

The heroes face the usual action and adventure—and a difficult moral quandary!

Word reaches Flash Gordon and friends (or a party of your own creation) that Emperor Ming's troops have seized a village somewhere in the Reeking Swamp, an exotic and often deadly area somewhere in Radiuma. The party investigates, battles the conqueror's minions, and discovers the amazing secret of the reeking bogs. Then they face the greatest test of all—a moral choice that will affect the locals forever! Literally!

## A PLEA FOR HELP

The party is contacted by the Freeman and told that a heavy detachment of Ming's soldiers have landed in the village of Murk, a tiny, unassuming settlement at the edge of the Reeking Swamp. The locals are said to possess certain resources the Emperor desires, and the soldiers aren't bothering with the usual pretenses—they're slaughtering resisters outright.

## SCOUTING

If the party is airborne, they can do high level aerial reconnaissance to get the lay of the land. Murk is very small, with visible houses for perhaps a hundred souls. Two imperial battle tanks are parked in the middle of the town, and even from on high the heroes can see at least a company of Ming's merciless minions (there are, in fact, about 80 soldiers here, led by Captain Titus).

Several of Murk's wooden houses are aflame, obscuring much of the sky above with smoke. A few miles away, in a clearing west of town, are four war rockets—likely what brought the infantry to the area.

The group can attempt to attack from the sky, but if they do, Captain Titus broadcasts that he will kill a civilian every minute the craft remains. It's a threat he's more than willing to carry out.

A better approach is to land their own rocket in a clearing a few miles to the east and approach on foot.

## THE BOG BEASTS!

The adventurers start to smell the Reeking Swamp within a half mile of Murk. It's a heavy, fishy smell, with a hint of some overly sweet fragrance none of the heroes have ever sensed before. The flora here is beautiful and exotic. Scintillating blue and red flowers grow from

rich green grass rooted in dark brown soil. Colorful birds, beetles with shimmering green and yellow carapaces, and lizards with scales the color of various metals dart from the intruders' footsteps.

The beautiful environment is also home to numerous predators, of course. Just as the group begins to hear the bark of soldiers in the village, three juvenile constrictosauruses rush from the bushes! The group must be careful when battling the creatures—any loud sounds immediately draw 2d6 of Captain Titus' soldiers!

## CONRICTOSUARUS [3]

These 10' long, four-legged lizards have snake-like bodies they use to crush prey. Constrictosauruses are known to change skin color from dull green to vibrant red when angered, thus the Arborian rhyme, "If green, serene. If red, you're dead."

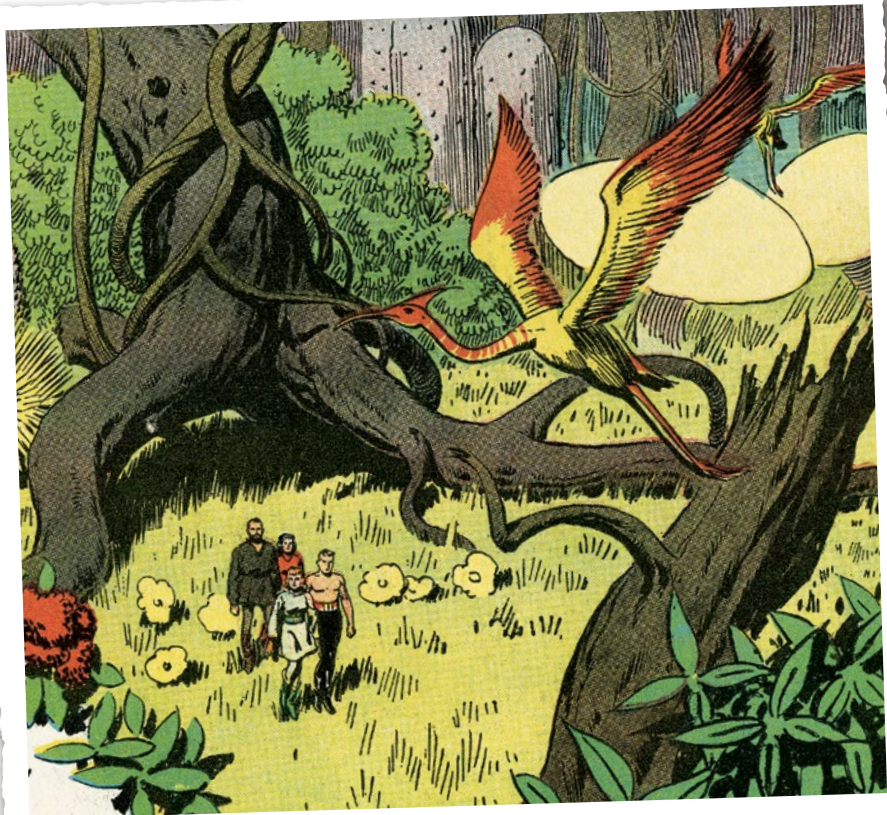
**Attributes:** Agility d4, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

**Skills:** Fighting d6, Notice d10

**Pace:** 4; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Special Abilities:**

- **Bite:** Str+d4.
- **Constrict:** Constrictosauruses bite when they succeed at a Fighting roll, and entangle when they succeed



with a raise. The round they entangle and each round thereafter, they cause damage to their prey equal to Str+d6. The prey may attempt to escape on his action by getting a raise on an opposed Strength roll.

### ADVICE & SECRETS

Within about 20 yards of the village, have the group make Stealth checks. Those who make it see a young man hiding in silver bushes behind one of the sturdy shacks. Should anyone fail, the local turns and sees the party approach—he jumps in fright but does not run. It's clear these new visitors aren't with Ming. Either way, he begins talking. A successful Persuasion roll hurries the small talk and jumps to the section below. Failure—or any sign of distrust or hostility—means the man asks a number of probing questions before finally asking for help.

*"You are clearly not with Ming, so I must trust you and ask for your help. The people of my village are not helpless. In fact, we've defended ourselves for...well, a very, very long time. Some of our elders have psychic powers that...convince...outsiders not to stay long. But Ming's spies somehow found out our secret. They kidnapped our elders from ambush and are enslaving the rest of us."*

Even though he basically trusts the newcomers, Alda needs a little convincing to tell them Murk's long-held secret. Let the group interact with him, make Persuasion rolls, offer gifts or assurances, etc., but eventually, Alda tells them the rest of the story.

*"The swamp. It has certain...properties. Bathe in the boiling mud here once every few years and it restores your youth."*

Allow that a moment to sink in.

*"I know that sounds impossible, but do I look like a young man? Well, I am by my people's standards. But I am over 200 years old!"*

After a brief pause, allow Alda to point out the obvious:

*"I have seen tyrants come and go in my time, but Ming is by far the worst. The mud loses its properties if you take it from the swamp, so his soldiers are here to build imperial baths. We will be forced to tend it if we wish to retain access. Or slaughtered if we don't. Needless to say, if Ming extends his cruel life, all Mongo will suffer!"*

### THE DILEMMA

What happens next is up to the group. A scientist can use any sort of Knowledge (Science) to deduce that the miraculous properties of the swamp could likely be extinguished with a large fire—such as that caused by an exploding tank or rocket ship. Chasing off the soldiers makes for an exciting but difficult battle (there are 80, after all!), but Ming can always send more.

The Murkians don't want the swamp destroyed and will fight to stop it. They'll even side with the soldiers, figuring serving Ming is better than losing their source of eternal life! And the fact that they kept this to themselves all these long years shouldn't sit well with native player characters of Mongo!

Convincing the locals to sabotage the swamp, or at least stay out of the way and not report their presences to the soldiers, might be a good time to use the Social Conflict rules. Destroying it without their support means they turn against the Freeman and become loyal servants of Ming—and the Murk are very old and experienced foes!

### SOLDIERS [80]

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

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

**Cha:** +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

**Hindrances:** Obligations (Major—Ming!)

**Edges:** —

**Gear:** Ray Gun Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2).

### ➤ CAPTAIN TITUS

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

**Skills:** Fighting d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Science) d8, Notice d8, Piloting d8, Repair d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6

**Cha:** +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** Obligations (Major—Ming!)

**Edges:** Command, Fervor

**Gear:** Ray Gun Pistol (Range 12/24/48, Damage 2d6+2), saber (Str+d8).

### MURKIANS [ETERNIANS]

The Murkians are currently in chains as the soldiers prepare plans to build Ming's imperial baths. The elders have powerful psionics, but were captured by surprise and spirited away to Mingo City.

Murkians dislike technology and the elders forbid it within their domain, fearing it will corrupt their near-ageless people for generations to come.

**Attributes:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**Skills:** Boating d8, Fighting d8, Healing d10, Knowledge (Nature Science) d12, Notice d10, Persuasion d10, Riding d8, Shooting d6, Stealth d10, Survival d12, Swimming d8, Throwing d8, Tracking d12

**Cha:** +0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 6

**Hindrances:** All Thumbs, Loyal, Vow (Major—keep the secret of the swamp!)

**Edges:** Alertness, Improved Arcane Resistance, Danger Sense, Healer, Level Headed

**Gear:** Wooden spears (Str+d4, Parry +1).