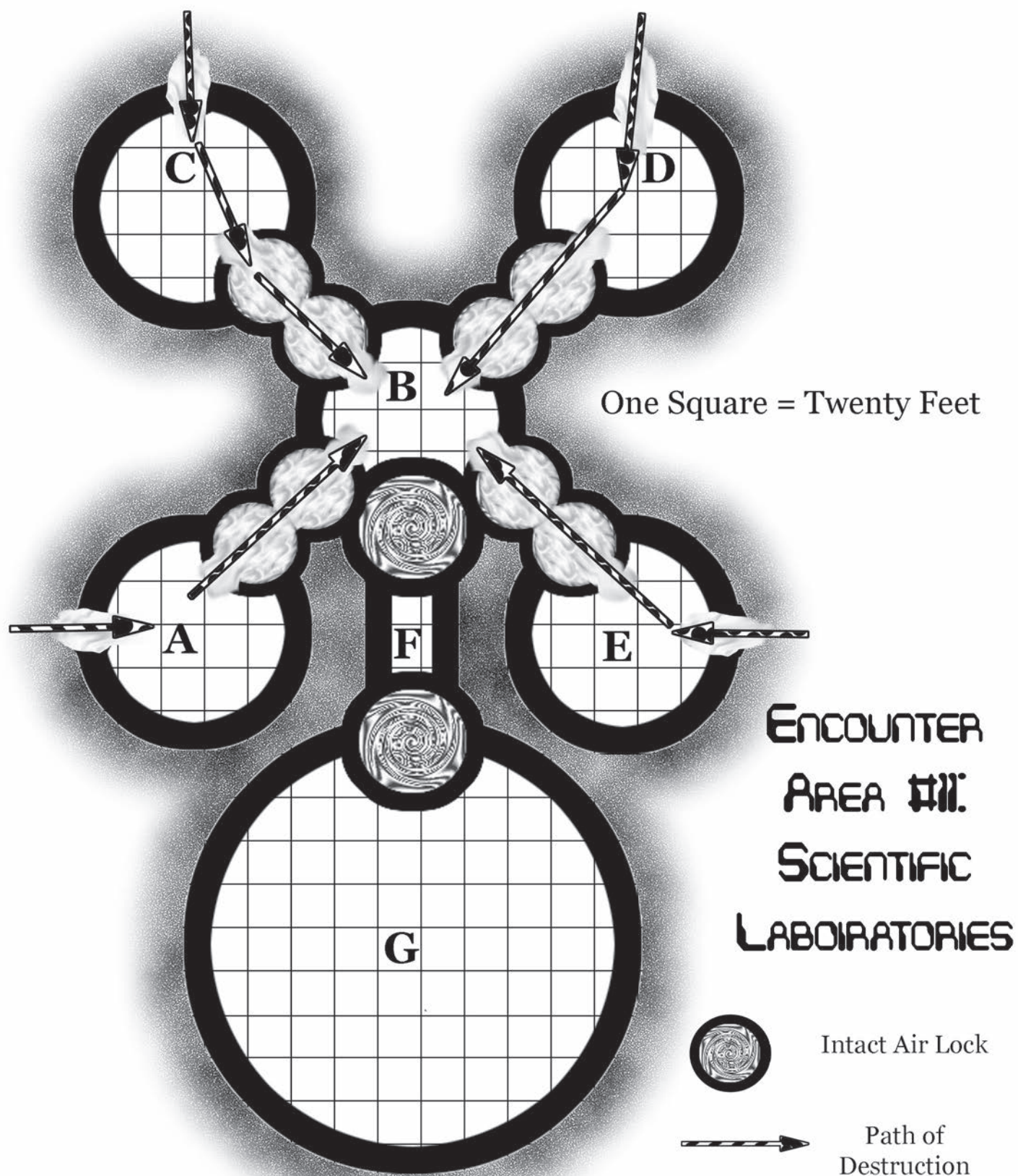
One of the first buildings to be finished once the colony's dome was in place, the scientific laboratories building houses all of the materials and safeguards necessary for experimentation with potentially hazardous new chemical compounds found upon the planet, as well as new life forms, minerals, energy sources — virtually any new scientific discovery that might be made. The laboratories are sequestered from the colony according to the danger level experiments conducted within them might represent. Simple biological and geological testing labs have the easiest access, while those that pose greater risk are separated from the interior of the dome by ever increasing security, blast walls, and blast-proof (ok, resistant) air locks.

Currently, the entire laboratory building is a shambles as the Kask entity does its best to interpret (yes, interpret) what is occurring within its heavy walls. The characters easily note this chaos as they approach.

Note: It does not matter from which direction the characters approach as all of the entrances to the scientific laboratories have been similarly destroyed.

The building in the distance has plainly been assaulted, perhaps looted by unknown vandals. Its entrance door has been wrenched from its hinges by forces much greater than those possessed by the average human, and dents and mud surround the cradle that used to contain this entry barrier.





Once the characters approach closely enough to peer inside, add:

A path of destruction leads beyond the door and through the interior.

Steel tables lie overturned within the room beyond. Paperwork, glassware and instruments lie scattered on the floor.

Once they enter, use the specific description for that area listed hereafter. The characters also hear, unavoidably, the continuing destruction occurring in Area #11B once they are inside the complex.

As you enter, you hear a heavy banging noise in the distance. It is not unlike the sound made when a large metal object impacts a rock or other hard stationary object.

Area #11A: Biology Lab

The biology laboratory was used for the preliminary investigation of new life forms found on the planet, with those deemed hazardous being moved into Area B, the Bio-Hazard Lab. The mineral minions of the Kask entity, in their efforts to interpret the strange signals being broadcast to them from the High Energy Lab (Area G, as we shall see), searched relentlessly for manzakium, or anything that might mimic its function. They then pressed onward, smashing the air locks that once separated this lab from Area B, the Bio-Hazard Lab.

As you peruse the wreckage of this circular-shaped room you note a sign on its far wall: "Biology Lab". Files cover the floor here, intermixed with shattered beakers, and ruined equipment. An airlock beckons from the far portion of the curved wall, but it has also been destroyed in much the same manner as the entrance door. A red warning light above the airlock indicates that it is by no means sealed. Your eyes tell you that without significant repairs, it will never be sealed again.

Characters searching through the mess discover two useful items: A plastic canister containing 6 doses of Anti-Fungal Cream (one dose can cover an entire individual and destroys all fungus spores present), and a small plastic flip-box containing 6 pills labelled, "Broad-Spectrum Antibiotic" (one pill cures any disease a character might have 75% of the time).

If the characters pass through the two shattered air locks that lead from this area to area B, the heavy banging noises become progressively louder... and closer.

Area #11B: Bio-Hazard Lab

The Bio-Hazard Laboratory was constructed to prevent the passage of microscopic particles (as small as 1 Angstrom) rather than to contain the fury of Kask's mineral constructs, and the entire area is a complete shambles. No piece of equipment or furniture remains recognizable in this area; all have been used in one fashion or another to try and pry open the sealed airlock that leads to Area #4F. Three other smashed air locks lead to less-secure labs on this building's perimeter, while the one intact air lock (leading to area F) continues to stubbornly resist the continuing abuse of the constructs. The three anthropomorphic piles of animated stone continue to batter this airlock as the characters enter this area.

As you struggle through the wreckage of the connecting air lock, you see a scene of utter devastation beyond. Twisted hunks of metal that might once have been tables, chairs or delicate electronic instruments lay scattered about this area and smashed bits of air lock doors lie wrenched from their cradles upon the floor. Three other air lock openings lead from this area, and one air lock, still intact, is being beaten upon by three anthropomorphic figures that appear to be made of stone. They have no facial features or fingers, and continue to assault the remaining airlock door, apparently unaware of your arrival. A sign over the lone surviving air lock reads "Caution: High Energy Lab" and then beneath that, "Protective Gear Must Be Worn At All Times."

The mineral creatures do not allow access to the airlock door they are attempting to batter down, and marks upon this door prove that, eventually, they will succeed in opening this hardened edifice. If the characters simply leave this area to continue their exploration of Areas A-E, the mineral entities ignore them. If they hope to gain access to this air lock and the High Energy Lab, however, they must attack.

Mineral Constructs (3)

Appearance: These stone mannequins are formed in the rough shape of skinny humans in bio-suits. They range in size from 7'-9'. These are manifestations of the Kask entity made of a very hard crystalline substance rendering them extremely difficult to damage but rather vulnerable once they do sustain damage. They are nearly impervious to conventional beam weapons (they are reflected) and impact weapons and projectiles only inflict half of normal damaging effects.

Demeanor: These constructs are implacable, and react slowly due to the fact that they are 'remotely controlled' by the Kask Entity (which has quite a bit to keep track of). They are capable of denting and deforming duralumin alloy, given time. When no longer needed by the entity, they sink back into the soil as their components unbind. If indoors when deconstructed, these creatures leave behind a large pile of gravel laced with traces of manzakium.

Power: 20%

Defense: 95%

Move: 20'

Health: 20

Init: Normal

Damage: Arm Bash 5d8

Special: The high defense factor is indicative of the nature of the crystals from which it is fashioned. There is a 1 in 4 chance that any given mineral construct contains an element that is highly explosive. If a Mineral Construct is fired upon with energy or beam-type weapons, there is a 50% chance that it will reflect the energy back at the source with an addition of 20% more force or power. (E.g., if hit with a beam that inflicts 10 health loss, it reflects 12 health loss.)

Planet Kask's Mineral Constructs are highly susceptible to Electro-Magnetic Pulses which cause them to lose cohesion and disintegrate 75% of the time.



Note: On rare occasions (at your discretion) the materials used within a construct are volatile, and if hit with an energy-based attack, explode for 12d12 Health loss to all within 20' of the construct.

Opening the airlock to Area #11F is problematic for the characters, even if they defeat the mineral constructs, as the air lock controls have been smashed. If the characters are able to repair the airlock or blast it open (it withstands 240 points more of physical damage before buckling, and then opening), the air lock on the far side requires security clearance of engineering/science level to use the airlock control keypad (this can be a code, an ID badge, or whatever best fits your campaign). Should the party manage to circumvent all of this security, they may enter Area #11F.

Area #11C: Chemistry Lab

The chemistry laboratory was used for the preliminary investigation of new compounds found on the planet, as well as those developed by the engineers and chemists working in the colony. The mineral minions of the Kask entity, in their efforts to interpret the strange signals being broadcast to them from the High Energy Lab (Area G), searched relentlessly for manzakium, or anything that might mimic its function, destroying this entire area. They then pressed onward smashing the air locks that once separated this lab from Area B, the Bio-Hazard Lab.

As you peruse the wreckage of this circular-shaped room you note a sign on its far wall: "Chemistry Lab". Files cover the floor here, intermixed with shattered beakers, and ruined equipment. An airlock beckons from the far portion of the curved wall, but it has also been destroyed in much the same manner as the entrance door. A red warning light above the airlock indicates that it is by no means sealed. Your eyes tell you that without significant repairs, it will never be sealed again.

Characters thoroughly searching this area happen upon a heavy, sealed plastic container labelled "Hydrofluoric Acid". Characters with chemistry based skills or abilities recognize this immediately as an acid that eats through any substance (and quite rapidly at that) other than most plastics. The amount in this bottle will consume 35 cubic feet (one cubic meter) of material before dissipating and becoming harmless.





Area #11D: Geology Lab

The geology laboratory was used for the preliminary investigation of mining samples taken from the planet. The mineral minions of the Kask entity, in their efforts to interpret the strange signals being broadcast to them from the High Energy Lab (Area G), searched relentlessly for manzakium, or anything that might mimic its function, destroying this entire area. They then pressed onward smashing the air locks that once separated this lab from Area B, the Bio-Hazard Lab.

As you peruse the wreckage of this circular-shaped room you note a sign on its far wall: "Geology Lab". Files cover the floor here, intermixed with ruined equipment. An airlock beckons from the far portion of the curved wall, but it has also been destroyed in much the same manner as the entrance door. A red warning light above the airlock indicates that it is by no means sealed. Your eyes tell you that without significant repairs, it will never be sealed again.

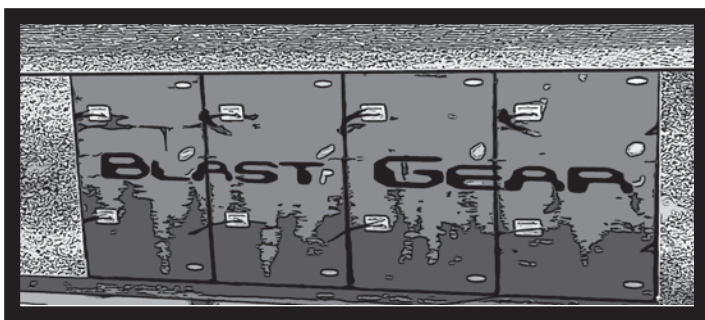
Characters thoroughly searching this area discover blast marks on several of the walls. Characters with knowledge of energy weapons recognize these marks as having been made by a laser pistol (*perhaps indicating that survivors are within as no bodies are present*).

Area #11E: Mechanical Engineering Lab

The mechanical engineering laboratory was used for stress testing fabricated parts, equipment, and mechanisms created by colony personnel. The mineral minions of the Kask entity, in their efforts to interpret the strange signals being broadcast to them from the High Energy Lab (Area G), searched relentlessly for manzakium, or anything that might mimic its function, leaving this entire area a maze of twisted and destroyed equipment. They then pressed onward smashing the air locks that once separated this lab from Area B.

As you peruse the maze of wreckage that fills this circular-shaped room you note a sign on its far wall: "Mechanical Engineering Lab". The ruined equipment here forms a maze that you will have to navigate if you wish to continue on into the complex. An airlock beckons from the far portion of the curved wall, but it has also been destroyed in much the same manner as the entrance door. A red warning light above the airlock indicates that without significant repairs, it too will never be sealed again.

Characters thoroughly searching this area discover nothing of any value.



Area #11F: Safety Zone for High Energy Lab

Entry into this area presumes that the character have gotten rid of the mineral constructs in Area #11B, and have defeated the security measures put in place to safeguard unauthorized use of the airlock that leads here from Area #11B.

This area is a remote control site for experiments being conducted in the High Energy Lab (Area #11G). Equipment here allows the remote instigation of experiments within area G, and several video screens allow the viewing of experiments in progress. It also contains 'Blast Gear' — Hazardous Material suits made to withstand fairly egregious explosions and the release of high energy plasma. These Blast Gear Suits withstand three times the amount of damage a normal space suit might absorb, and are impervious to all forms of radiation. They do not insulate their bearers from heat or cold, and are extremely cumbersome, cutting all activity by half (movement and actions).

As the air lock cycles shut, you survey the 20' wide by 40' deep room its far side. A row of lockers labelled, "Blast Gear" line one wall, while a control console with several joysticks takes up 12' of the opposite wall. Several view screens are also mounted on the wall containing the control console. At the far end of this rectangular room stands a heavily-built air lock door, complete with a controlling keypad. The door is labelled in large red letters, "Blast Door".

Characters studying the view screens notice 3 humanoid figures in a laboratory setting aiming a 2' radio dish at a strange yellow flower. Characters studying the control console with any electronics skills quickly discern the nature of the controls there, including a robotic arm that may be used via one of the joysticks, and a microphone for communicating with others that might be in the High Energy lab area.

Using the console, the characters may readily communicate with Xeno Biologist Angela Parrette, Botanist Laura Sherwood, and Laboratory Assistant Margaret Hinch, the three colonists within the high energy lab that are trying to receive and send messages to they-know-not-what-as-yet using the strange yellow flower. Angela discovered that the flower was putting out low-EM band radio signals, and was experimenting with the flower in the Geology Lab (Area #11D) with Margaret and Laura when the mineral constructs began breaking down the lab's outer door. Angela tried to stop them, in vain, with a few shots from her laser pistol before retreating to the high energy lab, with both her assistants and the flower, to continue their work. Angela can be persuaded to allow the characters to enter the high energy lab, or the characters may either satisfy or circumvent the security of the air lock (which again has an engineering level clearance requirement). None of these three scientists are aware of the psycho-active properties of these flowers as they have only handled them while wearing protective suits.

The flower is a hybrid developed via chemical manipulation by the Planet Kask Entity from a Mesmer Mushroom. Angela and Laura are unaware of its origin, but knew that a sample had been retrieved from The Brow, Area #16D.

Characters attacking the colonists within the high energy lab by using the robotic arms that are linked to the console only succeed in convincing the colonists that they cannot be trusted. If so attacked, Angela pulls her laser pistol and destroys the cameras that feed the view screens as well as the robotic arm hydraulics. Angela and her assistants then, over a period of half an hour, discern a means for communicating with the Planet Kask Entity. Kask then sends 6 mineral constructs to rescue his newly-found colonist friends from their hated character enemies.

Note: there is an excellent chance that the characters, if they make it this far, gain an understanding that the flower is capable of linking a human mind with the mind of the Planet Kask Entity. It is left to your discretion as to whether or not, and how readily, this might occur.

Area #11G: High Energy Lab

Characters gaining entrance to this area have either hacked their way in (in which case a battle occurs – see below) or have gained the trust of Angela, Laura, and Margaret. As the situation is highly volatile, you will undoubtedly need to adjust the following description to match recent events.

The three scientists look up as you enter, their attention diverted from the strange flower they have been studying that sits atop a plastic table within the lab. A 2' radio dish is pointed at the flower, and several nearby view screens are covered with bar graphs. A control keyboard is connected to these view screens by insulated wires.

If the characters are there to help, the three colonists are very grateful, and work with the characters in whatever fashion the party deems best.

If the characters threaten or attack the three scientists, Laura and Margaret surrender, but Angela, wearing Blast Gear, defends herself.

Angela Parrette (Human)

Appearance: Angela appears much larger than she is as she is wearing Blast Gear; a bulky Hazardous Materials suit that makes her 6'4" tall with a mass of 300#. The suit is bright orange with a clear (but very thick) face mask. Angela carries a laser pistol.

Demeanor: Angela feels betrayed by the characters if she is prompted to attack, and will not surrender under any circumstance.

Power: 20%(4)

Defense: 90%(18 – See Special)

Health: 240, then 8 (see Special)

Move: 6

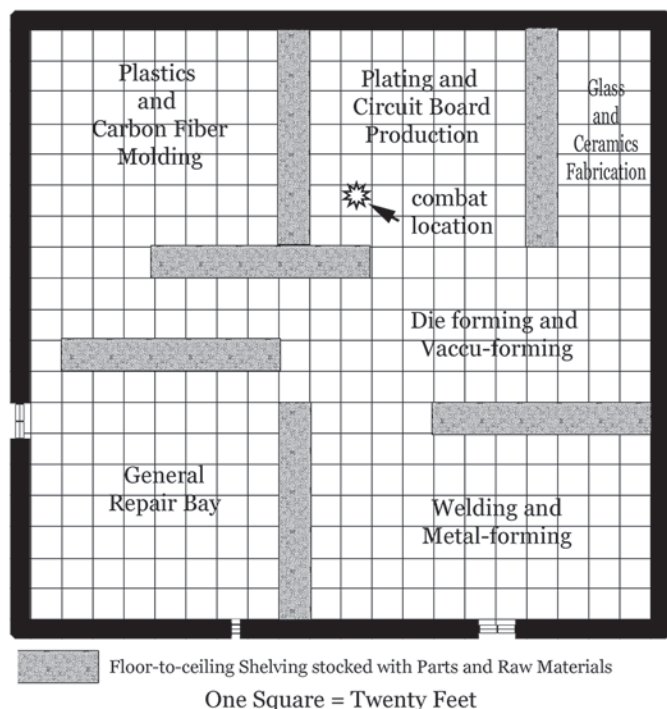
Init: 0

Damage: Laser Pistol (1D20 at +15%/+3 to hit) or knife 1d6

Special: Laser Pistols must be reloaded with a new battery after 10 shots and Angela has no spare batteries. Angela is encumbered by her suit, and fires only every other combat round. Angela's Blast Gear absorbs all incoming damage and withstands 240 points of damage before any damage can bleed through to Angela. Even once damaged, the protective nature of the suit is such that her defense remains 90%.



ENCOUNTER AREA #12: THE WORKSHOP



Something has attacked this building, wrenching open its large 30'-wide utility door several feet. You can see that the door has been dented and deformed even at this distance.

Chip Meyers first attempted to improve the operation of the Air Filtration Unit (Area #14) by adding a Manzakium Multiplier that he had invented to its ionizer. He installed the unit, and returned to this area (The Workshop) unaware that he had created an irritation to the Planet Kask Entity (see Incident Report #5). As the problem seemed to be a complete overload of the filtration circuitry, Chip spent a day and a half rebuilding the original filtration unit (without his new multiplier) and decided to run a few more tests before once again attempting to install what he now deemed, 'a risky device'.

Four days later (7 days ago) a sudden increase in pressurization within the dome (internal dome air pressure spiked to 204 milibars almost instantly, and very rapidly thereafter declined) again overloaded the filtration unit, and Chip had to replace the seals within its mechanical workings. It was later discovered that an explosion within the Recreation Center, (for which Chip's manzakium stove improvement was blamed) caused this unprecedented spike.

The current shutdown of the entire Atmospheric Filtration Unit and the colony's Power Plant has had Chip perplexed, and working, for the last three days. He no longer experiments with manzakium as his future lack of a job was mentioned as potential consequence of so doing by Colony Administrator Jim Tallenger after the Recreation Center 'incident'.

Yesterday, Chip was remanufacturing (a re-plating process that produced a strong EMF field) the turbine for the power plant (Area #14) when the mineral entities first attacked the workshop. Aided by his friend Security Specialist Alice Danvers, he pushed the entities back out the door with an earth moving tractor (like a bulldozer) and sealed the workshop doors against further intruders. They began pounding in the doors immediately thereafter but ceased some hours later when Chip finished the re-plating process (and the EMF field ceased).

ENCOUNTER AREA #12: THE WORKSHOP

The Workshop is a warehouse-like structure of great size (16,000 square feet, 1500 square meters) constructed to facilitate the onsite repair of damaged equipment, and the fabrication of equipment for which a need develops. It contains metal forming and metal cutting equipment, a laser cutting die and mold maker, welding equipment, and a 4-ton press. Chip Meyers, Fabrication Engineer, runs the facility and is present at the time the characters arrive. He has been continually repairing the Atmospheric Filtration Unit (Area #14) continuously for the last several days and has recently been attacked by both Clay constructs and Mineral constructs, and various types of fungus.

A large, square, warehouse-like building looms in the distance. It is easily 400' long on each of its sides, and towers 24' above the surface of the planet.

If the characters are approaching from either of the two sides that house the large, 30'-wide dock doors, add:



Chip then constructed a new compressor to repair the damaged filtration unit. Before leaving, however, he ran a computer analysis of the attack based on the presence of unusual energy fields. He discovered the link between the attack of the mineral entities, and the electro-magnetic field, and decided that, before he would take the chance of moving his repaired equipment to the power and filtration building, he would build himself a weapon.

Just before the characters arrive, Chip tested the weapon: A rifle that emits a tight-field EMF for a distance of 20'. The test proved successful. The pain it caused Kask was immediate, and intense, and the Mineral Constructs arrived almost instantly, and in greater numbers. Chip fought bravely until the battery in his new rifle ran low, at which point he retreated to the back of the workshop. The constructs used this brief respite to wrench open the outer doors to the workshop and begin the hunt for the source of the EMF irritation. Chip managed to reload, and he and Alice are near the metal-forming die near the back of the workshop still fighting the mineral constructs when the characters enter the building.

As you worm your way through the opening formed by the twisted door, you hear chaotic sounds from the far end of the building. The sounds of heavy impacts, tortured metal, and human voices echo through the vast warehouse-like area in which you find yourself. A maze of machinery, some smashed and damaged, some as yet pristine, but all of massive proportion, fills this area forming an easily navigable labyrinth with wide corridors. The sounds continue, but are nowhere near your current position. Perhaps you could follow the trail of damaged machinery?

Neither Chip nor Alice understands that the reason for the ongoing construct attack is the weapon they are using. Once the characters locate and approach the ongoing combat (location marked on map):

You round the corner and enter an area of the workshop containing large vats of transparent material, large transformers, and two humans desperately fighting a half dozen anthropomorphic figures that appear to be made of solid stone!

Chip and Alice, in the same manner as the other colonists the characters have encountered, have been living in fear for days, and are likely to be somewhat paranoid as an armed party of strangers enters their area of conflict. The characters need to convince Chip and Alice that they are allies (at your discretion), or this could easily become a three-way fight.

Mineral Constructs (6)

Appearance: These stone mannequins are formed in the rough shape of skinny humans in bio-suits. They range in size from 7'-9'. These are manifestations of the Kask entity made of a very hard crystalline substance rendering them extremely difficult to damage but rather vulnerable once they do sustain damage. They are nearly impervious to conventional beam weapons (they are reflected) and impact weapons and projectiles only inflict half of normal damaging effects.

Demeanor: These constructs are implacable, and react slowly due to the fact that they are 'remotely controlled' by the Kask Entity (which has quite a bit to keep track of). They are capable of denting and deforming duralumin alloy, given time. When no longer needed by the entity, they sink back into the soil as their components unbind. If indoors when deconstructed, these creatures leave behind a large pile of gravel laced with traces of manzakium.

Power: 20%

Defense: 95%

Move: 20'

Health: 20

Init: Normal

Damage: Arm Bash 5d8

Special: The high defense factor is indicative of the nature of the crystals from which it is fashioned. There is a 1 in 4 chance that any given mineral construct contains an element that is highly explosive. If a Mineral Construct is fired upon with energy or beam-type weapons, there is a 50% chance that it will reflect the energy back at the source with an addition of 20% more force or power. (E.g., if hit with a beam that inflicts 10 health loss, it reflects 12 health loss.)

Planet Kask's Mineral Constructs are highly susceptible to Electro-Magnetic Pulses which cause them to lose cohesion and disintegrate 75% of the time.



Chip Meyers (Human)

Appearance: Fabrication Engineer Chip Myers is a talented inventor and is never present without his trusty tool belt. Chip stands 5'11" and is a fit 200 pounds. He wears a grey dungaree one-piece work jumper and a large leather tool belt (filled with both mechanical and electronic tools).

Demeanor: Chip loves the pioneer aspect of his existence, and is constantly redesigning Fleet gear and equipment to match the particular needs of whatever station, colony or ship he happens to be serving. Fearless but cautious, Chip never trusts the motives of others until they have earned his trust through loyalty and the making of wise choices. Most importantly, Chip hates to lose.

Power: 15%(3)

Defense: 5%(1)

Health: 9

Move: 12

Init: +5%/+1

Damage: EMP rifle (special)

Special: Chip's EMP rifle causes no actual damage to living tissue, but disrupts electronic equipment (and the piezo-electric bonding of the Mineral Constructs) 75% of the time. Hits scored against the Mineral Constructs cause them to disintegrate 75% of the time. Chip's rifle has a range of 20' and fires 10 shots before it requires a new battery. It has an area of effect that covers a 10 cubic foot area.

Alice Danvers (Human)

Appearance: Security Specialist Alice Danvers is no stranger to a fight, and she looks the part of the seasoned warrior. Alice stands 5' 9", with a powerful but lithe build, and wears specially padded blue Kevlar body armor that absorbs half of the damage of any impact she receives. Alice carries a Stun Stick and a Utility Tool (see statistics at right).

Demeanor: Alice has been under terrific pressure over the last few days, but is in her element. Although she might draw the wrong conclusion concerning the characters, she is a calculating and pragmatic problem solver who is always willing to consider every option.

Power: 25%(5)

Defense: 20%(4 + Special))

Health: 10

Move: 12

Init: +5%/+1

Damage: Stun Stick 3d12 or Utility Tool 1d8

Special: Alice's armor is made to both avoid damage and absorb impact. Alice takes only half damage from impact-based attacks.

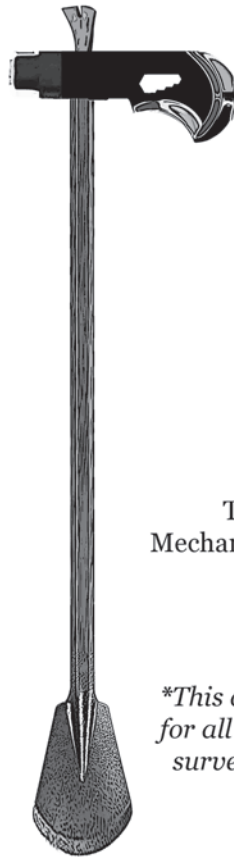
STUN STICK

The Stun Stick is an electrically charged club that causes 3d12 electrical damage while possibly rendering its target unconscious for 3d6 minutes. This chance is based upon the mass of the target and is equal to 100% - (2% per 10 pounds or 5 kilograms of target's mass). An average human target weighing 160 pounds, therefore is stunned 68% of the time. The Stun Stick operates for 24 uses before requiring a battery change.

FLEET MODEL SSG II STUN STICK

(Available to all
Security Specialists
and
Administrative personnel)

*Insulated Scabbard
accessory available



FLEET MODEL SG 3 UTILITY TOOL

(available to all
Fleet and Civilian
personnel)

Overall Length: 37"/94cm
Gross Weight: 2.1kg
Tensile Strength: 9.2 g/cm³
Mechanical Advantage: 3.6:1

**This all-in-one tool is recommended
for all miners, prospectors, farmers,
survey teams, and other explorers.*

UTILITY TOOL

The Utility Tool is a hand-held weapon that resembles a pick or climber's ax. It aids climbing, may be used as a reliable pry bar, or as a melee weapon causing 1d8 damage. Utility Tools are common issue amongst Fleet personnel.

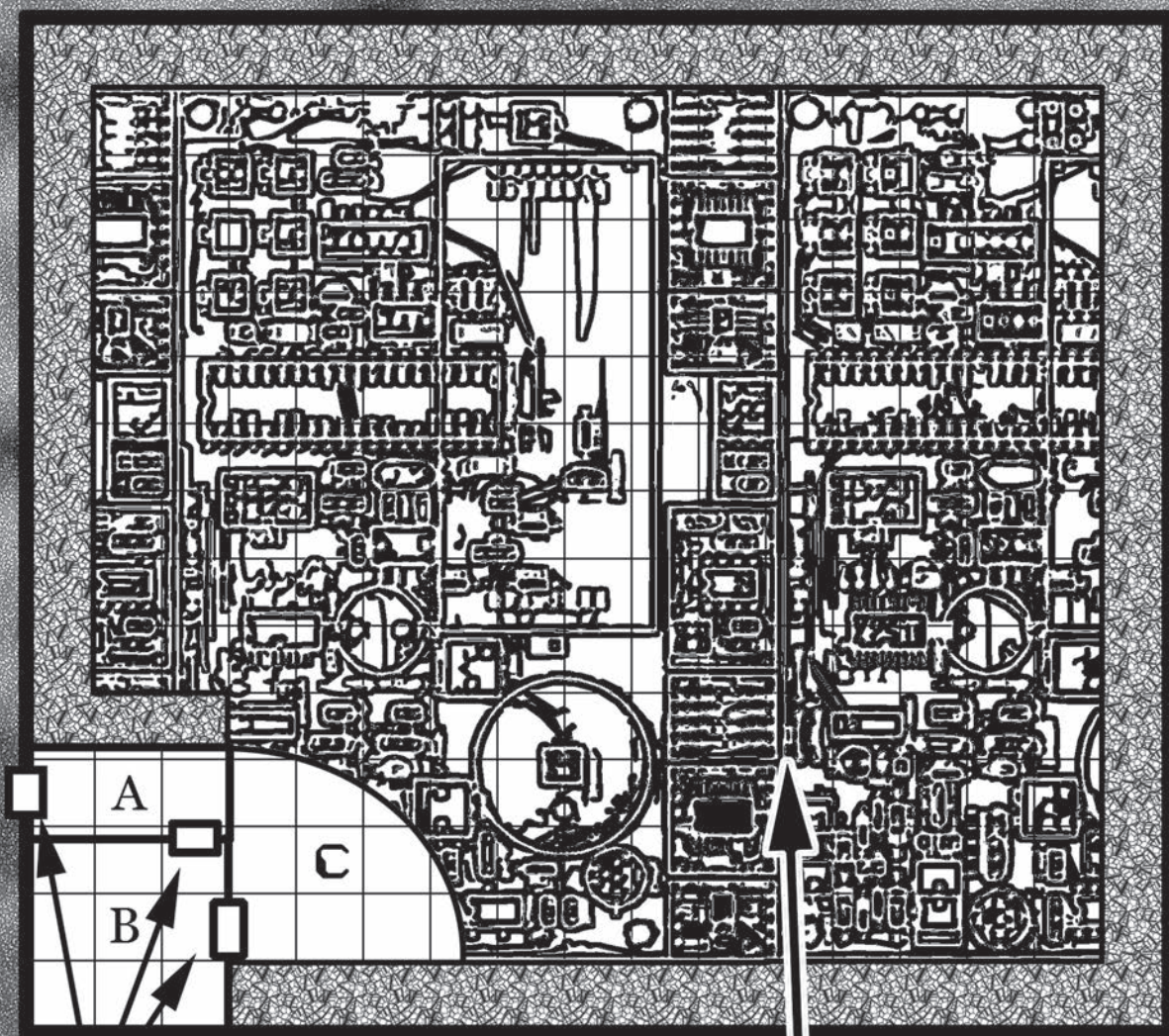
Size: 3.5' long

Weight: 3 pounds/1.4 kg

If the Mineral Constructs are defeated, Chip thanks the characters but explains that he has an urgent need to install the new turbine and compressor in the Power Station and Atmospheric Distillery (Area #14) if the characters would like to help him. If not, he begins packing these new parts onto a CDV4 (4-ton Colony Delivery Vehicle) with the help of Alice Danvers and offers to meet the characters at Area #14 when they have finished their other business.

Any technology required for repairs to character equipment may be found within this building. Limited supplies of raw materials (metals, plastics, chemicals, etc. are also found here.

ENCOUNTER AREA #13: COMMUNICATIONS ARRAY



Doorways

Signal Generators, Transmitters and Electronic Communications Gear
(access via engineering crawlway only)

One Square = Five Feet

ENCOUNTER AREA #13: COMMUNICATIONS ARRAY

This 80-foot square building is squat and grey, almost ugly. It has a tower for a roof that reaches through the top of the dome, and its walls are 5-feet thick reinforced concrete with insulating material added to absorb all forms of RF radiation. This is one of the most important buildings in the entire colony. This is the colony's lifeline to the rest of Fleet, and civilization as a whole. This is the Communications Array.

Given the importance of maintaining open communications with Fleet, this building has only one door, reinforced to withstand 240 points of physical damage before deforming. Security clearance of administrative level is normally required to use this door (this can be a code, an ID badge, or whatever best fits your campaign). As the characters approach this building:

The squat, grey concrete structure before you spans 80' per side but is only a single level in height. A massive radio antenna, a conical pyramid reaching all the way to the top of the colony dome (and perhaps beyond), is attached to the roof of this structure. A single massive security door seems to be the only entrance. A red indicator light near the doors control pad seems to suggest that it might currently be locked.

The door is indeed locked, and this lock must be bypassed, or the proper clearance used, before the door will open. As mentioned Administrative Level clearance is required to satisfy the security of this lock.

Once the characters gain entry, they find themselves in Area #13A, Security.

Area #13A: Security Hall

This 12' wide hallway is bare other than 4 security cameras which cover every inch of the 15'-long passage and a security-locked door with a control pad at its far end. The door at the end will operate for anyone providing administrative level clearance, but it may also be locked, with no means for opening, by an individual in Area #13C. The cameras provide a video feed to a station in this area, allowing or denying access to Area #13C to be determined by a colonist stationed at area C.

The view beyond the door is disappointing; only a 12'-wide hallway some 15' long with an 8' ceiling. Four security cameras, their red lights indicating a live feed, constantly scan this area. A door with a security keypad lock identical to the one protecting the outer building door bars your progress at the far end of this hall.

Area #13B: Atmospheric and Fire Control

Once the characters pass through hallway #13A, no further security measures bar their progress. This room contains a simple CO2 scrubber and smoke filter to ensure the air quality of the Control Room, and the automated controls for the Halon Fire Suppression System that guards the equipment in Area C. The scrubber is designed to operate for one week for 3 people. The building has now been sealed for 6 days, but with only one person inside, and so has 60% of its capacity remaining.

The door that leads to this room from the Security Hallway automatically closes after 1 minute. It can be reopened by again providing administrative security clearance or by anyone in area C.

This room is filled with automatic data processors and a large, box-like mechanism into which a number of 6" tubes are inserted. A standard door leads onward into the complex at the far side of this room. The door through which you entered now starts to close.

Skilled characters (versed in fire control, electronics, life support, or related topics) recognize the oxygen scrubber and the fire control system. The oxygen scrubber may be switched off, but if the security door to Area A remains closed, this leaves only 20 minutes of oxygen within the Areas A&B.

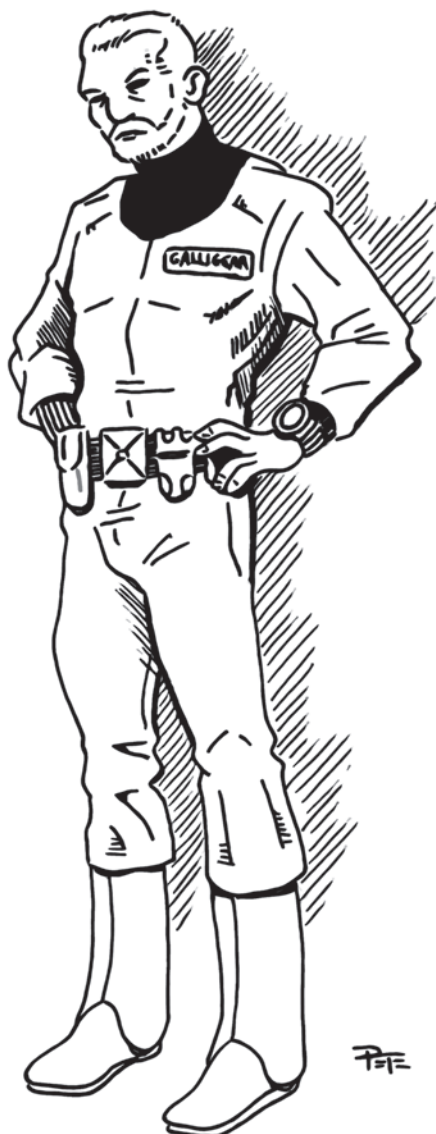
Joe Galligear has jammed the door that leads to Area C by placing a chair under the door handle on its far side (may be forced by a successful strength or similar statistical check). Once the characters are within area B, he addresses them via the buildings intercom.

If the characters appear to be Fleet personnel, Joe is convinced they are a rescue team.

“It’s about time you guys got here!” a voice from the building’s intercom announces. “When do we leave?”

If the characters do not immediately reply with an appropriate ‘yes we’re here to rescue you’ type of response, Joe panics and becomes hostile, attacking any that force the door into Area C. If they do reply in this fashion, Joe removes the chair from the door, invites the party into the control room, and thanks them for their rescue (whether it is actually a rescue or not).

If the characters do not appear to be Fleet personnel, Joe is convinced that Fleet is performing its exit strategy; that the team is here to ensure there are no survivors, and attacks any that try to force their way into Area C.



Joe Galligear (Human)

Appearance: Chief Mining Engineer Joe Galligear is a tall (6’3”) thin 49-year-old man in a blue mining company uniform jumpsuit with his name proudly displayed on its left breast pocket. His thinning hair and beard are immaculately trimmed, and he wears an antique gold watch. He carries a standard Fleet issue laser Rifle, and a concealed Stun Stick (see page #65 for statistics if needed) in his waistband.

Demeanor: Joe is normally a scheming, self-centered individual with a recognizable knack for running mining operations. Given the invasion of the fungus (of which Joe knows most of the details) and the fact that he has read the classified “Exit Strategy” file, Joe is now certain that anyone not obviously involved in his rescue is likely involved in ensuring he bears no witness in the future concerning mining company incompetence. Joe is crafty, and looks towards turning any challenge or circumstance into an opportunity to escape from what he is certain will be termed a ‘failed colony’ in the future.

Power: 20%(4)

Defense: 5%(1)

Health: 8

Move: 12

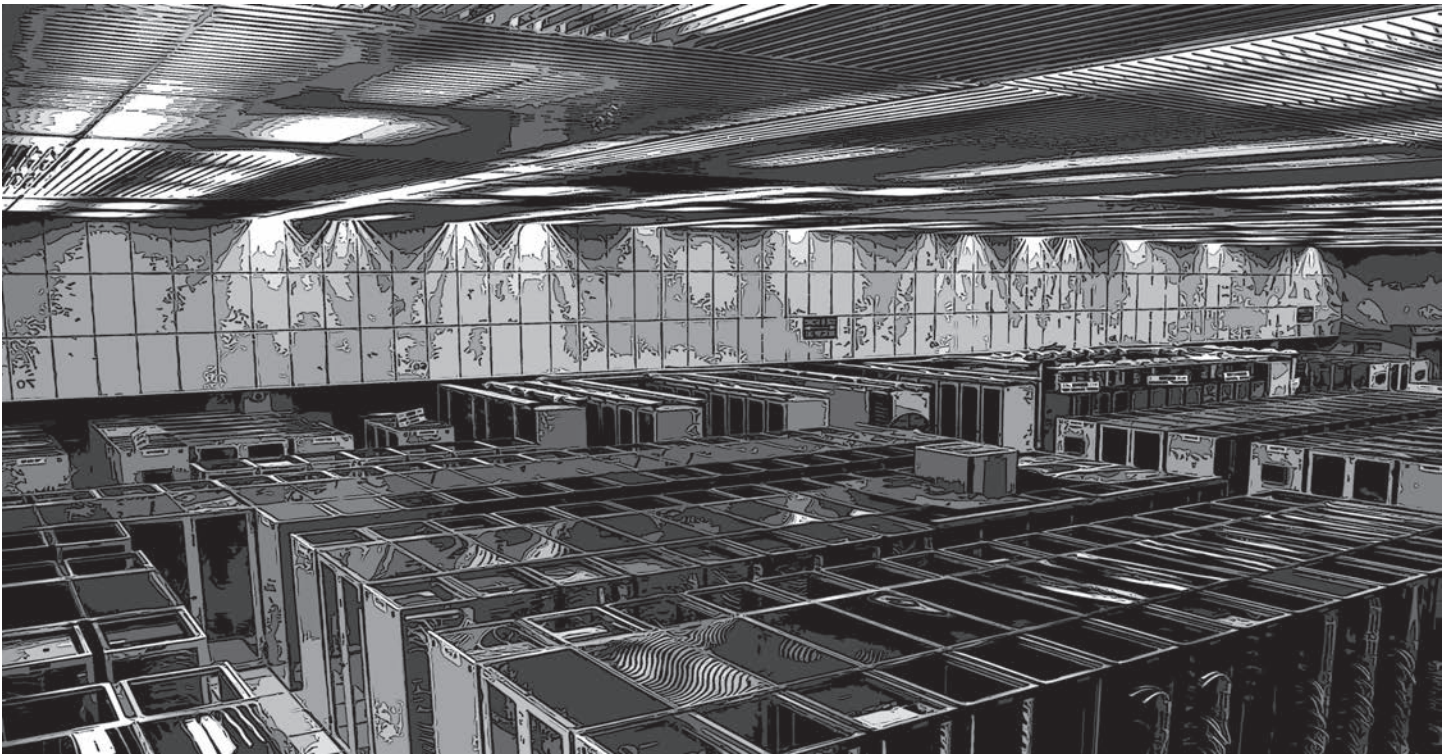
Init: +10%/+2

Damage: Laser Rifle (1D20 at +20%/+4 to hit) 2x per combat round

Special: Joe has had little sleep for the last 6 days (the time at which he jammed communications and began transmitting the false message — see Area C). He is currently operating under the influence of an unhealthy dose of amphetamines in order to maintain his state of readiness, and so receives a bonus (as noted above) to his Init. His ability to reason has been compromised by an equal amount, and he may act irrationally.

Note: If Joe Galligear accompanies the party after this encounter, he is still reasonably paranoid and uses every opportunity that might arise to secure a means of leaving the planet. Joe has piloting skills, and is familiar with most Fleet issue spacecraft.

If, in Area C, the characters discover that Joe Galligear deliberately disabled communications, and put forth the false message, Joe uses any opportunity to ensure that this information never reaches Fleet. The best method for ensuring that, of course, is to explain that the character party all tragically perished rescuing him.



Area #13C: Control Room

It is assumed that if the characters are entering this area, either Joe believes them to be his rescuers, or Joe has been defeated in combat or otherwise nullified.

This room is the control center for colonial communications; all messages coming into or out of the colony pass through this workstation. Chief Mining Engineer Joe Galligear has reprogrammed the system to block any reports from reaching Fleet that have not first been approved by this station, and to blanket all other forms of radio communication with a broad-spectrum jamming signal. He has then tasked the data-processing portion of the station to release a 'business as usual' message every 24 hours to help ensure that Fleet does not abandon the facility due to the alien fungal invasion. Joe believes that this 'request for assistance', rather than a panic-stricken cry for aid, will keep Fleet mining operations from instituting its 'exit strategy' — a program by which any evidence of incompetence is erased (with extreme prejudice).

Several viewing screens and two workstations mounted atop a curved counter form a partial partition here from the equipment that fills the rest of this area with a maze of electronic gear. Three chairs are parked in front of the two workstations, and all of the screens are active, though blank.

Characters with no skills in computers, electronics, or communications only discover that the control consoles do not function.

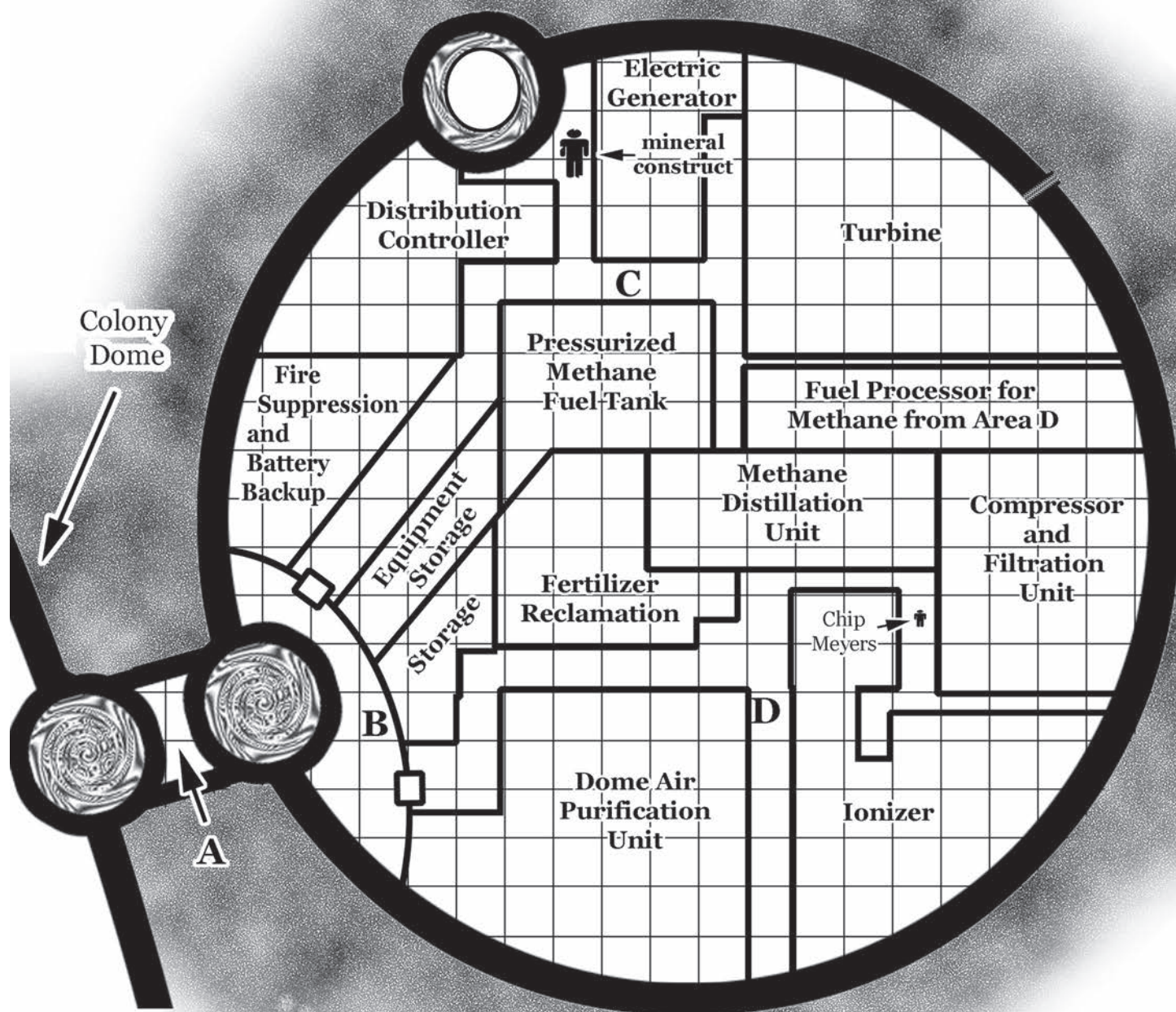
Characters with computer skills find themselves 'locked out'. Someone has reprogrammed the system, and it needs to be 're-hacked' before it can be made functional once again.

Characters with communications skills discover the false message that everything is reasonably normal (see Appendix F), and are able to access all Incident Reports. If they make a further skill check, they are able to determine that Joe Galligear is responsible for reprogramming the system, setting up the false message, and for withholding all of the Incident Reports from Fleet.

As noted previously, this sends Joe into survival mode; he realizes that the characters must die, or else his career is at an end. He pretends obeisance, but tries at every turn to get the characters killed if this situation occurs.

Characters with electronic skills discover the jamming signal and may (skill check required) disarm it, once again allowing other forms of radio communication.

ENCOUNTER AREA #14: POWER STATION AND ATMOSPHERIC DISTILLERY



One Square = Twenty Feet



Air Lock



Door



Open Air Lock



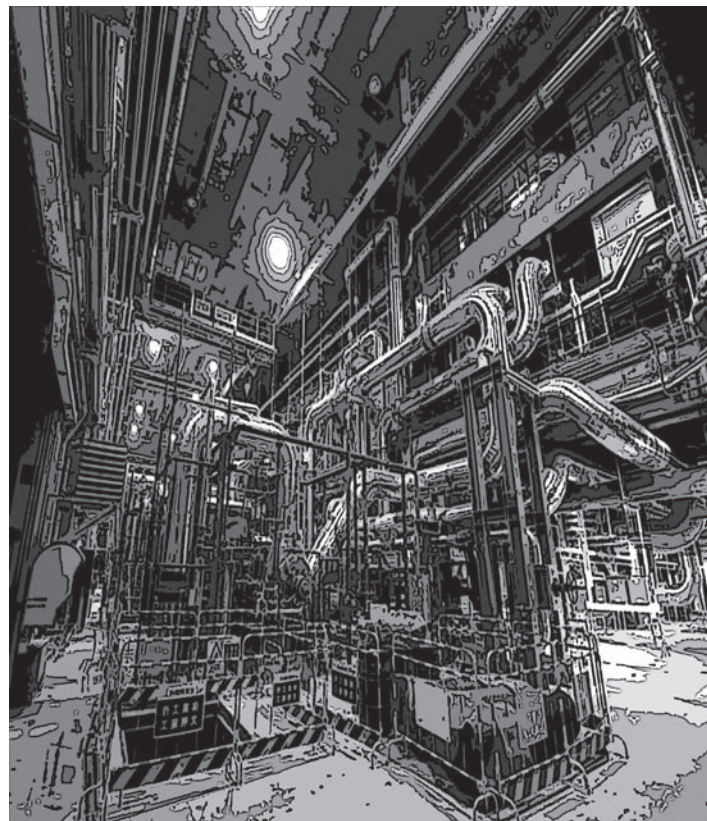
Exhaust Vent for Turbine

ENCOUNTER AREA #14: POWER STATION & ATMOSPHERIC DISTILLERY

This large, spherical dome is actually outside of the colony dome due to the volatile nature of its functions. It is 400' in diameter and opaque if viewed from the outside. If approached from within the dome, characters discern the smaller opaque dome outside the colony dome, but see, at first, only the airlock that leads to the Air-locked Tunnel (Area #14A). Security clearance of engineering level (lower than administrative) is required to use this door (this can be a code, an ID badge, or whatever best fits your campaign).

Through the clear surface of the colony dome you see a smaller dome, perhaps 400' in diameter, that has an opaque outer shell. An air-locked tunnel leads to this dome and connects to the main colony dome via an air lock not 30' from where you currently stand. The huge, 40' diameter airlock must have some level of security clearance as the control pad next to it is a strong indicator.

Once the characters either satisfy or find some means of circumventing the clearance required by the air lock, it opens into Area #14A, the Air-locked Tunnel.



Area #14A: Air-locked Tunnel

This large, 40' wide tunnel was obviously built so that large equipment might be moved through it without exposure to the outside atmosphere. It is only 30' in length, and the air lock on the Power Station side has no security. Everything here functions as it should.

A 30' foot long 40' wide passage leads to a second air lock that appears to have no security. All seems in order here.

Area #14B: Locker Room

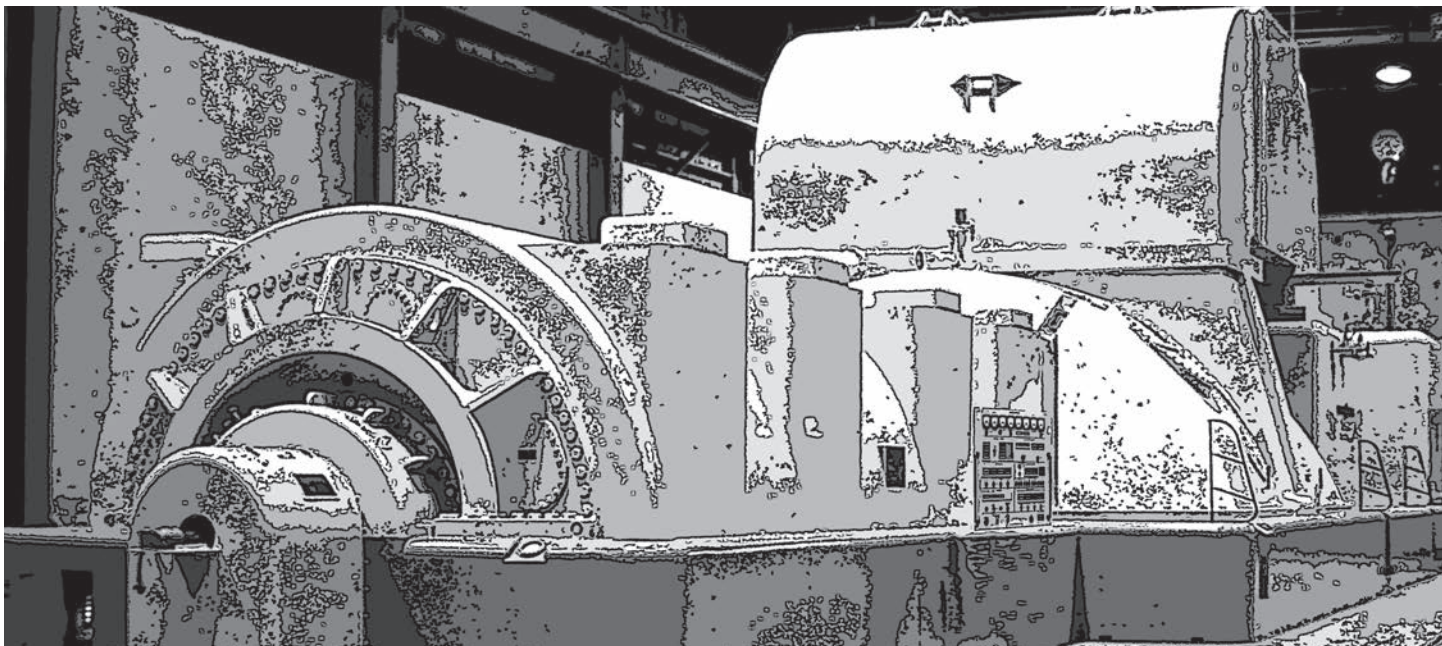
This area is used for preparation in the event that a hazardous condition exists in either the Atmospheric Distillery (Area D) or the Power Generation Station (Area C). It contains lockers with welding gloves, fire protection suits, and hazardous material suits, as well as a few space-suit like environmental suits. Several rubbish bins in need of emptying are also present, filled with bits of discarded wire, burnt-out circuit boards, and empty gas canisters.

As the air lock opens a rather unkempt hemispherical room measuring perhaps 120' from one end to the other is revealed. Several lockers line the walls and two standard doors provide exits other than the air lock. The circular wall that separates this room from the rest of the complex forms a partition from floor to ceiling.

When worn, the *Fire Suits* protect their wearers from continual heat up to 400°F and Sporadic bursts of heat (such as explosions or standard fires) up to 2000°F. They are destroyed if they take 30 points of impact-type damage.

When worn, the *Spacesuit-like Environmental Suits* work in exactly the same fashion as do space suits in whatever rules system your campaign uses.

Hazardous Material Suits are unaffected by acids or bases and are sealed suits with a 2-hour air supply. They accept 30 points of impact-type damage before failing as well.



Area #14C: Power Generator

Characters entering this area immediately note that the air is bad due to the outer dome airlock that has been left open (after being forced) by the Mineral Construct (see map). The Kask entity, uncertain that its message had been received is trying once more to communicate with the colonists in binary. A binary message has been formed in the minute rust particles that coat the protective housing of the colony's electric generator, and the construct has been tasked with remaining onsite, awaiting a response from the colonists.

If the characters enter this area from the outside; from the planet's surface via the open air lock, change the descriptions that follow accordingly.

The door opens onto a long hallway some 20' wide that proceeds for 100' before turning to the left. A row of locked doors dills the wall on your right while a single door marked "Fire Suppression and Battery Backup" is mounted in the left wall. There is a slight noise of moving air, but the rest of the machinery here is silent.

For those not wearing hazardous material suits, spacesuits, or some other form of controlled environment add:

The air here hurts your lungs and burns your throat, almost as though it were laced with acid.

The air here is a mix of left-over dome air and planetary atmosphere and so is less toxic than is the atmosphere undiluted. Characters breathing this atmosphere suffer 1d6 Health damage per combat round (however long that is using your favorite role playing system). Their equipment suffers a 1% chance per minute, cumulative, of suffering a critical failure due to exposure to the nitric acid of this atmosphere.

This entire room is filled with equipment designed to generate power for, and distribute power to, the entire colony. Characters with skills or knowledge of this type of equipment will note that it is not functioning at this time. The construct stands motionless, a mineral statue, and so generates no sound as well. The cause for the tainted atmosphere, the open air lock, is not plain until a character rounds the corner of the pressurized methane fuel tank.

A long hallway leads off to your left and you can just make out an air lock control panel mounted on the oblique outer wall of the small dome that shields the equipment here from the harsh atmosphere of the planet outside. The air lock appears open! Stranger still, it seems someone has left a stone statue resembling an iconic, detail free human figure, some 12' from the open air lock. The statue is human-shaped but has no fingers, facial features, or clothing detail.

Remember, the Mineral Construct is there to respond to any attempts at communication, and therefore does not attack unless it is attacked.

As the air lock was forced open, it will need to be repaired to be closed. While how this might occur is left to your discretion, it is recommended that no less than ten minutes of in-game time (and no less than three successful skill or statistical checks) be required before the air lock door can be made to close.

In addition, the filtration unit for both this dome, and the colony as a whole, is currently non-functional as the electrical generator needs a new turbine (Chip Myers, currently in Area D installing a new compressor, hopes to install this within the next half an hour but has no knowledge of events in area C) in order to function. Unless the generator is fixed, and the acidic air filtered from this area, a catastrophic failure of all equipment here occurs within 3 hours. All equipment in this area will then need to be replaced, and the colony temporarily (for a few days) abandoned. Characters able to repair, or aid in the repair of this equipment will be greatly rewarded by Fleet.

Characters studying the binary message see:

The statue appears to be staring at the side of the generator housing. Following its stony gaze you note a number of variable-width vertical lines that appear in ordered rows, dozens, perhaps one hundred ordered rows, all down the side of the generator housing.

Characters with computer or linguistic skills have a good (add 20% to any check made) chance of identifying the message burned into the generator housing as binary. Any character will likely (at your discretion) require access to a computer to decipher the message, but if a picture is taken of the message, or it is successfully copied to any transportable medium, a computer should be able to decipher the message almost instantly.

It is an in-depth set of pictograms that easily translate as four separate messages:

“Stop drilling holes into me.”
 “Leave the manzakiium alone.”
 “EMP fields hurt.”
 “Fungus is the enemy, don’t you agree?”

If any character attempts to speak with the statue, it remains mute as it does not comprehend audible language. Characters sending binary radio messages to the statue have a 50% chance of establishing communications, although the odds of the characters realizing that this method of communication is available are extremely slight, and should be. One hour after the arrival of the characters in Area #14C, the Mineral Construct disintegrates, leaving a pile of sand upon the floor.

If the characters attack the Mineral Construct:

Mineral Construct

Appearance: This stone manikin is formed in the rough shape of a skinny human in a bio-suit, and stands 7’ tall. It is a manifestation of the Kask entity made of a very hard crystalline substance rendering it extremely difficult to damage but rather vulnerable once damage has been sustained. The construct is nearly impervious to conventional beam weapons (they are reflected) and impact weapons and projectiles only inflict half of normal damage.

Demeanor: This construct has been tasked with attempting communication with colonist entities, and therefore does not attack until it has sustained damage. If the characters cease their attack at any time, the construct also ceases its defensive attacks. The mineral construct is able to communicate via any wavelength radio frequency, but understands only binary.

Power: 20%

Defense: 95%

Move: 20’

Health: 20

Init: Normal

Damage: Arm Bash 5d8

Special: The high defense factor is indicative of the nature of the crystals from which it is fashioned. There is a 1 in 4 chance that any given mineral construct contains an element that is highly explosive. If a Mineral Construct is fired upon with energy or beam-type weapons, there is a 50% chance that it will reflect the energy back at the source with an addition of 20% more force or power. (E.g., if hit with a beam that inflicts 10 health loss, it reflects 12 health loss.)

Mineral Constructs are highly susceptible to EMP which cause them to disintegrate 75% of the time.

Note: Once the characters leave this area, the Kask Entity abandons any attempt at binary communication and relies instead upon the new Kask flower — see Area 16.

Area #14D: Air Purification Unit

Note: Unless the characters have already investigated Area #12, the Workshop, Chip Meyers is not yet here. If they have investigated the Workshop, Chip is here installing the new compressor for the Atmospheric Distillery Unit.

Partitioned from the power generation area to reduce the risk of methane migration and the potential explosive hazard that would represent, Area D contains all of the machinery designed to separate the currently toxic nitric-acid rich atmosphere of planet Kask into nitrogenous fertilizer, oxygen, and water. Characters with skills related to these processes readily recognize the equipment in this area, others simply find it to be large, non-descript machinery.

A broad but short hallway is on the far side of the door. It is 25' wide but extends only 35' in front of you before turning 90° to the left. The wall on your left has a single door in it marked, "Storage", while to your right stands the gigantic outer casing of a piece of machinery. The hallway continues on into the complex beyond the left turn of the passage. Gurgling and bubbling noises surround you in an infrequent but persistent pattern.

If FE Meyers is here installing the new compressor, add:

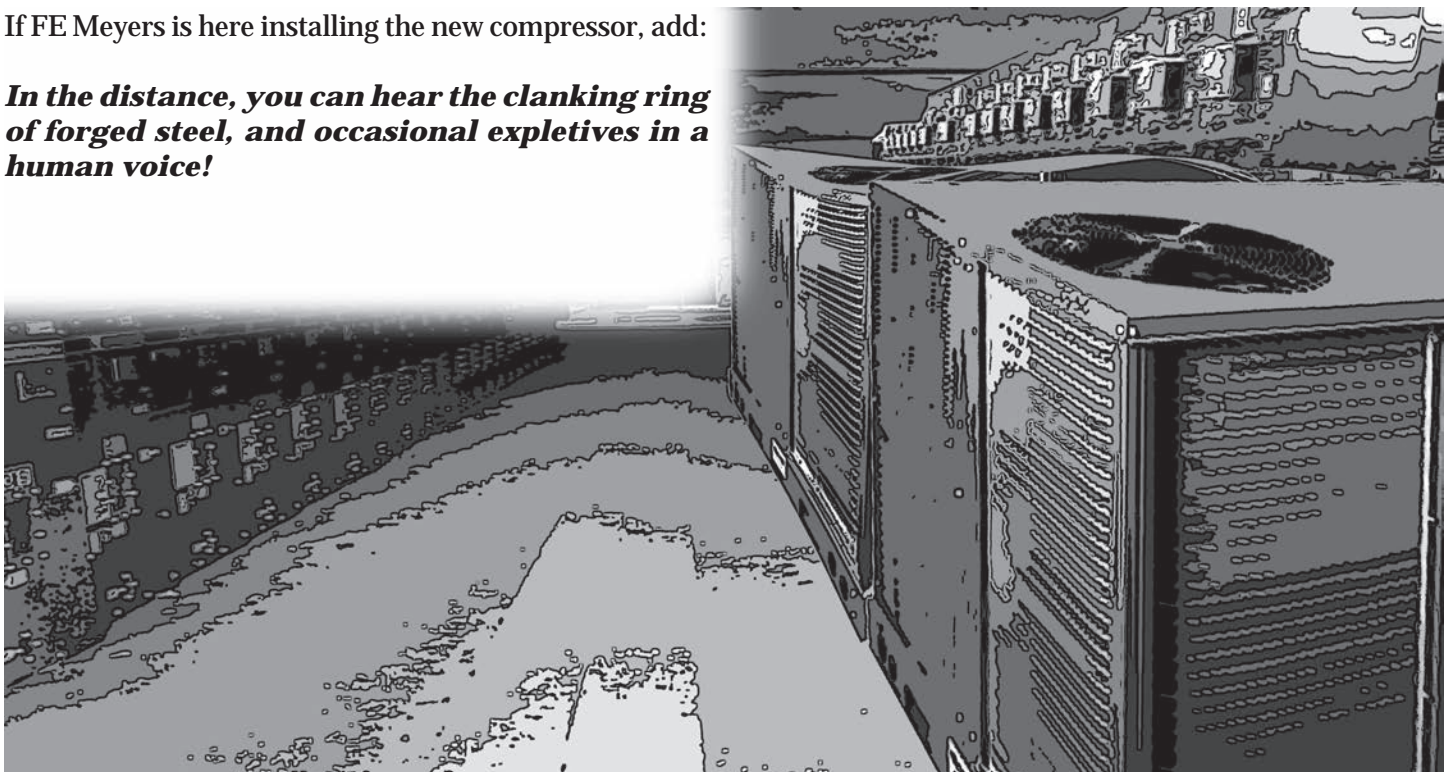
In the distance, you can hear the clanking ring of forged steel, and occasional expletives in a human voice!

The gurgling is simply the release of gas bubbles as a result of the distillation process. The voice is that of Chip Meyers, who, having already met the party in Area #12 (or else he wouldn't be here), greets them as he has finished his task.

"Hey good to see you guys!" says a human male that is approaching you from deeper in the complex. You realize that it is Chip Meyers, the Fabrication Engineer. "Mind giving me a hand installing the turbine next door? We need to get this thing running!"

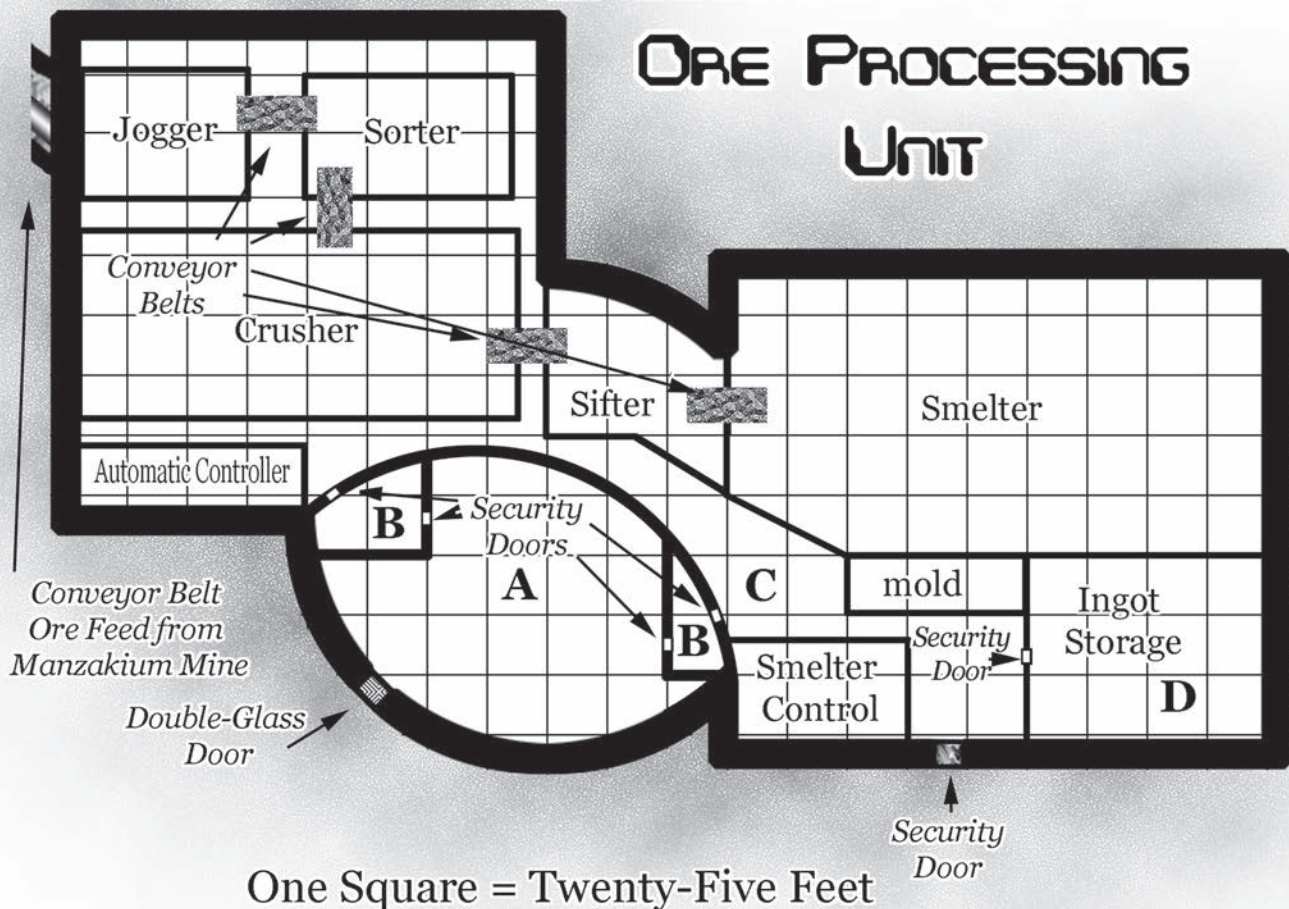
There is little else of note in this area, unless you decide to add a bit of adventure on your own. The storage area closest to the door does contain several usable hand tools, a small welding torch, a ratcheting block-and-tackle, and a wrecking bar. Should the characters ask to borrow any of these Chip readily acquiesces.

Note: If the characters convince Chip (an easy task, if they only think to ask) to help fix the air lock and generator in Area #14C, everything is repaired within half an hour. Again, Chip's glowing praise of the help provided by the party should engender a larger reward from Fleet when the party returns to the cruiser.



ENCOUNTER AREA #15:

ORE PROCESSING UNIT



ENCOUNTER AREA #15: ORE PROCESSING UNIT

Ore refining for the Planet Kask Colony is a completely automated process that refines the mined rock, rich with manzakium particles, into pure manzakium ingots. Their brochure, as presented to Fleet, describes the process.

*Fleet Mining Presents the State of the Art
in Ore Refining!*

Mined ore is transferred to this facility directly from the mine via a large conveyor belt. The ore is sent to a Jogger which separates the larger from the smaller particles, and then conveyed via belt to the Sorter which further separates the particles by size. Conveyor belts then transport the ore to various portions of the crusher, where all are turned into a uniform sand that might be easily smelted.

Conveyors then take this sand through a Sifter which removes all particles which have no manzakium content, sending these particles to a sanitary landfill via a separate set of conveyors. These tailings have had no chemical process, and so cause no pollution not already found in the environment. The refined sand is then sent to the smelter, where all non-manzakium materials are burned off, with exhaust being vented through a series of below-ground pipes that lead outside the colony dome. This exhaust has yet to be analyzed to see if it might add chemicals inimical to the process of terraforming the planet's atmosphere. Pure, molten manzakium is then sluiced through ceramic tubing to the mold, where robotic arms then remove the cooled ingots to a storage vault until enough have accumulated to ship to a customer.

Any character entering Area #15A is certain to find one of these mining company brochures lying around.

So extensive is the automation of this facility that personnel of any kind are seldom found here and then only to repair or maintain the equipment. Other than the reception area (Area #15A), access to the rest of the building is severely limited. Security clearance is limited to administrative personnel, and mining engineers, and all doors other than the double-glass door that leads into Area #15A are equipped with security locks (this can be a code, an ID badge, or whatever best fits your campaign) to ensure no unauthorized access occurs. Characters attempting to open the Security Door near Ingot Storage (the outer building door near Area #15D) must satisfy or circumvent this security in order to open this door.

In contrast the double-glass door that allows entry into Area #15A opens easily, and bears no lock.



The building before you actually seems to be the only building in the colony designed by an architect. Its gracefully curved central portion is 20' tall and made from glass, with an inviting double-glass door. On either side of this curved structure are square wings nearly twice as tall (40') are sheathed in what appears to be granite. A conveyor leads from one of these wings through a concrete portal set into the ground where it disappears from view in the direction of the mine. The other wing contains a large warehouse-like door that has stenciled on its face, "No Unauthorized Access". A large sign made from 3' tall letters caps the top of the shorter central portion of the building. It reads, "Ore Refining Center".

Once the characters enter this building, proceed to the description for that specific area.

Area #15A: Reception Area

This area is ridiculously furnished for a mining colony: expensive upholstered chairs, expensive wooden incidental tables, and glass displays filled with (the aforementioned) brochures. When the characters arrive, the power is out, so the room is dark.

Beyond the glass doors lies a semi-circular 100' wide x 90' deep reception room with a faux marble floor, and expensive furnishings. Lavishly upholstered chairs surround real wood coffee tables set together as conversation areas throughout the room. Each of the tables holds a glass display filled with brochures. Two doors located at opposite ends of this area provide exits from this room, but both are marked in large, red stenciled letters, "Radiation Hazard, No Unauthorized Access Allowed".

These doors are indeed locked, and security clearance is limited to administrative personnel and mining engineers. Characters attempting to open either of these doors must satisfy or circumvent this security.

Area #15B: Radiation Hazard Preparation

These two small areas contain lockers filled with heavy radiation suits, benches for changing, and showers for decontamination in the event of accidental exposure. Compared to the opulence of the reception area, they are extremely Spartan.

You pass through the ominous door and find yourself in a strangely austere room. Lockers line two of the walls, and showers a third while rows of benches occupy the space in between. A door in the far wall has a rather strident warning stenciled onto it: "Check Your Gear! Radiation Hazard!".

The radiation suits found in these lockers shield their wearers from 99% of ionizing radiation, and have a sequestered 2-hour air supply, but are extremely heavy (1/2 actions per turn). They accept 30 points of impact-type damage before their protection is compromised and the suit becomes worthless. The exit doors that lead to the refinery floor are locked, and require security clearance for their use in the same manner as the doors that lead into this area from area A.

Area #15C: Automated Processing Unit

As mentioned, this area is normally devoid of human occupation as the entire refining process has been automated. Large robotic arms are automatically activated if a conveyor or sorter becomes clogged with oversized particles, and the machines are regulated automatically as well. As the characters enter, however, the power is shut off, and the battery back-up system appears to be non-functional.

Note: This truly is a high radiation area as the refining process exposes an ever-more concentrated amount of manzakium to the environment. While not lethal, unshielded characters do suffer damage from exposure to this area at the rate of 1 Health damage per 5 minutes of exposure (0.9Sv). Most standard space suits are radiation resistant and cut this exposure to 1 damage every 15 minutes.

As you step onto the refinery floor, all is dead silent, and dark. Machinery towers towards the ceiling around you, and conveyor belts seem to lead everywhere. This place is very large, roughly the size of 2-3 football fields.

If any characters are unshielded, add:

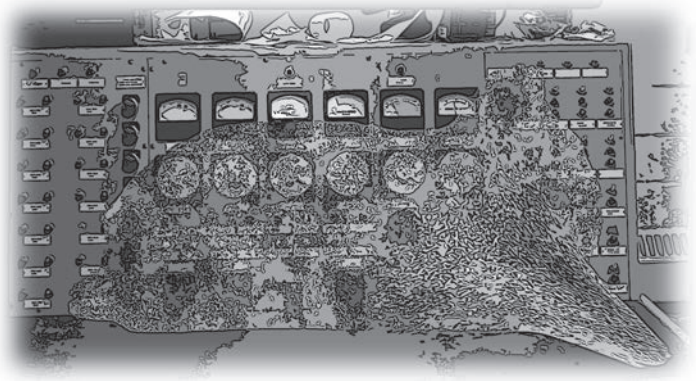
Your skin itches.

Allow the characters 2-3 minutes to explore the area, prepare lights, or even return to don radiation gear. Once they separate a bit, or enter the refinery to the extent that any character is more than 30' from the door, they discover that the automated controller that runs this refinery has been invaded by Yellow Fungus.

Suddenly, and without warning of any kind, the factory springs to life! Bright, almost blinding flare into instant incandescence, conveyor belts begin moving, and all of the machinery makes a combined noise loud enough that normal conversation is impossible. You have little time to ponder this; however, as four of the refinery's large robotic arms reach out to attack you for no readily explainable reason!

Although the robotic arms may be damaged to the point that they no longer pose a threat, the Yellow Fungus here does its best to use any and all (not just the robotic arms; but you'll need to decide how the other equipment might function to threaten the party) equipment in this area to kill the characters. The colony is lying on top of the automatic controller at refinery left, and characters either exploring or fleeing in this direction should notice the strange filmy substance.

A thin film of yellow powder covers a large section of the automatic controller. As you study it, strangely, a pseudopod forms from this unusual substance and extends itself towards you!



Yellow Fungus

Appearance: Yellow fungus appears as a film that covers 4 to 8 square feet. It extrudes a pseudopod that is about 3 inches in diameter, and that also appears to be made of the powdery yellow fungoid material.

Demeanor: This Yellow fungus controls all of the machinery in Area C, and tries to control any electronic gear owned by the characters as well.

Power: 10%

Defense: 10%

Health: 1

Move: 3

Init: +75%

Damage: electronic takeover of equipment

Special: Yellow fungi can form a pseudopod that extends for up to 20 feet, seeking out any equipment that has a data processor. A successful hit indicates that the fungus has gained control of the equipment, and the game master should then use whatever attack seems appropriate to simulate the equipment attacking the character. Yellow fungus can cause no harm to actual humans without the intervention of a data processing device. Yellow Fungus is unaffected by kinetic (impact based) attacks.

Robotic Arms (4)

Appearance: these 25' long arms have two separate articulated joints which allow then greater movement than a human arm. They have exposed hydraulic hoses made from a tough rubberized plastic, and grasping, vice-like claws at the ends of the arms.

Demeanor: These are machines with no motivation of any kind. They are controlled by the Yellow fungus and cease their attacks only when either they become non-functional, or the Yellow Fungus is destroyed.

Power: 20%(4)

Defense: 20%(4)

Health: 20

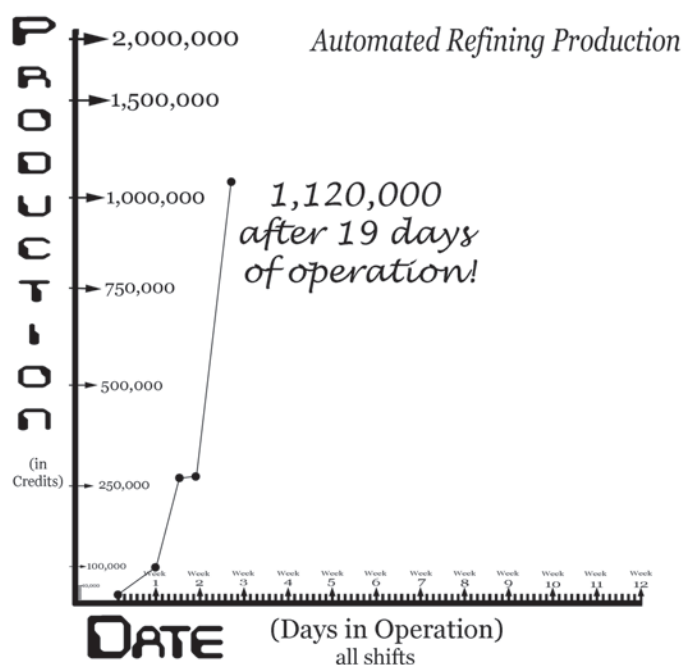
Move: 25' (but no further than that regardless of the time involved)

Init: +5%/+1

Damage: Arm Bash for 1d10 or grasp character (10% chance) – see Special

Special: these robotic arms attempt to grasp a character 10% of the time when they hit, pulling them from the floor and depositing them in the crusher. Characters that fail to avoid the crusher once placed within it suffer 4d20 damage per round, but may attempt to escape (Avoid) every round. Robotic arms are particularly susceptible to heat damage (they take double damage) and electrical damage (they take triple damage).

Again, if the Yellow Fungus can be nullified without causing a serious amount of damage to the equipment in this area, the characters will be well rewarded by Fleet upon their return to the cruiser.



Area #15D: Manzakium Ingot Storage Vault

The manzakium storage vault is built both to minimize the radioactive exposure threat of the refined manzakium, and to protect this highly valuable metal from pilfering. The door to this area is security locked, and requires either mining engineer or administrative clearance in order to function. If the characters approach the vault:

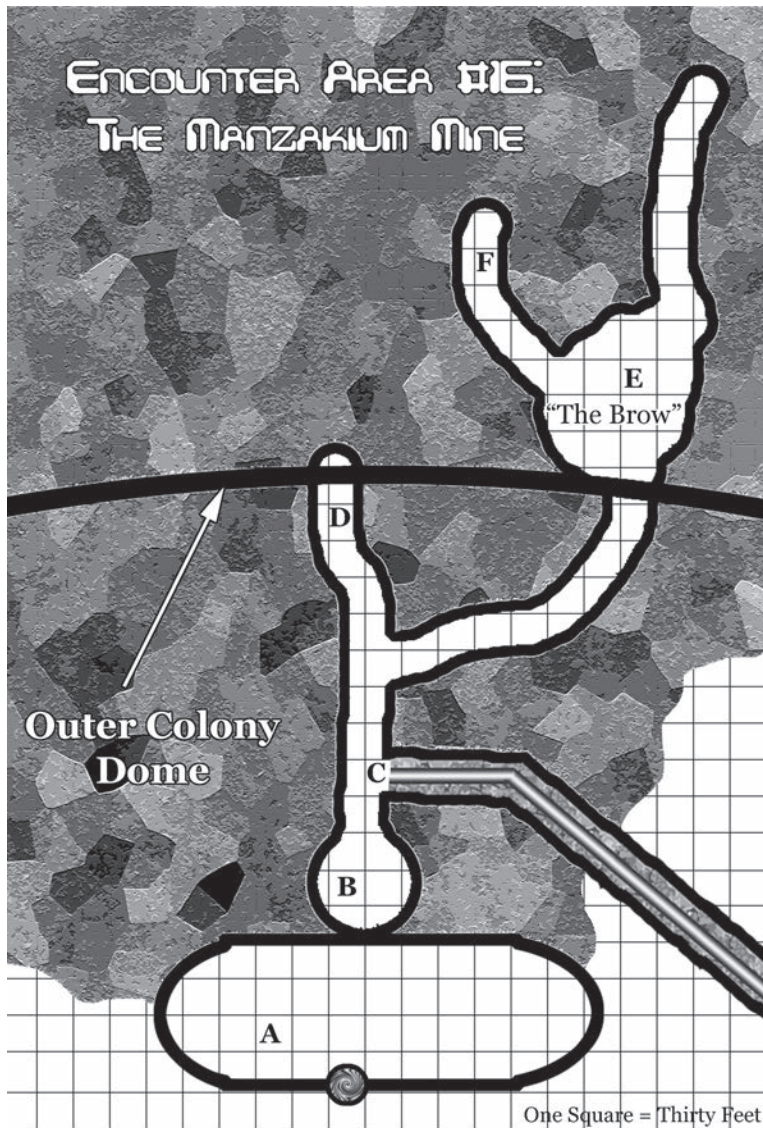
A large door is here mounted in the wall. It catches your attention for two reasons: first because a rather impressive security lock prevents its being readily opened, and second because a chart has been affixed to the door, tracking the progress of refined manzakium production in both value, and pounds. The chart shows the 160 pounds of pure manzakium now lie within this vault, with a value of over 1,120,000 credits!

It is not outside the realm of possibility that your players might wish to have their characters remove some of this valuable metal from the vault, but remember:

- Fleet will likely frown on missing manzakium and the characters will be blamed if any is missing.
- This material is radioactive and must be handled properly to avoid damage to electronic equipment (including the spacecraft) and character Health

Worse still, if the characters manage to defeat the security and open this vault, they discover that the manzakium is missing. Joe Galligear has removed it, placing it into two heavily shielded cases that he then hid inside the bedroom walls of his house (Area #8E, House #1). If Joe accompanies the party at this time, he adopts a rather guilty look, but gives no further clues as to his culpability unless interrogated thoroughly. If the characters do not open this vault, or are unable to identify Joe as the culprit, Fleet does initially accuse them of theft (including a threatened jail sentence) before forensic evidence clears the characters of wrongdoing.

Note: If the characters break into this vault, they leave their own forensic evidence behind, thus complicating their claims of innocence. Should you decide, this might make a great follow-up adventure.



Characters attempting entry need to either satisfy this security (this can be a code, an ID badge, or whatever best fits your campaign) or circumvent it in order to open this air lock.

Note: The colony dome intersects the rocky ridge behind this building, and follows its topography. The dome edge is imbedded two feet into the rock of this ridge to ensure that any mining that occurs does not break this all-important seal.

Before you stands the most impressive building within the colony dome. Built into a low ridge, it stands 35' in height and comes close to brushing the descending arc of the dome that is imbedded in the ridge behind it. Made entirely of a dull grey metal and with massive outer buttresses, this 300' foot long structure appears almost gothic. A sign with 2' tall letters proclaims Planet Kask Manzakium Mine. An oversized 12' X 15' security air lock appears to be the only entrance.

Area #16A: Locker Room and Lift

Once the characters have satisfied the security of the air lock and gained entry, they find themselves in the cathedral like open air of the locker room and lift which occupies the entire first building seen from outside. Just inside the airlock are two

rows of lockers, 36 lockers in all, as well as changing benches. To the left of this changing area six enclosed decontamination showers stand at the ready, as does a large hot-air blower to prevent anyone from becoming contaminated by a previous shower's drying towels. To the right of this row of lockers is a single large desk and chair, with a time clock and a rack for time cards.

What occupies the vast majority of the floor space in this building is the giant lift and the machinery used to operate it. A massive hydraulic pump with backup safety cables fills fully half of the building, while the lift itself, an open platform with only a 12' cage around its perimeter for safety, measures no less than 40' per side. The lift is capable of comfortably transporting up to 36 miners, and their gear, at one time, or any combination of miners and equipment up to a load limit of 14 tons (12,700kg). The sheer size of this place should impress your players when their characters enter.

ENCOUNTER AREA #16: THE MANZAKIUM MINE

The Planet Kask Colony was created due to the presence of manzakium; the mine is the center of the colony and the reason for its existence.

A massive edifice, the manzakium mine entrance is built to withstand blow-out pressures within the mine as well as the pressure of a catastrophic dome failure from outside the mine area. Built entirely of plasteel, and heavily buttressed, it presents an almost gothic appearance to those viewing it for the first time. Built into the foot of a ridge, the entrance building is 300' long and 100' deep, and it rises 35' to the height of the ridge behind it. A single locked security air lock measuring 12' high x 15' wide is the building's only access. Security clearance is limited to administrative personnel and mining engineers.

As the air lock opens a cathedral-sized open-air room meets your gaze. To your left, a number of decontamination showers and a body-sized hot air dryer ensure that any exposure in the mines can be resolved rapidly and successfully. To your right, a rack of time cards and a time clock are mounted on a small partition near a single large desk and chair. Down the center, not 10' from the air lock stands a double row of 36 lockers (18 per side) with changing benches mounted between them. None of these features, however, fill more than the first 25' of this 100' deep building. The back of the building is filled with the largest elevator you have seen outside of the Planet Kask Outpost (for those who have been there), and the machinery that makes it operate. The elevator platform measure 40' per side, and it is surrounded by a 12' high wire cage with a simple pair of gates that span 20'. A control box mounted on a pedestal is located near this gate on the elevators wire wall. All within this building is dark, with only a few emergency lights providing faint illumination, and as silent as a tomb.

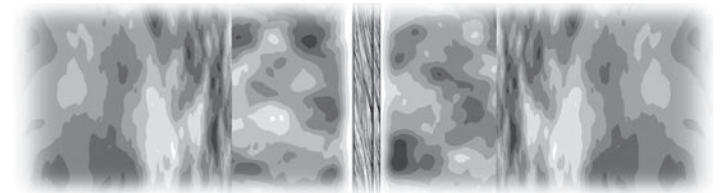
The lockers are not locked and contain extremely heavy (1/2 normal actions, including movement and attacks) radiation suits which shield their wearers from 99% of ionizing radiation, and have their own sequestered 2-hour air supply. They accept 30 points of impact-type damage before their protection is compromised and the suit becomes worthless. If colony personnel are accompanying the party at this point in the adventure, they recommend that all characters don them, and each will garb themselves in a suit immediately.

The time cards are all there, and accurate. For a list of the mining engineers that might have cards, refer to Appendix D, Colony Personnel.

The power is out unless the characters have repaired the generator (see Area #14C) and a separate source of power needs to be provided for the lift to function. How the characters might generate that power is left to you, and your players, discretion (certainly there is more than one correct answer) but 2400 amps of power are required to operate this gigantic lift (again you may pick the voltage, or Ac/DC current). The lift controls are very simple and may be operated successfully by any character regardless of their knowledge or skills.

Area #16B: The Landing

The lift descends only 80' before arriving upon a stable platform that forms the lower landing. The landing is 75' circular area with an opening that matches the location of the gate in the elevator's safety cage. The periphery of this area is lined with ready-for-use safety equipment: fire-fighting gear, 4-man cave-in pods capable of sustaining life for 24 hours, emergency medical equipment and oxygen, an emergency radio phone, anything that might be need in the event of a mine disaster might is stored here.



As the lift comes to a rest at the bottom of the shaft, you marvel at the shallowness of this mine. You have descended no more than 80'. The landing at the bottom is a circular area with a periphery comprised of every piece of safety equipment you have ever seen connected with mining: portable fire extinguishers, bottled oxygen, emergency medical supplies, and even a half dozen 4-man cave-in pods capable of sustain life in the event of a collapse in the mines. A single 50' wide tunnel some 25' in height leads off into the rock. It is well-lit and level. You have to admit, these guys know how to mine.

The tunnel is indeed level enough that even while still aboard the elevator, the characters are likely to discern the mechanism for the conveyor to the refining plant that intrudes upon the tunnel 70' from the landing. If colonists are accompanying the party, they might take exception to the characters 'borrowing' any of the safety equipment found here. What they might pilfer, and how it might later be either used or turned into credits by the characters is left to your discretion, but all of it is safety, rather than mining, equipment.

Once the characters arrive at the landing, they are being exposed to a mild form of hard gamma radiation. ***While not lethal, unshielded characters do suffer damage from exposure to this area at the rate of 1 Health damage per 15 minutes of exposure (0.4Sv).***

Area #16C: Conveyor to the Refinery

The conveyor mechanism here is actually quite simple; a sorter insures that oversized chunks of ore-bearing material are ejected onto the floor, while those that 'fit' the conveyor are organized by the same sorter and fed to the conveyor belt. This belt feeds into a 4' diameter tube that constantly expresses the ore to a second sorter inside the refinery building (Area #15C). The conveyor, and the sorter, are currently shut off. This happens automatically when a power loss occurs, and the system must be restarted manually using the controls found in this area.

As you proceed down the tunnel, you see ahead that it is partially blocked by a large metal bin measuring at least 12' per side and standing over 8' tall. A control panel is mounted on the wall near it, but all is currently quite. Whatever this mechanism does, it is not currently functional.

The bin is also empty at this time as no manzakium has been mined for several days. If the power has been restored (in Area #14C), restarting the conveyor does cause the sorter to begin its process, and the conveyor belt to visibly move. Characters attempting to use this belt for transit to the refinery (Area #14) run the risk of dismemberment by this sorting device. Any character climbing into the conveyor mechanism has a 65% chance of suffering 4d20 damage from this sorter. The sorter suffers no damage at all from the character's body being crushed.

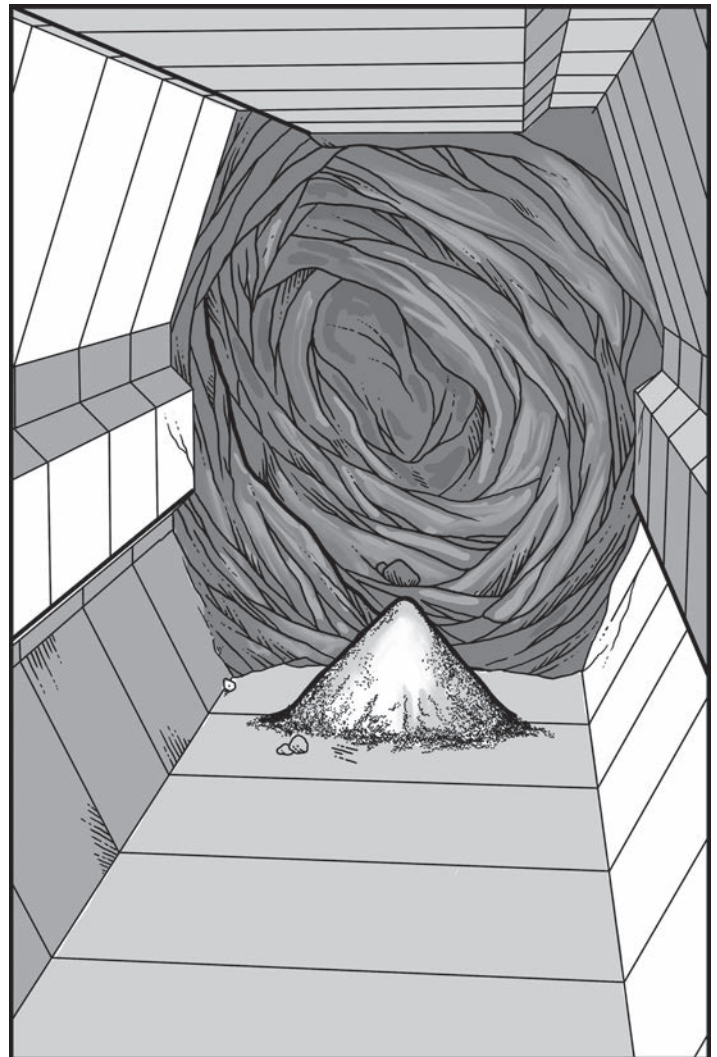
Area #16D: Abandoned Tunnel

Twelve days ago, a Remote Extraction Unit was set up in this area to auto-mine a rich vein of manzakium that follows the path taken by this tunnel. The Kask Entity responded to this irritation in the most efficient way in knew — it created a Clay Construct to halt the irritation it felt. The Clay Construct was rapidly disrupted by the REU, as was the one that immediately followed it, and so the Kask Entity created a Mineral Construct to assault the persistent nuisance. Several Mineral Constructs were required, but the REU was eventually damaged to the point of shutdown (see *Incident Report #2*).

This dig site within the mine has been temporarily abandoned until a replacement Remote Extraction Unit can be shipped in (from off-planet) and installed to continue the retrieval of ore. The old unit (see Incident Report #2) has been removed, but a curious conical pile of mud and sand remains on the floor here.

You note that, uncharacteristically, the tunnel ahead is unfinished; its sides are rough and uneven. A strange cone of material, perhaps mud or sand, rises upwards from the floor to a height of just under 3'.

The Kask Entity has been unable to establish Kask Flowers (explained in Area #16E, The Brow) and so responds to any attempt to obtain a sample of the manzakium ore vein from this location by erecting a new Mineral Construct to halt any operation of this kind.



Mineral Construct

Appearance: This stone manikin is formed in the rough shape of a skinny human in a bio-suit, and stands 7' tall. It is a manifestation of the Kask entity made of a very hard crystalline substance rendering it extremely difficult to damage but rather vulnerable once damage has been sustained. The construct is nearly impervious to conventional beam weapons (they are reflected) and impact weapons and projectiles only inflict half of normal damage.

Demeanor: This construct has been tasked with bringing to a halt the further removal of any manzakium from this area of the mine. The construct has a keen sense for manzakium and is able to detect anything more than the smallest trace amounts. Any character removing even a small piece is attacked until destroyed/killed, as are any characters carrying manzakium or manzakium ore.

Power: 20%

Defense: 95%

Move: 20'

Health: 20

Init: Normal

Damage: Arm Bash 5d8

Special: The high defense factor is indicative of the nature of the crystals from which it is fashioned. There is a 1 in 4 chance that any given mineral construct contains an element that is highly explosive. If a Mineral Construct is fired upon with energy or beam-type weapons, there is a 50% chance that it will reflect the energy back at the source with an addition of 20% more force or power. (e.g., if hit with a beam that inflicts 10 health loss, it reflects 12 health loss.)

Planet Kask's Mineral Constructs are highly susceptible to Electro-Magnetic Pulses which cause them to lose cohesion and disintegrate 75% of the time.

Note: If the characters do not attempt to remove any manzakium from this area, the Kask Entity does not reform the construct to prevent further damage (as no damage occurs).



*Original specimen
of the
Kask Flower sent to
the Kask Colony
Botany Lab*

Area #16E: The Brow

This large open area within the mine was the site of the largest and richest amalgamation of manzakium bearing ore yet discovered. It was also the greatest source of irritation experienced by the Kask entity.

Confronted with Yellow Fungus intrusions into its exposed manzakium, many of which were destroyed by colonists, Kask is faced with a perplexing choice: befriend the colonists, perhaps finding a means for a common-ground alliance to rid the planet of the invasive fungus, or simply scorch the entire surface of the planet in the hope that all fungal entities are destroyed along with the colonists. Currently, Kask hopes to establish communications. It finds the colonists amusing, interesting; it hopes to gain a friend.

Now a veteran at using electromagnetic fields to create Clay and Mineral Constructs, Kask has taken this experimentation one further step. Kask has used his ability to manipulate these fields to alter the DNA of the Yellow Fungus and their hated cousins, the Mesmer Mushrooms. It has created the "Kask Flower" from this recombined DNA; a flower able to generate and transmit Alpha and Beta brain waves. It hopes these flowers are a means for communicating with the colonists.

Early experiments with this new organism, an aspect of the Kask entity, have proven less than successful (see *Incident Reports #8 & #9*). While Kask has gained new insights as to the workings of the colonists reasoning process and thought patterns, the primitive minds of the colonists were confused, disorganized, and rapidly became completely random. Attempts to share thoughts with these creatures have thus far proven futile, as the colonists' minds seem incapable of comprehending the thoughts Kask has sent.

Undaunted, Kask has filled this area with Kask Flowers in hopes of establishing communications. So far only one message has gotten through: that this area is a great place that should be visited constantly.

MS McKnight, MS Rawwlon, and MS Veck were drawn back to this spot three days ago due to their previous exposure to the Kask Flower. Excited by their return, the Kask entity immediately attempted communications with these three mining specialists, and has as a result shut down (albeit inadvertently) their active thought processes. The three now stand in the midst of a field of Kask Flowers.

The tunnel ahead rapidly widens, quickly becoming a vast, roughly circular open excavation some 120' across. Three colonists in radiation suits stand mutely in the center of this area. They are surrounded by a strange field of yellow flowers that seem to grow from the rock of this area's floor. Two tunnels lead from this area to other portions of the mine.

The manzakium scent produced by the Kask Flowers is an extremely tiny molecule (> 1 angstrom) and is able to penetrate most protective suits, although space suits are 99% effective at blocking this chemical. All other forms of protective gear are at best 50% effective, and at worst provide no protection at all. The degree to which any gear worn by the characters might protect them from this airborne mind link is left to your discretion, but any character entering this area is immediately subjected to its potential influence.

Kask Flowers (362)

Appearance: This unobtrusive 6" tall flower has a white, puffy center and 6 petals that appear to be miniature mushrooms. It has a mushroom-like thick stem, and rootlets that both anchor the plant to any rough surface, and draw moisture into the plant for its continued existence. Kask Flowers radiate a slight radioactive field when scanned due to the presence of manzakium in their makeup.

Demeanor: Kask Flowers have no sentience, they are merely communicative conduits for the Kask Entity.

Power: 01%

Move: 0'

Init: Normal

Damage: Mind Link that can cause insanity. (see Special)

Special: Characters exposed to the chemical signature (scent - 20' range) of these plants must avoid the mental link it attempts to form between their mind and the Kask Entity or they risk becoming temporarily insane. An intelligence (or like statistic or skill) check is required, with a penalty of -10%/-2 to the roll. Space suits are 99% effective (no check required) at blocking exposure to this chemical, while all other forms of protective gear are at best 50% effective. Characters with linguistic, biochemical, or bio-feedback skills are better able to comprehend the process that occurs and receive a second Avoidance Roll, not to avoid the link, but to comprehend it when it occurs. Characters with these skills may also choose to simply accept the mind link, and roll a skill check only to maintain their sanity.

Defense: 1%(0)

Health: 1

Once a character successfully (sanity maintained) establishes a link with the Kask Entity via a Kask Flower, they may reinitiate this link without risk whenever they are exposed to the scent of a Kask Flower.

Characters failing to avoid the mind link that have not the skills or abilities to comprehend it (no biochemical, linguistic, or bio-feedback skills, or other skills you might deem appropriate) suffer a random form of insanity, although catatonia is most common. Roll 1d20 and consult the chart below, or assign your own favorite form of insanity (its good to be the game master).

- 1-5 Paranoia with visual and auditory hallucinations
- 6-15 Catatonia
- 16-20 Homicidal Schizophrenia (will attack other characters)

Characters failing to avoid the effects of this flower, should be given an additional Avoidance every six combat rounds.

If the characters manage to establish communications with the Kask Entity, another entire adventure awaits your campaign. The Kask Entity will not allow the removal of its manzakium, but might steer the colonists/humans towards other valuable natural resources. It might decide to help terraform the atmosphere, or any other of a number of cooperative adventures. It could also decide to fluctuate its gravitational field, drawing in (to crash) any fleet ships within 10,000 kilometers of the planet, fill its own atmosphere with methane and flash-fry the entire surface, or any number of other activities that might spell doom for the colonists, or even all of Fleet within a given sector of space. What any agreement might entail, and where said agreement might lead is left to you, but understand that the entity is neither naïve nor powerless should your players try to take advantage.

Should the party manage to establish communications with the Kask Entity, all those suffering from insanity due to the scent of the Kask Flowers are immediately released from this thrall, and suffer no further ill effects.

Area #16F: Unfinished Tunnel

This tunnel was the site of the second Kask Entity response to unwanted mining, and it occurred 17 hours after the REU unit was disabled in area #16D. The Allmore Tunneling Unit (ATU) is designed to create a path that may be followed and exploited by Remote Extraction Units such as the one destroyed in area #16D. The Allmore unit requires a remote operator (radio control with a maximum distance of 250') and MS Pfill Canwyne Nueller was assigned to operate this vehicle during the workshift that followed the destruction of the REU. Having learned from the last encounter, the Kask Entity immediately formed a Mineral Construct to thwart this invasion, accompanied by an early version of the Kask Flower to see if a lasting solution might not be imparted to the ignorant colonists. MS Nueller's mind was affected, disabling his ability to protect the tunneling unit, and the Allmore unit was destroyed (see Incident report #3). The limited success of the Kask Flower, however, has caused to remove area #16F from his potential problem list (as it were). No 'Kask guardian' of any kind is present in this sector when the characters arrive.

The rock surface in this area is rough, and rapidly narrows to a 3-meter diameter round tunnel, the floor of which is covered in fine particles of sand.

The sand here, if scanned, contains traces of manzakium, and is slightly radioactive as a result.

Tim's Tips

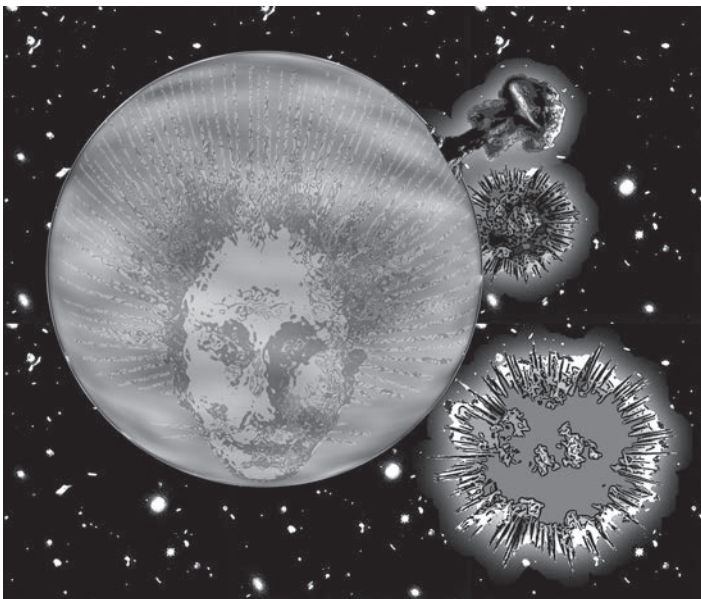
At the reading of the first mission, the characters have been presented with "findings" of previous inquiries into various events. If you as judge/moderator/GM choose to use them as background facts to be given to the players before play begins, that is your option. However, if I might be so bold as to suggest, you could have your party actually "live" through at least some of them. You have been provided with the architecture for each to be a possible encounter or incident. From this basic structure you are encouraged to branch out wherever the party leads.

I have employed some subtle and some not-so-subtle means of enabling these incidents to happen. The first incident with the flower is the planet first exercising compulsion-type skills; the planet is "infecting" the crew members with Mk127 in the scent molecules of the bloom. Early in its awareness, much as a toddler might behave, the planet is learning its capabilities. Causing a chasm to open and swallow the robotic device is a crude, simple and efficient (if somewhat sloppy) means of scratching an itch.

The planet instinctively realizes that MK127 is the channel that might facilitate communication. The flower incident was a clumsy first attempt; no traces of the substance a short while later in the samples drawn in sickbay. It is processed through the human body quite rapidly.

Finally, a peaceful solution should be attainable. Not all of the Mk127 is contiguous. In fact, there is quite a lot, by human standards, that is "free-floating"; *i.e.*, not connected to the central mass that has now come to awareness.

You can have your players live out each of the incidents described, and alter them to your schema, or have them simply part of their briefing. At present, the planet is devoid of all but vegetable life; no mammals, no birds, no bugs. What was there has died off as the atmosphere has been bled of methane and replaced with oxygen and nitrogen. Only the fungus growing in the dome is new life thriving on the planet. That however, is not graven in stone. If you choose, you can throw in anything that suits you. Keep in mind, though, that a reasonable level of verisimilitude requires at least a passing nod to such things as food chains and predatory relationships.



AFTERMATH

The possibilities for play beyond this adventure, given the actions of your players' characters during the adventure, are legion. What follows here are two potential reports filed after the characters visit the planet. Use them or not, as you see fit

Version 1

Report on Recent Findings on Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask

Translation/Interpretation by Ens. Kitt Nignon, Ethnobiologist, Fleet Cruiser Gallant 32 days elapsed since the erection of the colony dome on the Kask Colony.

The following is a compilation of several transcripts from several interviews and hypnosis sessions with MS Emma Nignon. It has become apparent that Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask, is sentient. As this occurrence is unprecedented, all work was suspended. MS Nignon has been thoroughly examined by Fleet doctors of all types, physical and neurological and is adjudged by all to be fully sane and rational.

The planet named Kask was "awakened" by the deep probes performed by the *Gallant*. As has previously been recognized, the element manzakium, (Mk, atomic number 127) found only on Kask, has remarkable conductivity properties and exists in a natural state in a rigid crystalline form. Subsequent testing and surveys have revealed that the entire planet is literally laced with deposits of manzakium, most of which, but not all, is contiguous. The probes apparently initiated a cascading piezo-electric effect in an infinite number of semi-conductor-like crystalline structures that is spreading across the entire planet to every contiguous deposit.

The planet has responded to what we might perceive as irritation or pain; it has not acted unilaterally against the would-be colonists in anything approaching an aggressive manner.

There is every likelihood that some sort of mutually beneficial agreement can be reached. It has sent an initial message which our top scientists agree reads,

"I was not. I became. I continued to become until I was as I am now."

Version 2

Report on Hidden Signal Discovery on Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask

Report compiled from the findings of Xeno Biologist Angela Parrette and Fabrication Engineer Chip Meyers, Planet Kask Mining Colony

Recent reports of radio jamming signals filling channel one with static and interfering with communications were brought to the attention of Chip Myers, the colony's Fabrication Engineer. He scanned the interference bands and began an analysis using computer models, but could not ascertain the source of this static buildup.

Simulation after simulation yielded negative results and all of the channels began to fill up with this static jamming signal. Driven to frustration, Chip placed the signal through audio amplifiers in his workshop normally used for entertainment purposes. While cogitating over the white noise, FE Myers thought he detected a pattern amongst the static. He sent a runner for me, as well as a thumb drive containing the static pattern that he had been looking at all day.

There is a pattern here.

I have studied it all day, and have submitted it to several Fleet linguists for verification, but I believe it to say,

"I was not. I became. I continued to become until I was as I am now."

FE Myers confirms that the origin of this static field is the core of planet Kask. I believe we must face the fact that planet Kask is alive. I believe we should be thankful. It wants to talk.

One final thought: it is also possible that the ever adaptive fungus through the use of Mesmer Mushrooms and a pervasive Yellow Fungus captures the Planet Kask, or that the planet, through the use of the Kask Flower, captures the Dark Visitor.

In either case, a new power will have arisen in the galaxy, a power terrible, amoral, and completely oblivious to the need for mankind to continue its existence.

Enjoy your game.

APPENDIX A: MISSION BRIEFING

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CODE NAME: *Kask Colony Civilian Inspection*

DIRECTOR: *Fleet Commander James M. Warden*

ADJUDANT: *Captain Bradley Clark*

CLASSIFIED

INITIAL DATA:

Several reports sent to fleet from Kask Colony indicate an outbreak of some strange, previously unknown growth, possibly fungal in nature. Several casualties have been incurred, but the situation is under quarantine control. Subsequent colony status reports appear to be duplicates other than the requisite time stamp. Other than daily status reports, Kask Colony has gone dark; no incidental communications have been received, and detailed communiques questioning aspects of status remain unanswered.

RECOMMENDATION:

Send in a private team so as not to arouse suspicion of any bad operators that might be involved. Minimize any damage while providing arm's-length liability control. Outfit private team as needed. Reports to be controlled by Fleet.

Suggest finding a team with experience in matters of this nature in order to avoid undue damage and any possible propaganda.

MISSION OBJECTIVES:

- Eliminate any fungal entities with extreme prejudice.
- Ascertain well-being of 40 active colonists.
- Re-establish communications. A personal report from Colony Administrator Tallenger is particularly necessary.
- If possible, re-establish normal mining operations.
- Minimize damage to colony property.
- Preserve samples of any new life forms encountered, if possible.
- Reports on progress are expected every two hours using your ship's communication system (if no other is functional).

APPENDIX B: INCIDENT REPORTS

The following reports are not available to the characters before they depart for the planet, but become available due to a variety of circumstances and in a variety of areas as they explore the Dark Colony. As Game Master, you should familiarize yourself with all of these reports before beginning play.

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Incident Report #1: Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask

Disappearance of VOLE (Valuable Ore Locator and Encoder) Unit

Location: 140.3°, 1363 feet from the colony dome (*Encounter A on the map*)

Timestamp: Kask Day 9.135

Geo-Survey Specialist Tathum Glass reporting

It was reported that three days after being installed, tested and set to Autorun, VOLE Unit 14 disappeared at approximately 0147 Hours. 14 was a remote crawler unit equipped with high energy probes set to search for and analyze deposits of manzakium (Mk 127). Study of the computers that were receiving and analyzing the data RMU 14 was sending all show the same sudden cessation of the dataflow signal. Automated scans failed to locate the unit; a Survey team was dispatched as soon as the spot experienced planetary sunrise. No trace of the VOLE was found by either a visual fly-by or a later ground search. The only anomaly noted was a smell prevalent in the area that was variously described as “earthy”, and a 90’ wide bowl-shaped depression about 2’ deep at the center that seemed too perfect to be completely natural. High EMF readings were also noted, although well within standard background EMF levels for this planet.

Incident Report #2: Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask

Damage to REU (Remote Extraction Unit)

Location: Pilot shaft A1 in the colony Manzakium Mine (*Area #16D on the map*)

Timestamp: Kask Day 18.16

Mining Specialist Team Leader Russel Ank reporting

REU had been erected and functioning for approximately 53 hours when the data stream became incoherent and then ceased. This occurred while the REU was in nightfall topside; it was ordered that a security team investigate immediately the following day. There were no signs of any life-forms present. The REU appeared to have been bludgeoned or beaten by a very large, very hard object or objects. The duralumin alloy of the facility was dented in multiple areas and even cracked in three. Connections of pipes and conduits appeared to have been most severely damaged. The RUE’s internal memory logs show that it had extracted nearly 300 kilos of Mk 127 ore; no trace of any was found. The REU was adjudged to be irreparable and subsequently recycled. One security camera had a very brief (2.5 seconds), very blurry glimpse of something vaguely humanoid that would seem to be 10 to 12 feet tall. There are no known lifeforms on this planet.

Recommendation: Until these incidents are resolved, dual CC cameras should be installed at all active mining sites so that should one fail a record of the problem might still be retrieved.

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Incident Report #3 Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask

Attack and Fracture of Allmore Tunneling Unit

Location: Pilot Shaft C1 in the colony Manzakium Mine (*Area #16F on the map*)

Timestamp: Kask Day 18.91

Mining Specialist Team Leader Russel Ank reporting

Work crews finished hooking up all of the connections on the Allmore* unit at 1746 Hours. The unit was set to create a tunnel encompassing a large deposit of Mk 127 as located on Geo-survey Drone reports. Mining Specialist Nueller, Pfill Canwyne, Fleet ID # 243957368, was assigned the first 10 hour shift, beginning 0001 Hrs, when the unit was activated. All proceeded normally for the first 3.5 hours and then MT2 Nueller logged hearing a loud noise from the front of the machine. He logged hearing it again some 12 minutes later, and again 9 minutes after that, then seven minutes later, then 4 minutes later. At that point (0402 Hrs) the Hydraulic Monitoring system activated and registered significant pressure loss. When MS Nueller went to investigate, he testified that he saw a crack in the front of the unit where it was being pummeled by a “big stone man”. There was sand all around, as well as in, the Allmore unit.

Security Specialist Alice Danvers was dispatched to investigate and found MS Nueller semi-conscious and raving about “a stone man”. He was escorted to the landing area and given a sedative by Doctor Nora Underwood, the colony psychologist but persisted in his testimony. Doctor Underwood, in conjunction with Chief Mining Engineer Joe Tallenger, attribute his unlikely tale to hallucinations triggered by the release of an as-yet undocumented gas pocket that blasted sand and gas into the passage, damaging the Allmore unit, and disorienting MS Nueller.

**Allmore Industries Model 34-59-8 automatic tunneling unit. 14 meters in overall length, with a variable bore of 2-4 meters.*

Incident Report #4 Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask

Destruction of Recreation Center

Location: Colony Dome Recreation Center (*Area #9 on the map*)

Timestamp: Kask Day 22.36

Colony Administrator Jim Tallenger reporting

1.6 hours ago (approximate) a vast low-grade explosion destroyed the entire Recreation Center. The roof and interior contents were vaporized. The walls of the structure still stand but so powerful was the explosion that cracks radiate outward from the foundation for up to 150 distance, so the building is in need of a complete rework and replacement. A subsequent investigation yielded few concrete results but apparently the standard Fleet issue cook stove (Model F34B) had its efficiency ‘improved’ by our Fabrication Engineer FB Chip Meyers using manzakium samples recently recovered from the Kask Colony Manzakium Mine. Untested, the upgrade was installed without prior approval, and it appears to have exploded when first powered. No colonists were present within the building when the explosion occurred. The center, however, is a total loss.

Recommendation: I have ordered that any further experimentation with manzakium cease without delay until ordered by Fleet command.

Incident Report #5 Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask***Unexplained Cessation of Operation of Atmospheric Distillery and Power Complex***

Location: Power Station and Atmospheric Distillery Dome, 19.9°, 112 feet from main colony dome (Area #14 on the map)

Timestamp: Kask Day 15.22

Life Support Engineer Jeff Goswell reporting

11 days after beginning operation to filter atmosphere of Nitric Acid (HNO₃), plant suddenly ceased to function. A search of the perimeter was performed; the only abnormality noted was several dozen areas of what appeared to be freshly dug or turned soil. Diagnostic performed on all equipment within facility and it was discovered that 90% of all of the electronics were burned out, victims of a very large EM surge. All circuit boards and breakers as well as automated data processing units will require repair. Requirements duly reported to Fabrication Engineer Chip Meyers and Colony Administrator Jim Tallenger. Conversation concerning the incident with FE Meyers led me to the conclusion that unauthorized modifications had been made to the Atmospheric Distillery unit by FE Meyers, and that manzakium was involved.

Recommendation: FE Meyers is a 'loose cannon', and his activities should be closely monitored by administrative personnel.

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Incident Report #6 Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask***Anomalous Appearance of Fumaroles and Loss of MP6ATV***

Location: 178.4°, 2053 feet from colony dome (Encounter C on the map)

Timestamp: Kask Day 15.61

Security Specialist Alice Danvers reporting

A xeno-biology team led by Senior Biologist Parrette was in the midst of studying an anomalous growth of a native grass species when what could only be referred to as a fumarole erupted approximately 600 meters away on radian 178. There was no seismic warning; it is estimated that approximately 3000 cubic liters of methane gas was released and instantaneously ignited in that first eruption. Approximately 12 minutes later another erupted approximately 425 meters distant along this same meridian. Approximately 8 minutes later another erupted only 300 meters from the party directly on (estimated) meridian 172. Several more fumaroles appeared, erupting all around the party. One ignited only yards away from the MP6ATV, completely destroying it and all the instruments and samples on board. The crew returned on foot.

Incident Report #7 Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask

Loss of Deep Extraction Auger 4 and 3 Killed In Service

Location: 41.8°, 1364 feet from colony dome (*Encounter B on the map*)

Timestamp: Kask Day 9.395

Geo-Survey Specialist Team Leader Thor Myerson reporting

Geo-Survey Team #1 sent an emergency call following an unexpected occurrence of slight seismic activity was noted on the DEF4's. According to the final telemetry we received from the unit, a massive sinkhole suddenly appeared 12 seconds later. DEF 4 was manned by a crew of 3 and had recently located an extensive deposit of Mk127 that extended deep into the planet. The DEF is housed under a dome 10 meters in diameter; the sinkhole that suddenly appeared was at least 20 meters larger and extended 415 meters deep. The facility was completely destroyed and all three lives lost. Notification of next of kin for Geo-Survey Specialist Lucas Walker, Geo-Survey Specialist Smitty Thompson, and Geo-Survey Specialist Sonjay Hilahl should be initiated immediately by administrative personnel.

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Incident Report #8 Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask

New Flora Discovery with Possible Psycho-active Properties

Location: "The Brow" in the colony Manzakium Mine (*Area #16E on the map*)

Timestamp: Kask Day 23.17

Psychologist Nora Underwood reporting

Two Mining Specialists, MS Rawwlon, Jeromi E., and MS Veck, Martin F., suddenly showed signs of psychosis alternating with delusions and hallucinations, none of which seemed to make any sense or shed any light on what happened. They were inside the mine preparing to place buttresses against the inner walls in the area now known as The Brow. Viewing the memory cards of their Personal Body Cameras it was seen that they simultaneously decided to open their radiation helmets to smell some sort of bloom that they found. They were discovered several hours later in a near-catatonic state with mild radiation exposure to their faces and were brought to the medical facility for treatment and assessment. Patients were admitted to the Quarantine ward for analysis in the event that a pathogen of unknown origin was discovered. No pathogens were found, but both blood samples showed significant levels of Mk127 (molecular manzakium). After a full day of irrational raving and babbling, they suddenly became rational, albeit very confused. They steadfastly asserted that they had no memory whatsoever of their day of raving. Blood samples taken 8 hours later showed no presence of Mk127 whatsoever, and so the patients were released.

Addendum: Follow-up investigation determined that the miners discovering Rawwlon and Martin crew suffered brief disorientation spells as well as strange feedback sounds in their communication systems during their trip to the Medical Center. A sample of the mysterious new flower has been retrieved and sent to the Bio Lab.

Incident Report #9 Planet 10249: Catalog Name-Kask***Mass Confusion Incident in The Brow***

Location: "The Brow" in the colony Manzakium Mine (*Area #16E on the map*)

Timestamp: Kask Day 21.85

Psychologist Nora Underwood reporting

Geo-Survey Specialist Team Leader Thor E. Myerson and Geo-Survey Specialist Tatham Glass were suddenly overcome by mild dizziness, nausea, severe vertigo and sensations of falling. Several minor injuries were sustained in the approximately 2.5 minute episode, none life-threatening. The two crew members had to be restrained from removing their radiation suits.

Two geosynchronous satellites noted sudden variations in the electromagnetic field in that area; one satellite's GPS system was momentarily flipped 180°.

These symptoms persisted intermittently for 48 hours.

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Incident Report #10***Mining Specialist Emma Nignon Narcolepsy Incident***

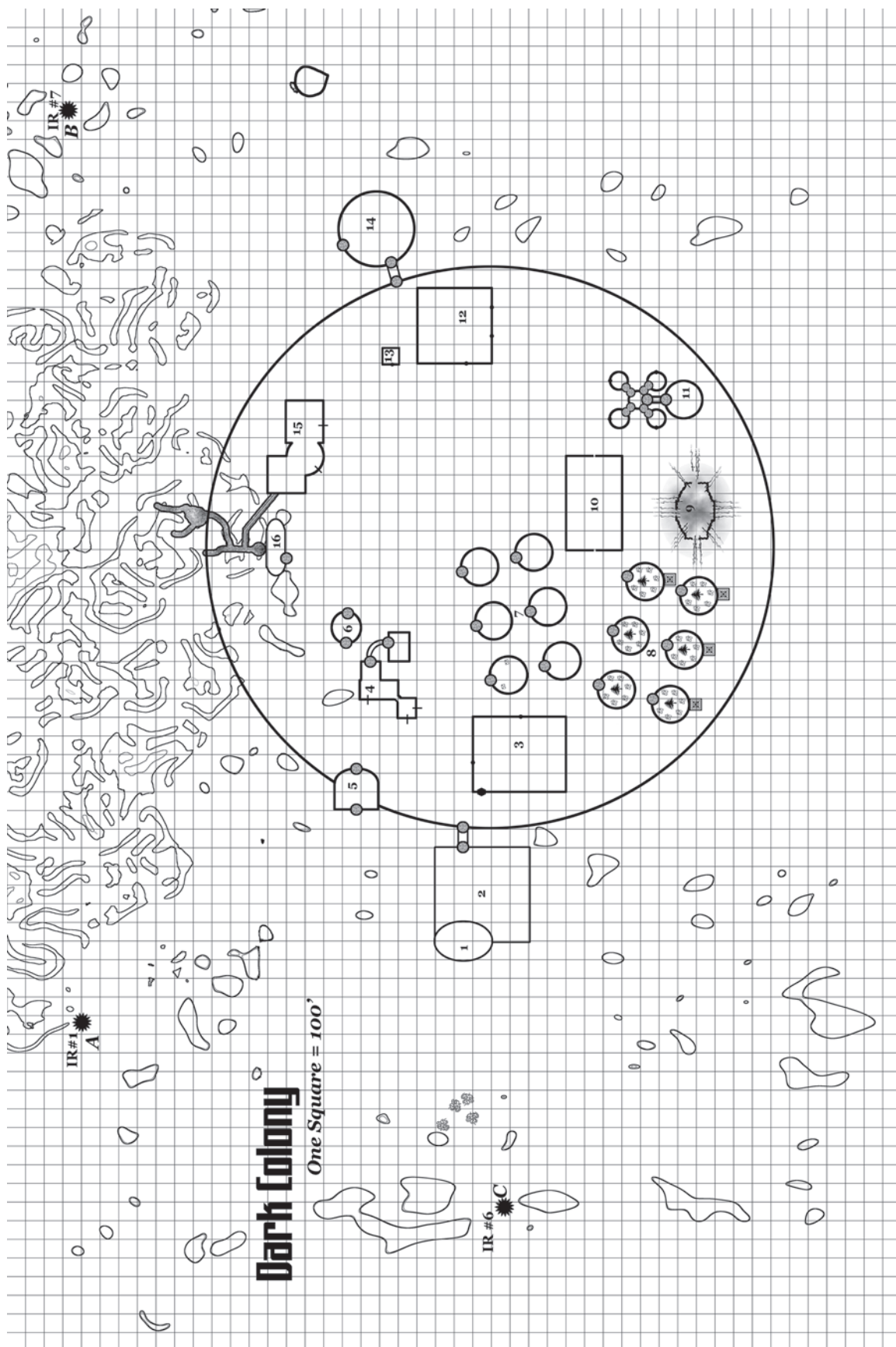
Location: 43 feet from the Landing Platform (*Area #1 on the map*)

Timestamp: Kask Day 22.16

Doctor Phyllis Liteman reporting

Mining Specialist Emma Nignon became drowsy after retrieving a sample of new flora found with the manzakium mine in the area known as The Brow. Upon her return she decided to unwind by hiking to an area near the Landing Bay outside the dome. She was found an hour later by Habitat Engineer Ted Giovanni who was checking the installation of a new robotic docking arm in the Space Dock. MS Nignon was fast asleep with a filter coupling slightly opened, compromising the filtration and allowing the ambient atmosphere to mix into the respiratory unit on her suit. When HE Giovanni tried to awaken her, he soon realized that her sleep was profound and slightly unnatural; her pulse and respiration had been dramatically lowered but instrument readings taken with an emergency medical kit showed that she had not been compromised. She was brought to the Medical Center and a standard full battery of tests were immediately performed. Initial blood scans showed a trace amount of Mk127 in her blood. MS Nignon awakened four hours later, and further blood was drawn, but no trace of manzakium was detected, and so she was released.

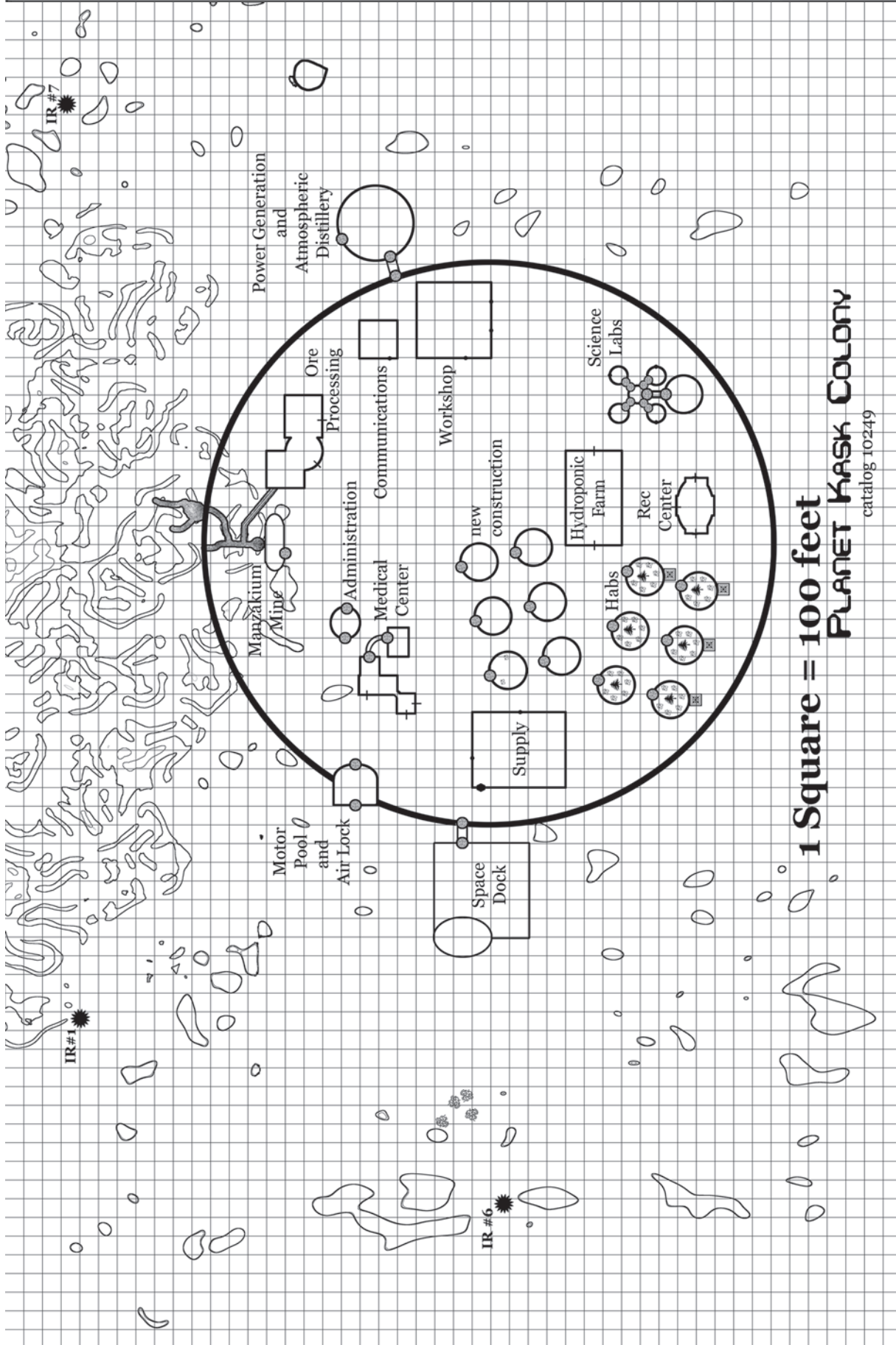
APPENDIX C: MAPS



For ease of use, both fully detailed Game Master and 'encounter-absent' Player versions of the maps pertinent to this adventure are included here.

Permission is hereby granted to photocopy or otherwise reproduce these maps to the purchaser of this product.

**Game
Master's
Full
Colony
Map**



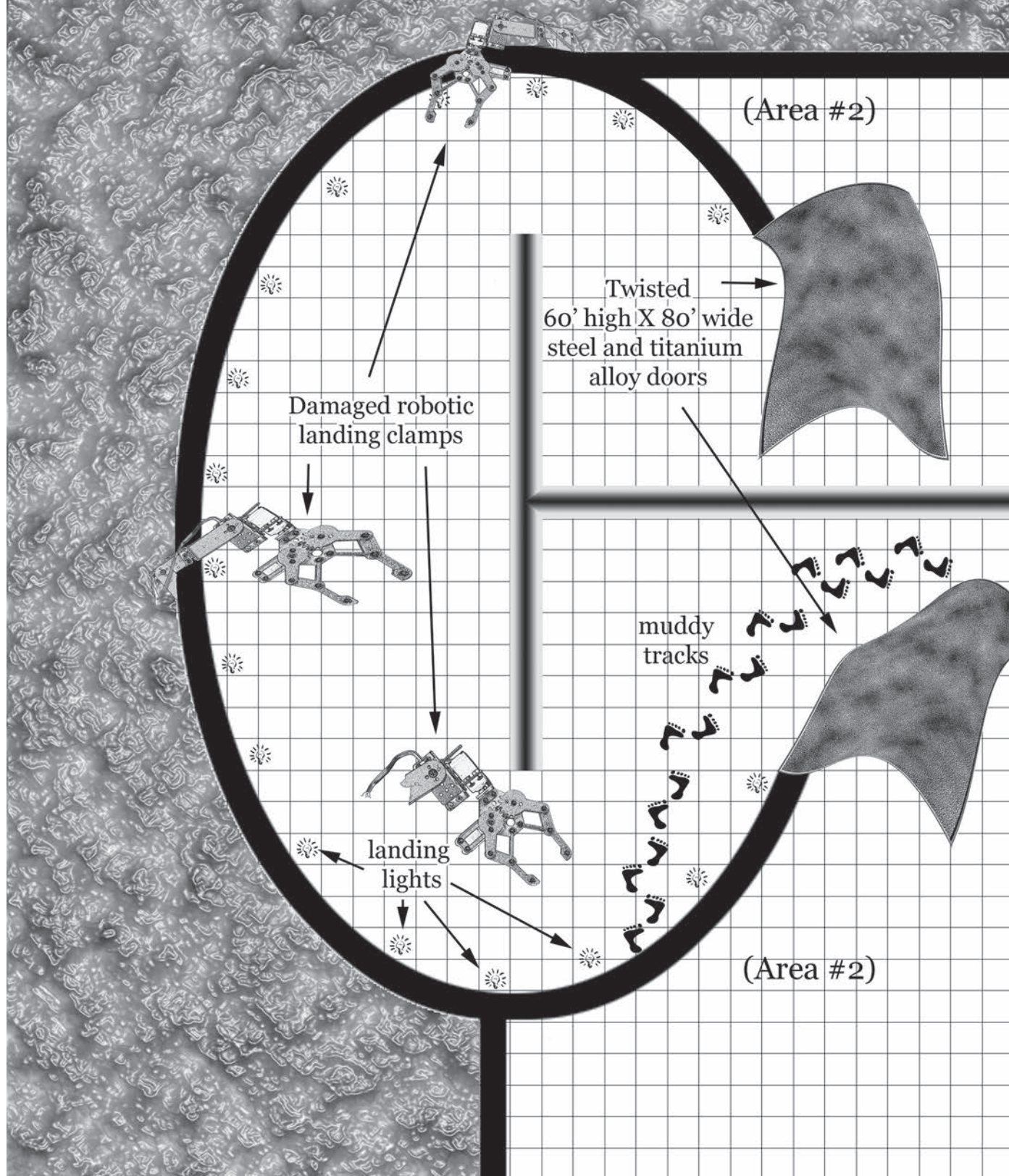
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Player's Full Colony Map

The maps that follow are suitable for either player or GM.

ENCOUNTER AREA #1 THE LANDING PLATFORM

One Square = Ten Feet

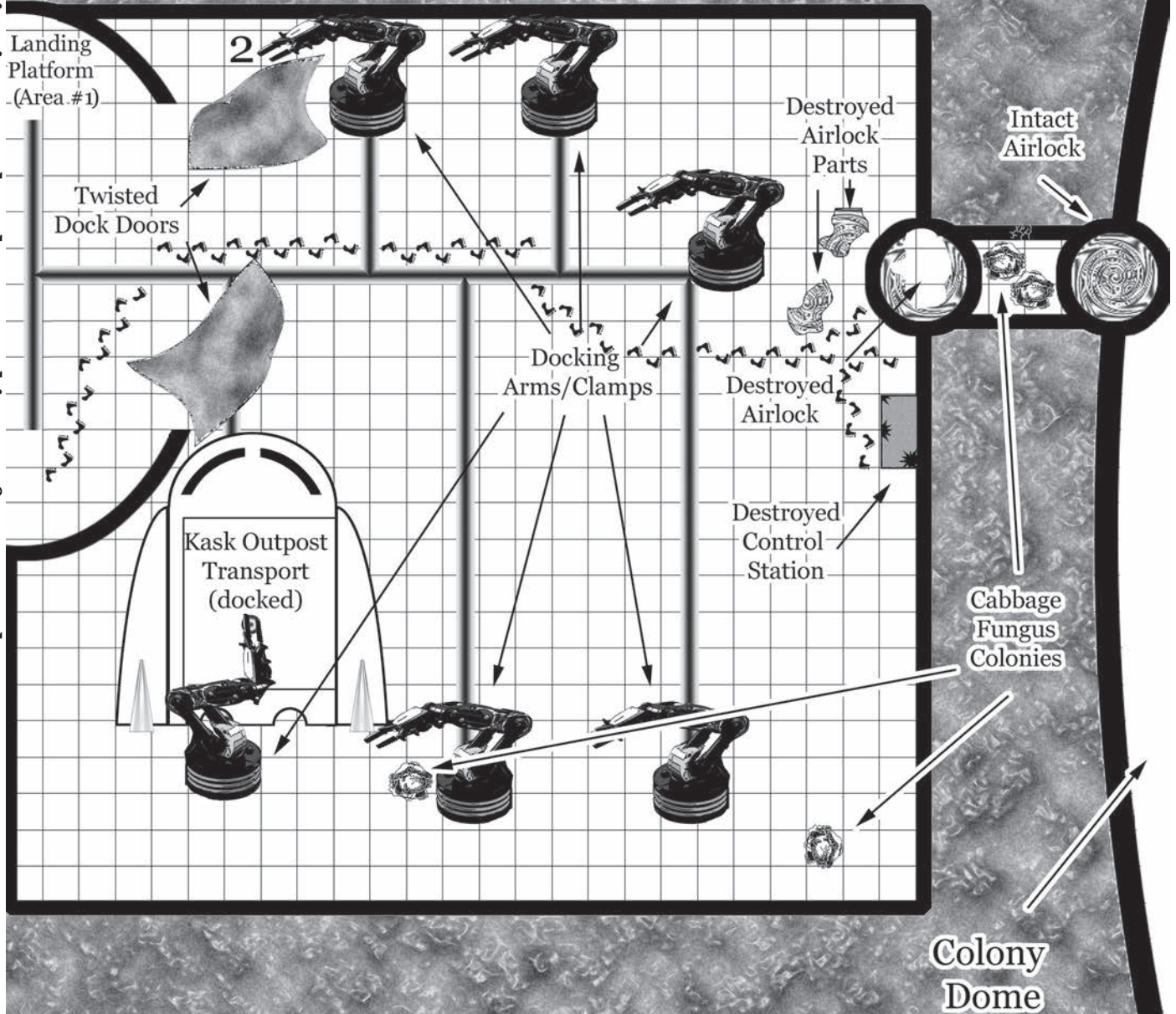


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ENCOUNTER AREA #12: THE SPACE DOCK

One Square = Twenty Feet

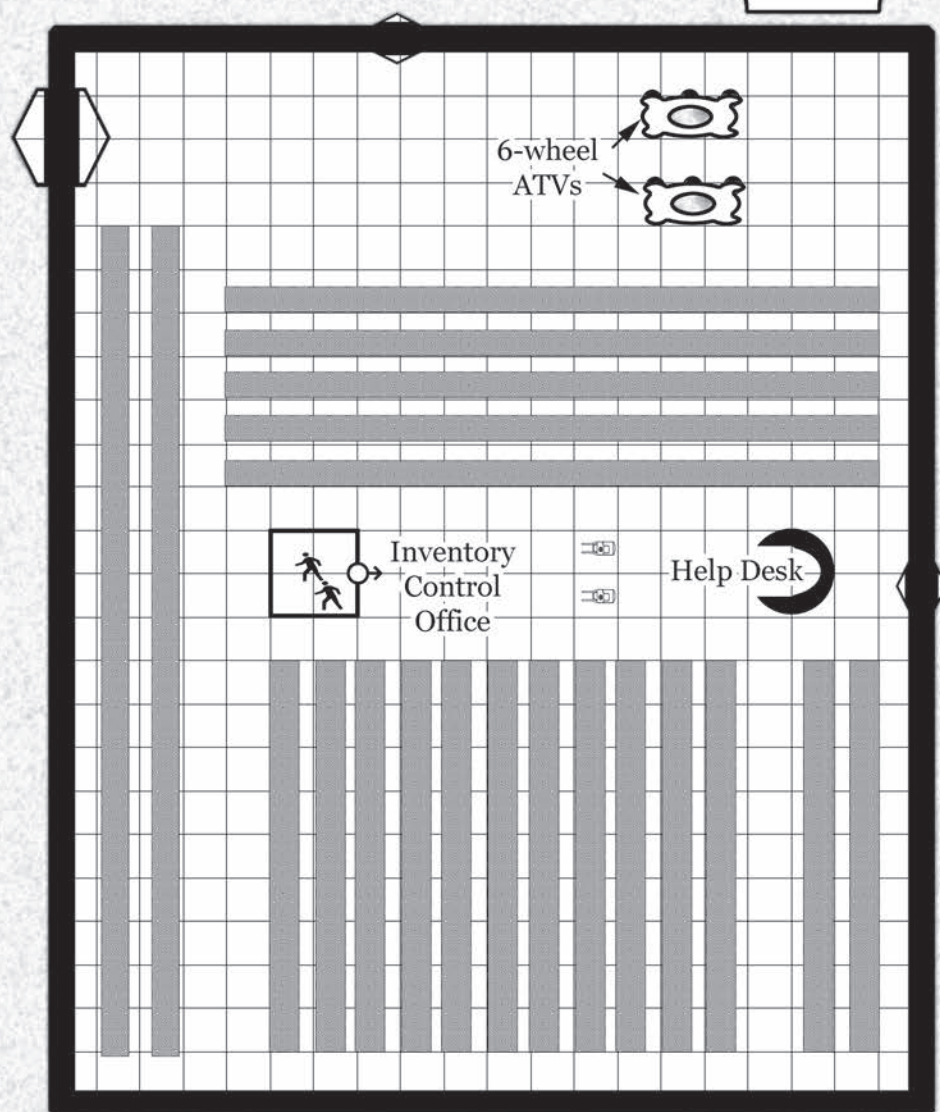
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ENCOUNTER

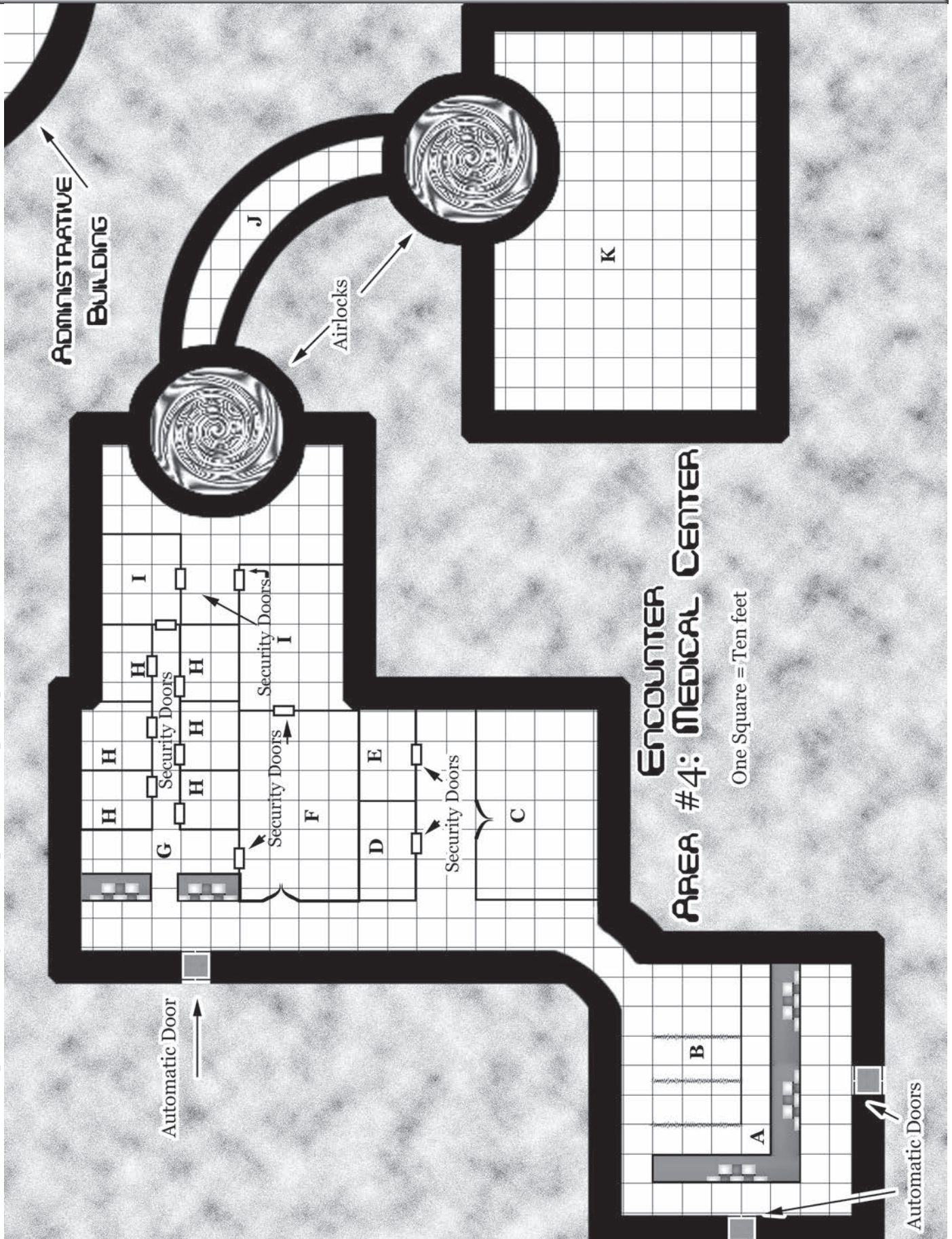
AREA #3: SUPPLY WAREHOUSE

One Square = Twenty Feet



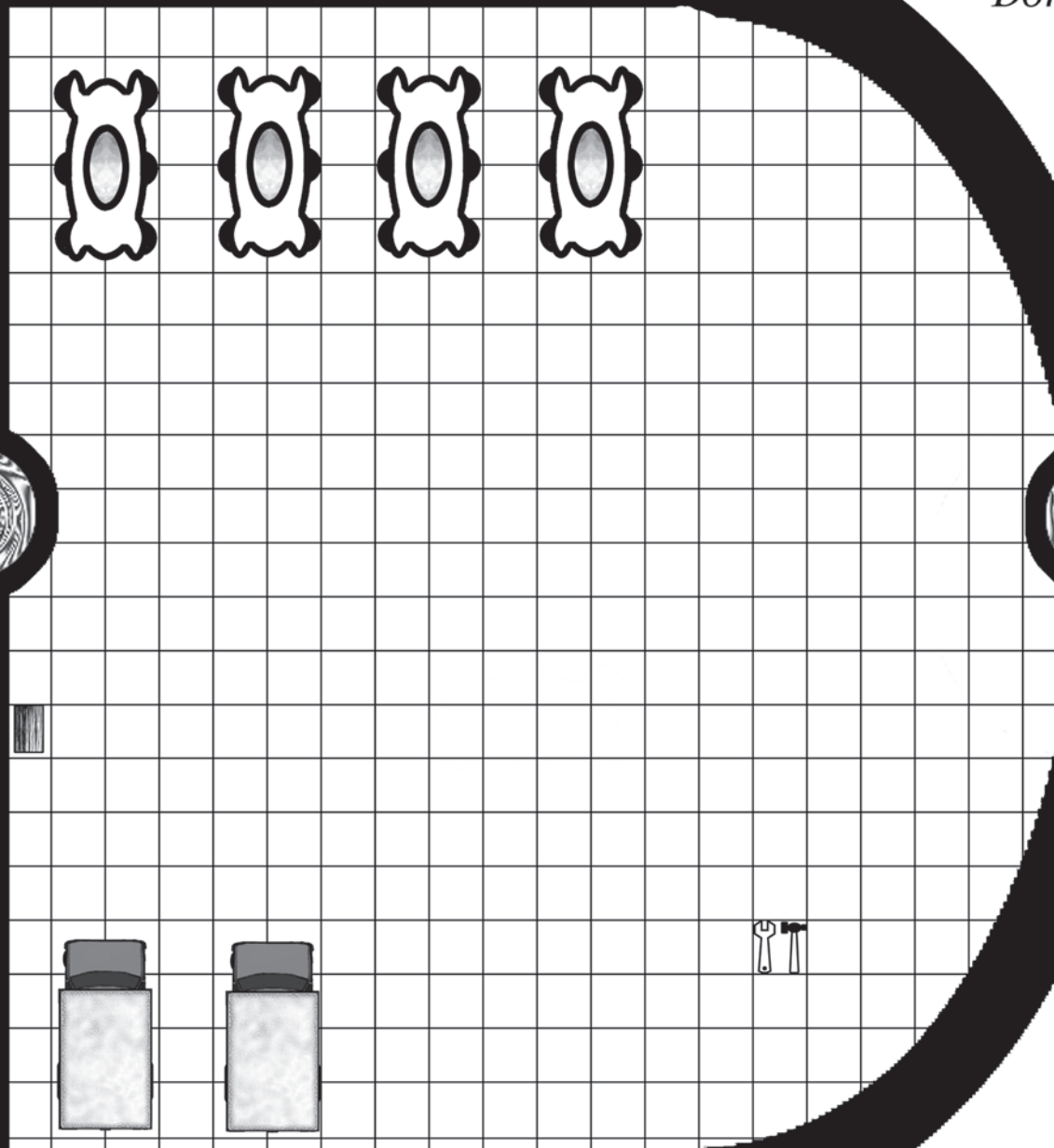
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*Inside
Dome*

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Airlock



Desk



Truck



6-Wheel ATV

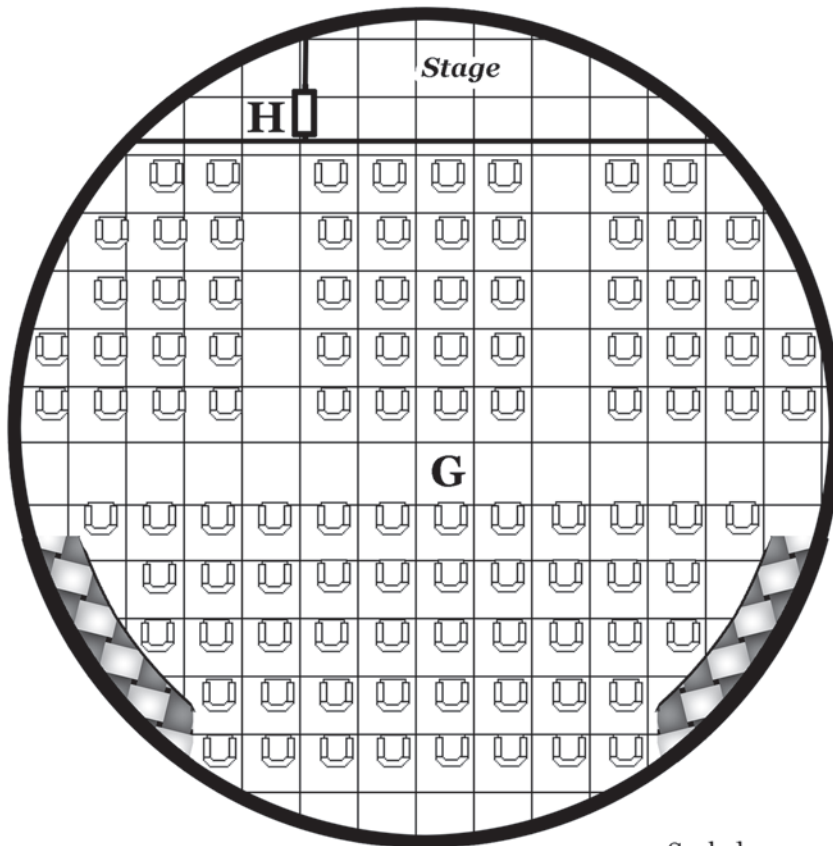


Repair Depot

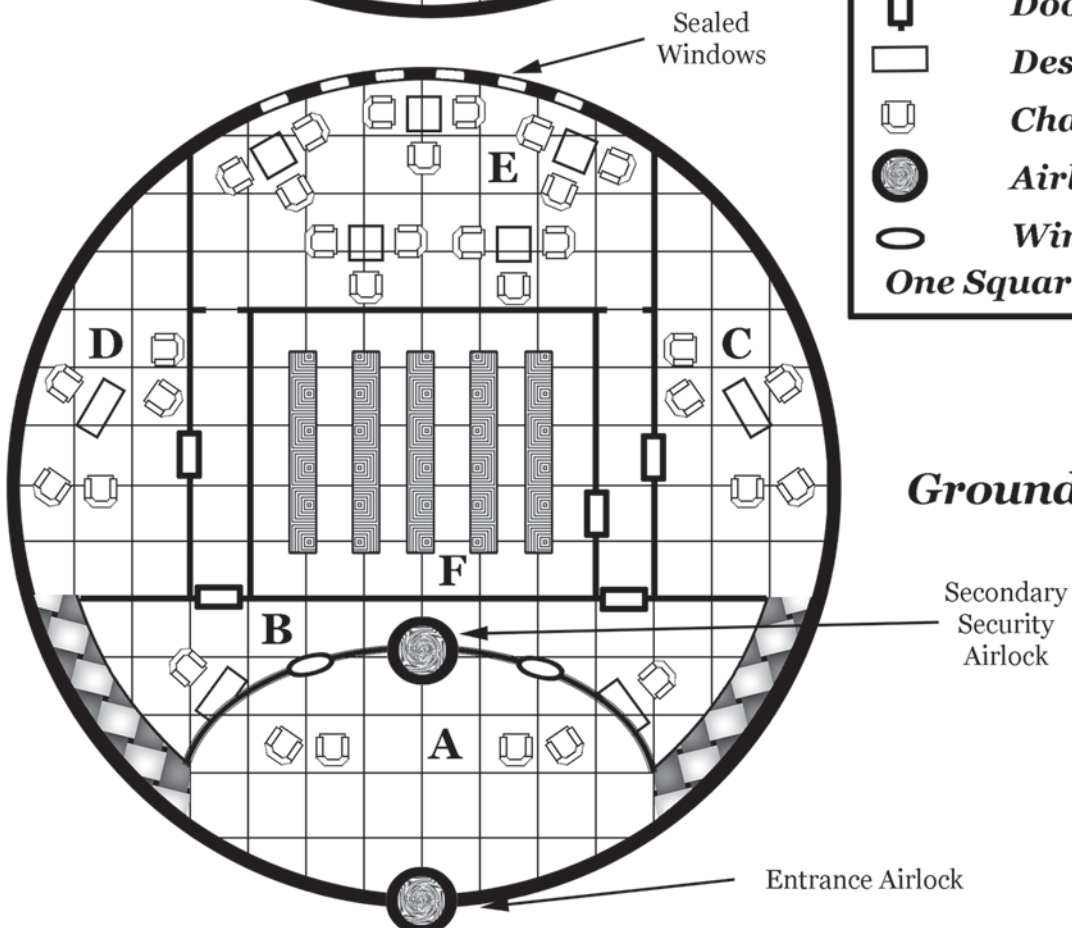
**ENCOUNTER
AREA #5: MOTOR POOL
AND
DOME AIRLOCK**
One Square = Ten Feet

ENCOUNTER AREA #16: ADMINISTRATION

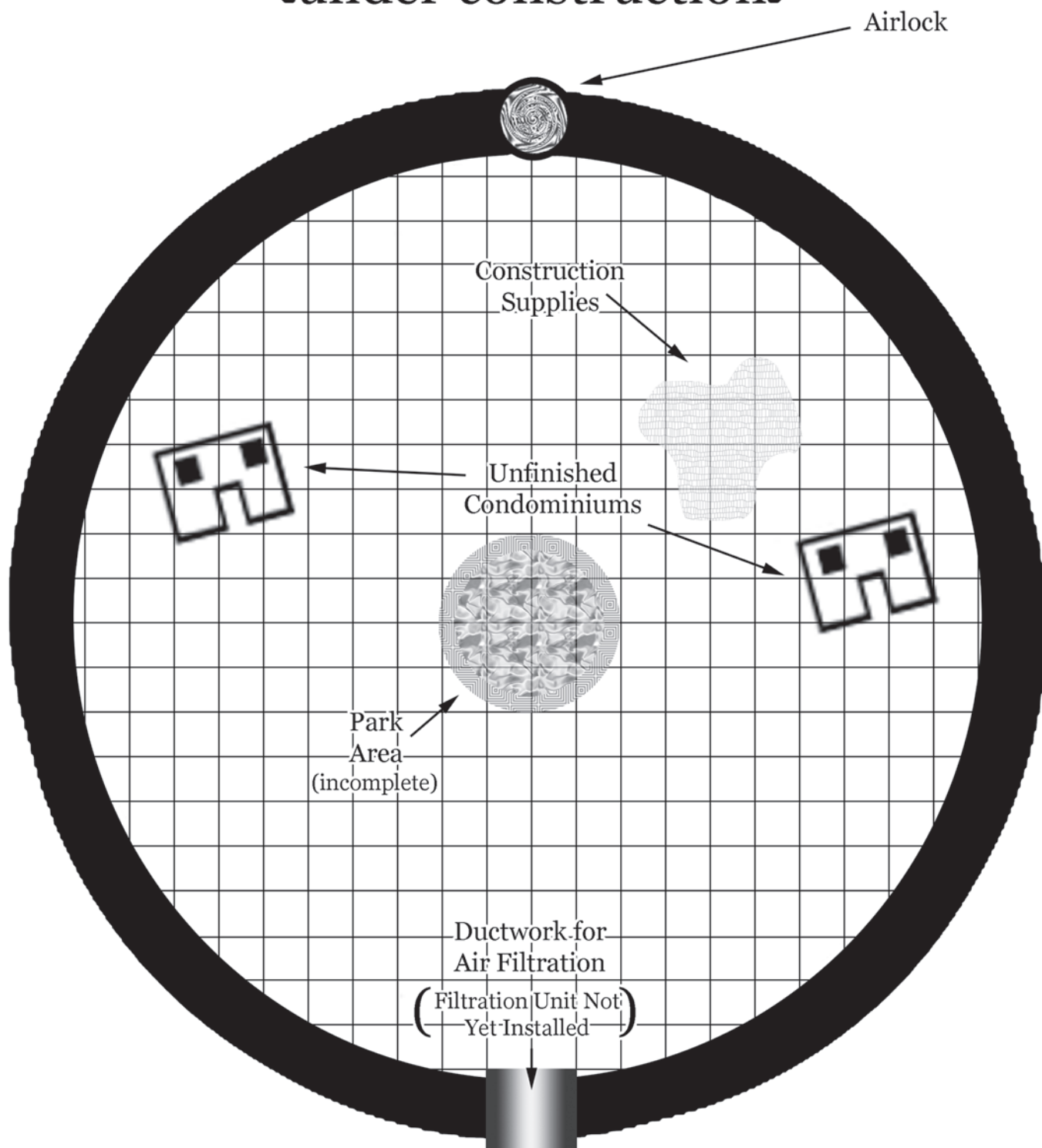
Upper Floor



Ground Floor



ENCOUNTER AREA #7: HABITATION DOMES (under construction)

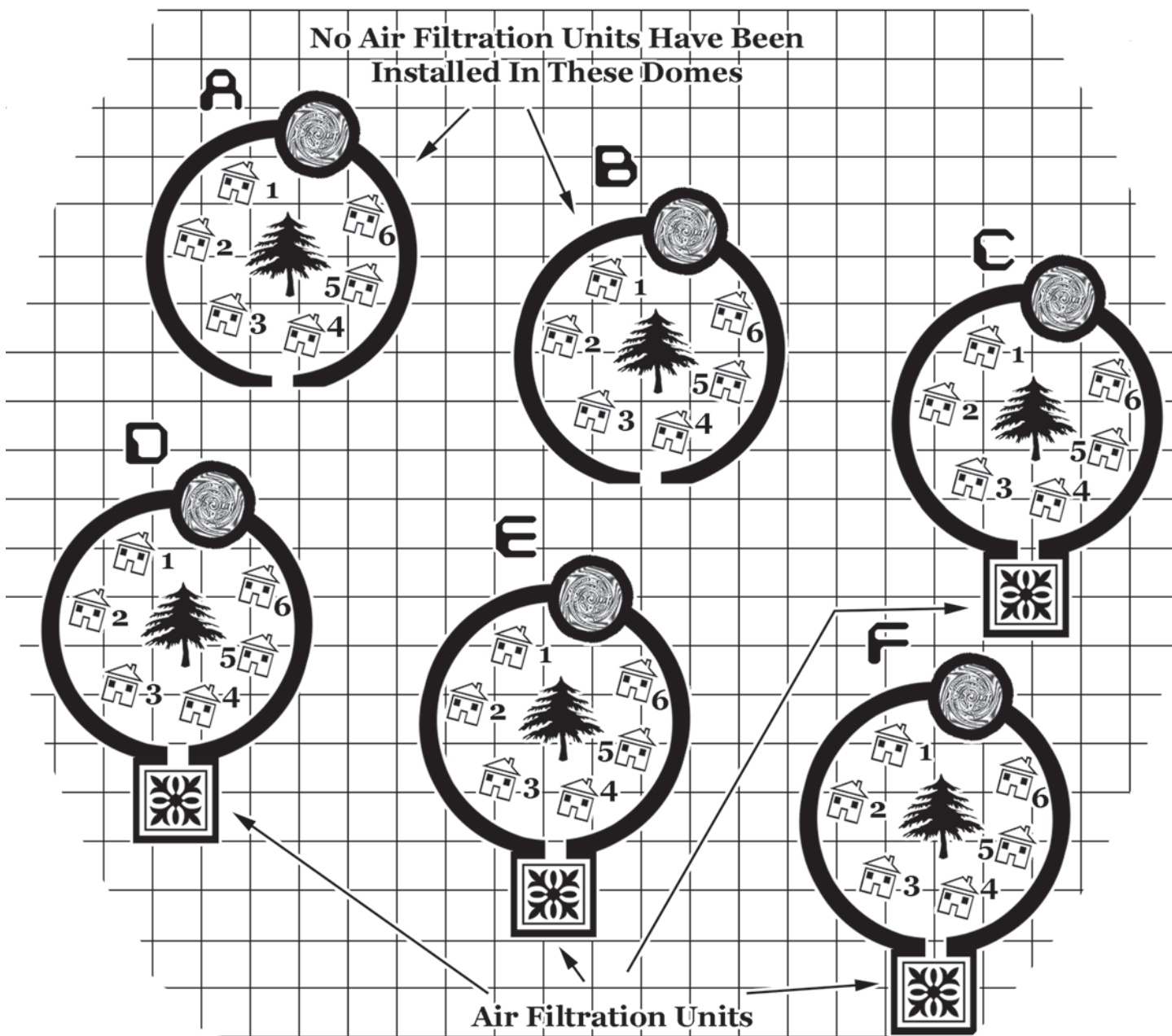


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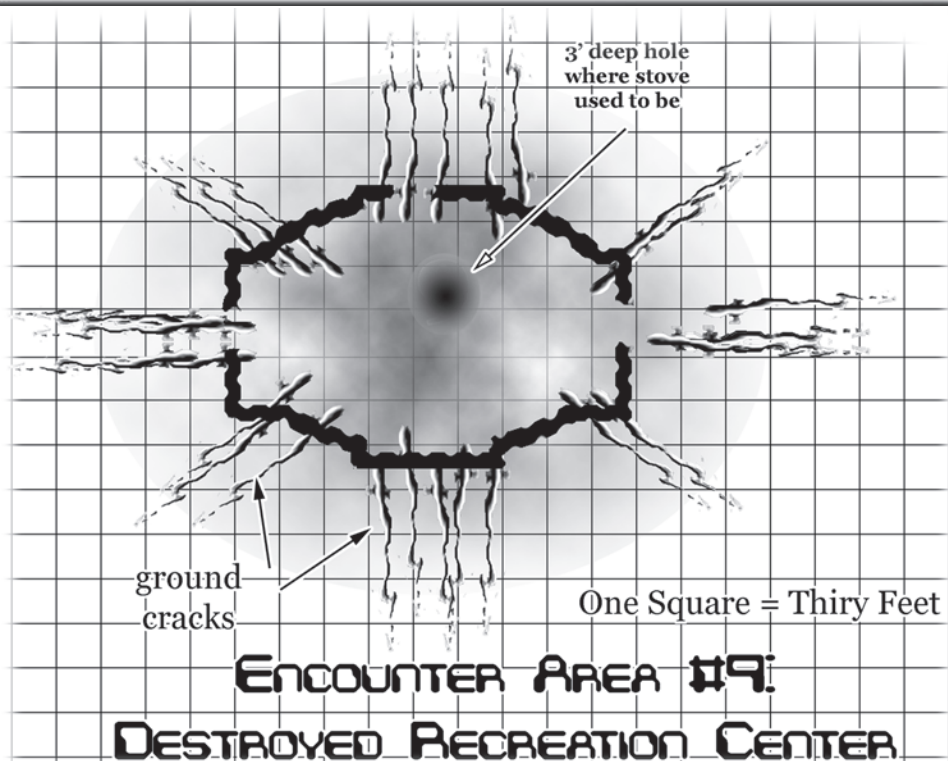
One Square = Ten Feet

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ENCOUNTER AREA #8: PERMANENT HABITATION DOMES

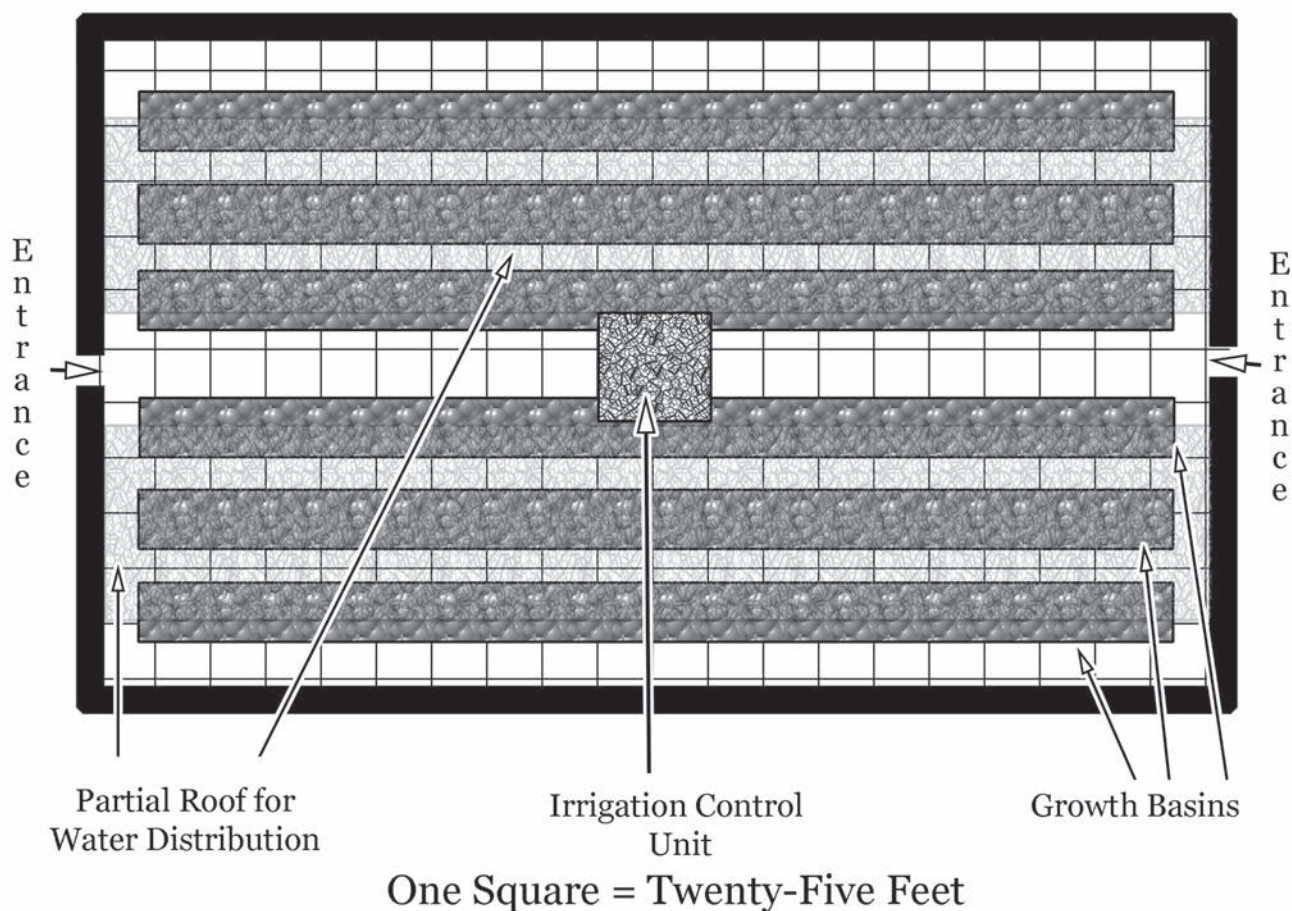


One Square = Forty Feet

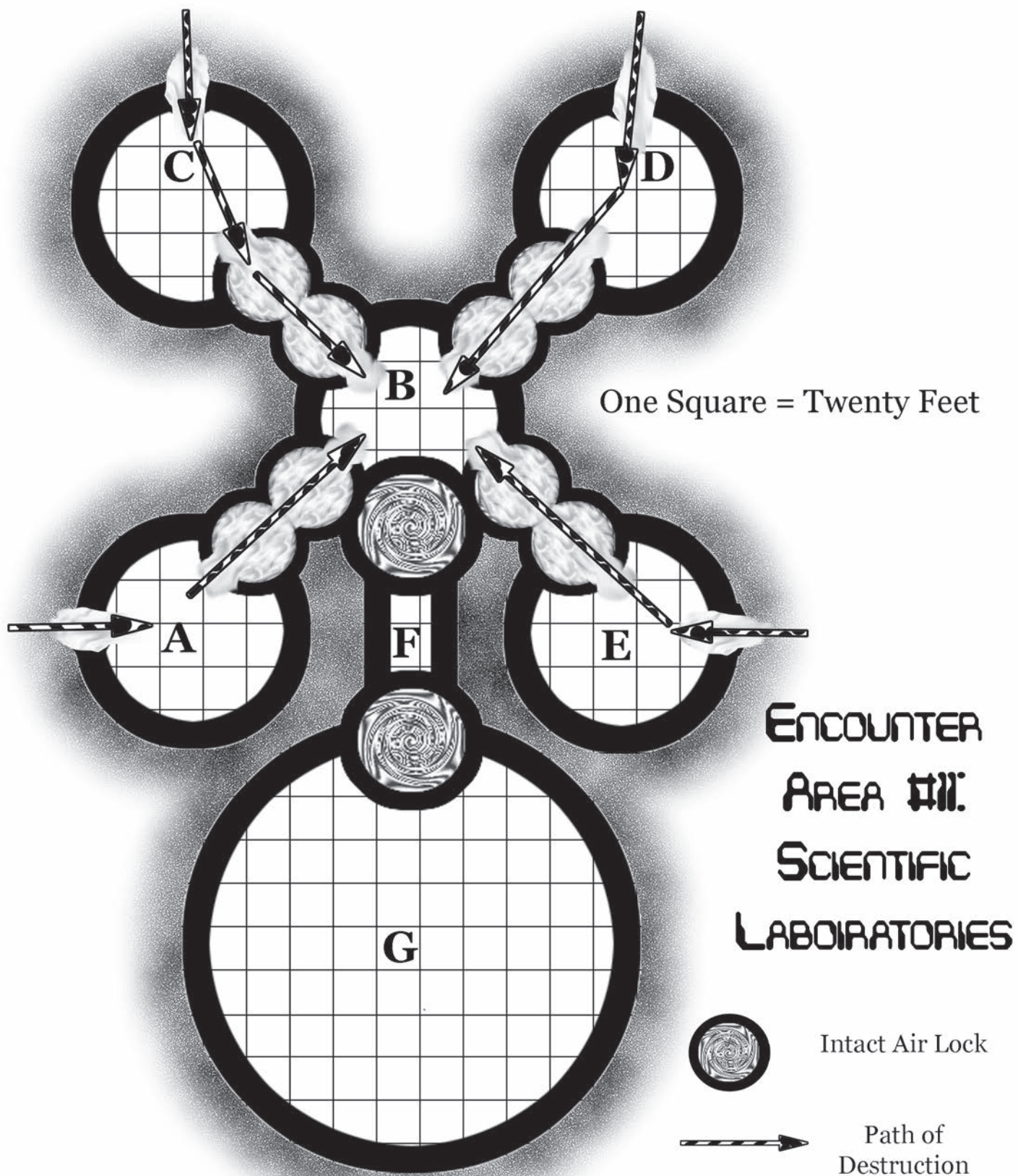


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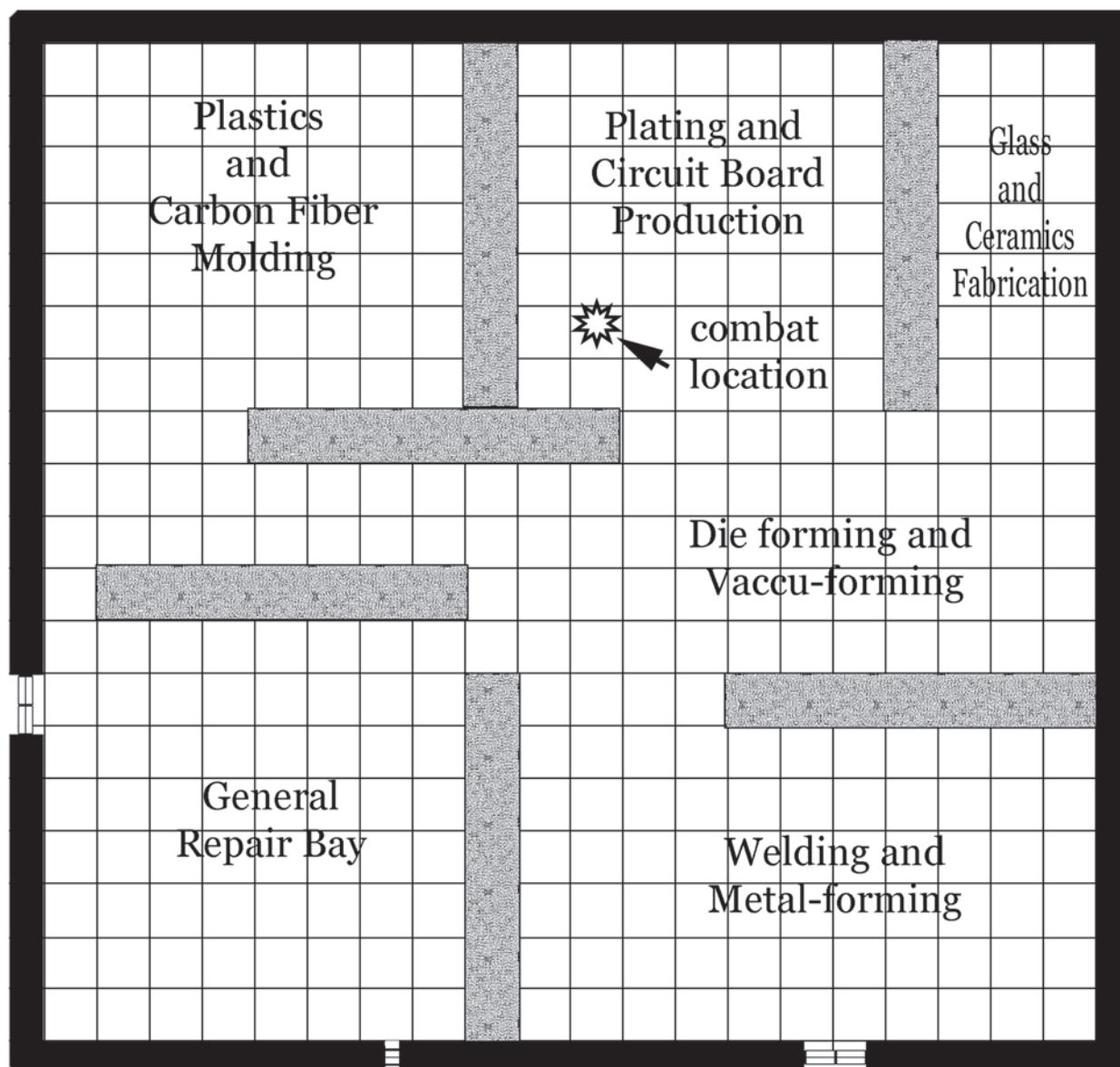
ENCOUNTER AREA #10: HYDROPONIC FARM



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ENCOUNTER AREA #12: THE WORKSHOP



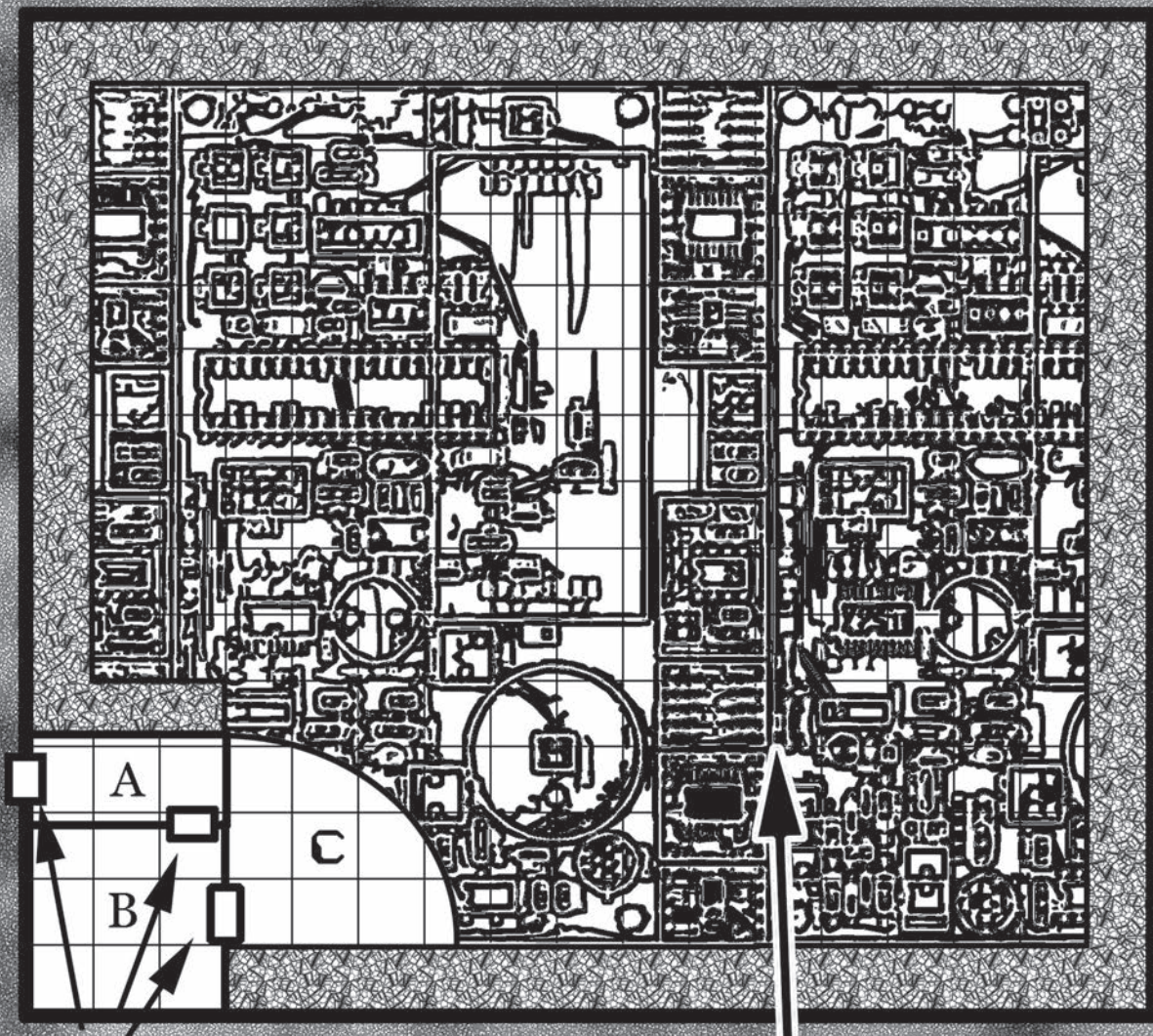
Floor-to-ceiling Shelving stocked with Parts and Raw Materials

One Square = Twenty Feet

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ENCOUNTER AREA #13: COMMUNICATIONS ARRAY



Doorways

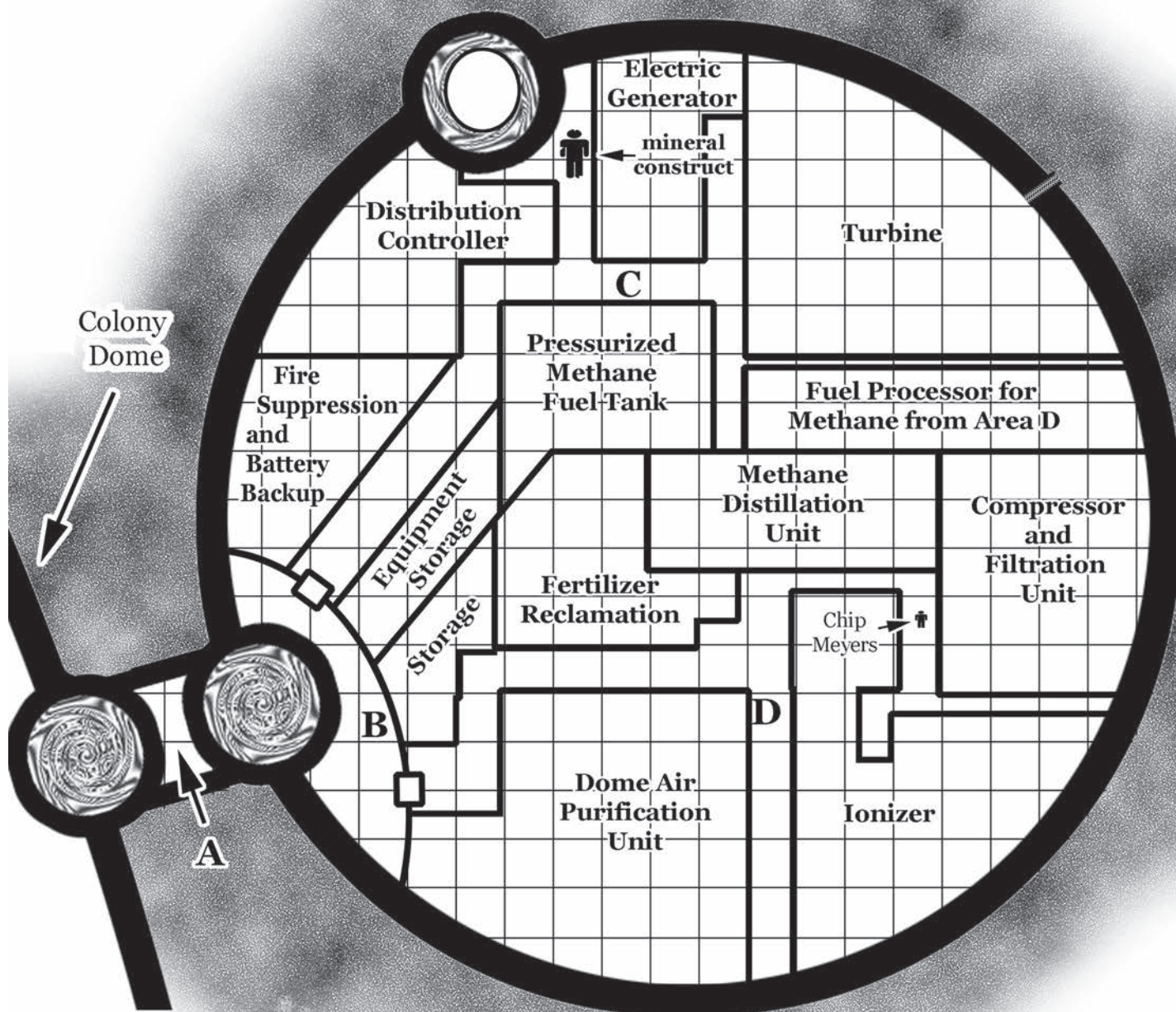
Signal Generators, Transmitters and Electronic Communications Gear
(access via engineering crawlway only)

One Square = Five Feet

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ENCOUNTER AREA #14: POWER STATION AND ATMOSPHERIC DISTILLERY

Game
Master's
Map



One Square = Twenty Feet



Air Lock



Door



Open Air Lock

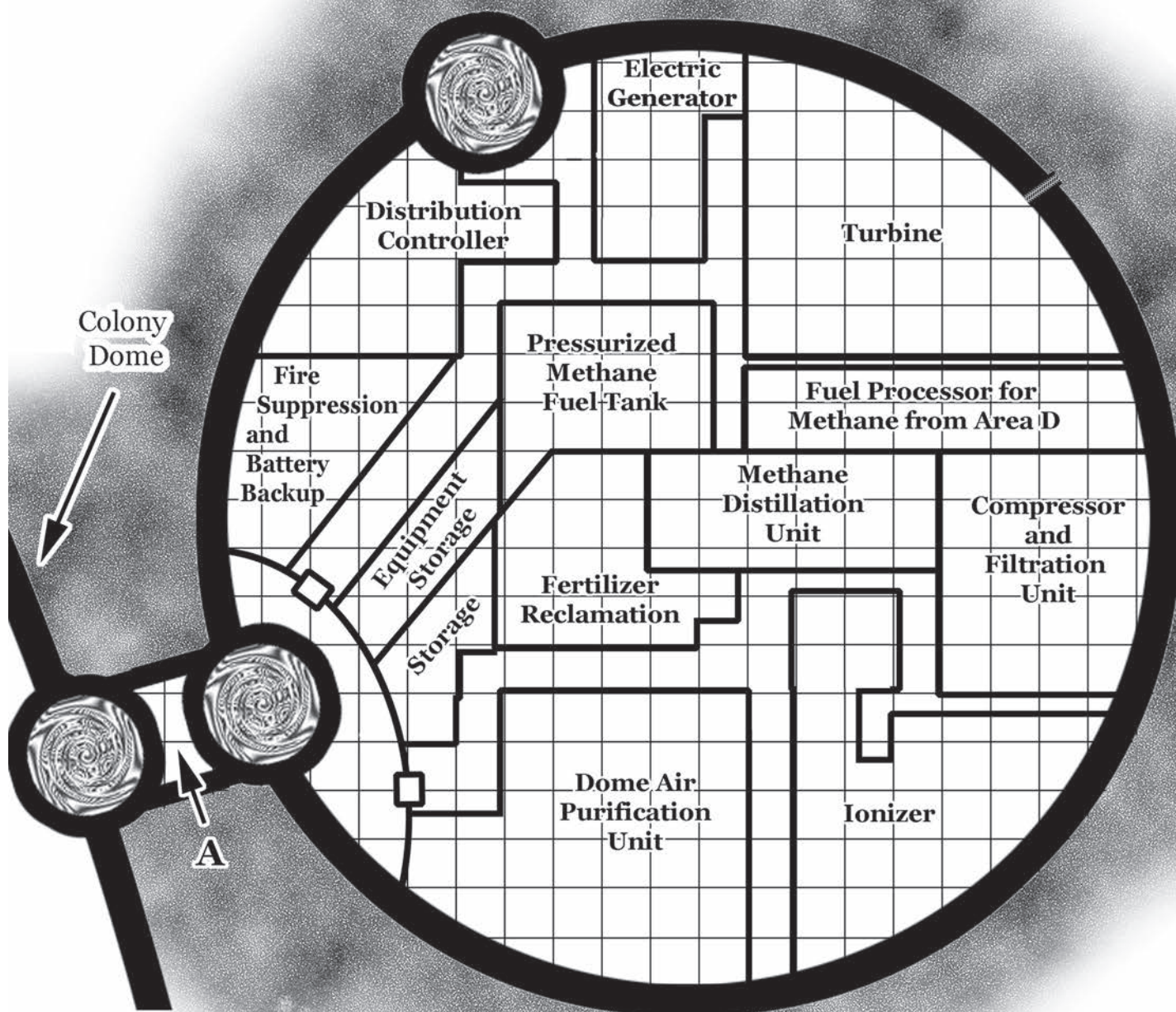


Exhaust Vent for Turbine

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ENCOUNTER AREA #14: POWER STATION AND ATMOSPHERIC DISTILLERY

Player's
Map



One Square = Twenty Feet



Air Lock

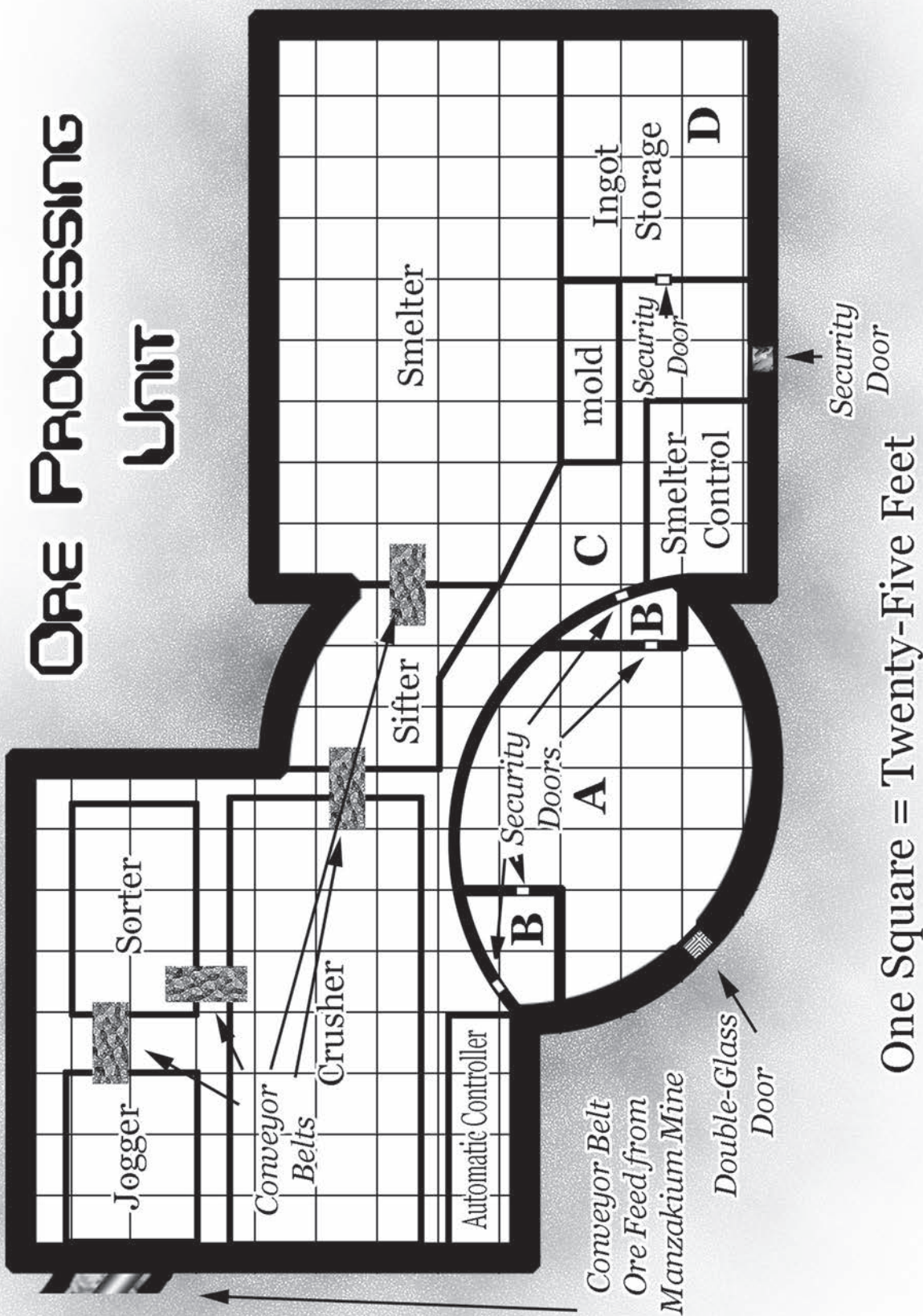


Door



Exhaust Vent for Turbine

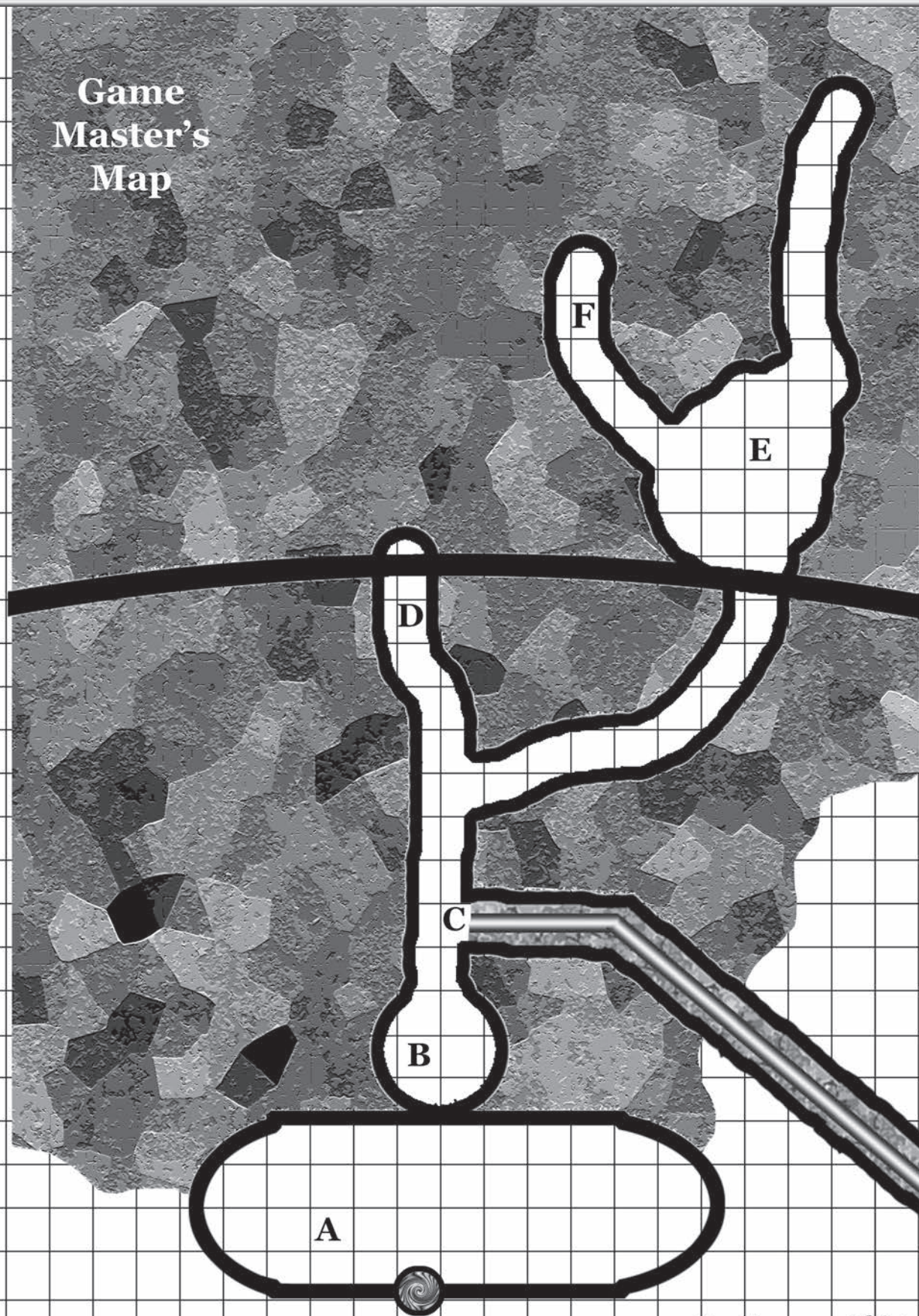
ENCOUNTER AREA #15: ORE PROCESSING UNIT



One Square = Twenty-Five Feet

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Game
Master's
Map



One Square = Thirty Feet

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Player's
Map

ENCOUNTER AREA
16:
THE MANZAKIUM
MINE

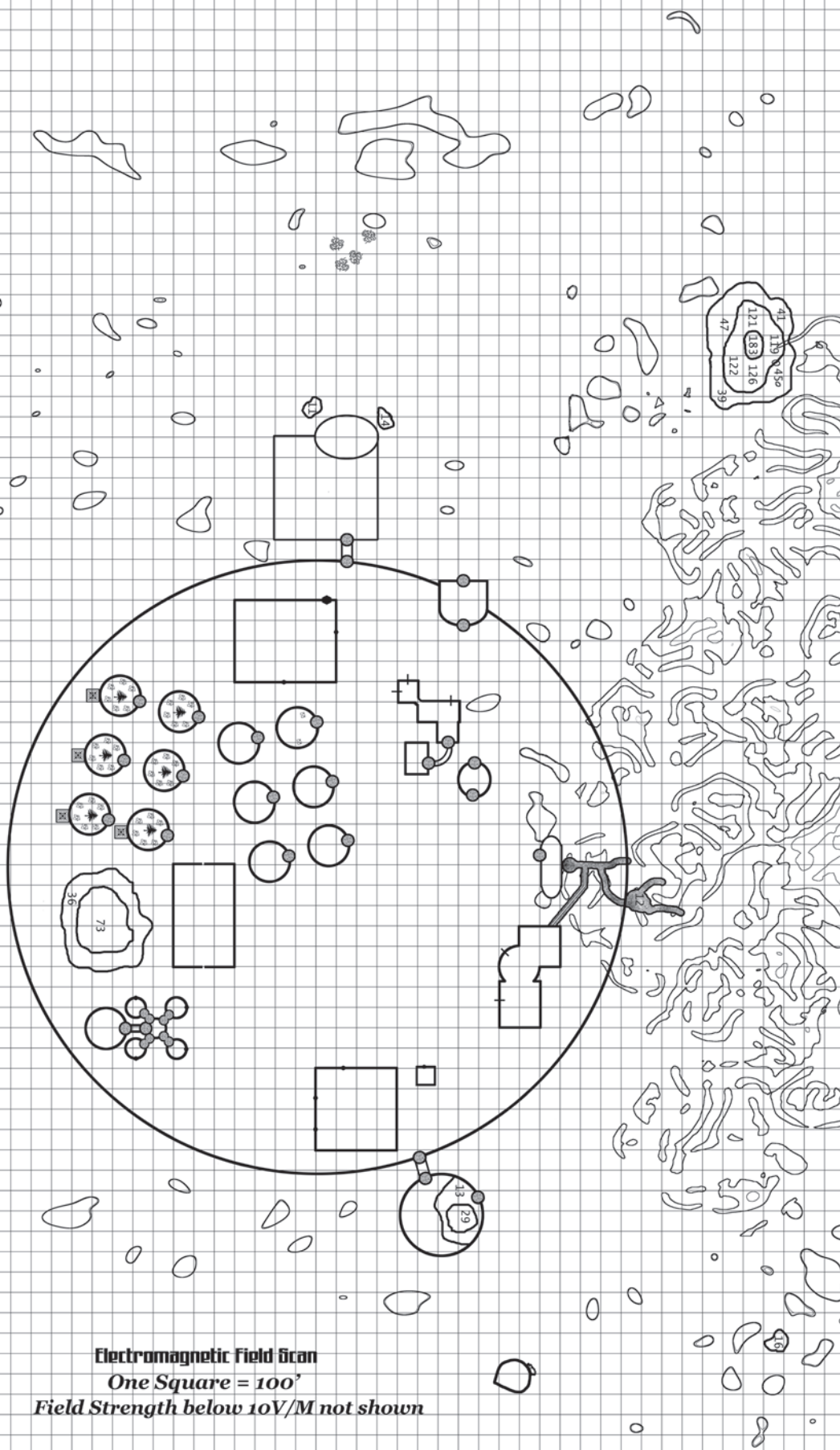


Mineshaft
Elevator

One Square = Thirty Feet

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Recent Electro-magnetic Field (EMF) scan for use if requested by players.



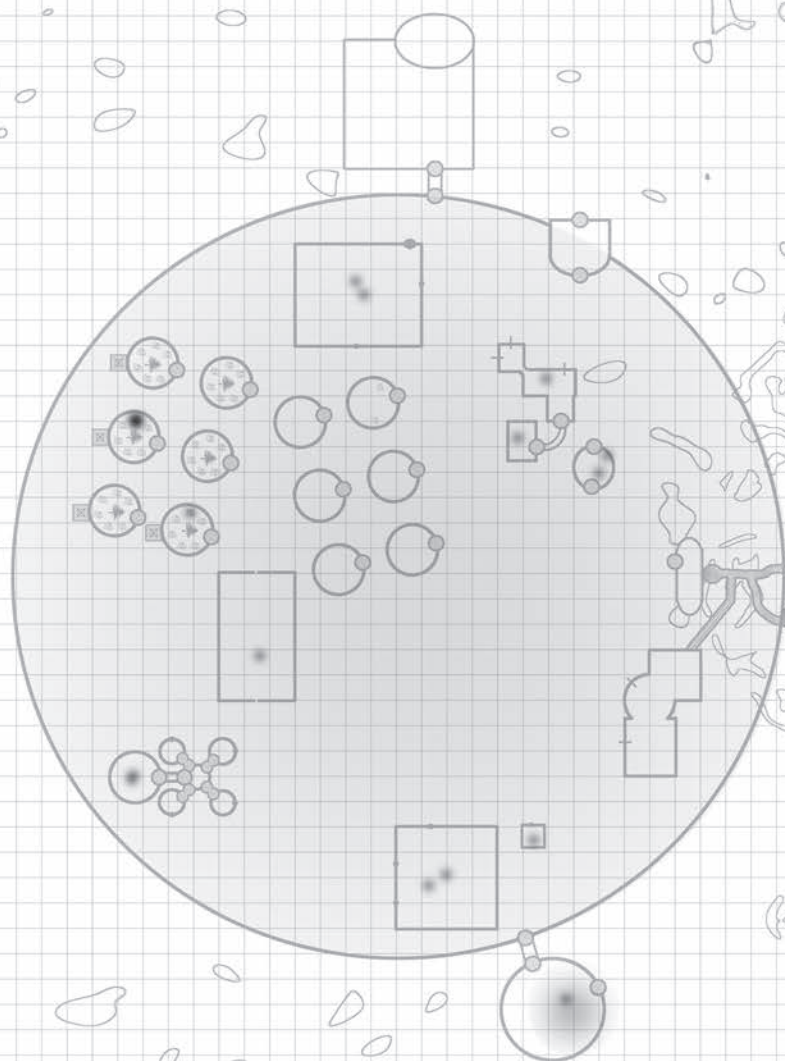
Electromagnetic Field Scan

One Square = 100'

Field Strength below 10V/M not shown

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Recent Infra-red (IR) scan for use if requested by players.



Infra-red scan

One Square = 100'

11 miles from surface

Darker coloring indicates the presence of heat.

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APPENDIX D: PERSONNEL FILES (for the Game Master's Eyes Only)

Current Compliment: 40 Souls

Andreav, Gregor - Nutrition Specialist Residence: House #C3, deceased (Fungus Zombie in Area #6A)
 Ank, Russel - Mining Specialist Team Leader (head miner) House #E2, survived, in Area #8 House#E2
 Canwyne, Nueller Pfill – Mining Specialist (miner) House #E2, survived, in Area #8 House#E2
 Chenault, Eran – Deck Engineer (space dock manager) House #C5, deceased, now a Fungus Zombie in Area #4K.
 Danvers, Alice – Security Specialist (sheriff) House #E6, survived, in Area #12.
 Farnor, Aisel - Deck Specialist (space dock worker) House #C5, deceased, now a Fungus Zombie in Area #4K.
 Galligear, Joe – Chief Mining Engineer (Supervisor of all mining operations) House #E1, currently in Area #13
 Giovanni, Ted – Habitat Engineer (housing supervisor and construction manager) House #C6, deceased, Fungus Zombie in Area #8 Dome D
 Glass, Tathum - Geo-Survey Specialist (geological survey team) House #E4, survived, in Area #8 House#E2
 Goloski, Urda - Nutrition Specialist House #C3, deceased (Fungus Zombie in Area #6A)
 Goswell, Jeff – Life Support Engineer House #C6, survived (for now) in Area #14
 Hilahl, Sonjay - Geo-Survey Specialist (geological survey team) House #E5, deceased in Remote Encounter Area B
 Hinch, Margaret – Laboratory Assistant House #F5, survived, in Area #11
 Khomeni, Rafael – Resource Specialist (administration, worked in Area 6B) Residence: House #C2, and is there, barricaded in his bedroom with a laser pistol.
 Leeson, Shara - Medical Administrator (hospital supervisor) House #D2, deceased, currently a Fungus Zombie in Area #4G.
 Lightner, Bruce – Chemist House #F2, survived, in Area #8 House#E2
 Liteman, Phyllis – Medical Doctor House #D1, deceased, Fungus Zombie in Area #4C.
 Looper, Eldin – Physicist House #F4, survived, in Area #8 House#E2
 McKnight, Ferguson - Mining Specialist (miner) House #E2, survived, in Area#16D
 Metcliff, Loyd - Medical Specialist (nurse) House #D2, deceased, currently a Fungus Zombie in Area #4C.
 Montoja, Trixie - Laboratory Assistant House #F5, survived, in Area #8 House#E2
 Myers, Chip - Fabrication Engineer House #C6, survived, in Area #12
 Myerson, Thor E. - Geo-Survey Specialist Team Leader (geological survey team supervisor) House #E4, survived, in Area #8 House#E2
 Nignon, Emma - Mining Specialist (miner) House #E3, survived, in Area #8 House#E2
 Parrette, Angela - Xeno Biologist House #F1, survived, in Area #11.
 Rawwlon, Jeromi E. - Mining Specialist (miner) House #E3, survived, in Area#16D
 Rheingeld, Wilhemena - Micro-Biologist House #F3, deceased, a Fungus Zombie in Area #10.
 Sherwood, Laura – Botanist House #F1, survived, in Area #11
 Snyder, Hal – Computer Specialist House #C4, survived, in Area #3
 Sonian, Ashley – Medical Doctor House #D1, survived, currently in Area #4I.
 Swanson, Wendy - Medical Specialist (nurse) House #D2, survived, currently in Area #4I.
 Tallenger, Jim – Colony Administrator (colony supervisor) House #C1, survived, in Area #6.
 Thompson, Smitty - Geo-Survey Specialist (geological survey team) House #E5, deceased in Remote Encounter Area B
 Turbo, Clark - Logistics Expert (administration, worked in Area 6B – now deceased) House #C2
 Underwood, Nora – Psychologist House #D1, survived, currently in Area #3.
 Veck, Martin F. - Mining Specialist (miner) House #E3, survived, in Area#16D
 Walker, Lucas - Geo-Survey Specialist (geological survey team) House #E5, deceased in Remote Encounter Area B
 Wave, Michael – Chef House #C3, deceased (Fungus Zombie in Area #6A)
 Weich, Sam – Deck Specialist (space dock worker) House #C5, deceased, now a Fungus Zombie in Area #4K.
 Zalar, Kawanee - Medical Specialist (nurse) House #D2, deceased, currently a Fungus Zombie in Area #4C.

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PERSONNEL FILES (for the Players)

It is entirely possible that Fleet personnel hand this list of current colonists to the players' characters at the outset of this adventure. They certainly wish to know the current status of all colonists.

Current Compliment: 40 Souls

Andreav, Gregor - Nutrition Specialist	Residence: House #C3
Ank, Russel - Mining Specialist Team Leader	Residence: House #E2
Canwyne, Nueller Pfill – Mining Specialist	Residence: House #E2
Chenault, Eran – Deck Engineer	Residence: House #C5
Danvers, Alice – Security Specialist	Residence: House #E6
Farnor, Aisel - Deck Specialist	Residence: House #C5
Galligear, Joe – Chief Mining Engineer	Residence: House #E1
Giovanni, Ted – Habitat Engineer	Residence: House #C6
Glass, Tathum - Geo-Survey Specialist	Residence: House #E4
Goloski, Urda - Nutrition Specialist	Residence: House #C3
Goswell, Jeff – Life Support Engineer	Residence: House #C6
Hilahl, Sonjay - Geo-Survey Specialist	Residence: House #E5
Hincho, Margaret – Laboratory Assistant	Residence: House #F5
Khomeni, Rafael – Resource Specialist	Residence: House #C2
Leeson, Shara - Medical Administrator	Residence: House #D2
Lightner, Bruce – Chemist	Residence: House #F2
Liteman, Phyllis – Medical Doctor	Residence: House #D1
Looper, Eldin – Physicist	Residence: House #F4
McKnight, Ferguson - Mining Specialist	Residence: House #E2
Metcliff, Loyd - Medical Specialist	Residence: House #D2
Montoja, Trixie - Laboratory Assistant	Residence: House #F5
Myers, Chip - Fabrication Engineer	Residence: House #C6
Myerson, Thor E. - Geo-Survey Specialist Team Leader	Residence: House #E4
Nignon, Emma - Mining Specialist	Residence: House #E3
Parrette, Angela - Xeno Biologist	Residence: House #F1
Rawwlon, Jeromi E. - Mining Specialist	Residence: House #E3
Rheingeld, Wilhemena - Micro-Biologist	Residence: House #F3
Sherwood, Laura – Botanist	Residence: House #F1
Snyder, Hal – Computer Specialist	Residence: House #C4
Sonian, Ashley – Medical Doctor	Residence: House #D1
Swanson, Wendy - Medical Specialist	Residence: House #D2
Tallenger, Jim – Colony Administrator	Residence: House #C1
Thompson, Smitty - Geo-Survey Specialist	Residence: House #E5
Turbo, Clark - Logistics Expert	Residence: House #C2
Underwood, Nora – Psychologist	Residence: House #D1
Veck, Martin F. - Mining Specialist	Residence: House #E3
Walker, Lucas - Geo-Survey Specialist	Residence: House #E5
Wave, Michael – Chef	Residence: House #C3
Weich, Sam – Deck Specialist	Residence: House #C5
Zalar, Kawanee - Medical Specialist	Residence: House #D2

APPENDIX E: JOE GALLIGEAR'S REPORT

(an identical report is received daily by Fleet from the colony at exactly the same transmission time)

KASK COLONY DAILY STATUS REPORT

KASK DAY: (varies)

PERSONNEL REPORT:

DE Eran Chenault and DS Aisel Farnor are still recovering in the quarantine unit from a mild fungal infection.

All other colonists report good health. 40 colonists verified.

EQUIPMENT REPORT:

All equipment reported as functional and undamaged.

PROPERTIES REPORT:

Dome and airlocks report nominal and undamaged. Space Dock undergoing routine maintenance.

Security seals on mine checked and nominal.

Power Plant output stable at 13.7 MW/hour.

Air Terrarforming continues at a standard rate of 328.6 CFM.

Colonial scrubbers functioning nominally at 112 CFM.

Water reclamation nominal at 83 LPM.

Interior dome temperature regulated and remaining within 22-24°C.

MINING REPORT:

No new deposits discovered.

Current mine output with expected parameters at 3467 grams manzakium ore per hour.

SUPPLY:

No new supplies needed. Scientific assistance request from Medical and Scientific personnel as yet unanswered.

REPORTING OFFICIAL:

Staff

APPENDIX F: BESTIARY

Alien Master Fungus

Appearance: Master Fungus colonies resemble lacy ropes of dark green Spanish Moss coiled into a 10' tall mass. Four tentacles protrude from this mass to 30 foot range, and are constantly in motion. Bits of fungi are constantly falling from the main body and floating to the ground.

Demeanor: Master Fungus colony are arrogant as well as wise, and most often have a plan in place when encountered.

Power: 10%

Defense: 10%/(2)

Health: 14

Move: 3

Init: 0

Damage: Tentacle Strike 1d10 (x4), range 30'

Special: This alien emits a cloud of fungal darkness in a 5' radius, making it impossible to see the alien or detect it with any type of gear. The fog can be dispersed by a strong wind. If wounded, the fungus exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe within 20' of its location.

**Black Fungus**

Appearance: Black Fungus appears as a shapeless black furry mass covering a large area (based on the size of the fungus – from 1' square to 100 square meters).

Demeanor: This alien fungus has no sentience and responds only to base stimuli.

Power: 5% (1)

Defense: 0% (see Special)

Health: 24

Move: n/a

Init: 0

Damage: special

Special: when touched, Black Fungus affixes itself to any non-ceramic surface. If that surface contains nitrogen or oxygen compounds (like human skin, space-suit seals, or any other organic material) the fungus begins growing into the material. In the first hour this growth and decomposition only inflicts 5 Health points of damage, but this damage doubles every 15 minutes if the fungi are not carefully cleaned off. Black Fungus is susceptible only to heat damage and caustic (base) chemical anti-fungal agents. Even in death, Black Fungus acts as an amplifier and line repeater for chemical (smell-based) signals.

**Cabbage Fungus**

Appearance: This strain is made of 4' long and 3' wide, black leaves of fungi, with a central mass that looks like nothing so much as a head of cabbage. The mass rests on the floor of the chamber, completely covering the area.

Demeanor: This alien fungus is not sentient, but has adapted to the high nitric acid environment (and is therefore highly resistant to acid-based attacks, and the atmosphere). Characters contacting through touch or tread the leaves of these fungi cause them to snap upwards at the characters; leaving chunks of the fungi sticking to their suits, equipment, or skin. Each fungus colony has 6 of these leaves (and thus gets 6 attacks).

Power: 15% (3)

Defense: 15% (3)

Health: 8 per leaf

Move: 0

Init: 10% (2)

Damage: special

Special: Contact with this fungus causes the slow decomposition of all nitrogen based compounds. Rubber suit seals (and other rubber equipment) suffer 1 point of damage per turn, while exposed flesh contracts the fungus as a disease causing 1d6 per turn. Infections caused by direct exposure are cured by the application of medical cures (like chemotherapy), or by the application of flame. Cabbage Fungus is immune to cold, acid, and physical attacks, but incurs double damage from fire and caustic (base) attacks. Gear that has no rubber or nitrogen compounds in its makeup suffers no damage, but may transport the damaging spores of this fungus to other locations if not (eventually) sterilized.

Clay Constructs (mud men)

Appearance: These manifestations of the Kask Entity are mud mannequins formed in the rough shape of humans in bio-suits; their appendages seem to flow as they flex and grow, then shrink. They range in size from 5'-8' and are bulky and wide.

Demeanor: These constructs are slow but implacable in their movements and intent; they are controlled and directed by the entity. If "defeated" or otherwise subdued, they simply melt back into the soil from which they emerged.

Power: 35%

Defense: 10%

Move: 20'

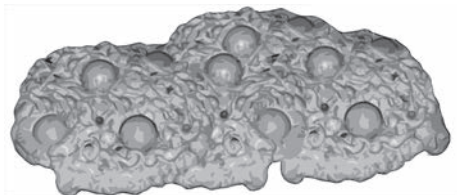
Health: 60

Init: -10%/-2

Damage: 5d4

Special: Projectiles or thrusting weapons have no effect upon clay constructs; they are simply absorbed into the body. If a clay construct is able to grasp a PC long enough and is of sufficient size, the construct attempts to absorb the PC, leading to its inevitable demise from suffocation.

Planet Kask's Clay Constructs are highly susceptible to Electro-Magnetic Pulses which cause them to lose cohesion and disintegrate 75% of the time.

**Colonists (Human)**

Appearance: The colonists vary in height from 5' to more than 7' in height. All wear an official Fleet Mining Colony Uniform (description at your discretion) and carry either a knife or a laser pistol.

Demeanor: Colonists are defensive, but inquisitive, and generally do not attack unless threatened.

Power: 20%(4)

Defense: 10%(2)

Health: 8

Move: 12

Init: 0)

Damage: Laser Pistol (1D20 at +15%/+3 to hit) or knife 1d6

Special: Laser Pistols must be reloaded with a new battery after 10 shots. Colonists occasionally (50% of the time) carry spare batteries.

Drop Fungus (Green Mold)

Appearance: Drop Fungus appears as a gelatinous mass 12"-18" in diameter with several short but thick 6" long tentacles protruding from a slightly bulbous center. It mimics the colors of whatever surface it rests upon. These fungi tend to rest in elevated areas from which they can drop upon unsuspecting targets.

Demeanor: This alien fungus has no sentience and responds only to base stimuli. It senses chemical signatures through pores in its outer membrane and attacks due to erratic air movement, warmth, or if it senses organic carbon compounds.

Power: 5% (1)

Defense: 5%

Health: 9

Move: n/a

Init: 0

Damage: Digestive Acid 1d6

Special: Successful attacks by this fungus indicate that the fungus has adhered itself to its target with a strong digestive acid glue. This glue both makes the Drop Fungus difficult to remove (70# pressure or more is required) and allows the fungus to digest whatever it has dropped upon (1d6 per combat round after an initial hit is indicated, until such time as the creature is either destroyed or removed). As the digestive acid of this creature is sulfuric in nature, it has no effect on ceramics or silicon (glass, for example). Drop Fungi tend to form clusters of 2-12 colonies that all hide themselves within a 20 square foot area.

Fungus Zombie

Appearance: This creature appears to be a human upon which black Spanish moss grows in profusion. In particular the heads of these beings retain almost no human characteristics but instead appear to be comprised of tentacle-like strands of lichen or fungus.

Demeanor: These creatures are fully intelligent and always do what is best for the nearest Alien Master or Black Fungus Colony.

Power: 30%

Defense: 15%

Health: 35

Move: 7

Init: +10% (+2)

Damage: tentacle (X3 each) 1d6 +1 and chance of infection (25%)

Special: Energy weapons do not damage these creatures. If wounded, it exudes a horrific smell that makes it difficult to breathe in a 20-foot area around it. Anyone infected by the spores of the fungi gradually becomes a new colony of fungi in 6 hours to 3 days. The only remedy is to cut the infected flesh from the victim, or to douse the victim in caustic fluid (which harms the fungus for 4-24 points of damage).

Kask Flowers

Appearance: This unobtrusive 6" tall flower has a white, puffy center and 6 petals that appear to be miniature mushrooms. It has a mushroom-like thick stem, and rootlets that both anchor the plant to any rough surface, and draw moisture into the plant for its continued existence. Kask Flowers radiate a slight radioactive field when scanned due to the presence of manzakium in their makeup.

Demeanor: Kask Flowers have no sentience, they are merely communicative conduits for the Kask Entity.

Power: 01%

Move: 0'

Init: Normal

Defense: 1%(0)

Health: 1

Damage: Mind Link that can cause insanity. (see Special)

Special: Characters exposed to the chemical signature (scent - 20' range) of these plants must avoid the mental link it attempts to form between their mind and the Kask Entity or they risk becoming temporarily insane. An intelligence (or like statistic or skill) check is required, with a penalty of -10%/-2 to the roll. Space suits are 99% effective (no check required) at blocking exposure to this chemical, while all other forms of protective gear are at best 50% effective. Characters with linguistic, biochemical, or bio-feedback skills are better able to comprehend the process that occurs and receive a second Avoidance Roll, not to avoid the link, but to comprehend it when it occurs. Characters with these skills may also choose to simply accept the mind link, and roll a skill check only to maintain their sanity.

Once a character successfully (sanity maintained) establishes a link with the Kask Entity via a Kask Flower, they may reinitiate this link without risk whenever they are exposed to the scent of a Kask Flower.

Characters failing to avoid the mind link that have not the skills or abilities to comprehend it (no biochemical, linguistic, bio-feedback skills, or other skills you might deem appropriate) suffer a random form of insanity, although catatonia is most common. Roll 1d20 and consult the chart below, or assign your own favorite.

- 1-5 Paralyzing paranoia with visual and auditory hallucinations
- 6-15 Catatonia
- 16-20 Homicidal Schizophrenia (will attack other characters)

Mesmer Mushrooms (in groups of 6-36)

Appearance: These harmless-appearing fungi appear to be nothing more than common (although large) 12" tall mushrooms. They vary in color from dead-white to medium brown, and have caps 1"-16" in diameter.

Demeanor: These fungi are a new experiment by the Alien Master Fungi, and they are designed to allow the control of other sentient creatures. While the mushrooms themselves respond only to specific stimuli (they have no reasoning capacity), they automatically discharge their spore cloud if approached more closely than 10'. They may also be triggered by Alien Master Fungi if black fungi spores are present nearby to allow communication of this sort.

Power: 10% (2)

Health: 8

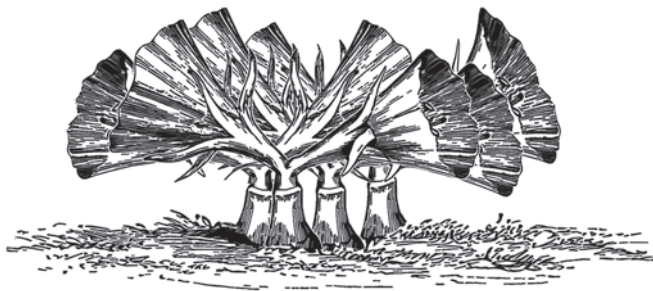
Init: +10% (+2)

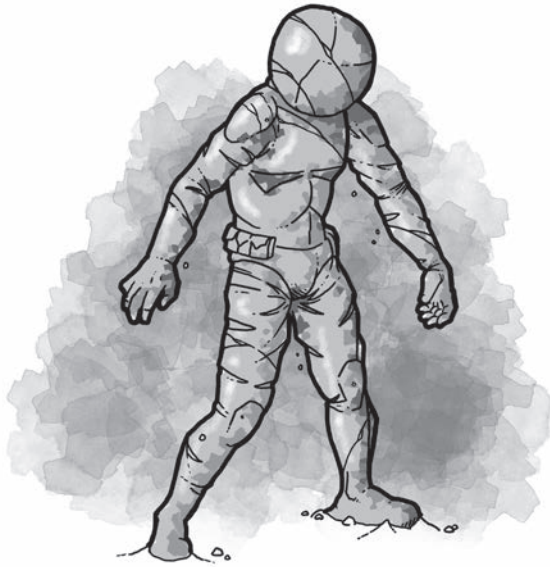
Defense: 5%(1)

Move: 0 (stationary)

Damage: Spore Cloud (see special below)

Special: If approached more closely than 10', or if triggered by a scent-cue (like those used for communication by other alien fungi) Mesmer Mushrooms emit a dense cloud of psycho-active spores that cause any inhaling these micro-particles to become highly susceptible to suggestion via smell/scent communication. Those of particularly stout constitution occasionally spurn this effect (Avoidance is possible), but others become susceptible to the thoughts of any nearby (black fungus within 50') Alien Master Fungus colony for 10-60 (1d6 x10) minutes. *Note:* Unusual chemical combinations/smells in close proximity to a victim can both interfere with fungus control, and/or send unusual, often nonsensical and deadly commands (at your discretion).





Mineral Constructs

Appearance: These are stone mannequins formed in the rough shape of skinny humans in bio-suits. They range in size from 7'-9'.

Demeanor: These constructs are implacable, and react slowly due to the fact that they are 'remotely controlled' by the Kask Entity (which has quite a bit to keep track of). They are capable of denting and deforming duralumin alloy, given time. When no longer needed by the entity, they sink back into the soil as their components unbind. If indoors when deconstructed, these creatures leave behind a large pile of gravel laced with traces of manzakium.

Power: 20%

Defense: 95%

Move: 20'

Health: 20

Init: Normal

Damage: Arm Bash 5d8

Special: These are manifestations of the Kask entity made of a very hard crystalline substance. They are nearly impervious to conventional beam weapons (they are reflected) and impact weapons and projectiles only inflict half of normal damaging effects. There is also a 25% chance that any given mineral construct contains an element that is highly explosive. If hit by any high energy impact or actual energy discharge, these Mineral constructs explode for 4d20 to all within 20'. All other Mineral Constructs fired upon with energy or beam-type weapons reflect the energy back at the source with an addition of 20% more force or power 50% of the time. (E.g., if hit with a beam that inflicts 10 health loss, it reflects 12 health loss.)

Planet Kask's Mineral Constructs are highly susceptible to Electro-Magnetic Pulses which cause them to lose cohesion and disintegrate 75% of the time.

Pod Fungus

Appearance: Pod Fungus is totally transparent (invisible). Each pod is ten feet long and wide with two forty-foot transparent tentacles extending from the bottom that troll for victims. Any bodies that are scooped up by the tentacles are placed in the pod for digestion. These bodies appear stuck to the wall as the acids of the pod dissolve the victim.

Demeanor: The pods are motion sensitive. Any larger moving objects it considers edible, but it quickly drops anything non-organic. The reflexes of the pods are such that nothing human is fast enough to escape its grasp.

Power: 45% (9)

Defense: 70% (12)

Health: 14

Move: 0

Init: +25%/+5

Damage: Tentacle squeezing 3d6, Acid dissolving 25 points a minute

Special: Because the fungi are totally transparent it isn't seen by normal optics. This fungus has neither a heat signature nor a radiation footprint.

Medium Spongoid

Appearance: Appearing as a 10' diameter, irregular, gray, sponge-like mass Medium Spongoids move by extending portions of body mass (like pseudo-pods) forward and then drawing the main body mass after.

Demeanor: Mindless, Spongoids are drawn to non-electro-magnetic sources of power/radiation. Each alien spongoid is also chemically drawn toward activated Zoombees.

Power: 40% (8)

Defense: 10% (2)

Health: 100

Move: 15

Init: 0

Damage: enveloping (special)

Special: A successful attack by a Spongoid indicates the fungi creature has enveloped its target (or some portion thereof). These Spongoids are large enough to envelop a human character's limb, torso, or head, but not an entire human. The enveloped target may then attack from within the Spongoid, but suffers 3d8 damage per turn as the Spongoid exudes rhizomes (root-like tentacles) into the enveloped target which digest these materials with a highly corrosive acid. Medium Spongoids ingesting an entire human-sized opponent may grow to become Large Spongoids.

Yellow Fungus

Appearance: Yellow fungus appears as a film that covers 4 to 8 square feet. It extrudes a psuedopod that is about 3 inches in diameter, and that also appears to be made of the powdery yellow fungoid material.

Demeanor: This Yellow fungus seeks to control one or more of the Clay Constructs as it senses they contain a mineral-based data-processing system (the manzakium operating within their forms). It ignores the characters unless they attack, but shifts its (attack) focus to the party in the event they do so.

Power: 10%

Defense: 10%

Health: 1

Move: 3

Init: +75%

Damage: electronic takeover of equipment

Special: Yellow fungi can form a psuedopod that extends for up to 20 feet, seeking out any equipment that has a data processor. A successful hit indicates that the fungus has gained control of the equipment, and the game master should then use whatever attack seems appropriate to simulate the equipment attacking the character. Yellow fungus can cause no harm to actual humans without the intervention of a data processing device. Yellow Fungus is unaffected by kinetic (impact based) attacks.

Zap Fungus

Appearance: Zap Fungus appears as a dry, glowing, orange sponge-like mass covering ten square yards and rising from a height of mere inches at its edge to several feet at its center.

Demeanor: This alien fungus has no sentience and responds only to base stimuli.

Power: 15% (3)

Defense: 0% (0)

Health: 65

Move: 0

Init: +25%

Damage: 2d8 (X3) electrical damage

Special: The Zap Fungus shoots out a high voltage discharge 3 times per turn at a range of up to 10 feet. Any character caught by this discharge burns from the high voltage, and equipment is often rendered completely useless. This attack causes no damage to non-conductive materials (like rubber, glass, ceramics, and plastics).

Zoombees

Appearance: These 6" rubbery spheres are purple in color and move forward by rolling and bouncing unerringly toward a target.

Demeanor: Zoombees pursue all foreign materials in an effort to make physical contact with any foreign object.

Power: 5% (1)

Defense: 30% (6), 60% (12) when activated

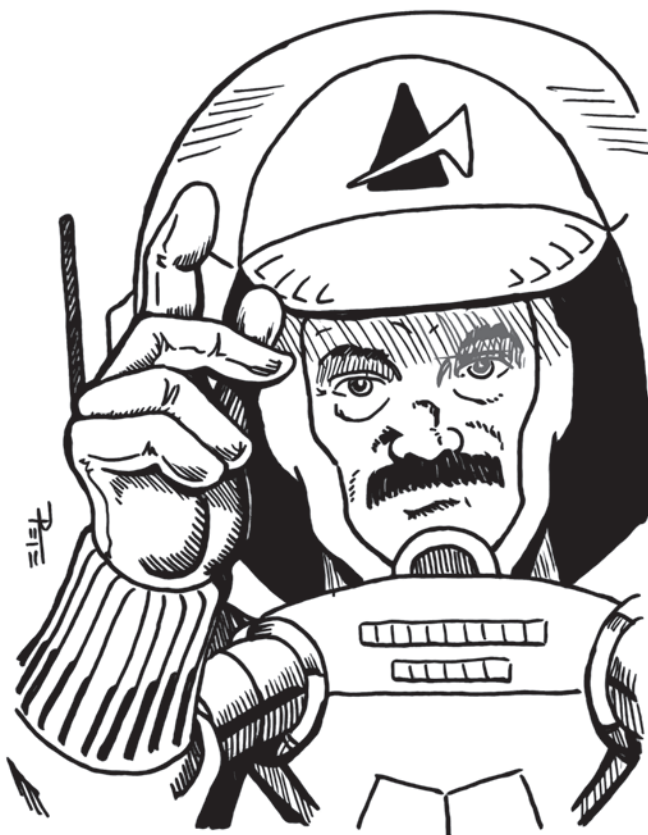
Health: 15

Move: 9

Init: +5%

Damage: special

Special: Zoombees attack by making physical contact with an object. Once contact has been established, the alien fungi quickly activates, inflating to eight times its original size (about 2' in diameter), and enveloping a portion of the body of the target. The Zoombee then becomes rock hard (its defense becomes 60%) and inert. Equipment successfully attacked by a Zoombee becomes quickly useless (unless freed from the Zoombee) while characters lose 4" of movement and a degradation of 20% (-4) to any attacks, movement, or abilities used. Activated Zoombees often whistle loudly in an attempt to attract other nearby Zoombees. This whistling is heard for hundreds of yards if the conditions are favorable.



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