

MARVELS OF MARS



SPACE

1889

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Credits

Creatures of Mars is a sourcebook by Dominic Hladek

Wonders of the Martian Past is a sourcebook by John Snead

Editor in Chief

Stefan Küppers

Editors

Nicole Heinrichs, Stefan Küppers

English Translation by

Jan Enseling, Nicole Heinrichs

Cover Artwork by

Robin Blicher, Viktor Fetsch

Logo Design

Arndt Drechsler, based on the original logo of the Space: 1889 Core Rulebook by GDW

Interior Artwork by

Rich Longmore, Michael Jaecks

Map Artwork by

Steffen Brand, Daniel Jödemann

English Language Editor

Daniel Bluff

Proofreading by

Daniel Bluff

Layout by

Daniel Bruxmeier

Graphic Design by

Ralf Berszuck

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CREATURES OF MARS



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Introduction

Mars—a world of endless red sands, inhabited by bizarre creatures whose evolution reached its peak tens of thousands of years ago. After a short period of fertility—from an evolutionary standpoint—the planet is again largely covered in desert, causing plants and animals to once more fight for survival on a dying planet. But despite the drying up of the seas and the devastation of the land, the diversity of life remains vast, and a great many strange and dangerous creatures are yet to be encountered by man. The life forms of Mars have adapted to the harsh conditions of a dying planet in fascinating ways, finding and fighting hard for their niches among the desolate and unforgiving sands of Mars.

This volume focuses on the creatures which inhabit the Red Planet (and, in some cases, on those which did so in the past).

No one book could describe all life on Mars, squirming endlessly through cities and canals, scouring the deserts and steppes, haunting caves and dried-out canyons. Hence, this game supplement is to be understood as a wide catalog to present further suggestions for your game, without any claim to completeness. You can either involve the ready-made creatures into your campaign, or use them as inspiration for populating Mars with your own critters.

And on that note, I wish you fun reading and playing.

Dominic Hladek
Milan, July 2014



On Martian Flora and Fauna

The flora and fauna of Mars is characterized by many parallels to, but also by many differences from, life on Earth. To most Earthlings who have never visited the planet, the adventure stories told of Mars are fascinating simply because they are so extraordinarily strange and otherworldly. Scientists feverishly work on researching the Martian ecosystem, and on anticipating the future development of terrestrial evolution based on the findings, on the principal that Mars must represent the eventual fate of a planet, like Earth, millions of years further along in its geological history. Earthlings actually living on Mars, on the other hand, regard those creatures more as a threat than a spectacle, and would probably rather prefer to see them shot than studied. As for the Martians, they know their fauna only as it is, and they either live in harmony with it, domesticate it, or fight it.

All creatures on Mars evolved under the following conditions, which you can use as a guideline if you want to inhabit Mars with your own creatures:

Drought

The most distinct difference between Mars and Earth is drought: to all but the most discerning eye, the Red Planet is nothing more than one giant sandy desert. Water is scarce, and so is food. Because of this, Martian creatures are nearly all extremely tough and resilient: thick hides, deadly defensive weapons, and high energy efficiency are typical traits for Martian fauna. Only in a very few regions are the animal inhabitants allowed to show a touch of excess. In these places, one may find colorful furs and fragile beauty with some species, and have a glimpse at the “glamor of bygone days,” like the ancient Martian cultures, reflected in the last remnants of extinct animals.

Extinction

From a terrestrial viewpoint, the diversity of species is quite low, but research on it is only rudimentary at this point. This is especially the case when compared to the sprawling, primeval life on Venus, or to the multitude of primitive life forms on Mercury, a world which resembles Creation’s experimental laboratory. Many species on Mars went extinct due to the drought, and the survivors fight in their own way to delay their own inevitable extinction a little longer. Not exuberance, but a harsh struggle for survival defines the everyday life of the creatures of Mars. There are no birds, amphibians or fish on Mars—at least, not in the forms we know—or if they do exist, they are very rare exceptions.

Ecological Niches

Since the time when the waters receded, many species have gone extinct, but others have adapted to the pressure of the extreme circumstances and oftentimes found incredible niches in which they can exist, and in some cases even thrive. Thus, body parts or features have evolved differently from similar creatures on Earth, and now they serve different purposes than they did for the ancestors of those animals. Habitats have changed, so one can encounter the descendants of former water animals on land

or even in the sky, and erstwhile inhabitants of cool forests now dwell in the baking desert. Other forms of life migrated to the polar caps, burrowed below the red-dusted soil, or found ways to live alongside the Martians in their artificial canals and cities.

Ability to Fly

In a great many cases, the evolution of the local species has adapted to the unique conditions of Mars by granting them the ability to fly. This is of special interest, since there exist no Martian flying birds at all. Some Martian animals appear to fly similarly to birds, but the skies are dominated by other creatures: draconian or serpentine lizards, mammals floating with the help of flying membranes, and creatures which carry in their organs substances mimicking the properties of liftwood. They all share the airspace with Martian screwgalleys and British gunships, and the struggle for domination has not yet been decided.

Peak of Evolution

Mars, though, was not always characterized by death and decay, for the Red Planet has already reached the pinnacle of civilization and the peak of evolution, and the planet’s decline has only served to weed out the weaker and less developed species. Thus, many animal species on Mars can be considered the “ultimate form” of their development, e.g. the most dangerous predator that ever existed, the most intelligent form possible in a class of animals within a given resource niche, or the most resilient beast one can encounter in the known solar system. Some exceptionally intelligent animal species even stood on the edge of forming a culture, but the dying of the planet created insurmountable barriers to their further development.

Ancient Technologies

Not only did the planet’s features influence the fauna, but the civilized Martians played their part as well. The numerous species which, in the early period of Martian culture, originated from domestication were later complemented by those creatures created by technologies humans and modern Martians cannot even dream about. Artificial hybrids of animals species, genetic breeding programs, and other ways of shaping and domesticating the animal world had been conducted in the past for various reasons, and left their marks on the modern fauna.

Arms and Legs

Many creatures of Mars have developed more than four and up to ten limbs. The reasons for this are diverse. During the course of a long period of evolution, creatures that would be known to human children as “creepy crawlies,” usually considered lower life forms on Earth, became higher forms of life as they were forced to share their habitats with standard quadrupeds: eight-legged crayfish from the erstwhile seas, six-legged insects, six-limbed mammals, limbless snake creatures—all lived in the *naBrifanoon*,

the Age of Drying—in common habitats, as the waning waters forced them into closer and close proximity with one another. This explains the different combinations of use and number of

limbs which characterize the animals on Mars, as the adapt-or-die conditions of a drying Mars forced lower life forms to change and develop to survive.

Habitats

Listed below, you will find the habitats of the creatures presented in this book. Each habitat describes one or more types of environment the respective animals are found in. Sometimes, you will

find a specification written in brackets. The following are the environment types:

Territory / Specification	Description
Urban	Canal cities of Mars, e.g. Syrtis Major, Dioscuria, or Umbra
- Sewers	Sewer systems of Martian cities
- Ruins	Abandoned, uninhabited areas or buildings
- Domesticated	The animal is kept by city dwellers as a pet or livestock
Canals	The artificial canals built by architects
Farmlands	Cultivated land along the canals
Woodlands	Martian forests along the canals
Swamps	Martian swamps along the destroyed canals, e.g. the Swamps of Gorklimsk
Steppes	Vast parts of the former continental mass of Mars, e.g. the Steppe of Nepenthes-Thoth
- Underground	Caves and underground tunnels beneath the steppes
Mountains	Martian highlands, e.g. the Astusapes Mountains
- Underground	Mountain caves
- Forests	Areas of thriving woods in the highlands, including liftwood forests
Deserts	The former Martian seabeds, e.g. the Mare Erythraeum
- Stone Deserts	Rocky red deserts (the majority of deserts)
- Salt Dune Deserts	Sandy deserts
- Coral Deserts	Bizarre former coral reefs
- Underground	Caves in the stone and coral deserts
Polar Caps	Both polar caps of Mars
- North Pole	Northern polar cap
- South Pole	Southern polar cap
- Outskirts	Rugged areas at the edge of the polar caps
Extinct	This creature cannot be found on Mars today and its habitat may no longer exist



Creatures of Mars

All creatures in the following chapters are listed alphabetically according to their Martian name, which is usually the most common version among human scientists researching the Martian fauna,

followed by the English version given in brackets. The creatures are categorized into **Land-Dwelling Animals** (p. 7), **Aquatic Animals** (p. 32), and **Flying Animals** (p. 35).

Land-Dwelling Animals

Brifa Oum (White Ape)



Habitat: Polar Caps, Mountains

There is no proof that this legendary creature really exists, nor knowledge of which animal species it belongs to. Alleged eyewitness accounts, cave paintings, and Martian myths describe the “White Ape” as a giant animal with six limbs and white fur. It could be a gargantuan descendent of a gorilla-like ape species; some explorers, though, classify it as a “land whale” that was able to find a new habitat in the icy areas during the *naBrifanoon* on Mars. The main indications of this theory are that, in contrast to the head, the eyes are tiny, and that the maw visible in pictures is nearly completely clotted by lappets reminiscent of baleens. In addition, its Martian name means something like “behemoth of wetness” (although the terms “ice” and “wetness” are used synonymously in the Martian language).

A dangerous predator, it supposedly prowls (or prowled) the polar regions and its icy outskirts as well as the highlands around the polar caps. Virtually every land animal on Mars can be considered its prey, since not even ruumet breehrs would be too large to appear on the *brifa ous*'s menu.

Its sheer existence might be questionable, but even more questionable are rumors that the High Martians who live in the mountains near the polar caps are able to capture these fearsome creatures and make them fight in their arenas for sport. There are certainly dozens of drunkards, mostly Earthlings, in the cities of Syrtis Lapis, who claim to have fought against these beasts after being captured by the High Martians of the Noachis Mountains.

Brifa Oum

Animal Companion 5

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 24

Primary Attributes

Body: 12 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 11 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 6 **Initiative:** 5
Move: 15 (30)* **Defense:** 12**
Perception: 5 **Stun:** 12

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	11	6	19	(9+)
Stealth	4	2	0***	(0)
Survival	1	5	8	(4)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Robust (+2 Health rating)

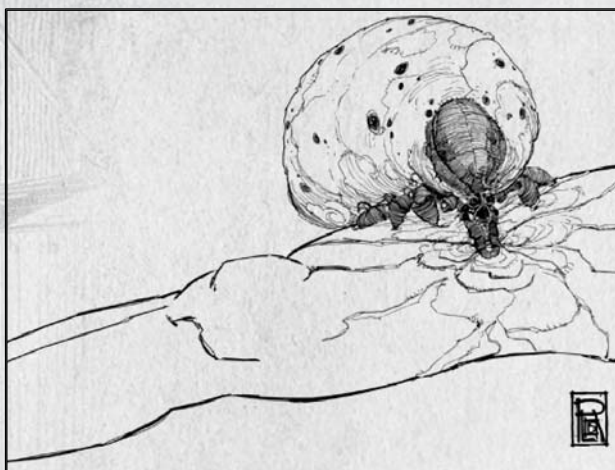
Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	10 L	-6	23 L	(11+) L
Claw	8 L	-6	21 L	(10+) L
Trample	12 N	-6	25 N	(12+) N
Ramming Attack	8 N	-6	21 N	(10+) N

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Brifa Oums have a thick hide that provides a +2 Bonus to their Passive Defense

***Brifa Oums suffer a -6 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Briifazak (Water Tick)



Habitat: Woodlands, Polar Caps (Outskirts), Mountains (Forests)

The water tick, an ugly arachnoid species about the size of a baseball, lives in the grass and foliage of the few remaining woodlands. It is not named for living in water, but for drawing on the water of its prey. Anyone found wading through knee-high grass or brushing aside low-hanging foliage is likely to feel the sharp pinch of a water tick's fangs sinking into their skin. Shaped like a black leaf, the water tick lies in wait for its prey, crawling swiftly up a trouser leg or springing from a tree branch onto a passerby's neck. Once it encounters bare skin, it instantly sinks its teeth in and attempts to drain the host's water. It sucks out moisture so

fast that the body part it attaches to begins to wrinkle and dry up almost instantly, turning necrotic within minutes.

If the creature is not removed quickly, it continues sucking until it reaches the size of a football, flops down to the ground and tries to crawl away. In most cases, the affected body part will be so necrotic at this point that the only chance of saving the victim's life is through amputation.

Some peoples of the High Martians, and even Hill Martians, carry a specimen with them in a pouch and put them on enemies they have defeated. Afterwards, the filled-up animal is carried like a water skin to be stabbed and drunk from later, a practice which most humans find utterly revolting. However, those tribes consider this procedure an honor for the killed enemy, because through their deaths, they have given precious water to another living Martian.

Briifazak

Animal Companion 0

Archetype: Insect/Arachnid **Health:** 3

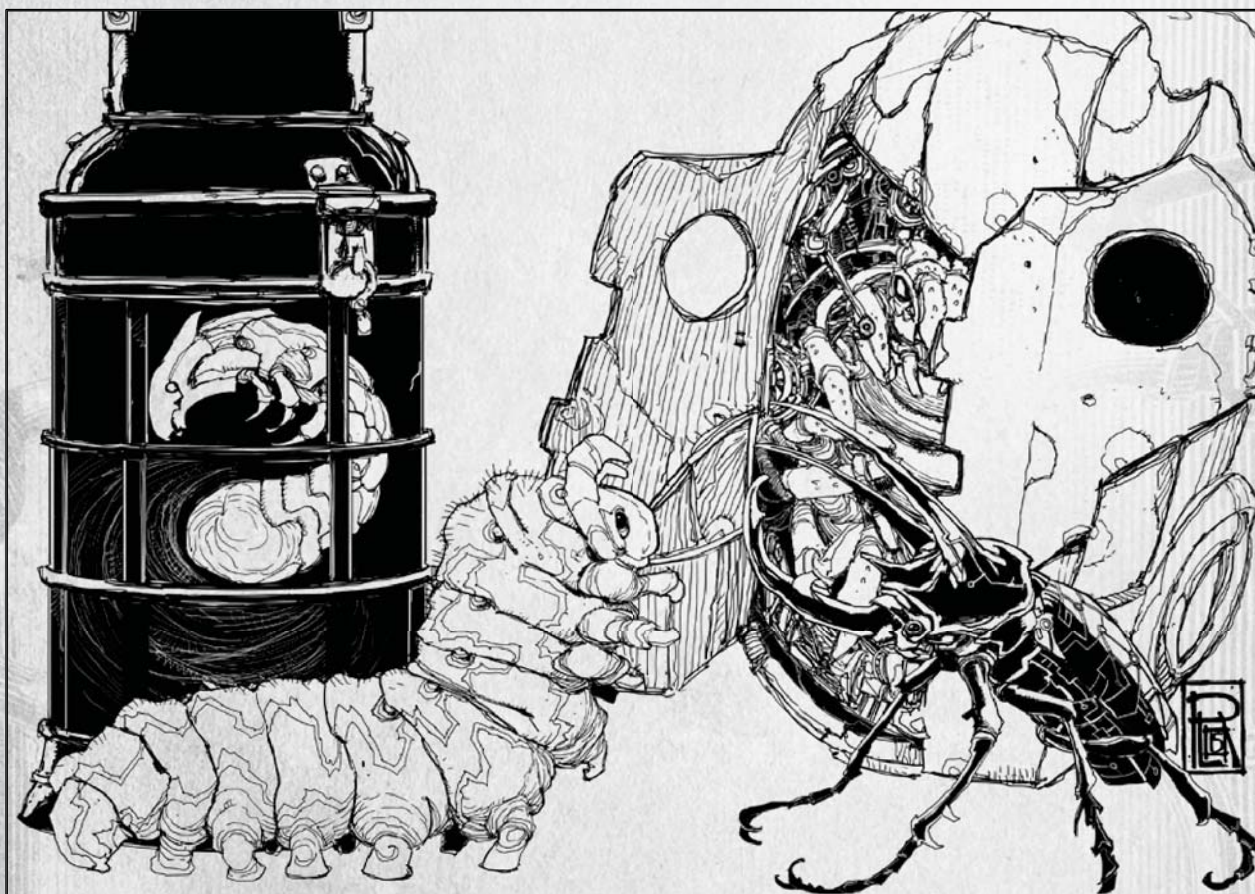
Primary Attributes

Body: 1 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 2 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: -2 **Initiative:** 2
Move: 5 **Defense:** 5
Perception: 4 **Stun:** 1

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	3	6	(3)
Stealth	2	5	11*	(5+)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)



Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)

Blood Sucking (on a successful attack, the creature will adhere to the victim's skin. Each creature sucks out 1 point of Health per combat round)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	0 L	2	8 L	(4) L

*Briifazaks receive a +2 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Coparas (Copper Scarab Beetle)

Habitat: Steppes (Underground), Deserts (Underground) Urban (Ruins)

This distinct bug, about the size of a kitten, has seemingly metallic antennae and a back pattern that experts on Martian technology would easily recognize as resembling Martian ornamentation. While other creatures lie in the sun, the copper scarab sits down on old Martian technology made from legendary Martian copper.

Artifact Symbionts

Artifact symbionts are an artificially created, insect-like animal species of Mars. They live off, or in symbiosis with, Martian artifacts.

Esbaatenabra (Elder Caterpillar)

Habitat: Urban (Ruins, Domesticated), Polar Caps

These creatures are quite rare, and most of them are domesticated, worshipped by the Canal Martians with outright religious vigor and are guarded like precious treasures. It is hardly surprising, since these caterpillars are fascinating animals.

Their body, which is nearly as long as a person's forearm, is whitish, almost transparent, and usually glows with a weak sheen. In their gelatinous insides pulsate veins like thin copper wires. Over and over, waves of warm light pulse through the creature, as if the light itself slows as it reaches the body, wades slowly through as if fighting against the gelatinous substance, and picks up again on reaching the other side.

There is a consensus among Earth scientists that the elder caterpillars are creatures grown by the Canal Builders and have something to do with their crystal technology. It has been determined that the body of a caterpillar can cause different effects when placed as a connector between two Martian crystal artifacts: the contents of two similarly formed crystals are copied, both crystals glowing with a bright light and producing their respective effects with more amplified intensity. When combined, these two artifacts have a different use than on their own. All this and more has been observed, though many caterpillars have died during experimentation. This is why their owners are reluctant to make them available for testing. However, terrestrial researchers eager to conduct these experiments will pay horrendous sums for permission to use the animals.

Rules: An elder caterpillar is considered a level 4 Martian artifact.

Luur (Lens Beetle)

Habitat: Urban (Ruins), Deserts (Underground, Stone Deserts)

A strange insect, the seemingly crystalline lens beetle is about the size of a finger and is closer in appearance to a flying worm. It is drawn to artificial light and likes to be near ancient Martian lenses, crystal artifacts and optical devices. The longer it stays there, the more it begins to glow in a green and yellow light, similar to a firefly on Earth. The glow intensifies until the beetle flashes a piercing burst of light and splits itself into two dimmer specimens. It is assumed that the light energy is used as food and allows for reproduction.

Lens beetles are sometimes put in lamps. Correct use requires that they be kept near a fitting artifact to breed so that, when required, some may be fished out with a net or jar to be used as a light source. Away from an energy source where they can feed, lens beetles have a short lifespan of about three days, during which they grow gradually dimmer, usually not noticeable until after the first day.

Rules: On Mars, a lur lamp can be bought as gear for £5; it weighs 1 pound (0.5 kilograms). When properly maintained under the mentioned conditions, it is very reliable.

Barifaarim (Ice Warrior)

Habitat: Polar Caps

There is a persistent legend on Mars about the Age of the 1,000 World Wars. According to the story, a whole army of mechanical warriors was supposedly deposited in the eternal ice and was forgotten in the chaos caused by the wars. They were not piloted by means of mind crystals, but using an insect-like hive mind. It is said that in the helmet of each mechanical soldier, there lies an insect similar to a pill bug able to pilot the walking armor by its own movement. These insects are controlled by a pill bug queen which passes its orders through the hive mind to its swarm. In short, whoever controls the bill bug queen is in command of a powerful army. There have been numerous expeditions to the polar caps in order to find this army. To this day, all expeditions have proved fruitless, but reports of armored helmets dredged from the canals with the husks of multi-legged insects inside have inspired wave after wave of ill-fated expeditions.

The pattern on its back may well serve as camouflage. Since the scarab has never been seen feeding and it totally lacks a maw, it is assumed that it receives nourishment from the charge inside the machines on which it sits. It remains a mystery exactly by what mechanism it is able to absorb these charges, but the fact is certain, for anyone attempting to pick up the bug will likely suffer a dangerous electrical discharge or find the bug's carapace suddenly glowing red hot, and anyone attempting to use a device on which a scarab has been sitting will often find it drained.

Recently, some scarabs were found to have been sitting on terrestrial analytic devices which had been brought to Mars, after they got caught in the works. Because of this, "bugs in the works" has become a popular saying.

Cooparas

Animal Companion 0

Archetype: Insect Health: 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 3 Willpower: 6

Secondary Attributes

Size: -3 Initiative: 2
Move: 5 (10)* Defense: 9**
Perception: 6 Stun: 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	1	4	(2)
Stealth	2	3	8***	(4)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)
Empathy	0	2	2	(1)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Martian Technology (interacts with Martian technology; variable effect)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Mandible	1 L	3	8 L	(4) L
Electronic Discharge	5 L	3	12 L	(6) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Cooparas have a thick hide that provides a +2 bonus to their Passive Attack

***Cooparas receive a +3 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Eegar (Steppe Antelope)

Habitat: Steppes, Farmlands

The name is an onomatopoeic description for the warning cry of the *eegar*, the fastest of Martian land animals. These long-necked creatures protect their herds by posting a guard comprised of the longest-necked members at the edge of the herd, constantly on the lookout for threats. They can escape a predator's surprise attack with astonishing speed. They are quickly fatigued, however, and untiring cursorial hunters like roogies pose a much greater threat for these antelope-sized animals than impressive runners like the steppe tiger. Whenever they are hunted by roogies, the herd disperses and meets again later; usually, some members have gone missing by that point.

Eegar

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 8

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 6 Intelligence: 1
Strength: 3 Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 7
Move: 11 (22)* Defense: 10
Perception: 5 Stun: 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	6	9	(4+)
Stealth	6	4	10	(5)
Survival	1	3	6	(3)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Swift (+2 Move rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	0	10 L	(5) L
Kick	2 N	0	11 N	(5+) N

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running



Some Small Animals

Krolik (Martian Rabbit)

Habitat: Farmlands, Urban (Domesticated)

If there ever were wild *kroliks*, they died out eons ago when the steppes formed on Mars. The few extant specimens are domesticated through and through, and they are bred for their delicious meat, especially that from the thighs, of which the animals have six—as does a considerable part of the Martian fauna. Aside from that fact, *kroliks* share many similarities with rabbits from Earth. A full-grown animal weighs about 10 pounds (5 kilograms). It can scratch and bite, but due to its small size, a *krolik* poses little threat to anyone.

Shakh Nilai'l (Shaggleigh)

Habitat: Steppes, Woodlands, Polar Caps (Outskirts)

These common burrowing insectoids can often be found in large numbers, and form a large part of the diets of numerous Martian predators. Its appearance is somewhat like an eight-legged, grub-like armadillo. Clicking its legs and feeling with its antennae as it moves, the *shaggleigh* is often seen climbing rocks and searching the ground for eatable carrion, bulbs and tiny animals.

As well as being on the menu for many smaller predators, some High and Hill Martians regard the slimy and soft innards of the animal as a delicacy (even, to the horror of humans, when eaten raw). Earthlings who have seen one of these animals, let alone its innards or the way it is cooked and eaten, mainly agree that they would rather eat their own feet.

Piiras (Flying Gecko)

Habitat: Urban, Steppes

In some regions of Mars, for example in Angahiaa, *piiras* are worshipped religiously. They are about a foot long (30 centimeters) in size, and resemble geckos with flying membranes.

Ganz Willoi (Prairie Rat)

Habitat: Steppes (Underground), Farmlands, Urban

Whether referred to as “Prairie Rats” (by Americans), “Little Willies” (by the British) or “Hanswürste” (by the Germans), the *ganz willoi* is a rabbit-sized burrowing rodent that lives in the steppes. They are surprisingly fast, seemingly fearless when threatened, and they like to bite.

Often, during flooding periods, whole swarms are driven out of their burrows, attacking the fertile land and the cities near the canals. When faced with such ravenous swarms, the recommended course is to seek shelter immediately.

Ganz Willoi (Swarm)

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 8*

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 **Initiative:** 4
Move: 7 (14)** **Defense:** 7
Perception: 3 **Stun:** 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	2	5	(2+)
Stealth	4	4	7***	(3+)
Survival	0	5	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Peaceful Appearance (only considered dangerous on a successful Survival roll)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	-1	6 L	(3) L

*Only attacks with an Area of Effect inflict damage on a swarm; all other weapons inflict a maximum of 1 point of damage per hit

**Ganz Willois double their Move rating when digging

***Ganz Willois suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls



Gashants, various types

Habitat: Urban (Domesticated), Steppes, Farmlands

Fat Gashants

Fat gashants are a relatively small kind of *gashant*, which are kept similar to chickens and cows. Since their meat is cheap and has a rather neutral, indistinct taste to it, the phrase “tastes like *gashant*” is very common among Martians. There are whole fattening farms around the cities on the canal banks where one pays low prices for a *groomwar* of thigh meat or for a *wihaari* from the breast. True gourmets, however, pay the highest price for a *dshaak* of *gashant* filet from the farms of known Dioscurian breeders.

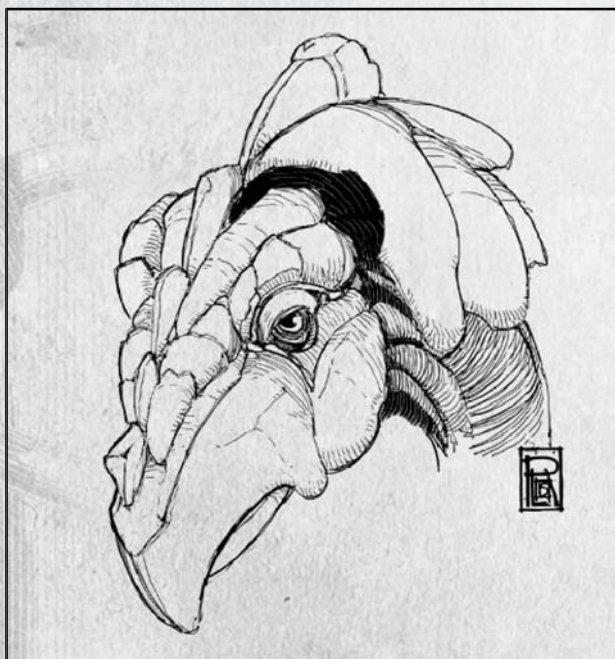
Racing Gashants

A passion for breeding the fleet-footed **racing gashant** is one of the few things that Canal and Hill Martians have in common; both peoples trade these animals among each other, organize races and can waste hours with highly emotional discussions about the exact *vagaari* the favorite animal lost by. Thereby, everyday *racing gashants* do more to strengthen the relationship between these two very distinct peoples than any alliance of convenience or any political decision has ever done.

Rules: *racing gashants* are considered Runners. Runners double their Move Rating while running.

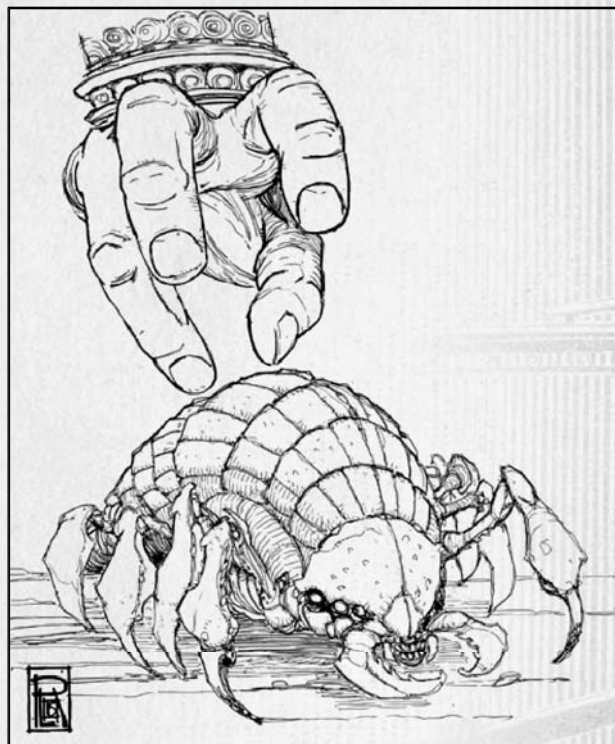
Queen Victoria Gashants

The **Queen Victoria Gashant** is called such due to the distinct appearance of its mane. On its skull, it wears a parted dark mane clinging to the head, and above it, longer, nearly white hair from which in turn a dark bun protrudes. This headdress is so similar to an image of the crowned Queen Victoria that the animal—which is a precious kind of mount, by the way—was named after her.



Currently, the Royal Gashant Corps is trying to set up the first British-Martian cavalry with these animals. These mixed troupes (Martians and British alike) are always competing with each other for the title of best rider. Much to the delight of the instructors, this rivalry spurs the cavalymen of both peoples to give their top performances. It is usually not mentioned that the Martians described this species of gashants as “*ouun bashanta*,” which translates roughly as “*gashant* turd-on-head,” and the Martians in the Parhoon area and in Syrtis Major are forbidden under penalty from mentioning this aloud.

Gata Zarostarr (Deimos Crawler)



Habitat: Deserts (Underground)

This creature is supposedly one of the most poisonous, if not *the* most poisonous living thing on Mars. At about 12 inches (30 centimeters) in length, this lamellar-shelled bug has a similar appearance to the harmless *shaggyleigh* (see p. 11). Two of its eight legs, though, end in pointed stingers through which the deadly poison enters its victim's body. These two extra legs normally remain hidden under its shell, making it appear harmless. But touching the Deimos crawler provokes a reflexive sting whose poison suffocates the victim within minutes, turning even the head of the yellowish-skinned Martians a deep blue.

Deimos crawlers are one of the weapons favored by the Worm Cult. They are known to be used prolifically by Hattabranx and his Worm Cultist followers in Syrtis Major. Supposedly, the bugs originate from the very moon of Mars which they are named after. They are believed to be a symbol of death and decay. Only a handful of initiates of the cult are taught the secret grip with which to squeeze the appropriate muscles and neural pathways of the animals, so they can be touched without any danger in order to extract their poison, or to place them in an enemy's bedroom.

Gata Sarostarr

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Insect Health: 8

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 3 Willpower: 6

Secondary Attributes

Size: -2 Initiative: 4
Move: 7 (14)* Defense: 12**
Perception: 6 Stun: 4

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	4	7	(3+)
Stealth	4	4	10***	(5)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Venom 6 L

Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite (Venom)	1 L	2	10 L	(5) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Gata Sarostars have a thick chitin hide that provides a +2 Defense bonus

***Gata Sarostars receive a +2 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Gluug (Giant Slug)

Habitat: Urban (Sewers), Swamps

At up to five meters long, these creatures are believed to be one of the biggest inhabitants of the vast and ancient Martian sewers. The *gluug*'s body looks like a single, lobar muscle dripping with mucus. Multiple tentacles protrude from the grotesque body, and a sharp tongue flops out of the jaw at its front. These slugs eat everything they can find in sewers and swamps, and are even often found in small groups. Fortunately, they are slow, but once they have grabbed a victim, it is very hard to escape their grip. Their Martian name *gluug* is an onomatopoeic expression for the noises they make.

Other Poisonous Wildlife

Shamm Baalo (Pleasure Worm)

Habitat: Urban (Ruins, Domesticated)

This earthworm-sized insect, also called the "pleasure worm," is the scourge of the Martian cities of the Mare Sirenum. With its hairlike antennae, it nestles on the skin of living creatures and secretes a drug with an intoxicating and ecstatic effect. As soon as the tiny hairs penetrate the skin, the victim experiences pleasure similar to sexual arousal. In addition, the worm sucks the victim's nutrients through its antennae, in return supplying its prey with the drug.

Thus, the victim doesn't even wish to have the worm removed. On the contrary, depending on the level of the addiction, they will do everything in their power to *prevent* the removal of the animal. Meanwhile, this "merchandise" has found its way into the British colony of Syrtis Lapis. In the local cellar pubs, modelled after the opium dens on Earth, humans as well as Martians get such worms placed on their skin, mostly by female Martians, and have them removed there later. Yet, those who become intoxicated can hardly pursue their day-to-day business; they start to lose weight and become dehydrated, whilst the worm grows and matures, until it lays eggs in the victim's skin, and soon afterwards new worms infest the lonely victim. Humans or Martians may be able to supply *one* of these worms during the early stages of the addiction, and they might summon the willpower to remove it—but this is absolutely impossible with more than one worm attached.

Thus, it is common to find the victims of "worm death" lying in their own excrement inside a stinking, abandoned

house, covered by a score of fat grubs which suck the last remaining nutrients from the corpse, and this image has become a potent symbol of the dying Martian civilization. It is often the suppliers of those worms, not the families of the victims, who discover the dead. To many Martians, worm sellers are considered the scum of the Martian cities, since they consider a worm-infested corpse merely as a free supply of new worms they can resell. It remains only a rumor, but some claim that the British have begun to breed pleasure worms and encourage smugglers to sell them to the Oenotrians to undermine the enemy from within.

Rules: The poison acts as an intoxicating drug (the victims suffer a temporary loss of -1 to their Willpower and Intelligence rating).

T'skkiiss (Tess' Kiss)

Habitat: Swamps, Steppes, Urban (Domesticated)

The poisonous, six-legged Martian lizard known locally as *ts'kkiiss* is about 12 inches (30 centimeters) long and is identified by its characteristic jagged tail. Its bite injects a poison that is life-threatening to Martians (poison level 5, damage 3 L per hour, 10 successes on hourly Constitution rolls to end the effect). Humans, on the other hand, only suffer from temporary total paralysis (-1 Strength and Dexterity rating instead of damage). Thus, the creature is often bred to extract this useful drug.

Rules: The poison causes a temporary loss of -1 Dexterity and Strength rating per dose.



Glug

Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Animal Health: 14

Primary Attributes

Body: 6 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 1 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 5 Willpower: 6

Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 1
Move: 6 Defense: 5
Perception: 6 Stun: 6

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	5	10	(5)
Stealth	1	2	1	(0+)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Drown (on a successful attack, the victim is pushed underwater and drowned. It can withstand this attack for one round per success on an instinctive Body roll, after which it suffers 1 L per round until it is able to breathe again)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	-2	10 L	(5) L
Tentacle (Drown)	2 N	-2	10 N	(5) N

*Glugs suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Griigan (Furry Lizard)

Habitat: Urban (Sewers, Ruins, Domesticated)

These six-legged animals are small, furry lizard-like creatures about 12 inches (30 centimeters) long. They are often kept as pets by rich Martians, and are especially popular among the ladies. Having escaped from the manors of the rich, however, some specimens have spread to the city sewers, likely because they are frequently brought there to die. A large infestation of *griigans* has been reported in the sewers of Dioscuria, but most other cities suffer stray *griigan* populations of various sizes.

Though normal specimens do not grow bigger than cats or small dogs at best, legends tell of giant albino *griigans* with white fur, giant red eyes and razor-sharp teeth, living in the lightless sewers.

Griigan

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 3

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 2 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: -2 Initiative: 4
Move: 6 (12)* Defense: 8
Perception: 3 Stun: 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	2	4	6	(3)
Stealth	4	2	8**	(4)
Survival	0	5	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	2	10 L	(5) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Griigans receive a +2 Size bonus on Stealth rolls



Albino Griigan

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 10

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 5 Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 3
Move: 8 (16)* Defense: 7
Perception: 4 Stun: 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	5	12	(6)
Stealth	3	1	3**	(1+)
Survival	0	5	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	3 L	-1	14 L	(7) L
Claw	1 L	-1	12 L	(6) L

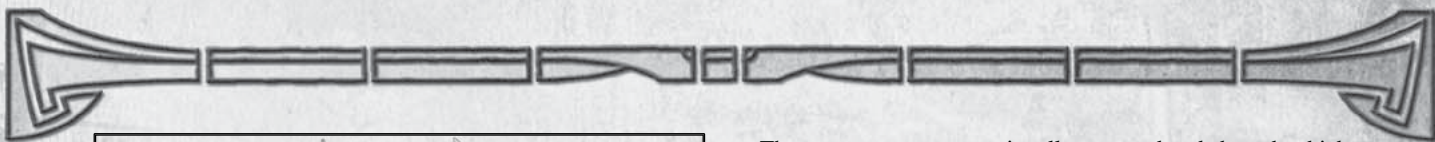
*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Albino Griigans suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Gugruuz (Spiked Roogie)

Habitat: Steppes, Polar Caps (Outskirts)

This animal is related to the roogie and resembles a porcupine. The *gugruuz*, however, is poisonous, producing a poison in a gland on its back which it delivers to its victims through its spikes, which can be shot several meters. The poisoned victim lapses into a deathlike paralysis, allowing the otherwise defenseless scavenger to quietly eat up its still-living prey as if it were carrion.



Gagruuz

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 8

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 3 Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 3
Move: 6 (12)* Defense: 7
Perception: 4 (8) Stun: 4

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Archery	3	4	7	(3+)
Brawl	3	5	8	(4)
Stealth	3	2	5	(2+)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Keen Senses (+4 bonus when making smell-based Perception rolls)

Venom (paralyzing; victims suffer a temporary loss of -1 on their Dexterity and Strength rating)

Weapons

	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	0	9 L	(4+) L
Spikes (Ranged) (Venom)	3 L	0	10 L	(5) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

Kapaan (Wigged Monkey)

Habitat: Steppes, Urban (domesticated)

This species of Martian monkey, related to the bush monkey (see Core Rules, p. 71), seems to be made up entirely of hair. In fact, they are a curiosity of nature. Just as it is believed on Earth that the skin of sharks is structurally more similar to teeth than skin, it has also been theorized that the teeth, the skin and the exterior organs of wigged monkeys are comprised entirely of strong hair fibers. In fact, autopsies of dead animals have revealed the hair to be attached to only a very thin layer of actual skin, but even this is protected below a reinforcing layer of hardened, interwoven hair.

These creatures are occasionally captured and shaved, which causes them great pain and very often ends up killing the monkey. The Martians process the hair as a treatment for impotency and baldness, and the British use it especially for making wigs, since it is of the highest quality and is extremely durable.

In the royal courts of Europe, it befits the ladies to wear such wigs. The protests of the vanishingly small opposition to the brutal shaving procedures fall largely on deaf ears. However, one case from early 1889 caused quite a stir, when the Austrian Crown Prince Rudolf and his mistress Mary Vetsera (who was known for wearing Martian wigs) were found dead in the Imperial hunting lodge at Mayerling. Up to this day, the incident remains unsolved, and it is assumed to have been a murder-suicide committed by the crown prince; there are some hints, however, that a fanatical animal rights activist group could have been responsible. The royal family keeps the incident confidential, but it is rumored that secret investigations are being conducted.

Kapaan

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 1
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 1
Strength: 3 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 Initiative: 5
Move: 7 Defense: 11*
Perception: 4 Stun: 4

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	4	7	(3+)
Stealth	4	3	8**	(4)
Survival	1	4	5	(2+)
Empathy	1	1	2	(1)

*Kapaans have a thick fur that provides a +2 bonus to their Passive Defense

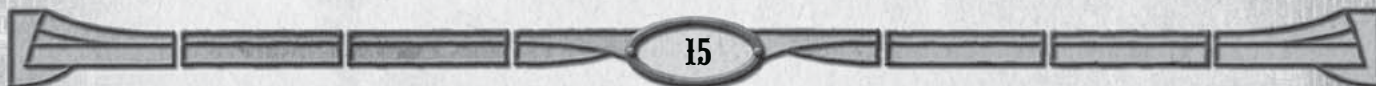
**Kapaans receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Karssa Shoshu (Dust Kraken)

Habitat: Deserts (Salt Dune Deserts)

When the seas dried up, the majority of water animals went extinct. Up until that point, the "cephalopods," which on Earth are known exclusively as marine animals, were well on their way to evolving into an intelligent species. Archeological evidence even hints at the beginnings of a primitive culture. Due to the *naBrifanoon*, however, the octopods, sepias, and ammonites degenerated before they could develop into the equals of the Martians. They had begun to adapt to the new circumstances by the time some of them left the water.

Even during the *naBrifanoon*, the dust octopodes remained on the ocean floor in diminishing numbers. On laying eyes upon the rough, wrinkled, crushed exterior of this type of cephalopod, one inevitably gets a notion of how very few of these last octopodes exist, desperately clutching at the last straw of survival on those





tiny specks of ocean floor. It is questionable whether the survival of their species has really been worth the cost.

These creatures, whose coloration runs from yellowish-brown to rust red, appear terribly pitiful, uttering rattling, dry cries with organs obviously not meant for breathing air; a sound reminiscent of consumption patients drawing their terminal breaths. Like their airways, their sad eyes are clotted with sand, and their tentacles coil this way and that without apparent purpose or control, seemingly unable to allow the pathetic animals to move with any dignity. Anyone with a heart beholding them will curse the cruelty of nature and pray that God have mercy on these hideous creatures.

Fortunately, God's mercy comes in many forms, one of which being a .303 British full metal jacket shot from a Lee-Metford, since dust octopodes are indeed very dangerous, burrowing below the desert soil—the former ocean floor—to lie in wait for prey. It would be kinder to say that they make short work of their victims, but unfortunately the opposite is true; one cannot claim that their natural weapons are particularly efficient, but they are effective, eventually. Instead, their victims often suffer a long while, screaming as the beak smashes into their flesh and the tentacles rip muscle and snap bones, while the creature rolls about in the sand, attempting to maul, bludgeon and suffocate the victim all at once, trying just about *anything* to make the victim die. A dust octopus will almost never release a victim, since, as a species on the edge of extinction, every meal counts.

Karssa Shoshu

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal

Health: 11

Primary Attributes

Body: 5

Charisma: 0

Dexterity: 2

Intelligence: 0

Strength: 4

Willpower: 5

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1

Initiative: 2

Move: 6 (12)*

Defense: 6

Perception: 5

Stun: 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	4	8	(4)
Stealth	2	6	9**	(4*)
Survival	0	5	7	(3+)
Empathy	0	1	1	(0+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

Dual Wield

Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)

Strangle (on a successful attack, the victim is seized and strangled. The victim can withstand the strangling for one round per success on an instinctive Body roll, after which it suffers 1 N per round until it is able to breathe again)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	-1	8 L	(4) L
Tentacle	0 N	-1	7 N	(3+) N
Grab (Strangle)	2 N	-1	9 N	(4+) N

*Karssa Shoshus double their Move rating when digging

**Karssa Shoshus suffer a -1 penalty on Stealth rolls

Koljiss (Carion Bear)

Habitat: Steppes, Farmlands

This furry animal resembles a gigantic, upright bear or ape with a doglike snout and a long tail to keep its balance. However, it owes its terrestrial name "carion bear" to its trait of eating berries and grasses alongside carrion, and thus it lurks in any place



where death is not far away. It only poses a minimal threat to humans, since, despite its large size, it does not normally attack creatures approaching its size, instead preferring to scare other hunters away from a fresh kill. Superstitious Hill Martians, on the other hand, consider its appearance a bad omen because of its close connection with death.

Koljiss

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 8

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 3 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 **Initiative:** 3
Move: 6 **Defense:** 7*
Perception: 2 (6) **Stun:** 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	3	6	(3)
Stealth	3	1	2**	(1)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)

Talents

Keen Sense (+4 bonus on smell-based Perception rolls)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Claw	1 L	-2	5 L	(2+) L
Tail	2 N	-2	6 N	(3) N

*Koljisses have a thick hide that provides a +2 bonus to their Passive Attack

**Koljisses suffer a -2 penalty on Stealth rolls

Magoo (Phobian Lemur)

Habitat: Woodlands

In Martian legend, the Phobian lemur is an ominous harbinger of the dark powers of the Martian moon Phobos. This belief may have its roots in the fact that the grey, snouted, monkey-like animal stares with its huge eyes from the treetops at the faraway



and hardly visible heavenly body. As it stares, its pupils dilate and contract rapidly, flickering constantly bigger and smaller. As an observer, one is under the distinct impression that they receive coded messages from the moon and decipher them. For a long time, there have been rumors connecting the animal's behavior to the obelisks on the moon.

After a period ranging from a few minutes to several hours, the *magoo* suddenly ends its nocturnal ritual and will move purposefully in a seemingly random direction, staying active until sunrise.

Death and disaster is said to befall those who try to follow; many Martians and even some careless and ignorant humans have disappeared while trying to follow the *magoo* to its goal. Those who return give noticeably understated reports of how common and boring the nocturnal activities of the lemurs are: climbing trees, searching for small prey, mating. Often, the statements appear to be all too similar, too rehearsed. And some of those reporting later vanish without a trace within the following months. Thus, the lemurs remain a mystery.

Magoo

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 3

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 5 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: -2 **Initiative:** 6
Move: 8 (16) **Defense:** 10
Perception: 5 **Stun:** 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	2	5	(2+)
Stealth	5	3	10**	(5)
Survival	1	4	5	(2*)
Empathy	1	2	3	(1+)

Talents

-

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	2	8 L	(4) L

*Magoos double their Move rating when climbing

**Magoos receive a +2 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Mogwuul (Martian Kangaroo)

Habitat: Steppes

Descended from a marsupial-like mammal, this animal has a "jumping gland" whose composition is somewhat simpler than that of the well-known lifting gland. Due to the resulting jumping ability, the tough, bony creature is often compared to the terrestrial kangaroo. Apart from their ability at jumping and similar physiques, these two animals have little in common. The *mogwuul* is a hunter, with sturdy bones and thick, wrinkled, bristly skin like an elephant. The four legs give it a powerful jump, allowing the animal to pounce up to 100 feet (30 meters)—for prey the size of a human this mostly comes unexpected; unwary humans traveling the steppes often find the peaceful-looking creature which a moment ago stood calmly in the distance suddenly hurtling towards them with teeth bared. The two arms are short, yet tipped with massive claws which the creature turns on its target when pounc-

ing. The sheer weight of the attack knocks the victim down and renders them defenseless as its sharp teeth rip out the victim's throats. Fortunately for humans and Martians alike, *eegars* are its preferred prey.



Mogwuul

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 9

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 5 Intelligence: 1
Strength: 4 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 6
Move: 9 (18)* Defense: 11**
Perception: 4 Stun: 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	6	12	(6)
Stealth	5	1	5***	(2)+
Survival	1	5	6	(3)
Athletics	4	3	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	-1	12 L	(6) L
Claw	0 L	-1	11 L	(5+) L
Trample	4 N	-1	15 N	(7+) N

*Mogwuuls double their Move rating when jumping

**Mogwuuls have a thick hide that provides a +2 bonus to their Passive Defense

***Mogwuuls suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Onam Reech (Canal Digger)

Habitat: Deserts (Underground)

The Hill Martians south and west of Syrtis Major speak of a legend of a huge animal digging through the underground, so large that its abandoned burrows now serve as canals. Accord-

ing to the descriptions given by most storytellers, it resembles a titanic, hairless mole without hind legs and with multiple bone plates covering the front third of its body. The natives scare disobedient children with this legend, and it is assumed that the creature is either totally fictitious or an exaggeration on a naturally occurring (if smaller) animal. It is also possible that these stories originate from a primitive and ignorant tribe trying to explain the existence of the canals, not unlike savages on Earth ascribing the formation of lakes to the footsteps of a legendary giant.

Onam Reech

Animal Companion 5

Archetype: Animal Health: 30

Primary Attributes

Body: 18 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 1
Strength: 22 Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 8 Initiative: 3
Move: 24 (48)* Defense: 12
Perception: 5 Stun: 18

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	22	4	26	(13)
Stealth	2	6	0**	(0)
Survival	1	4	5	(2+)

Talents

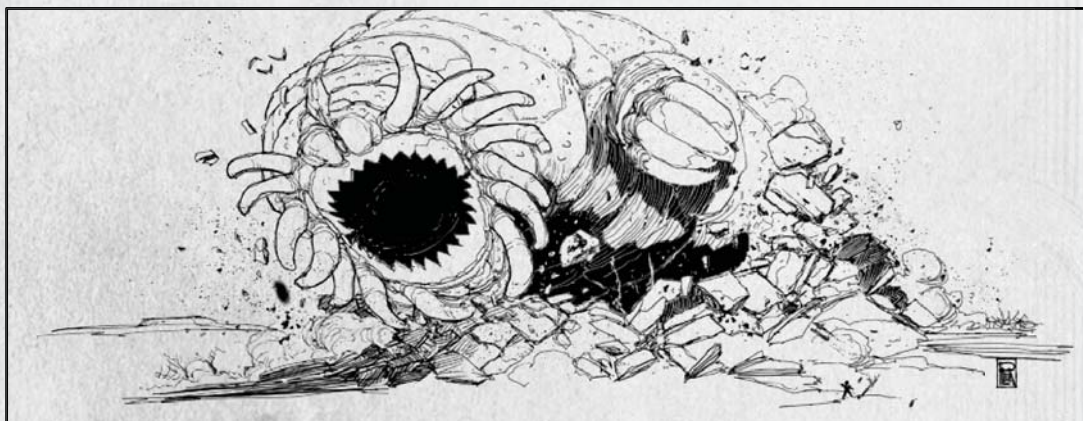
Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	8 L	-8	26 L	(13) L
Claw	10 L	-8	28 L	(14) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Onam Reeches suffer a -8 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Raduug Grei (Red Manikin)

Many stories circulate among the daring aerial flyer captains of Mars about the mysterious "red manikins" or "little Martians." They are said to live in large packs and to watch the sky, holding strange poses and waiting silently. In the unfortunate event that an aerial flyer encounters them, their mysterious powers are said to render the ship unable to fly and make it as heavy as a rock, so that the flyer drops and crashes to the ground. For this reason, the manikins' territories in the steppes—those of Electris—are avoided when possible.





They are eusocial marsupials, meaning they are colony animals—a rare feature among mammals. Stranger still is the fact that the red manikins actually appear to comprise several animal species, who have come together to form a sort of “kingdom,” living in extensive underground cave systems they have dug themselves.

Raduug Wahgar (Red Watcher)

Habitat: Steppes

It is the *watchers* that give the red manikins their name, seen posing strangely and staring into the distance by airship captains shortly before their ship goes down. These creatures grow to between 1 and 1.6 feet (30 and 50 centimeters) with large, elongated heads and wide open lemur-like eyes. Due to their watchful poses, they resemble the meerkats known to Europeans who have visited the colonies in Africa. Their skin is covered by a soft, reddish tomentum dancing in the steppe winds. Red watchers spend hours of each day staring into the sky, with scores of watchers gathering at twilight outside the entrance of their caves, and on nights when the moons are dim. By this, they guard their fellow species against aerial predators.

In fact, their abilities go beyond simple guard duty. Researchers are still in the dark about how they are able to change the properties of liftwood and similar organic substances over such distances, to the extent that these substances lose their levitating effects for a while. Airship captains have observed that before their ships lost lift, the creatures straightened and their fur stood on end, suggesting that their hairs serve as some kind of antennae. These theories are where the knowledge ends and speculation starts; electricity, psychic powers, some kind of “liftwood magnetism,” “ethereal

pull” drawing the ships down towards them, all of these theories have been put forward and more. Despite our inability to explain it, the fact remains that two or three specimens can bring down a flying High Martian, while about twenty animals pose a threat to a gunboat, and about fifty are needed to sink a galley. Through this ability, the red watchers have been observed to keep *kommota* and other flying predators grounded while the other red manikin species forage for food on the surface.

Raduug Wahgar

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 7

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 **Charisma:** 1
Dexterity: 3 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 2 **Willpower:** 5

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 **Initiative:** 4
Move: 5 **Defense:** 7
Perception: 8 (12) **Stun:** 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Archery	3	4	7	(3+)
Brawl	2	1	3	(1+)
Stealth	3	4	7*	(3+)
Survival	1	4	7	(3+)
Empathy	1	2	3	(1+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Keen Senses (+4 bonus on sight-based Perception rolls)

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Liftwood Disturbance (each point of Damage nullifies the lifting capacity of 22 lbs, or 10 kg, of liftwood)

Flyer Disturbance (instead of falling unconscious, a flying creature is unable to fly and may crash)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Claw	1 L	1	5 L	(2+) L
Interfering Wave	6 N	1	14 N	(7) N

(Ranged) (Liftwood Disturbance)

*Raduug Wahgars receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Raduug Kash (Red Foragers)

Habitat: Steppes (Underground)

Unlike the upright watchers, *foragers* walk on all fours, standing at about a foot (30 centimeters) long. They resemble mole-rats or fat hamsters, with thick, red fur which protects against the cold of night and makes them hard to detect on the dusty red ground of the steppes. Under the protection of the watchers, they use their cheek pouches to collect bulbs, shrubs, crunchy insects, fragrant carrion, and other scarce foods on the Martian soil. They are incredibly agile and have a distinctive flight instinct which allows them to flee into their burrows whenever danger is in sight. Additionally, they can curl up, and due to their red fur they resemble a rock in the desert. Therefore, passengers on aerial flyers seldom get to see them, so it is not obvious at first that these animals are related to the watchers, or that they are living beings at all. The foragers are peaceful omnivores and pose no threat to anything bigger than a *ganz willoi*.

Raduug Reech (Red Diggers)

Habitat: Steppes (Underground)

The third species in the red manikin colony is virtually unknown to humans. Looking like red naked mole-rats, the *diggers* live exclusively underground. Their eyes are covered by lappets, leaving only a small slit to see through. The lappets probably serve to protect their eyes from dirt as they dig the tunnels of the colony. Their 0.6 to 1 foot (20 to 30 centimeters) long bodies feature shovel-like front paws, and their mouths are designed for digging tunnels without swallowing soil. They are unable to drink and so absorb water from their food, but mostly they extract it from the moist dirt underground. In both cases, the means of extraction is unknown.

These creatures, like the foragers, pose absolutely no threat to humans. Their red thin hairs are touch-sensitive, since their eyes are as good as blind. With the help of the tiny hairs they orient themselves inside the Martian soil and with them can distinguish between good and less appropriate materials for building tunnels.

Raduug Koko (Red Koko)

Habitat: Deserts (Salt Dune Deserts)

Although the green koko is better known, its relative the red koko is no less dangerous. Being 6 feet (2 meters) in length, the "red koko" may be considerably smaller, but it is much more venomous. It inhabits the sandy deserts of Mars, slithering just below the surface. It remains under the surface right up until it strikes, appearing like a ripple in the sand as it speeds towards its prey, which it detects through its tremor sense. Dug in and well camouflaged by its red skin, it often lurks for weeks in a state hibernation. During this time, it senses the ground vibrations within hundreds of meters, allowing it to estimate the size and the position of possible prey.

The koko's poison is injected through its bite, but can also be spat. The poison paralyzes the victim and slowly liquefies their innards. The victim becomes gradually immobile and wastes away in agony. Usually, while the victim is still alive, the koko creates a hole in the skin with its teeth and crawls inside the softened body. Thank the Lord that during this process the victim usually dies sooner rather than later.

Red Koko

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 8

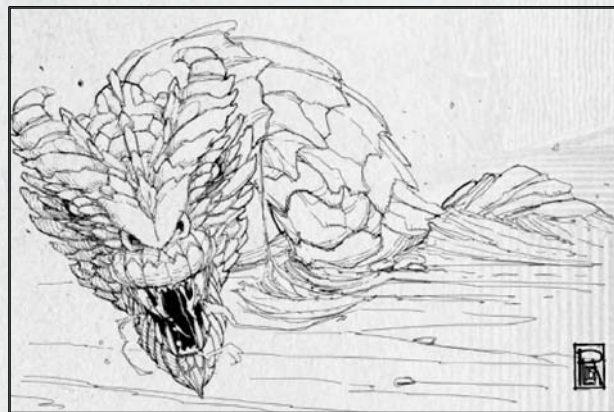
Primary Attributes

Body: 4 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Initiative:** 7
Move: 7 (14)* **Defense:** 8
Perception: 5 (9) **Stun:** 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	5	10	(5)
Archery	4	3	7	(3+)
Stealth	4	5	9	(4+)
Survival	1	5	8	(4)



Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Keen Senses (+4 bonus on touch-based Perception rolls)

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative rating)

Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a **Surprise Attack** using its **Stealth** rating instead of its **Brawl** rating against the **Passive Attack** of its victim)

Venom (the bite and the sprayed venom have a paralyzing effect; the victim suffers a temporary loss of -1 on their **Dexterity** and **Strength** rating)

Venom (the bite also includes a digestive toxin that slowly decompose the victim. This toxin is a level 3 poison and induces 1 L per hour if the **Defense** check fails until the victim has accumulated 5 successes during an extended **Body** roll (1 roll per hour). See **Poison and Drugs in the Space: 1889 Core Rules**, p. 217)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite (Venom)	4 L	0	14 L	(7) L
Spray Venom (Venom)	0 N	0	7 N	(3+) N

*Red Kokos double their **Move** rating when digging

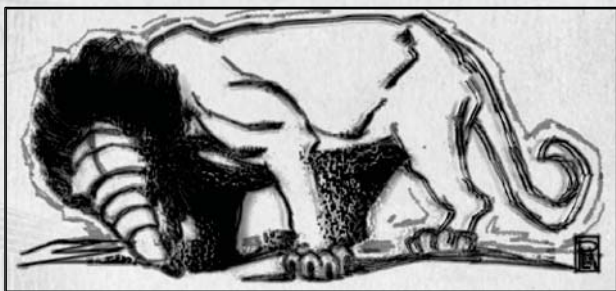
Others

In addition to the three main groups, there are likely a number of other roles within the colonies of the red manikins, of which one can only make assumptions at best. Researchers speculate about queens and armored drones. A less than credible explorer even claimed to have seen a huge, fat creature, supposedly a red manikin which had been fattened by its own fellow species, like cattle for slaughter.

Rakarri (Red Tiger)

Habitat: Steppes, Deserts (Salt Dune Deserts)

The red tiger of the Martian steppes and desert sands is a rare and smaller relative of the steppe tiger, and bears a strong resemblance to it. Through an electrostatic charge whose exact mechanisms are still poorly understood, its fur attracts the sand and dust around it, providing the tiger with a camouflage pattern matching its current environment. The camouflage is so sophisticated that when lurking the creature is virtually undetectable, while its movement is a blur that often appears little more than a whirlwind of color and dust. It is a popular topic of debate among scholars whether this feature is a natural development, or if the Canal Builders' breeding programs had something to do with it.



Rakarri

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 7

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 6 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 4 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 6
Move: 10 (20) Defense: 10
Perception: 3 Stun: 4

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	5	11	(5+)
Stealth	6	6	14	(7)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)

Weapons

	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	0	13 L	(6+) L
Claw	0 L	0	11 L	(5+) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

one must only imagine a bristly, grunting ball with short legs, which occasionally squeals like a roogie.

While many Canal Martians value them as pets, in some places, particularly within the Tossian Empire, they are consumed as a delicacy. Unfortunately for the faint of heart, the flesh only remains palatable if cut straight from the full carcass, after cooking the roogie in a hot broth into which it is placed while still alive. Listening to the creature's desperate squealing is an integral part of the eating ritual.

It is rumored the now-decadent chief of the High Martian Cloud Guard of Biblis Fons even feeds shavings of liftwood to his pet roogie, thereby creating a unique status symbol in the shape of a "floating pug" for himself. That, of course, is only an urban legend, but it hasn't stopped others from trying, sometimes killing their pets in the process.

Roogie Krae

Animal Companion 0

Archetype: Animal Health: 1

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 1
Dexterity: 1 Intelligence: 1
Strength: 2 Willpower: 1

Secondary Attributes

Size: -2 Initiative: 2
Move: 3 (6) Defense: 5
Perception: 2 Stun: 2

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	2	1	3	(1+)
Stealth	1	1	4**	(2)
Survival	1	2	3	(1+)
Empathy	1	1	2	(1)

Talents

—

Weapons

	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	0 N	2	5 N	(2+) N

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Roogie Kraes receive +2 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Pet Roogies

On Earth we have dogs and wolves, and on dying Mars they have—tellingly—the carrion-eating roogie. During the course of evolution, numerous breeds of roogie have developed or been developed. They all share a somewhat trunk-like snout, four legs and the bristled or spiky skin of their species.

Roogie Krae (Ornamental Snouter)

Habitat: Urban (Domesticated)

One example of a roogie breed that has been over-bred by the Martians beyond recognition is the domesticated "ornamental snouter." Decadent Martians may find it decorative, but due to their aesthetic sense, most humans would at most smile politely at it, since ornamental snouters are overly fattened pets with bristled dark skin, their stumpy snouts permanently looking for food so they can gorge themselves even more. Unfortunately, their mistresses and masters are much too eager to fulfil their desire to eat, and constantly feed them pieces of meat, preferably partially decayed. Their bodies have more in common with a Martian roundhead than with their own wild relatives. To picture an ornamental snouter,



Roogie Paraar (Martian Mastiff)

Habitat: Urban (Domesticated), Farmlands

Known by many names in the human languages, the *roogie paraar* actually encompasses a great variety of breeds used in guard dog and attack dog roles. The local name used by humans for the *roogie paraar* often reflects the appearance of the type bred locally. No matter its name or appearance, these highly trained roogies are commonly encountered in front of the city palaces of the Canal Martian elite or as escorts for caravans. By sharing food with their handlers, these carrion-eaters become "members of the pack." As such, they are easily trained to smell and growl at outsiders, and even to attack them on command or in case of an emergency. Their curious, screeching bark makes for an excellent alarm call. Their loyalty, though, depends on regular feeding. If they do not get fed regularly, the roogies' former masters quickly learn how devious these beasts can be.



Roogie Paraar

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 10

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 **Charisma:** 1

Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 1

Strength: 5 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 **Initiative:** 5

Move: 9 (18) **Defense:** 8

Perception: 7 (11) **Stun:** 5

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	6	13	(6+)
Stealth	4	2	5**	(2+)
Survival	1	3	4	(2)
Athletics	5	2	7	(3+)
Empathy	1	1	2	(1)

Saarksan (Martian Loris)

Habitat: Mountains, Woodlands, Polar Caps (Outskirts)

Probably one of the most nightmarish creatures on Mars is this usually harmless animal about the size of a little monkey. It feeds on roots, steppe plants, and insects, but seldom attacks animals bigger than a mouse. Still, the existence of these creatures at all is unsettling. Since scientists point out that researching life on Mars allows us to draw conclusions about our own planet's future, Earthlings are terrified that a similar creature to the little

tree-climbing loris may exist on Earth. The reason humans find the loris so terrifying is its insectoid features, despite it being mammalian. Its large eyes are faceted (an extremely unusual evolutionary abomination, which was a conundrum even for Darwin). It has six legs with which it can crawl like an insect, but also swing like a monkey between trees. Its otherwise mammalian body is protected on the back by a shell made of chitin. Mandibles protrude from its mouth. Thus, the creature displays features both of mammals and of insects. It is still unclear what may have caused this development. Some researchers assume that the evolution of the loris may have been influenced by its diet. At the beginning of the *naBrifanoon*, it could have adapted to eating insects, and sometime during this process it could have taken on insect-like features.

Saarksan

Animal Companion 0

Archetype: Animals **Health:** 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 **Charisma:** 0

Dexterity: 3 **Intelligence:** 0

Strength: 2 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: -3 **Initiative:** 3

Move: 5 (10)* **Defense:** 10

Perception: 4 **Stun:** 4

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	2	3	5	(2+)
Stealth	3	4	10**	(5)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)

Sekeparaa (Spider Hound)

Habitat: Canals, Steppes (Underground)



In the past, the Canal Builders knew how to domesticate the spider hound and how to make it produce an extremely strong silk. The animal, which today is seldom encountered and lives in the wilderness along unused canals, looks like a dog-sized, furry spider, though it has ten legs, four of which are used exclusively for weaving silk. The materials used to form its silk are acquired through its diet, which is seemingly enriched by tiny fragments of sand. Whether this is the secret to the tensile strength of its silk is not known.

The secrets of spider hound silk production are lost, but rumors has it that, following on from the success of his jeans, the Franco-nian industrialist Levi Strauss, who lives in San Francisco, is now pulling a few strings through his contacts on Mars to get some samples of "wild spider hound silk" from the animals' webs, or even live or dead specimens.

Sekeparaa

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Charisma:** 1
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 2 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 **Initiative:** 5

Move: 6 (12)* **Defense:** 7

Perception: 5 (9) **Stun:** 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Archery	2	3	5	(2+)
Brawl	2	3	5	(2+)
Stealth	4	3	8**	(4)
Survival	1	4	5	(2+)
Empathy	1	2	3	(1+)

Talents

Keen Senses (+4 bonus on touch-based Perception rolls)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	1	7 L	(3+) L
Silk Threads (Ranged)	2 N	1	9 N	(4+) N

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Sekeparaas receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Jess Par (Steppe Shark)

Habitat: Steppes, Deserts (Salt Dune Deserts)

The origin of this animal remains unclear, but its ancestors are assumed to be fish-like amphibian ocean dwellers, similar to the canal shark, with lizard-like features. Just like Earth's birds evolved from lizards after a natural disaster decimated their species diversity, it is possible that these animals evolved in a similar fashion during the *naBrifanoon*.

Using its six broad, fin-like limbs, the 13 foot (4 meter) long monstrosity skates across the deserts and steppes. In a cloud of red dust it strikes, with only its vestigial dorsal fin showing through the dust, before tearing its victim to pieces with its sharp fangs. Although it happily hunts for sport and food, it will defend its clutch of eggs with even less mercy.



Sess Pars

Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Animal Health: 9

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 5 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 4
Move: 9 (18) Defense: 8
Perception: 3 Stun: 5

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	6	13	(6+)
Stealth	4	2	5**	(2+)
Survival	0	5	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Weapons

	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	3 L	-1	15 L	(7+) L
Ram Attack	4 N	-1	16 N	(8) N

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Sess Pars suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Sig Rak (Living Avalanche)

Habitat: Steppes, Mountains

This species is one of the strangest creatures on Mars. Appearing like a sand storm, rock slide or an avalanche, in reality it is a tightly packed swarm consisting of thousands of creatures whose sizes range from that of a small pebble to that of a fist-sized boulder. Up close, each individual specimen appears exactly like a simple rock. Together, they appear to utilize a swarm intelligence much like insects do; whenever one of the creature moves, it stimulates movement in those around it. Within moments, this leads to a flowing, purposefully moving swarm, resembling a tumbling mass of stones. However, once an individual is separated from the swarm, it ceases to act with any purpose at all, jumping and jolting about randomly, and in this state it poses virtually no threat.

Single specimens are even sold as toys and trinkets in some places, but many a highland traveler has fallen victim to a living avalanche swarm, which have even been reported to move uphill under certain circumstances. The insect's hunting tactic is simple and effective. The swarm throws itself on its victim and buries it under its mass. The creatures then secrete an oily agent which digests the victim over the course of a few days, during which time the swarm continues to cover the victim, lying inconspicuous. It is said that the High Martian tribes of the South Wind throw their flightless enemies to these creatures in a very unusual form of stoning.

Sig Rak (Swarm)

Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Animal Health: 19*

Primary Attributes

Body: 9 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 8 Willpower: 6

Secondary Attributes

Size: 4 Initiative: 3
Move: 13 Defense: 10**
Perception: 6 Stun: 9

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	8	5	13	(6+)
Stealth	3	1	2***	(1)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)
Archery	3	2	5	(2+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Swift (+2 Move rating)

Weapons

	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Trample	5 L	-4	14 L	(7) L
Stone Avalanche	3 L	-4	4 L	(2) L

*Only attacks with an Area of Effect inflict damage on a swarm; all other weapons inflict a maximum of 1 point of damage per hit

**Sig Raaks have a thick stone skin that provides a +2 bonus to their Passive Defense

***Sig Raaks suffer a -4 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Talpeish (Croaker)

Habitat: Urban (Sewers), Canals, Swamps

Due to the frog-like sounds they utter, these tiny, six-legged and carnivorous reptiles are called "croakers" by British colonists. They inhabit the sewers of many Martian cities, but also dwell in swamps. They are almost suicidal in that they attack and eat everything they come across, and even attack humans. Fortunately, they are only really dangerous in large swarms. Fire has proven to be an effective defense against them, since they flee from it immediately.

Talpeish (Swarm)

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 8*

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 5 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 3 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 5
Move: 8 (16)** Defense: 8
Perception: 3 Stun: 4

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	3	6	(3)
Stealth	5	2	6***	(3)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

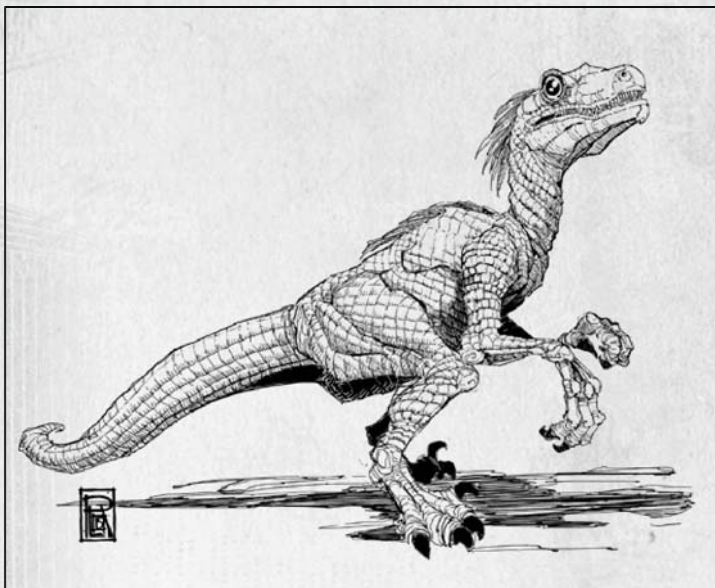
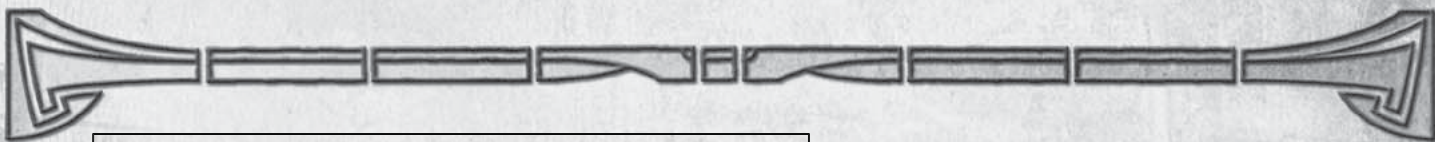
Weapons

	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	-1	7 T	(3+) L

*Only attacks with an Area of Effect inflict damage on a swarm; all other weapons inflict a maximum of 1 point of damage per hit

**Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

***Talpeishes suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls



Teshuwaan (Martian Hunter Lizard)

Habitat: Steppes, Woodlands

The peculiar feature of this lizard is that it is a warm-blooded creature. No such lizards are known on Earth, and most biologists would even call this a criterion for which to exclude this animal from the family of reptiles. And yet, the *teshuwaan* is living proof that warm-blooded reptiles can exist.

It resembles a raptor-like dinosaur and is about the size of a human being. Due to its warm-blooded nature it can hunt at any temperature, by day and by night. It has night vision, and can thus be confused momentarily by bright flashes of light. Its meat is palatable, and because its taste is reminiscent of frog's leg, it is considered a delicacy in many places.

Teshuwaan

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Dinosaur **Health:** 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Initiative:** 4
Move: 7 (14)* **Defense:** 7
Perception: 3 (7) **Stun:** 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	4	7	(3+)
Stealth	4	2	6	(3)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)

Talents

Keen Senses (+4 bonus on sight-based Perception rolls)

Night Vision (no penalties on Perception; may be blinded by bright light for 1 round)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	0 L	0	7 L	(3+) L
Tail	0 L	0	7 L	(3+) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

Tilri (Hunting Feathertail)

Habitat: Woodlands, Mountains (Forests)

These tiny, nocturnal animals look downright cute and resemble shrew mice to some degree, with big eyes suited to seeing in the dark. A small flying membrane allows them to move incredibly fast by jumping between branches of trees and bushes. In his latest book, *The Power of Movement on Mars*, Darwin compares this spectacle with that of the rubber "bouncy balls" Charles Goodyear gave away to children during the Centennial International Exhibition in 1876 as an advertising gimmick to promote his tires made of vulcanized rubber.

These little beasts, however, are anything but cute in nature. In hunting packs of up to a hundred, they dare to hunt big prey, even Martians and humans. Tireless, they jump at their prey and cause hundreds, even thousands of tiny but deep bite wounds, cutting the victim like a hail of knives, until it loses consciousness due to pain and blood loss and is then gnawed down to the bones.

The discovery of the Australian acrobatidae at almost the same time is quite peculiar, since these animals resemble the "Martian bouncy balls," although the terrestrial ones are small, peaceful animals which pose no threat. This may be because their ability to glide in Earth's gravity while not having a jumping gland has never been enough to hunt a more powerful enemy—unlike on Mars, where conditions are much different.



Features of Mars

Tilri (Swarm)

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 7*

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0
 Dexterity: 7 Intelligence: 0
 Strength: 5 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 9
 Move: 14 (28)** Defense: 12
 Perception: 2 Stun: 5

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	5	10	(5)
Stealth	7	4	13	(6+)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative rating)

Swift (+2 Move rating)

Peaceful Appearance (is only considered dangerous on a successful Survival check)

Blood Sucking (on a successful attack, another creature will adhere to the victim's skin. Each creature sucks out 1 point of Health per combat round)

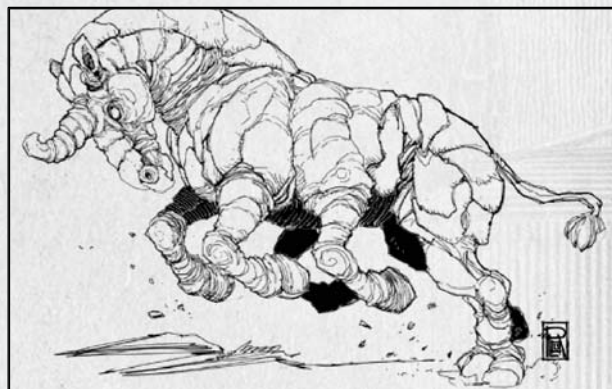
Night Vision (no penalties on Perception; may be blinded by bright light for 1 round)

Weapons

	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	0	12 L	(6) L

*Only attacks with an Area of Effect inflict damage on a swarm; all other weapons inflict a maximum of 1 point of damage per hit

**Ti'Iris double their Move rating when jumping



metallic, or strangely geometric—so they are assumed to have been tampered with or bred by the Canal Builders. The reasons for this remain unexplained.

Varaas gulas give birth to litters of four to eight foals at once. Comparisons of their phenotypes clearly demonstrate each foal to be sired by different fathers from the female's herd. Multiple impregnations by different fathers within one single birth is completely unknown among terrestrial fauna. The rate of male young in the group is about two thirds and thus far higher than the amount of females.

It was discovered recently that the females use their harem as a food supply in times of food shortage. The female purposefully courts multiple males at once, causing the males to fight each other to the death. The victims are then eaten by the herd, and the victor proceeds to the mating. Researchers consider this ritual particularly strange because, apart from that, the unicorns are peaceful herbivores.

Varaas Gula

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 10

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0
 Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0
 Strength: 4 Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 4
 Move: 8 (16)* Defense: 6
 Perception: 4 Stun: 4

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	5	9	(4+)
Stealth	4	2	4**	(2)
Survival	0	5	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Weapons

	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Horn	2 L	-2	9 L	(4+) L
Ram Attack	4 N	-2	11 N	(5+) N

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Varaas Gulas suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Varaas Gula (Amazonian Unicorn)

Habitat: Steppes

Called the "Queen of the Red Steppes of Amazonia," the *varaas gula* is a pachyderm whose single padded, curved horn hangs over the fireplaces of numerous big game hunters from Earth, who themselves pay pretty sums to get flown from Parhoon to the Amazonian Steppes via aerial flyer. In addition to its six legs and the equine frame, the horn is the most characteristic feature of these animals. It grows in the middle of their foreheads, and every single one possesses a unique shape, color, and structure. Similar to deer on Earth, the horns serve as weapons for territorial fights the animals carry out against each other. For a long time, it seemed to be a given that only males wore those horns, until researchers eventually proved the opposite. Among this species, which only inhabits the territory of Amazonia, it is the females which surround themselves with a harem of males and defend them against other females and predators. Their name, it turns out, fits them better than originally intended, as it was originally only a regional designation.

Among scientists, the evolution of this species is a phenomenon for which extensive research is planned, since the mysteries are numerous. It seems, for example, that the shape of the horn is both suitable for fighting and a symbol of rank from which other *varaas gulas* can gather much information about the given specimen. Some horns, though, appear very unusual—e.g. crystalline,



Verteb Varaata (Armored Rat)

Habitat: Urban (Sewers, Ruins)

Mars has its share of rat-like creatures, and they have a nearly identical value as on Earth—pesky vermin that plague every city and are near impossible to exterminate. The armored rat (*cingulata rattus*) is especially persistent. It is about 1.5 foot (0.5 meters) long and appears in small groups. It may be only moderately dangerous, but it is also known as a carrier of disease.

Verteb Varaata

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 3

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 3 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 1 **Willpower:** 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 **Initiative:** 3
Move: 4 (8)* **Defense:** 6
Perception: 2 **Stun:** 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	1	3	4	(2)
Stealth	3	5	9**	(4+)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Diehard 1

Disease Vector (various diseases)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	3 L	1	8 L	(4) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Verteb Varaatas receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls



War Breehr

Habitat: Urban (Domesticated)

Especially in the Oenotrian and Tossian Empires, ruumet breehrs are used in battle. Instead of a saddle, war breehrs are equipped with an armored howdah, effectively a small, portable bunker manned by multiple gunners. Such a giant is the war breehr that the standard tactic is to drive the creature through the ranks of the enemy and trample them to death, after which fire is opened on the enemy flank and rear, with the psychological effect of this tactic devastating enemy morale. Traumatized British soldiers often speak of these "thick-skinned devils" as if they were evil incarnate.

Rules: Any heavy weapon can be attached to a war breehr, e.g. a Gardner machine gun or a swivel gun.

War Breehr

Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 16

Primary Attributes

Body: 7 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 7 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 3 **Initiative:** 7
Move: 11 (22)* **Defense:** 8
Perception: 5 **Stun:** 7

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	7	6	15	(7+)
Stealth	4	1	2**	(1)
Survival	1	4	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative rating)

Robust (+2 Health rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Headbutt	4 N	-3	16 M	(8) N
Trample	5 N	-3	17 N	(8+) N
Ram Attack	6 N	-3	18 N	(9) N

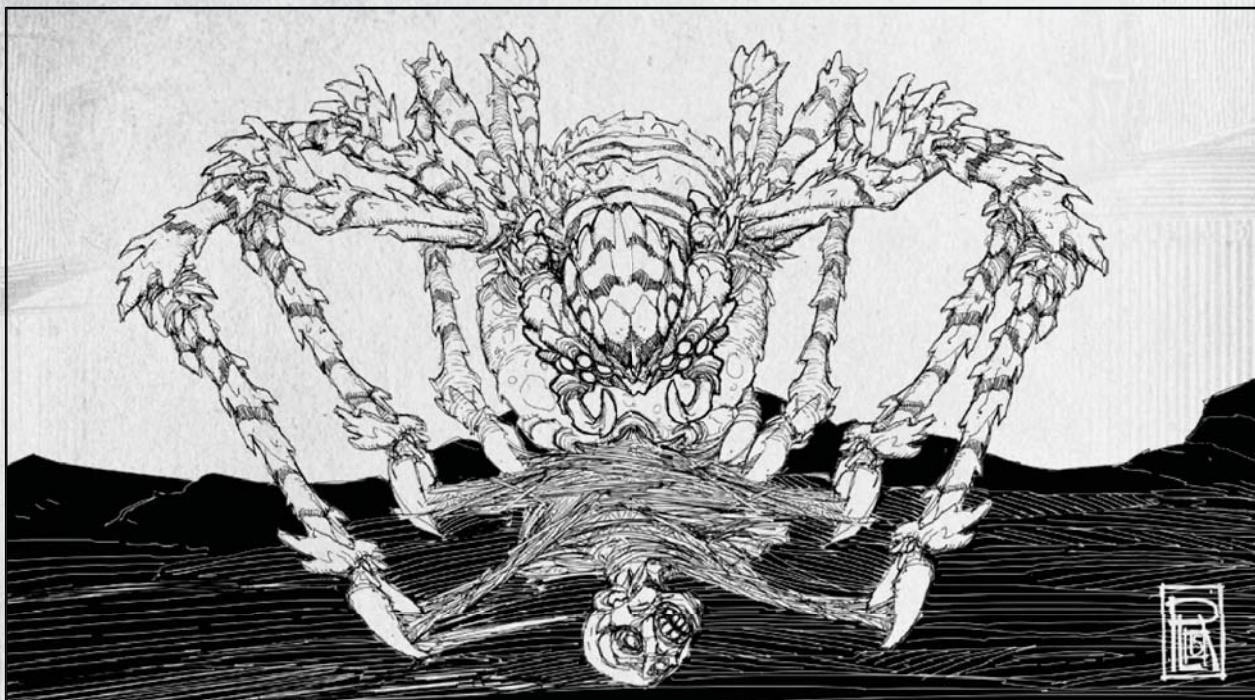
*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**War Breehrs suffer a -3 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Weethabraar (Death Spider)

Habitat: Deserts (Underground, Stone Deserts)

This large spider-like species is the scourge of the deserts. It lives in the caves and canyons of the Martian wastelands, which once were ocean beds, lying in wait for its prey. Researchers are divided over whether the animal descended from a species of spiders, or if it evolved its present form from a crayfish or a marine crab. Its orange shell adds weight to the latter theory, but supporters of the former point out that it could simply be an adaptation to the red desert environment. The fact is, the death spider is able to spin webs. Instead of building webs, however, the highly tear-resistant threads remain attached to its eight legs, and so the spider's body becomes a deadly net in itself. With this ability, it pounces on smaller prey and throws them to the ground. With the help of



barbs on its feet, the spider anchors its legs into the desert floor, forming a sort of tent around its victim, so as the victim attempts to escape it becomes tangled in the sticky strings of the net. Once caught, the spider slams its body into its now defenseless prey. On its underbelly, the spider has multiple pointed, hollow stingers through which it can suck out body fluids and blood, but also fat. All that remains of the victim afterwards is a dried-up corpse.

Due to its size and light weight, the death spider can rarely take down prey whose height is more than 3 feet (1 meter) when pouncing. For larger prey, it instead makes use of another tactic. It stalks larger prey, such as humans, until they take rest or collapse from exposure and exhaustion. The spider then sneaks up, hooks its feet quietly into the ground and finally drops its net and itself on the victim's body, draining the victim before it has time to react.

Weethabraar

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Insect/Arachnid Health: 7

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 4 Willpower: 5

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 Initiative: 6
Move: 8 (16)* Defense: 8
Perception: 5 Stun: 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	5	11	(5+)
Stealth	4	5	12**	(6)
Survival	0	5	5	(2+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative rating)

Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)

Blood Sucking (on a successful attack, the creature will adhere to the victim's skin. Each creature sucks out 1 point of Health per combat round)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	1	18 N	(9) N
Entangle	6 N	1	18 N	(9) N
Throw Down	4 N	1	16 N	(8) N

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Weethabraars receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Wocnid (Nepenthes Buffalo)

Habitat: Steppes

This six-legged grazing animal lives exclusively on steppe grass and is itself prey for steppe tigers and Hill Martians, who hunt it for its meat and fur. It lives in large herds, which can often be encountered in the steppes, since the *wocnid* is not in serious danger of being wiped out, unlike the American bison.

Wocnid

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 10

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 5 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 3
Move: 8 (16) Defense: 6
Perception: 5 Stun: 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	4	9	(4+)
Stealth	3	2	3**	(1+)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Head Butt	3 N	-2	10 N	(5) N
Ramming Attack	4 N	-2	11 N	(5+)

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Wocnids suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls



Other Desert Creatures

Brifba (Cactus Fish)

Habitat: Deserts

The cactus fish became famous through the writer Karl May and his well-known travelogue *Durchs wilde Hesperia* (*Journey Through Wild Hesperia*), in which the author describes his fight for survival in the deserts of the former Martian seas. Seen inside its cactus-like cocoon, the creature is about the length of an arm and exhibits features of fish and reptiles, and it is still, even after the *naBrifoon*, dependent on water as its habitat. It has never found its way into the canals, however. Instead, it builds a leathery cocoon around itself, not unlike lungfish on Earth. It spends most of its lifetime inside the cocoon, which contains gallons of water. The cocoon is able to absorb even the smallest amount of ambient moisture and store it inside. Even the tiniest animals and plants are dragged inside and drained, serving the fish as its only source of nutrients. The fish even excretes into the cocoon wall through an umbilical, so that its excretions are transported outside via a muscle.

Whoever finds such a cocoon in the Martian water can consider themselves fortunate; they can cut open the cocoon, drink the water and eat the unfortunate animal inside. The cocoon itself is in no way palatable and indigestible to boot, but according to Herr May, wrapped in a crust of steppe grass and steam-boiled, the fish itself is a true delicacy. The description of the water in May's book has proven false, however. It is in no way fresh, cold and clear, as he describes, but more of a brownish, fishy-tasting, murky soup. However, it does quench the thirst, at least.

Ssind (Martian Pipefish)

Habitat: Deserts (Salt Dune Deserts, Coral Deserts)

This worm-like creature grows in colonies on the former floor of the Martian seas. While two thirds of its body remains stuck in the ground, the last third (about 8 inches, or 20 centimeters) protrudes out of it. It is assumed that its ancestors were once pipefish or other worms living on the ocean floor, which in order to survive managed to get out of the dwindling water onto the land and migrated into the desert.

Now, the Martian pipefish has become a danger feared by travelers. Their colonies often stretch for miles across the sandy floor and can hardly be crossed on foot—animals cannot do it at all—since the part of the pipefish protruding from the ground is razor sharp. This is because, over time, dust particles and tiny stones stick to the creature's skin, becoming encrusted on the body and shaped by the wind.

Purposeful breeding of these animals along strategically important borderlands is known to be practiced by several tribes of Canal Martians, since it is virtually impossible for gashant riders or infantry to attack while moving through a Martian pipefish colony.

Rules: Difficult Terrain (across the field Basic Move rating is halved; quadrupeds and sprinters cannot use their double Move rating, unless they suffer 1 L damage per round).



Zephis (Crystal Creeper)

Habitat: Urban (Ruins)

This feline predator is also called the “crystal creeper” due to its filigree, flexible physique which gives the impression of its limbs being made of fragile crystal. Its body is almost transparent and glows slightly red. It is agile and moves virtually without any sound; it can jump long distances and has sharp teeth and claws. Because of this, it stands out from the mass of robust and bulky predators typically found on Mars.

The animal has adapted to life within Martian cities, where it exists inconspicuously in the ruined outskirts that can be found in almost every city. It is encountered particularly in cities with blown-glass architecture. Gliding between the ancient buildings, it is as if the *zephis* were once part of the architecture itself—the building designs and the features of their four-legged feline physique bear far too many similarities. Within these ruins, they hunt for small animals and thus keep vermin at bay.

Many Martians consider these animals as a revered, lucky relic from a time when their own people had some influence on the evolution of the wildlife. They would never hunt or capture these animals; instead, they appreciate their presence. A Martian superstition claims that the day one sees a *zephis* will be a day filled with great luck. In addition, there are persistent rumors that there exist certain crystal creepers which can walk through walls (especially of glass buildings), and which have secret missions and agendas the ancestors of the Martian people supposedly programmed into their genetic makeup.

Zephis

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Charisma:** 1
Dexterity: 8 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 5

Secondary Attributes

Size: –1 **Initiative:** 11

Move: 13 (26)* **Defense:** 11

Perception: 6 **Stun:** 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	4	7	(3+)
Stealth	8	5	16**	(8)
Survival	1	3	4	(2)
Athletics	3	4	7	(3+)
Empathy	1	3	4	(2)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative rating)

Swift (+2 Move rating)

Lucky Charm (whoever sees this creature may reroll one dice of their choice this day)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	1	9 L	(4+) L
Claw	0 L	1	8 L	(4) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Zephis receive a +2 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Zonor (Carion Coati)

Habitat: Steppes, Farmlands, Urban (Ruins)

This creature, which stands on four thin, long legs and is about the size of a deer, can often be encountered in the vicinity of prairie rat burrows, since these form the bulk of its diet, dead or alive. Claw-like nails protrude from its front paws with which it digs out the rats from their burrows, or uncovers buried carrion. The *zonor* seldom poses a threat to humans, but it is known to plague burial grounds, where it digs up and eats the corpses. In many areas of Mars, they are therefore considered unclean and unfit for eating, although their meat is certainly palatable.



ZODOR

Animal Companion 0

Archetype: Animal Health: 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 4 Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 Initiative: 4
Move: 8 (16)* Defense: 7
Perception: 2 (6) Stun: 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	3	7	(3+)
Stealth	4	3	7	(3+)
Survival	0	3	3	(1+)

Talents

Keen Senses (+4 bonus on touch-based Perception rolls)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	0	9 L	(4+) L
Claw	0 L	0	7 L	(3+) L

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

Legendary Creatures

Zaab (The Omega Beast)

Habitat: Extinct

One mysterious legend revolves around a species of creatures or (depending on the story) one single consciousness spread across a collective of multiple bodies, created as a weapon during the Age of the 1,000 World Wars. Some people claim that the black bones which are occasionally found in the deserts and steppes of Mars, and which are used to make jewelry, are those of a *zaab*.

Most legends tell about the people of Tharsis who, cornered and on the brink of extinction, turned to their biologists in their desperation. Under a fanatical leader, those scientists set upon the task of creating a weapon which would be crucial for winning the war. The sensationally named "Omega Beast" was created, and the scientists sent it into enemy territory.

The moral of the story is that the weapon got totally out of control; the collective organism is said to have wiped out its enemies, then turned on its creators, before the collective died out.

Little is known about its physique, but depending on the legend, black bones or insects with chitin limbs are mentioned. Mostly, the Omega Beast is described as an amalgamation of a region's most dangerous animals or as an insect-like swarm intelligence.

The Black Koko

Habitat: Extinct

Fortunately, these animals are considered long extinct. The legends about them bear many similarities to the tales of terrestrial sailors about giant sea serpents. After

the dwindling of the seas during the *naBrifanoon*, their habitat vanished and they with it. Today, there are no oceans on Mars that could harbor an animal of its size. The koko is said to have been 100 feet (30 meters) long and wide as a railway carriage. Researchers from Earth are gasping to find fossils of these creatures, and they take great risks leading expeditions into the middle of the deserts, the former ocean floors, to find them. Traces are found on occasion, but to this day, the museums of natural history on Earth do not even own one single exhibit between them.

The Faces of Cydonia

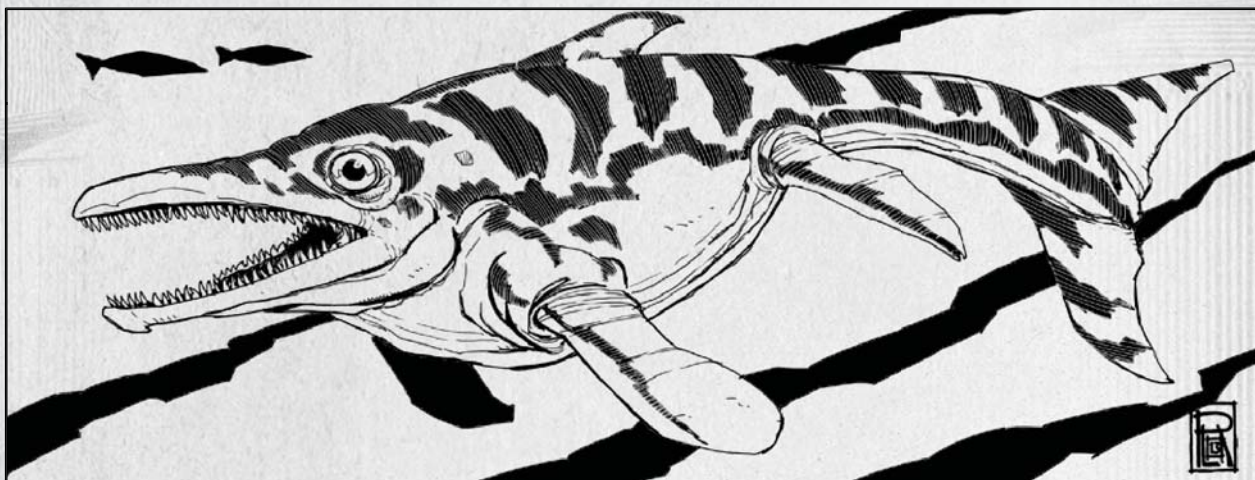
Habitat: Steppes, Deserts (Stone Deserts)

According to legends, these creatures exist in the area of Cydonia. The Martians claim that the Veiled People consult these stone faces as oracles and wise advisors, since they possess lost knowledge from Seldon's ancestors, or (depending on who is telling the story) the knowledge of the God at the Heart of the World. The legends have caused numerous careless humans to leave for the tribal territory, but they were all either turned away or killed.

The creatures are said to move through the rocks, that they are a part of them and appear as faces on the walls or in the ground. Supposedly, one can call them by intoning the secret, well-protected prayers of the Veiled People, or one has to be lucky enough to have a face reveal itself willingly. Once the face reveals itself, it is said it either answers questions or utters some prophecy.

It is questionable whether these creatures really exist. If so, they could be a creation of the Canal Builders, possibly part of a massive analytical device.

Aquatic Animals



Kabarthapa (Canal Shark)

Habitat: Canals

There are many horrors on Mars—ravenous roogies, lurking knoe shoshus, and others. One creature, though, has killed more travelers than all the others combined: the canal shark. Although primarily a scavenger, it does eat living prey if it falls into the canal in front of it; something that happens more often to Earthlings than Martians. In addition, stones, parts of ships and other scrap have been found in the shark's stomach, which probably both serves as ballast and helps its digestion, similar to crocodiles.

It is some kind of reptilian-like fish. Similar to sharks on Earth, females carry fertilized eggs, which mature into infants astonishingly fast.

One effective way of repelling canal sharks known among Martians is to use the extract of the *oontha* root, which grows along the canals and smells slightly repugnant, but scares the animals away.

Kabarthapa

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 9

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 3 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 4 **Willpower:** 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 **Initiative:** 3
Move: 14 (0)* **Defense:** 7
Perception: 3 (7) **Stun:** 5



Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	5	11	(5+)
Stealth	3	4	6**	(3)
Survival	0	6	8	(4)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Keen Senses (+4 bonus on smell-based Perception rolls)

Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	-1	12 L	(6) L

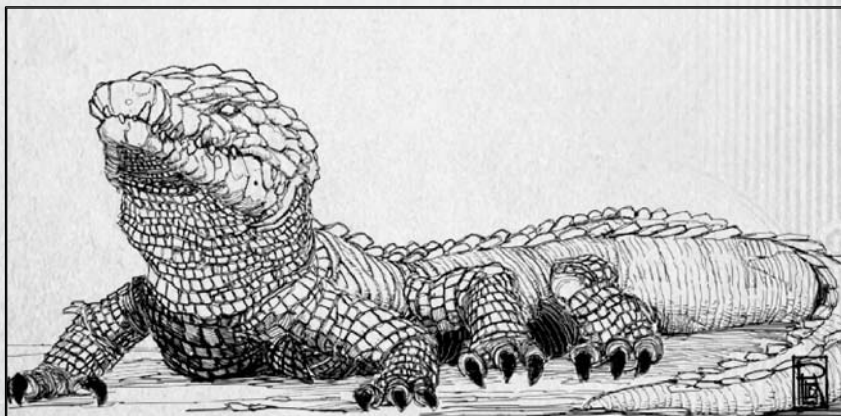
*Aabarthapas double their Move rating when swimming, but cannot move outside of the water

**Aabarthapas suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Greiscoo Too (Mars Crocodile)

Habitat: Canals, Swamps

This carnivorous lizard has eight legs, massive clawed feet, a short tail, and gray scaly skin. Its eyes are far apart, and its maw is long and riddled with teeth similar to a crocodile. It grows about 10 feet



(3 meters) long and is most commonly referred to as the “Mars crocodile” by humans. Canal skippers fear it for obvious reasons.

Greiscou Tou

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 8

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 5 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 2
Move: 7 (14)* Defense: 5
Perception: 3 Stun: 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	4	9	(4+)
Stealth	2	3	4**	(2)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	-1	10 L	(5) L
Tail	2 N	-1	10 N	(5) N

*Animals with four or more legs double their Move rating when running

**Greiscou Tous suffer a -1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Groalmar (Crusher)

Habitat: Swamps

The natural habitat of this fish-like species, which is also called the “Martian catfish,” is the swamp regions of Mars. It is assumed that this species' origins lie with the canals. Their scales are leathery and brown or grey, though mostly covered by mud. Since they are lurking predators, they wait in the swamp waters, waiting to pounce on prey up to the size of a gashant. As soon as their prey approaches, they launch themselves off the ground with their powerful hind flippers and jump on the prey like a slobbering muddy avalanche. The catfish's maw, having as many rows of teeth as a shark's mouth, takes up half its body, its drooling mouth spreading from the massive head, which is attached without a neck directly to the torso, and ending just under the belly. Usually, one single jump attack is enough to crush the victim under its massive bodyweight and drag it into the muddy waters, to drown it or bite it to death with its maw—whatever works quickest.

Groalmar

Animal Companion 3

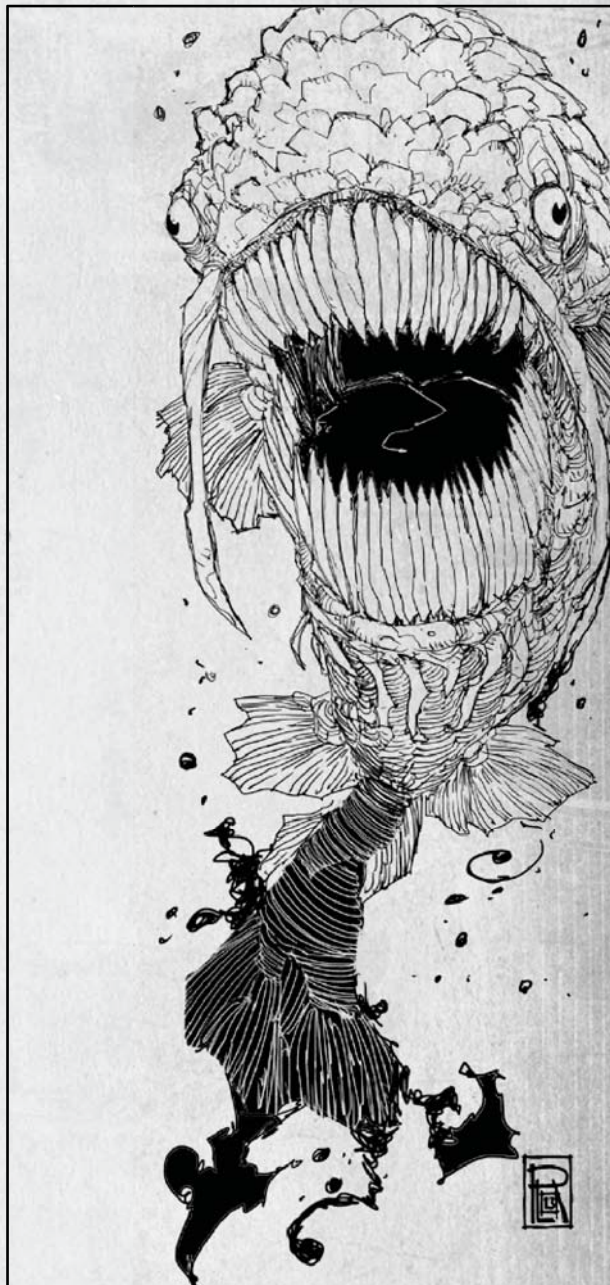
Archetype: Animal Health: 10

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 2 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 6 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 2
Move: 8 (16)* Defense: 5
Perception: 3 Stun: 5



Features of Mars

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	6	5	11	(5+)
Stealth	2	4	6**	(3)
Survival	0	5	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)

Drown (on a successful attack, the victim is dragged underwater and drowned. It can withstand this attack for one round per success on an instinctive Body roll, after which it suffers 1 L per round until it is able to breathe again)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	-2	11 L	(5+) L
Body Slam (Drown)	4 N	2	13 N	(6+) N

*Groalmars double their Move rating when jumping

**Groalmars suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Partach (Flesh Worm)

Habitat: Urban (Sewers), Canals, Swamps

This worm species lives in the water and seems to have evolved from cestoid-like creatures. It thrives in dirty sewage and lives off the carrion of small animals. The worms grow up to the width of an arm and have a mouth with three hideous pincers. Their bodies grow up to 6 feet (2 meters) in length, and they can use them to strangle their weak, still living prey. Thus, flesh worms can be dangerous for both humans and Martians wading through water.

Partach

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 7

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 2 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 2 **Willpower:** 6

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 **Initiative:** 2
Move: 4 (2)* **Defense:** 5
Perception: 6 **Stun:** 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	2	4	6	(3)
Stealth	2	2	7**	(3+)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

Strangle (on a successful attack, the victim is seized and strangled. The victim can withstand the strangling for one round per success on an instinctive Body roll, after which it suffers 1 N per round until it is able to breathe again)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	1	8 L	(4) L
Entangle (Strangle)	3 N	1	10 N	(5) N

*Partaches use their full Move rating when swimming and half their Move rating when on land.

**Partaches receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Taur Varaata (Martian Canal Rat)

Habitat: Urban (Sewers, Ruins), Canals

Being familiar with the unpleasantness that is a terrestrial rat does not prepare one for the utter revulsion one experiences at the sight of a Martian canal rat. Looking something like an opossum, these animals are either hairless or sprout only ragged patches of bristly hair. Their skin appears bloated like a drowned corpse, usually covered in calluses, and their smell is just as repellent. Out of their hideous wrinkled faces peek perpetually bloodshot eyes. Especially noticeable is the translucent webbing between their toes, fingers, arms and legs, making them exceptional swimmers. The rats are primarily carrion eaters. It is interesting, though, that they themselves hunt for smaller scavengers while camouflaged as carrion (since, when lying still, one can summarize their appearance in one word: dead). Whenever a scavenging roogie whelp or a fat flesh worm approaches close enough, the rat pounces. As such, the rat is commonly believed to be sneaky and devious.

During Flood and Flow, the citizens of Martian cities take various measures against vermin infestations, including rat poisons which, among other things, are purchased from Earth where the townspeople have more experience with pest control. Such poisons often have unforeseeable effects on the Martian ecology, as happened during the "Great Stench" of Parhoon in 1887; those who could afford it left the city for a couple of weeks until the stinking chemicals dissipated.

Taur Varaata

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 3 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 2 **Willpower:** 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: -2 **Initiative:** 3
Move: 5 **Defense:** 10
Perception: 2 **Stun:** 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	2	4	6	(3)
Stealth	3	4	11**	(5+)
Survival	0	5	7	(3+)

Talents

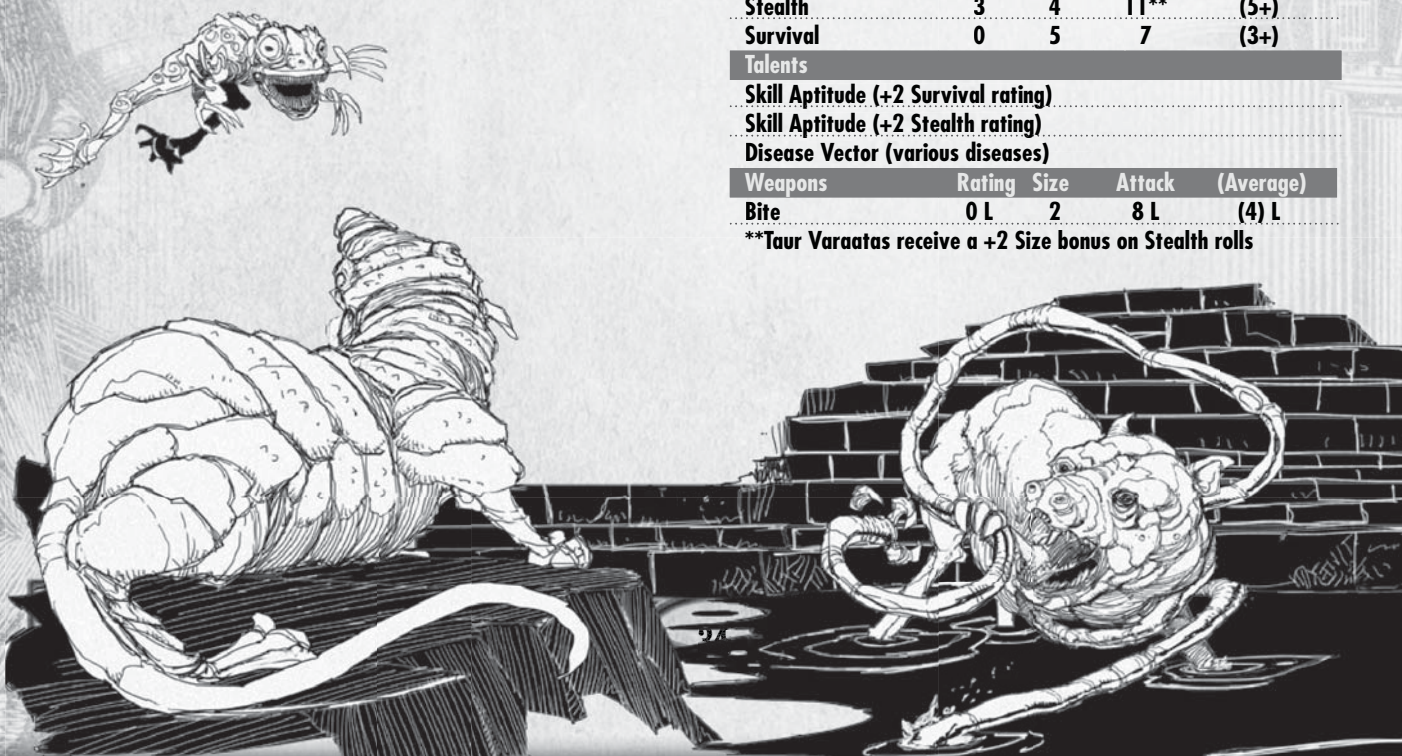
Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

Disease Vector (various diseases)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	0 L	2	8 L	(4) L

**Taur Varaatas receive a +2 Size bonus on Stealth rolls



Flying Animals

Baadshauli (Galoot)



Habitat: Woodlands, Steppes, Mountains

In addition to small animals like the terrestrial bat, there are some larger species of chiroptera on Mars, which in part possess some basic intelligence. One amusing example is the *baadshauli*. It resembles a pot-bellied monkey, sporting a trunk-like snout and gliding membrane which allows it to fly though the air, though without much elegance. The typical up-and-down of its flight led to the coining of the idiom “flying like a *baadshauli*” among galley captains, meaning to have a pathetic flying style.

The creature is a harmless herbivore and intelligent enough to split open fruits—those of the *pushti* tree, for example—by throwing them to the ground. It then sucks the fruit dry with its trunk. In 1884, an unfortunate incident occurred when a British diplomat was hit on the head with a *pushti* fruit and died on the spot. Since then, an urban legend has circulated among travelers from Earth that one must constantly watch the sky, less one falls victim to a “*baadshauli* attack.” In response, hushed *baadshauli* jokes have spread among the Martians, making fun of the exaggerated caution of Earthlings. Partly as a consequence, the animals are often hunted for sport by British aristocrats.

Baadshauli

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 **Charisma:** 0

Dexterity: 1 **Intelligence:** 1

Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Initiative:** 2

Move: 4 (2) **Defense:** 5

Perception: 3 **Stun:** 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	1	4	(2)
Archery	1	1	2	(1)
Stealth	1	1	2	(1)
Survival	1	3	4	(2)
Empathy	1	1	2	(1)

Talents

Peaceful Appearance (is only considered dangerous on a successful Survival check)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	0 L	0	4 L	(2) L
Pushti Fruit (Ranged)	2 N	0	4 N	(2) N

*Baadshaulis use their full Move rating when flying and half their Move rating when on land

Bilair (Blackwing)

Habitat: Mountains, Polar Caps (Outskirts)

Bilairs are flying predators, originating from an age during which there was more water available on Mars. Their relatively high water demand has caused them to seldom leave their wet mountain habitats (e.g. Copratia).

At about 6 to 10 feet (2 to 3 meters), their jet-black bodies (eyes, wings, and all) shroud their prey in darkness as they plummet out of the sky, biting and swiping with their claws. Their seemingly frail wings are aided by their quite small lifting glands, allowing them to stay in the air through fast wing beats, making a humming sound like a humming bird. They live in family units and even huge swarms of sometimes up to a thousand animals.



Bilair

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Dinosaur Health: 9

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 Charisma: 0
 Dexterity: 5 Intelligence: 0
 Strength: 5 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 Initiative: 5
 Move: 10 (5)* Defense: 7
 Perception: 3 Stun: 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	5	12	(6)
Stealth	5	1	4**	(2)
Survival	0	3	3	(1+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	-2	12 L	(6) L
Wing Strike	1 N	-2	11 N	(5+) N
Claw	2 L	-2	12 L	(6) L

*Bilairs use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land

**Bilairs suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Bluurg (Balloon Moth)

Habitat: Woodlands, Mountains, Farmlands

The shape of these huge insects resembles a mosquito-like moth, with a body the size of a tennis ball. Eight thin legs are suspended from it, and two translucent wings protrude upwards. Unlike the wings of terrestrial moths, those of the *bluurg* do not move, but remain pointing rigidly upwards, being only used for maneuvering and steering, while their flight organ, a magnificently developed lifting gland, keeps them in the air.

The creatures feed on the pollen of woodland plants and are mostly harmless. They are also bred in order to harvest their lifting glands, meaning they are killed when they have reached



an appropriate size, and the gland is removed without damaging the torso too much. Once harvested, the lifting gland remains functional for weeks, even months, if it is regularly put into a nutrient solution. The gland is powerful enough to fly on its own and can be utilized for numerous tasks. It can be used as a flight element to maneuver Martian aerial flyers—even small one man flying devices have been developed from it—or it can be applied to various mechanical systems, playing a role in producing and transforming energies due to its lift. Lastly, the gland is used by entertainers for the amusement of their audiences, and as children's toys.

Bluurg

Animal Companion 0

Archetype: Insect Health: 5

Primary Attributes

Body: 1 Charisma: 0
 Dexterity: 5 Intelligence: 0
 Strength: 1 Willpower: 6

Secondary Attributes

Size: -2 Initiative: 5
 Move: 6 (3)* Defense: 7
 Perception: 6 Stun: 1

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	1	2	3	(1+)
Stealth	5	2	9**	(4)
Survival	0	3	3	(1+)

Talents

-

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Sting	0 L	2	5 L	(2+) L
Wing Strike	2 N	2	7 N	(3+) N

*Bluurgs use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land

**Bluurgs receive a +2 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Buraak (Liftwood Gremlin)

Habitat: Mountains (Forests)

These little buggers, sporting a slightly ball-shaped and hedgehog-like body, but also a constant sharp-toothed grin, cause terror onboard cannon boats and screw galleys. No bigger than a hedgehog, they sneak into any place where liftwood can be found. The unique workings of its jumping gland, which allows the gremlin to vault in seeming defiance of gravity, affects the properties of any liftwood around it, with effects ranging from small drops in flight capability to catastrophic failures. Ships can even suffer from heavy lift and shoot upwards, or drop out of the sky altogether, but most commonly a ship becomes unable to maneuver or experiences turbulence.

The longer the gremlin remains near liftwood, the faster they jump and bounce, even able to glide for minutes at a time after long exposure. The liftwood malfunctions accumulate respectively.

Superstitious Martian air captains like to put the blame on liftwood gremlins for any malfunction of mechanical systems, although they are quite rare and are often wrongly accused. The ether zeppelin captains of the German Empire like to make fun of their British counterparts and mockingly regard the *buraaks*, or "Marselmännchen," their own little helpers.

Buraak

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal Health: 4

Primary Attributes

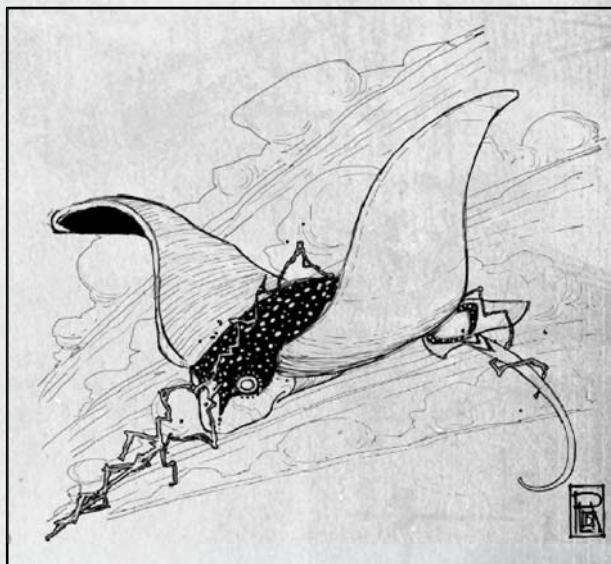
Body: 3 Charisma: 1
Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 1
Strength: 2 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: -2 Initiative: 1
Move: 8 (16) Defense: 9
Perception: 4 Stun: 3

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	2	2	4	(2)
Archery	4	3	7	(3+)
Stealth	4	4	10**	(5)
Survival	1	3	4	(2)
Empathy	1	1	2	(1)



Gaearamin (Flying Ray)

Habitat: Deserts, Steppes

The weightless flying ray is a delicate being. Its four fin-like limbs are connected by a single gliding membrane, so it appears like a large ray or whale shark floating through the skies.

It feeds on small animals and does not actually pose a threat to humans or Martians. In fact, its behavior is characterized by a curiosity which grips it whenever it catches sight of an aerial flyer. Just like a dolphin, it approaches the flyer, flies alongside it for a while, and “plays” with the vehicle. Unfortunately, playing also means tickling its “companion” with “light” electrical discharges. Such “playful” discharges are in fact powerful enough to kill a grown man. Flying rays are particularly common around the Mare Acidalium.

Gaearamin

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal Health: 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 6 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 2 Willpower: 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 Initiative: 6
Move: 8 (4)* Defense: 7
Perception: 3 Stun: 2

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	2	2	4	(2)
Stealth	6	4	10	(5)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)
Empathy	0	2	2	(1)



*Gaeuramins use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land

**Gaeuramins suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Hunting Skill

Habitat: Urban (Domesticated), Woodlands, Farmlands

A British lord's gyrfalcon is a Martian aristocrat's hunting skill. These small skrolls, usually only about 3 feet (1 meter) in length, are rather trusting and can easily be trained for hunting. They are harmless herbivores in the wild, though they have very high awareness and defend themselves against predators, which makes it possible to train them to hunt various wild animals for prey.

A trained specimen remains with its snake-like body wrapped around its master's arm, ready to uncoil on command and rise into the air, uttering its typical, terrifying cry; the inflation and deflation of its lifting gland, which is connected to its breathing organ, produces a shrill scream-like utterance as it flies. One can get a rough idea of the sound if one plays the scream of a bird of prey backwards on a phonograph.



Hunting Skill

Animal Companion 0

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 6

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 **Charisma:** 1
Dexterity: 6 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 3 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 **Initiative:** 9
Move: 11 (5)* **Defense:** 10
Perception: 7 (11) **Stun:** 3

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	4	7	(3+)
Stealth	6	3	10**	(5)
Survival	1	4	5	(2+)
Athletics	3	2	5	(2+)
Empathy	1	1	2	(1)

Talents

Keen Senses (+4 bonus on sight-based Perception rolls)

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative rating)

Swift (+2 Move rating)

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	1	9 L	(4+) L
Wing Strike	2 N	1	10 N	(5) N

*Hunting Skills use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land

**Hunting Skills receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls

Imperial Knoe Shoshu

Habitat: Steppes, Mountains, Urban (Ruins)

The rare imperial knoe shoshu is considered to be the evolutionary ancestor of the widely known knoe shoshu. Using its so-called "lifting bags," it even can fly, although without much speed or grace when compared to creatures with a lifting gland. This is probably the reason why it has almost been driven out of the airways of Mars by animals with superior lifting glands. Today, the creature is rare, and probably on the brink of extinction.

As predators, these creatures search for prey from the skies. With their spherical bodies and their rubbery skin, they resemble their descendants, but they are larger and have flipper-like feet, allowing them to maneuver through the air like a swimmer through water, while the lifting bags regulate altitude by inflating and deflating. Once they have ensnared a target with their tentacles, imperial knoe shoshus bite their victim, injecting them with a paralyzing poison.

Imperial Knoe Shoshu

Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 9

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 6 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 4 **Willpower:** 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 **Initiative:** 6
Move: 10 (5)* **Defense:** 10
Perception: 3 **Stun:** 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	5	11	(5+)
Stealth	6	3	8**	(4)
Survival	0	2	2	(1)
Athletics	4	3	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Dual Wield

Venom (paralyzing; victims suffer a temporary loss of -1 on their Dexterity and Strength rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite (Venom)	2 L	-1	12 L	(6) L
Tentacle	0 L	-1	10 L	(5) L
Grab	0 N	-1	10 N	(5) N

*Imperial Knoe Shoshus use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land

**Imperial Knoe Shoshus suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls



Kasdrakkar (Sandwing)

Habitat: Mountains

The High Martians tell tales of an incredibly large flying animal whose size and appearance resembles the dragon of Earth mythology. They say it is a big, grim hunter, able to kill a breehr and carry it to its young like a falcon does with a mouse. The people of the Astusapes Mountains claim to have wiped out the monster after the invention of the cannon and the aerial flyer brought the Martians on eye level with the sandwing, and yet other High Martians talk of the creatures as if they still existed. Human scientists, though, have never found any trace whatsoever.

Kasdrakkar

Animal Companion 5

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 20

Primary Attributes

Body: 12 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 12 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 4 **Initiative:** 5
Move: 16 (8)* **Defense:** 12
Perception: 5 **Stun:** 12

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	12	8	22	(11)
Stealth	4	2	2**	(1)
Survival	1	2	5	(2+)

Talents				
Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)				
Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)				
Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	3 L	-4	21 L	(10+) L
Claw	3 L	-4	21 L	(10+) L
Tail	8 N	-4	26 N	(13) N
*Kasdrakkars use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land				
**Kasdrakkars suffer a -4 Size penalty on Stealth rolls				

Krii Krii (Martian Vampire)

Habitat: Steppes (Underground), Mountains (Underground)

On Mars, water is very scarce, and every living being has to develop strategies to obtain this precious resource. The "Martian vampire" is a small, bat-like, blood-sucking animal. From its small snout it can extend a tubular, pointed tongue, with which it pierces the victim's skin and starts sucking.

The animal utilizes two strategies to deal with its victim. If the prey is agile, as humans and Martians are, it flies close to them, stings them, sucks, and shortly after flies away. It prefers large animals, though, like ruumet breehrs, to which it can attach itself. The amount of blood the *krii krii* actually needs does not do any real harm to an animal of this size. Thus, it can stay attached to the prey like a parasite for a long period of time. A common cause of death among very old and poorly cared-for ruumet breehrs are exactly these parasites, since the tiny creatures attach themselves to the animals in swarms, hiding in their skin folds until they die of anemia. Thereafter, they leave their eggs in the carcass and fly off to look for new victims.

Krii Krii (Swarm)

Animal Companion 3	
Archetype: Animal	Health: 11*
Primary Attributes	
Body: 5	Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 5	Intelligence: 0
Strength: 4	Willpower: 3
Secondary Attributes	
Size: 3	Initiative: 5
Move: 9 (4)**	Defense: 7
Perception: 3	Stun: 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	4	8	(4)
Stealth	5	2	4***	(2)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)

Talents				
Blood Sucking (on a successful attack, the creature will adhere to the victim's skin. Each creature sucks out 1 point of Health per combat round)				
Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	-3	6 L	(3) L
*Only attacks with an Area of Effect inflict damage on a swarm; all other weapons inflict a maximum of 1 point of damage per hit				
**Krii Kriis use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land				
***Krii Kriis suffer a -3 Size penalty on Stealth rolls				

Lurec (Flesh-Eating Firefly)

Habitat: Steppes, Deserts

Lurecs are small flying insects not unlike fireflies. Unlike fireflies, they feed on flesh, landing on their prey like mosquitoes and biting off tiny chunks. They cannot harm pachyderms like ruumet breehrs or gashants; large swarms, on the other hand, can pose a considerable threat to thinner-skinned humans and Martians. Applying camphor or oils to the skin is a common method of repelling them. Their typical hissing sound is created in flight by hairs on their underside.

Lurec (Swarm)

Animal Companion 0				
Archetype: Insect		Health: 11*		
Primary Attributes				
Body: 4		Charisma: 0		
Dexterity: 4		Intelligence: 0		
Strength: 3		Willpower: 5		
Secondary Attributes				
Size: 2		Initiative: 4		
Move: 7 (3)**		Defense: 6		
Perception: 5		Stun: 4		
Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	4	7	(3+)
Stealth	4	3	5***	(2+)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)



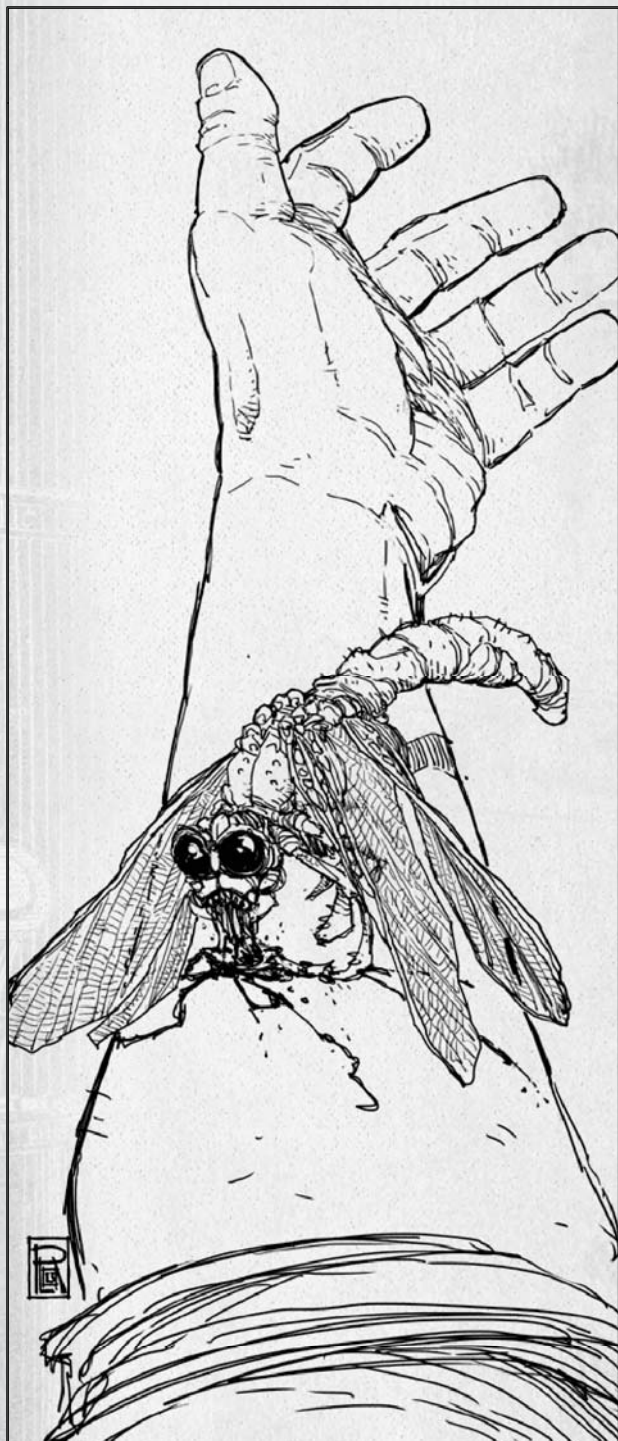
Talents

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	-2	6 L	(3) L

*Only attacks with an Area of Effect inflict damage on a swarm; all other weapons inflict a maximum of 1 point of damage per hit

**Lurecs use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land

***Lurecs suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls



Marmrak (Martian Gargoyle)

Habitat: Deserts, Steppes

If, while traveling through the deserts or steppes of Mars, you suddenly come across a boulder which appears to be at the source of a rivulet and do not believe your eyes, there is a high chance that you may be encountering the rare Martian gargoyle, and should thus exercise extreme caution.

The skin of this creature, which seems to be made of stone, has in fact been coated in sand and mineral particles, which adhere to it and provide an ideal protection. On a planet like Earth, the gargoyle would be restricted in its movements, but, this being Mars, the bulk of stone contains substances similar in properties to liftwood. It cannot fly considerable distances, but it is still agile and fast.

It is able to allow water to flow out of its mouth and quickly reabsorb the liquid through its skin folds. The gargoyle uses this technique to lure in animals such as *kroliks* and red manikins. When the prey gets within the vicinity of its maw, from which the water trickles, the gargoyle uses its powerful set of teeth like a bear trap and bites its victim. Its teeth cut through flesh like sharpened obsidian, grabbing the prey or tearing off limbs. Almost every Martian claims to know a friend of a friend who, bending down to drink, lost their forearms and could only stare while the presumed stone unfolded itself and jumped several meters onto the next rise, taking the torn-off body parts with it.

Marmrak

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 8

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 2 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 5 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 **Initiative:** 3
Move: 7 (3)* **Defense:** 10**
Perception: 5 **Stun:** 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	4	9	(4+)
Stealth	2	6	11***	(5+)
Survival	1	5	8	(4)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Skill Aptitude (+2 Stealth rating)

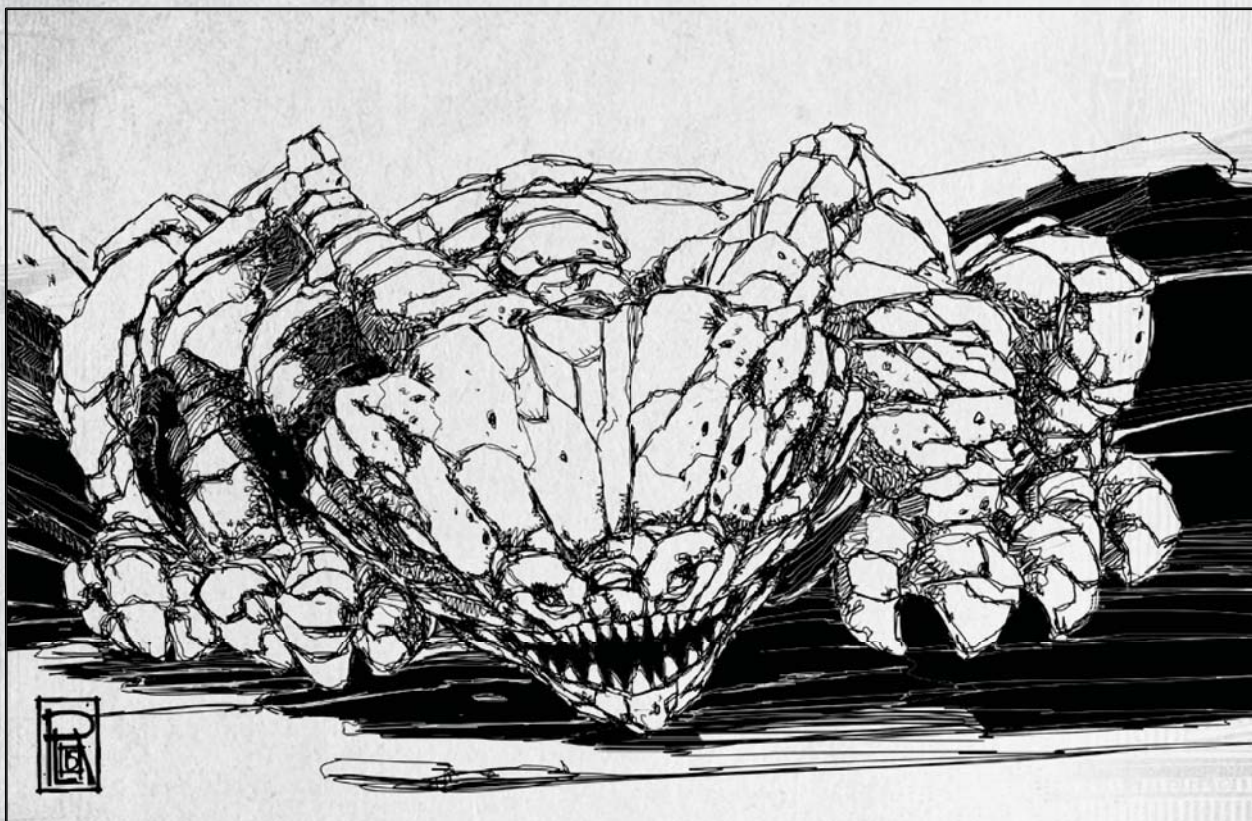
Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	3 L	1	13 L	(6+) L
Claw	1 L	1	11 L	(5+) L

*Marmraks double their Move rating when jumping

**Marmraks have a thick stone skin that provide a +2 bonus to their Passive Defense

***Marmraks receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls



Rowata (Carrion Bat)

Habitat: Steppes (Underground), Mountains (Underground)

This easily scared and nocturnal scavenger flies above the steppes and plains of Mars in search of carrion, which it carries back to its nest and consumes either at dusk or at dawn. It resembles a terrestrial bat in almost every way except for its tawny color and slightly smaller wings.

Rowata

Animal Companion 0

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 3

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 1 **Willpower:** 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 **Initiative:** 6
Move: 7 (3)* **Defense:** 7
Perception: 4 **Stun:** 2

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	1	2	3	(1+)
Stealth	4	5	10**	(5)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)

Talents

Quick Reflexes (+2 Initiative rating)

Swift (+2 Move rating)

Alertness (+2 Perception rating)

Night Vision (no penalties on Perception; may be blinded by bright light for 1 round)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	0 L	1	4 L	(2) L
Claw	1 L	1	5 L	(2+) L

*Rowatas use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land

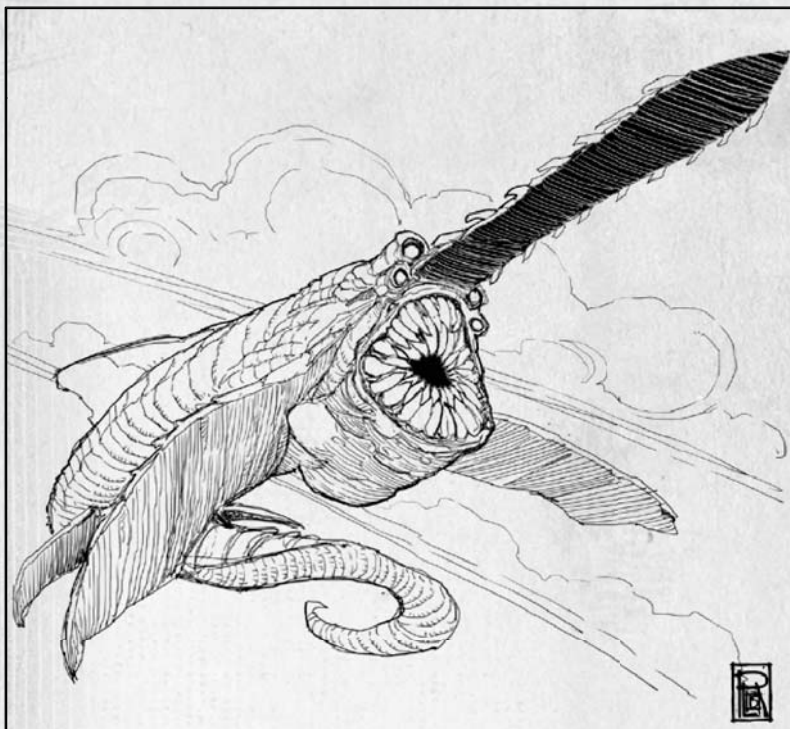
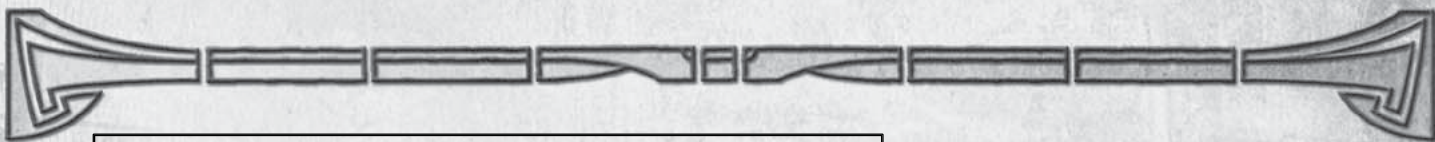
**Rowatas receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls



Saabrar Kammutu (Flying Swordfish)

Habitat: Steppes, Mountains

This bizarre flying creature resembles a paddlefish from Earth; its upper jaw has grown to a flat, wide, sturdy rostrum. Underneath is a wide circular mouth, which is constantly open. It uses its muzzle to spear flying prey such as the skrilk, but may even attack larger prey if desperate or hunting together with a partner. Sometimes, the creature mistakes small aerial flyers for such prey, and it can bore dangerous



Skrashoshu (Liftwood Squid)

Habitat: Mountains (Forests), Steppes

In the red skies of Mars, air pilots spin many yarns, and there are many legends, particularly about "sky krakens" and other dreadful tentacled creatures hunting for aerial flyers. Although the same worn-out tale is told each time an aerial flyer disappears, and few believe it, there is, in fact, a grain of truth in these stories:

Under the pressure of the emerging *naBri-foon*, a squid-like species of cephalopods which could grow up to 80 feet (25 meters) long, but was astonishingly delicate by Martian standards, managed to shift its habitat from the dwindling seas to the air. Today, these creatures are known as "balloon squids," and they feed not only on the flesh of their victims, but with their beak-like mouth they also suck out the active substance from liftwood and other floating materials, which allows them to stay in the air. For this reasons, they are often encountered flying above liftwood forests, where they sometimes nest and sleep in the treetops. As of late, their

holes in the hull or even knock crew members screaming from the deck, skewered on its beak. The creature grows up to 3 feet (1 meter) in length.

attacks on aerial flyers have increased, as the more liftwood trees are cut down to build airships, the more the otherwise rather shy animals are forced to find the substance "second hand" instead of direct from the source. The delicious humans and Martians on board are just a bonus.

Saabrar Kammotu

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 7

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 2 **Willpower:** 5

Secondary Attributes

Size: -1 **Initiative:** 4
Move: 6 (3)* **Defense:** 8
Perception: 5 **Stun:** 3

Skills

	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	2	3	5	(2+)
Stealth	4	1	6**	(3)
Survival	0	3	3	(1+)

Talents

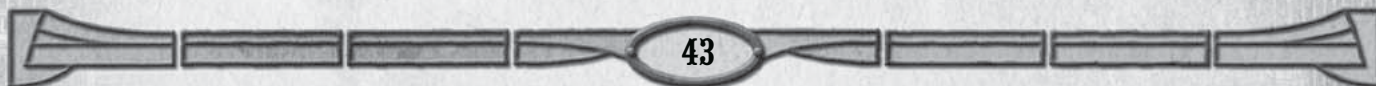
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Weapons

	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Digging	1 L	1	7 L	(3+) L
Ramming Attack	2 N	1	8 N	(4) N

*Saabrar Kammotus use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land

**Saabrar Kammotus receive a +1 Size bonus on Stealth rolls



Skrashoshu

Animal Companion 4

Archetype: Animal Health: 22

Primary Attributes

Body: 10 Charisma: 0
 Dexterity: 3 Intelligence: 0
 Strength: 9 Willpower: 6

Secondary Attributes

Size: 6 Initiative: 3
 Move: 12 (6)* Defense: 7
 Perception: 6 Stun: 10

Skills

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	9	5	14	(7)
Stealth	3	5	2**	(1)
Survival	0	4	4	(2)
Empathy	0	1	1	(0+)

Talents

Dual Wield

Weapons

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Entangle	4 N	-6	12 N	(6) N
Ramming Attack	8 N	-6	16 N	(8) N

*Skrashoshus use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land

**Skrashoshus suffer a -6 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Ter Rakka (Swarm)

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Insect Health: 13*

Primary Attributes

Body: 6 Charisma: 0
 Dexterity: 4 Intelligence: 0
 Strength: 5 Willpower: 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 3 Initiative: 4
 Move: 9 (18)** Defense: 7
 Perception: 4 Stun: 6

Skills

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	5	10	(5)
Stealth	4	1	2***	(1)
Survival	0	6	8	(4)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Weapons

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	-3	9 L	(4+) L

*Only attacks with an Area of Effect inflict damage on a swarm; all other weapons inflict a maximum of 1 point of damage per hit

**Ter Rakka double their Move rating when jumping

***Ter Rakka suffer a -3 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Ter Rakka (Martian Locust)

Habitat: Deserts, Canals, Polar Caps (Outskirts), Mountains (Forests), Woodlands

On Mars, the borrowed word locust is used quite literally, since these animals are a scourge of biblical proportions on the Red Planet. They are extremely aggressive, and between hatching and laying new eggs, they devastate everything they come across.

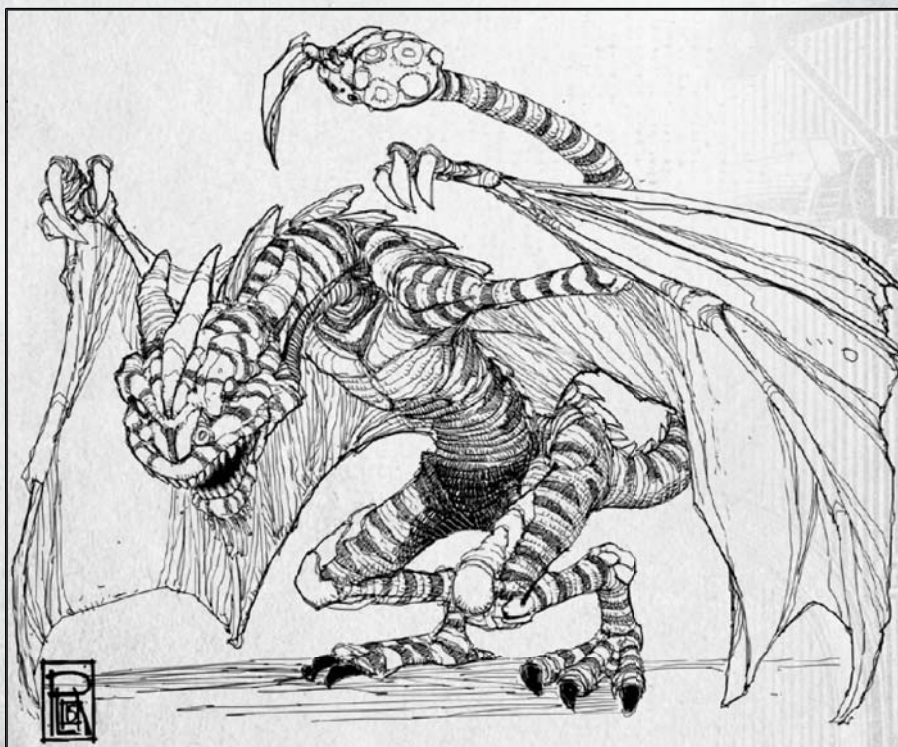
First, they deprive the area they fly across of all its water; morning dew, the remnants of tiny clouds still existing in the Martian atmosphere, water holes, even canals. If a canal carries only a small amount of water, a relatively small swarm of only a few thousand is able to drain the canal completely dry and doom the nearby population. Even living beings that are in their path are gnawed to the bone, ending up as skeletons in the sands of Mars. The creatures do not even spare trees (including liftwood trees). With their saw-like front legs they can work their way through the bark of the trees into the inside and eat their fill.

Once a swarm has had its fill, the animals lay countless slimy eggs in the highlands and die. Inside the eggs, however, the next swarm grows.

Wihjirakkar (Martian Wyvern)

Habitat: Mountains, Steppes

It is incredible how closely some Martian flying creatures resemble those of terrestrial mythology. In the case of the Martian wyvern, which fortunately inhabits the highlands only, even renowned scientists cannot help but theorize that the mythical wyvern of Earth may have its origins in a historic encounter with the very much real Martian equivalent, however impossible that may sound.



The Martian wyvern appears as a lizard with a red-tinged hide, ranging from yellow-red to rust-brown. Its mouth is wide and riddled with small sharp teeth. Most notable is its agile tail, which is tipped with a poisonous stinger which the creature can use with frightening precision. The venom is deadly for humans and Martians alike. Legends even tell of some Hill and High Martians capable of taming and riding the wyvern.

Wihirakkar

Animal Companion 2

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 10

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 **Charisma:** 0

Dexterity: 5 **Intelligence:** 1

Strength: 5 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 1 **Initiative:** 6

Move: 10 (5)* **Defense:** 9

Perception: 5 **Stun:** 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	5	12	(6)
Stealth	5	1	5**	(2+)
Survival	1	4	5	(2+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Brawl rating)

Venom 4 L

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	2 L	-1	13 L	(6+)
Wing Strike	2 N	-1	13 N	(6+) N
Sting (Venom)	3 L	-1	14 L	(7) L

*Move rating when flying (Move rating when on land)

**Wihirakkar suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Other Vermin

Loor-Niir (Martian Louse)

Habitat: Deserts (Stone Desert), Mountains

The tiny, red Martian louse is an astonishing life form found in swarms of immeasurable size. It inhabits the vast stone deserts of Mars and feeds on the very rocks found there and surviving on the smallest amount of water. They pose no threat to other creatures, but the lice bite and cut tiny passageways through the rocks they infest. If a swarm has lodged in a rock long enough, its stability may suffer and it will eventually break away from the rock wall. Their presence makes rockfalls surprisingly common on Mars, and many a caravan has suffered casualties due to such accidents, since a large infestation, which is not visible from the outside, can cause even an entire cliff to collapse at the wrong moment, shook loose by the vibrations of a passing wagon.

Driiparak (Liftwood Borer)

Habitat: Mountains (Forests)

In the wild, this insect, which is only a few millimeters in size, lives on the liftwood trees of the Martian highlands.

Its eggs, which float in the air, penetrate the tree through breaks in the bark, and from there the maggots eat their way crisscrossing through the wood. This process leaves a delicate weave of veins where the tree sap collects, to which liftwood owes its lifting abilities. Through many months or years, the grown animals eat their way en masse to the outside. There, they spend hours sucking the liftwood sap out of the veins and injecting it into their eggs while laying them. The eggs are then given lift by the sap and can float in the air for months.

The liftwood borer is a large-scale vermin, and no small number of the High Martians' slaves are occupied day in, day out climbing liftwood trees and closing the wounds in the bark with resin to keep the liftwood borers out. A board of liftwood cut into a buoyancy panel must be practically free from damage. For this reason, Martian carpenters spend a lot of their time examining new panels, sealing them with wax, and checking them constantly for infestations after they have been installed. The direst of consequences can occur if an infestation goes unnoticed; the moment matured eggs eject from the liftwood, they instantly drain the panel of buoyancy, the resulting loss of buoyancy usually being catastrophic. That is why all air pilots who love their lives are mindful of the sudden appearance of liftwood borers ready to lay eggs, since they can cover a liftwood panel like moss within hours.

Wuraag Kawaama (Martian Neanderthal)

Habitat: Mountains (Underground), Polar Caps (Outskirts)

German scientists insist on naming this creature after the famous find which was made in the Neander Valley in 1856, referring to it as the Martian Neanderthal. The being does, in fact, somewhat resemble a prehistoric human, and thus the name has stuck; it lives in caves and possesses an intelligence similar to a highly evolved ape. The astonishing feature that is especially of interest to scientists is the fact that their bodies resemble not apes, but rather bats. A thin flying membrane stretches between arms which end in claw-like hands, and its torso and ears are highly angular in shape. Its posture is hunched, but not only is it able to fly, its claw-like prehensile feet allow it to hang upside down from the ceiling while it sleeps.

The creatures communicate using a squeaking call, but some researchers believe (or wish to believe) that they have detected a language within it. How these animals are connected to the High Martians in particular has remained mostly unexplored. In his latest book, *The Power of Movement on Mars*, published in 1880, Charles Darwin speculates that they could represent primitive ancestors of the High Martians. In consequence, this would imply that Canal Martians too are descended from bats—a theory which is rapidly gaining support among distinguished scientists.

Wuraag Kawaama

Animal Companion 1

Archetype: Animal **Health:** 7

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 **Charisma:** 1
Dexterity: 4 **Intelligence:** 1
Strength: 4 **Willpower:** 3

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Initiative:** 6
Move: 8 (4)* **Defense:** 8
Perception: 5 **Stun:** 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	4	8	(4)
Empathy	1	2	3	(1+)
Stealth	4	2	6	(3)
Survival	1	4	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Bite	1 L	0	9 L	(4+) L
Claw	0 L	0	8 L	(4) L

*Wuraag Kawaamas use their full Move rating when flying, and half their Move rating when on land



Plants

Gaurab (Flesh-Eating Fungus)

Habitat: Steppes, Polar Caps (Outskirts)

With its wide, spiky cap, the giant “flesh-eating fungus” protrudes from the ground of the steppes like a large cactus, promising shade and water in the form of condensation collecting on its stem and gills. By this method, it lures in small prey, which quickly become stuck to its sticky stem, triggering a digestive reaction. The excreted body fluids of the carnivorous fungus digest the prey, including its bones.

If careful, humans as well as Martians can use the fungus' shade and scoop water from its gills. It is, however, very easy to become stuck on the skin of the fungus—a situation nearly impossible to escape from without aid.

Gaurab

Animal Companion 2				
Archetype: Plant		Health: 12		
Primary Attributes				
Body: 5		Charisma: 0		
Dexterity: 1		Intelligence: 0		
Strength: 4		Willpower: 6		
Secondary Attributes				
Size: 1		Initiative: 1		
Move: 0*		Defense: 7**		
Perception: 6 (10)		Stun: 5		
Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	4	4	8	(4)
Stealth	1	2	2***	(1)
Survival	0	4	6	(3)
Talents				
Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)				
Keen Senses (+4 bonus on touch-based Perception rolls)				
Poison (digestive toxin that slowly decomposes the victim. This toxin is a level 4 poison and induces 1 L per hour if the Defense check is failed, until the victim has accumulated 6 successes during an extended Body roll (1 roll per hour). See Poison and Drugs in the Space: 1889 Core Rules, p. 217)				
Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Entangle (Poison)	4 N	-1	11 N	(5+) N
*Immobile creatures have a Move rating of 0				
**Guurabs have a thick hide that provides a +2 bonus to their Passive Defense				
***Guurabs suffer a -1 Size penalty on Stealth rolls				

during daytime. At night, though, its roots shoot out. Living beings sleeping in the root's vicinity usually only wake up to the piercing pain of the death root's thorns digging into their skin, their limbs already entangled while they slept. With its thorns the plant is able to suck the liquids out of a living being like a mosquito sucks blood. If the victims are unable to free themselves, they finally die of dehydration, leaving nothing but a field of mummified corpses. But even if they manage to get free, their affected limbs are likely to turn necrotic, in some cases requiring amputation.

A less dangerous subspecies of this plant prospers in the outskirts of the polar caps and in the highlands. In the morning, it lifts its roots out of the ground in order to suck up the dew. Since this process is quick and nourishing to the plant, sleeping animals or humans can be surprised by the twines and get crushed on the ground and strangled to death as the roots attempt to return underground.

Raane Tooku

Animal Companion 1				
Archetype: Plant		Health: 9		
Primary Attributes				
Body: 4		Charisma: 0		
Dexterity: 3		Intelligence: 0		
Strength: 3		Willpower: 5		
Secondary Attributes				
Size: 0		Initiative: 3		
Move: 0*		Defense: 7		
Perception: 5 (9)		Stun: 4		
Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	5	8	(4)
Stealth	3	5	8	(4)
Survival	0	6	8	(4)
Talents				
Skill Aptitude	3	5	8	(4)
Keen Senses (+4 bonus on touch-based Perception rolls)				
Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)				
Dual Wield				
Blood Sucking (on a successful attack, the creature will adhere to the victim's skin. Each creature sucks out 1 point of Health per combat round)				
Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Sting	2 L	0	8 L	(4) L
Entangle	2 N	0	8 N	(4) N
*Immobile creatures have a Move rating of 0				

Raane Tooku (Death Root)

Habitat: Deserts (Underground, Stone Deserts, Coral Deserts), Mountains, Polar Caps (Outskirts)

No traveler should underestimate the danger lurking in the cracks and rifts of the dried-out desert soil. Protected from the sun and hidden from sight, the death root lies rolled up in these cracks

Rniir Gadshaan (Cutting Cage)

Habitat: Deserts (Coral Deserts)

In the coral deserts of Mars, the ancient sea corals have hardened to form bizarre, fantastic shapes. Though most of their species have long since died and fossilized, some others have developed their own survival strategies in the desert. The “cutting cage” is

Mythological Corals

Martian mythology is littered with strange tales of corals adapted to the dry Martian environment in a variety of bizarre and frightening ways. Since the seas dried up (and even before that), these bizarre structures have been deeply rooted in Martian literature and mythology. Despite there being far more coral species on Mars besides those mentioned below, this hasn't stopped Martians from recalling countless legends about giant corals crawling across the Martian sands, buried in caverns deep under its cities, or even floating corals blotting out the sky like a dark cloud and swallowing cities whole. It is possible that these legends originate from the yearning for the glorious age of the *Brifanoon*, but there is probably some truth to some of them.

The existence of the **brain coral** is more or less regarded as pure legend by most. This creature is said to have a level of intelligence similar to Martians, and is supposed to possess the knowledge of the ancient Martian people. The legend probably stems from the fact that the whole shape of this coral resembles a brain. In speculative fiction, brain coral is often depicted as a gigantic coral buried deep under the surface of the entire planet, and it is likewise said that the coral desert of Hellas is in no way a dead structure, but a titanic and wise being with a brainpower greater than the whole Martian population.

Most stories about **carnivorous corals** can be dismissed as gothic tales, too. They do exist, but most of the stories are exaggerated. They tell of the gargantuan *pnir gadshaan*, a massive coral which rolled across the desert floor for miles until it came across a Martian canal city. Encircling it at night, it formed a razor-sharp wall of coral, capturing the inhabitants without hope of rescue, before slowly closing in and devouring the city's inhabitants over the course of generations. Earthlings, and Germans especially, mock this fairy tale as "the Martian version of Sleeping Beauty's castle."

Still, there have been expeditions with adventurers searching the deserts of Mars for this same castle, but without any success. The tales also tell about "coral blades," which sweep across the desert grounds like whirlwinds. They are believed to downright attack, rip apart and eat caravans, which then disappear without any trace.

A distinctly more beautiful story tells of the **desert flower**, supposedly a flower-like coral reef of untold beauty, a true blaze of colors. It has been given the title of the most beautiful place on Mars, as a creation of a Martian god, or as the oasis of beauty. Most probably the core of this myth lies in the memory of colorful corals once existing on Mars, just like those that can be found in the tropical seas of Earth.

Last but not least, one should mention the belief that is held in some canal cities in the area of Hellas. According to myth, corals are part of the "**God in the Heart of the World**"—depending on the city, it could be the god's life-giving bloodstream, its feeling nerves, or its memory. Allegorically, the transformation of the sea floor from an ecosystem bright with color and vitality to a crumbling chalky reef is said to represent the slow but eventually death of Mars and its gods. Some radical sects desperately defend the corals and hinder or punish any destruction of the formations wherever possible. Other, more optimistic groups try to cultivate the few surviving coral species, thereby strengthening the father god and the planet itself. It is an unfortunate side effect that by doing so they often fall prey to the more dangerous corals, though the mythology of these sects often reveres those who have died this way as paragons and martyrs, giving them a status close to sainthood. It is believed that by dying in such manner they go directly to the inner god; some religious Martians even commit suicide by sacrificing themselves to a siren coral—certainly a very enjoyable and painless death.

amongst them. It has mastered the evolutionary feat of movement to some extent. Similar to heat crystals, the coral collects energy from sunlight all day long.

Any creature or sentient being sleeping in the vicinity of a cutting cage usually only awakens after the branching corals have already closed silently around them like a cage, as during the night the coral's arms twist and grow around their sleeping prey. Without tools or very hard claws there is little other chance of escape. Once a victim is surrounded, the branches constrict even more around their prey until their sharp spikes and edges slowly pierce them in numerous places. The attack quickly becomes extremely agonizing torture if the prey has not died by morning, as the coral grows stiff again with the coming of the light and only continues its deadly work after the dawn.

As soon as the prey dies, the coral extracts all nutrients and liquids; blood, water, fat, and proteins are absorbed and digested. The bones, however, are incorporated into the coral's structure, so twisted rib cages, deformed animal skulls, or other skeletal shapes can sometimes be observed among the corals. Due to the

coral's nocturnal movements, such bones quickly begin to deform, losing their original shape over time, but any well-informed wanderer will be aware of such warning signs and set up camp as far away as possible.

Pnir Gadshaan

Animal Companion 3

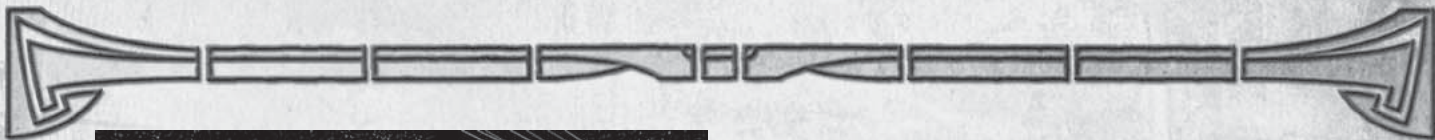
Archetype: Plant Health: 15

Primary Attributes

Body: 6 Charisma: 0
Dexterity: 1 Intelligence: 0
Strength: 6 Willpower: 5

Secondary Attributes

Size: 4 Initiative: 1
Move: 1/0* Defense: 5**
Perception: 5 (9) Stun: 6



Sharaamblau (Siren Coral)

Habitat: Deserts (Coral Deserts)

This coral species possesses almost transparent, thin hairs which wave in the desert wind. It is difficult to avoid the hairs, which can grow up to 6 feet (2 meters), especially if one is unaware of their existence and the danger they pose. The touch of its hairs on bare skin usually means death; it impels the victim to directly move towards the coral as if in a trance. Victims experience ecstatic pleasure that intensifies at the embrace of each additional hair, and often die embracing the coral and moaning in pleasure as the coral's digestive juices flow over them, dissolving the still-living victim, who takes no notice of the pain or their draining life force.

Sharaamblau

Animal Companion 3

Archetype: Plant **Health:** 14

Primary Attributes

Body: 5 **Charisma:** 0
Dexterity: 0 **Intelligence:** 0
Strength: 5 **Willpower:** 7

Secondary Attributes

Size: 2 **Initiative:** 0
Move: 0* **Defense:** 5**
Perception: 7 **Stun:** 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	5	5	10	(5)
Stealth	0	4	2***	(1)
Survival	0	5	5	(2+)

Talents

Poison (hallucinogenic drug; temporary -1 penalty on Willpower and Intelligence)

Venom (when entangling a victim, the creature excretes a digestive toxin that slowly decomposes the victim. This toxin is a level 4 poison and induces 1 L per hour if the Defense check is failed until the victim has accumulated 6 successes during an extended Body roll (1 roll per hour). See Poison and Drugs in the Space: 1889 Core Rules, p. 217)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Hair	0 N	-2	8 N	(4) N
Entangle	0 N	-2	8 N	(4) N

*Immobile creatures have a Move rating of 0

**Sharaamblaus have a robust coral structure that provides a +2 bonus to their Passive Defense

***Sharaamblaus suffer a -2 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	6	4	10	(5)
Stealth	1	6	3***	(1+)
Survival	0	5	7	(3+)

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Survival rating)

Keen Senses (+4 bonus on touch-based Perception rolls)

Assassin (when unnoticed, it can make a Surprise Attack using its Stealth rating instead of its Brawl rating against the Passive Defense of its victim)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Cut	2 L	-4	8 L	(4) L

*During the day, the coral is considered an immobile creature and has a Move rating of 0

**Pniir Gadshaans have a robust coral structure that provides a +2 bonus to their Passive Defense

***Pniir Gadshaans suffer a -4 Size penalty on Stealth rolls

Features of Mars



More Dangerous Plants

Spore Fungi

Habitat: Urban (Sewers)

A series of fungi propagating through spores has spread in the sewers of Martian cities. Depending on the species, these spores, which often explode from the fungal body, can have different effects on humans and Martians.

Rules:

- **Obscured View:** The dense clouds of fungus spores block the view like Half Cover (+2 Defense rating).
- **Poison:** If inhaled, some spores act like damaging poisons (up to 4 L poison damage) and cause nausea and vomiting.
- **Insidious Fungal Growth:** Legends tell of a fungus whose spores, when inhaled, settle in the body and transform the host slowly into a fungus from the inside. The host's skin becomes rubbery and covered in mould, and eventually their legs fuse together and their feet meld with the ground.

The Rose of Oenotria

Habitat: Deserts, Steppes

Tumbleweeds are a common sight on the steppes and deserts of Mars, tossed around by the Martian wind.

Among them, "the rose of Oenotria," as this unremarkable plant is commonly called, can sometimes be found. At first sight, the rose does not appear to be more than a dense bundle of thorny shrubs.

Similar to the rose of Jericho known on Earth, the Martian rose of Oenotria reacts immediately upon coming into contact with water. In fact, as soon as the winds of the Martian steppes blow it in the vicinity of even a few drops of precious water, the creature transforms instantly; its thorny branches thicken as it unwinds itself, forming fresh thorny shoots which reach out in all directions. It would appear that the water acts as a catalyst upon stored substances, starting a chain reaction, allowing those substances to develop rapidly.

On Mars, this spectacle may fascinate travelers, but on Earth, careless interaction with the plant has led to multiple accidents. Inappropriate watering with several gallons of water turned the bedroom of a London governess into a thorny prison overnight, from which the desperately frightened and screaming lady had to be cut out by the police. In Austria, a tragic death occurred when such a plant fell from the window sill into a bath tub, and the man bathing naked was gored beyond recognition by the sprouting thorns.

Rules: Depending on the amount of water, the sudden growth of the thorny plant can cause up to 4 L damage.



WONDERS OF THE MARTIAN PAST



SPACE
1889

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The History of Martian Technology

Martians first learned to use technology to improve their lives during the long ago *Brifanoon*, when shallow seas briefly covered large portions of Mars. During this ancient era, Martians first learned to harness wind, waves, and simple machines. As with humanity, their technology continued to advance, but it took a very different direction from the discoveries made on Earth. As the Martians learned to harness forms of energy other than the natural resources of wind, water and muscle, in addition to steam and electricity, they also learned to draw power from the sun and eventually from the mysterious subterranean telluric currents. They harnessed this power using the exotic natural properties of

specially carved crystals. The gradual drying of the *naBrifanoon* propelled Martian technology to new heights as the growing deserts forced the Martians to build a vast network of canals. To meet the challenges presented by this endeavor, they eventually learned to use forces far beyond anything their predecessors or their descendants could manage. No one on Mars now understands how any of this technology worked, and even knowledge of its existence has been reduced to a handful of myths and accounts moldering in antique manuscripts, but in some areas this ancient Martian technology exceeded anything the best human technology is capable of.

The Basics of Ancient Martian Technology

Most Martian technology that is more advanced than pre-industrial human technology uses either thermoelectric power, solar power or telluric energy currents. Even before Mars began to dry, it was clear that wood was too valuable to burn and Martian stores of coal were limited, and so the ancient Martians soon turned to other sources of power.

Mars contains several varieties of naturally occurring crystals with unusual properties. One type of crystal could transform sunlight into beams of light hotter and more concentrated than a welding torch. Another could store concentrated sunlight and release it slowly as either light or heat. These crystals were widely used as Mars industrialized and a few examples of these devices are still in use. However, these crystals were inherently limited, both because the most powerful devices only worked while exposed to concentrated sunlight and because the crystals used to create these devices were relatively rare and required considerable time and effort to locate and mine. All this changed with the development of synthetic crystals. The ancient Martians learned to grow their own crystals, made of the same materials as the natural ones, but grown from seed crystals in large vats of molten rock. During this era, cloudships crossed Mars powered by steam engines heated by crystals drawing on stored solar energy.

Research into synthetic crystals also allowed the Martians to create entirely new varieties, including one which could store concentrated sunlight and release large but controlled amounts of it in response to a small electric current. This advance allowed Martians to use their most powerful devices any time of the day or night, without the necessity of using solar mirrors for any purpose except charging the newly developed storage crystals.

During the early days of the *naBrifanoon*, before the era of canal digging began, the ancient Martians used sunlight and solar energy stored in crystals, as well as various other crystals which allowed them to observe distant locations or record sounds and images and replay them later. Cloudships were now powered by crystals that released stored solar energy as rotational energy for turning propellers. Also, the ability to easily create large numbers of mind crystals allowed the Martians to create mechanical men and other mechanisms. In this era, every Martian settlement had dozens or even hundreds of huge flower-like arrays of solar mirrors that worked from sunrise to sunset, charging solar storage crystals as well as stationary rotating liftwood wheels providing near perpetual mechanical energy.

As the seas receded and Mars became increasingly dry, the necessity of digging a world-spanning network of canals and pumping countless gallons of water drove Martian technology to new heights. Investigations into methods of extracting more energy from Martian crystals revealed the existence of strong telluric currents flowing under the surface of Mars. The solar mirrors were supplanted by the far more powerful telluric energy taps that extended several hundred yards into the Martian bedrock. The height of Martian technology was a time of wonders, where the Martians dreamed of traveling into space or storing the minds of their finest scholars in immortal crystals. However, even after the canal network was completed, Mars continued to dry out. Eventually, the ancient Martians were forced to devote more of their effort to the basics of survival. Soon, the march of technology slowly ground to a halt, as all hope for progress and building a better world died.



The Decline of Martian Technology

As the last shallow seas receded, a desire to control the few remaining larger areas of fertile land increased tensions between the previously allied nations of Mars. Famines and the renewed threat of Hill and High Martian bandits caused a cascading series of riots, barbarian attacks, and eventually a series of small but nearly continuous wars that lasted for close to a century. Nations that once spanned a third or more of Mars fragmented into warring city states, who used devastating ancient weapons to destroy one another. Eventually, the worst of these battles and turmoil ended and Martian civilization had slipped back into a state where their technology was somewhat better than it was when the first Europeans arrived, but well below its previous lofty peak. All knowledge of how to tap telluric energy had been lost, but the most advanced city-states still retained knowledge of how to use crystals and mirrors to tap the sun's energy.

During these long centuries, scholars and relic hunters occasionally managed to scavenge bits of ancient technology. A few even managed to understand and duplicate them, but most simply used any devices they discovered until they broke.

Mars continued to slowly dry out and over a dozen millennia Martian science and technology continued to

slowly and gradually decline. No one noticed this decline in their lifetime, and children who talked to their grandparents about the past heard tales of a world much like the one they

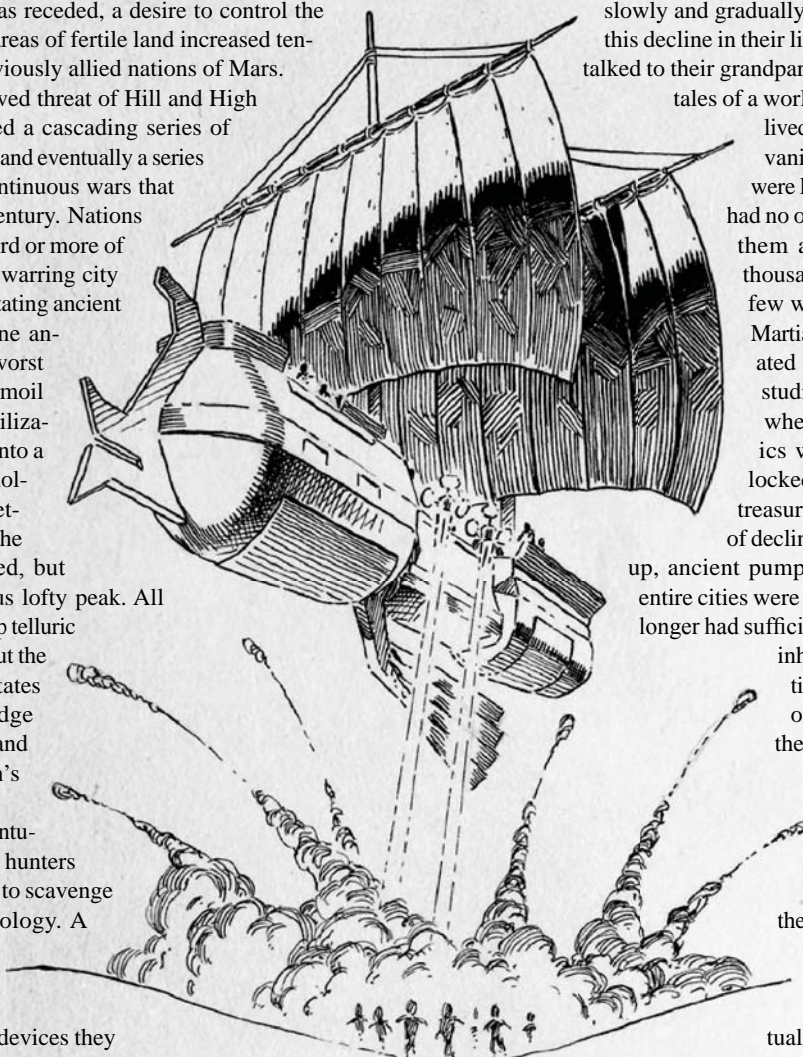
lived in, but slowly knowledge vanished as relics and books were lost or destroyed or simply had no one who could understand them anymore. After several thousand years of decline, the few working pieces of ancient Martian technology were venerated as holy relics rather than studied for their secrets, and when they failed, these relics were lost, destroyed, or locked away in rarely visited treasuries. During this long era of decline, canals gradually silted

up, ancient pumping stations failed, and entire cities were abandoned when they no longer had sufficient water to support their

inhabitants. First, the Martians lost the ability to store or generate electricity, and they could no longer use energy storage crystals. Later, they

ceased being able to manufacture synthetic crystals. Next, their metallurgy declined, so that mining natural crystals became far more difficult. Eventually, they were left with oil

and gas lighting, breech-loading musket and cannon, and canals that continued to gradually fail.



Seldon's Empire

The last great era of Mars was the empire of Seldon II, but in terms of science and technology it was an era of rediscovering fragments of old knowledge rather than making any new discoveries. During this era, Martian technicians and engineers once again learned how to use many of the simpler crystal technologies developed by their forebears, but they found uncovering old crystals far easier than mining and cutting new ones, and most complex devices remained beyond their abilities to use or repair, much less understand. During Seldon's era, even the most brilliant scholars had no understanding of telluric energy. Some believed it was a myth, others that it was some form of exotic magic, but no one knew how it worked or even what it could be used to accomplish.

The greatest achievements of Seldon's Empire were simple but profound: dredging silted up canals, repairing broken aqueducts, and fixing damaged or broken pumps or sluice gates. Workers performed most of this work using nothing more sophisticated than

Martians wielding shovels and buckets, and screw galleys carrying heavy loads. A few hundred Martians with some knowledge of basic engineering directed these dredging and repair efforts. Once this work was complete, the number of working canals increased by more than 25% and almost a dozen cities began to be rebuilt from ancient ruins because the canals running to them had been restored. However, re-opening these canals was a triumph of organization rather than advanced technology.

Rebuilding and digging through these ancient ruins provided scholars and engineers with additional knowledge as they found manuscripts and devices that had been abandoned more than 15,000 years before. Under the guidance of Seldon II and his first two successors, these scholars worked to gather together all the knowledge of ancient Martian technology that they could uncover.

They learned that sunlight and mirrors could power some of the ancient crystal technology. Although they were unable to repair the

few damaged canal-digging rays they found, technicians working in this era repaired and refurbished hundreds of fire lances and more than a dozen heat rays. Seldon had the first two of these restored heat rays mounted on his largest screw galleys. He used these weapons as one of his primary weapons of conquest. In addition to the damage they caused, these deadly weapons had been nothing more than legends for more than 20,000 years! Seeing these weapons in use caused almost a dozen different Martian cities to surrender as soon as Seldon's heat ray galleys demonstrated their power by fusing rocks into glass or burning hastily abandoned canal boats to ash. Not understanding electricity, these technicians were unable to use the energy storage crystals, and so the crystal weapons only worked when concentrated sunlight was focused on them. However, these weapons were still far more powerful than any other weapons at that time.

As word spread of these weapons, Seldon's reputation grew, and for five centuries after his death, these weapons were maintained, ready to be deployed against bandits or would-be rebels. However, eventually some of the heat rays and fire lances failed in ways that later technicians were unable to repair, while others were stolen by bandits who could use them, but knew nothing of how to keep them working.

Nevertheless, some of these weapons remained intact. Technicians who knew nothing of the principles these weapons were based on were nonetheless able to replace the damaged or worn parts of some weapons with parts from other weapons that were in worse shape. In this fashion, half a dozen heat rays and several

score of fire lances continued to work for the next 3,000 years. This technological renaissance ended more than a thousand years later, under the reign of the mad emperor Seldon XXXI. He ordered many of the surviving devices and manuscripts to be destroyed. Then, under his reign and the reign of his equally crazed successor Seldon XXXII, rebels gained access to the few surviving advanced weapons. Several of the rebellions resulted in widespread destruction, with cloudships and even entire buildings burned to ash. The few crystal weapons that survived this battle were soon destroyed by soldiers and civilians who were horrified by the destruction these weapons had wrought.

After the last of these rebellions, Seldon XXXII ordered the execution of the few remaining technicians who possessed at least some knowledge of crystal technology. Since the death of Seldon XXXII, the remains of the surviving advanced weapons and devices now either lie covered in shifting sand or are locked away in palace treasuries as mystical relics that their owners no longer understand. Even most of the manuscripts about this technology are now lost or ignored, in large part because these books discuss how to repair and use items built using the ancient crystal technology, but not how to create them. Without items of crystal technology to repair or use, these books are largely useless. The few Europeans who have examined these books believe them to be nothing more than fiction or propaganda designed to intimidate Seldon's enemies with the unlikely wonders his armies and technicians could command.

Ancient Martian Technology Today

Even two thousand years later, stories of these weapons remain, as Martians talk of how Seldon's soldiers and warships fought with weapons of light, or how they called down fire from the Sun. A few British scholars and folklorists have noticed how widespread and pervasive these stories and legends are. A group of scholars associated with the British Museums recently published a monograph combining excerpts from these stories with Jules Verne's recent speculations that the ancient Martians created the canals by melting the sand using vast solar mirrors carried on enormous cloudships. The monograph suggests that military architects and armorers during Seldon's empire may have used huge solar

mirrors as weapons much like the stories about how the Greek scholar Archimedes once defeated Roman warships attacking the city of Syracuse by using a large array of mirrors. A few traces of this ancient technology remain hidden in plain sight. There are still several dozen Martian mansions and temples with crystals that provide limited amounts of light or heat at night, provided that they are exposed to sunlight during the day. A few British explorers have noticed these crystals and remarked on them as a clever but far inferior substitute to electric or gas lighting, but as having no real significance.



Common Martian Artifacts

Ancient Martian technology is extremely diverse. Here is a small sampling of the more common devices, particularly those of great interest to humans. Explorers might discover broken devices in ancient ruins, or read references to these devices in the earliest Martian manuscripts. Encountering actual working devices should

always be a rare event that is part of some significant discovery, like uncovering a long buried pumping station created by the ancient Martians or meeting one of the few human scholars or inventors who has taken a keen interest in Martian technology.

Crystal Technology

The various unusual crystals are the most common and enduring of the ancient Martian technologies. The first such devices were specially carved natural crystals that the Martians discovered had unusual properties, but Martians eventually discovered how to grow artificial crystals from small seed crystals suspended in vats of molten rock. Many of these crystals are exceptionally durable and anyone excavating ancient ruins could easily uncover one or even several crystals of various types. Of course, they would also need to know that they had found something other than a curiously carved piece of stone. All Martian crystals are transparent. The ones that produce and channel light are clear and look a great deal like clear quartz. However, most of the other crystals used in Martian technology are colored and look similar to amethysts, sapphires, or other transparent colored stones. The size of these crystals can vary, with larger crystals typically being more powerful than smaller ones, but each different type of Martian crystal is always the same color and the same approximate shape.

Burning Crystals

These carefully cut clear and transparent crystals focus light. Each crystal is long, thin, and hexagonal in cross section, with one blunt end and one pointed end. When light shines into the long hexagonal sides, the crystal focuses and concentrates this light so that it emerges as a narrow beam from the crystal's pointed end. A crystal's power depends upon both its size and the amount of light it receives. In bright sunlight, a crystal a few inches long can burn holes in paper and ignite kindling just as well as a flint and steel. A crystal a foot or two long can rapidly ignite highly flammable material like cloth or well-seasoned wood that is up to 10 ft away or cause mild burns at the same range, and a crystal three or more feet long can cause severe burns or instantly ignite even damp wood up to 100 ft away. Burning crystals become far more powerful when used with mirrors that focus sunlight on their facets. The ancient Martians used larger burning crystals as formidable weapons, further multiplying their power by using smaller crystals to focus light on larger ones.

Fire Lances

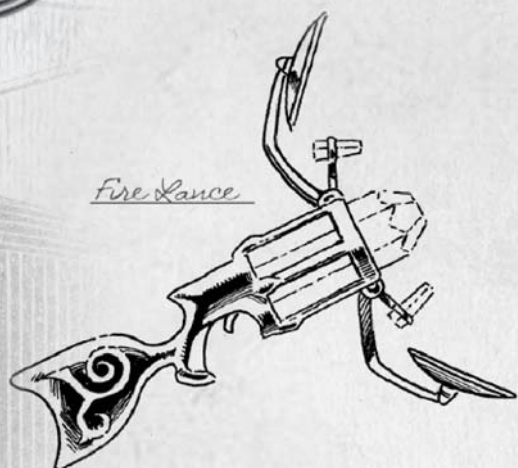
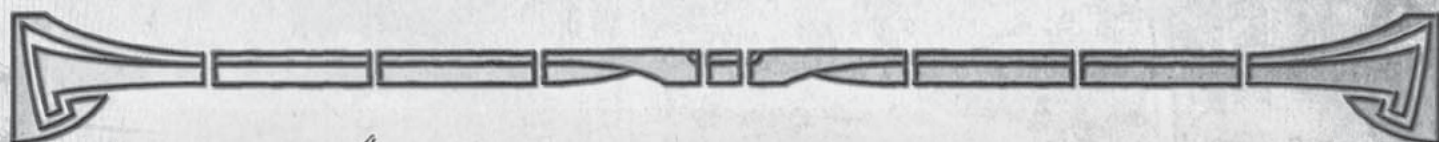
These were the most dangerous personal weapons used by the ancient Martians. The basic model was used for several thousand years, and almost 200 were refurbished during Seldon's Empire. This device is a short rifle-like weapon, the length of a carbine. The barrel is a burning crystal roughly one foot long with three smaller burning crystals arranged around it. However, the weapon is somewhat clumsy to use because large lightweight mirrors must be attached to either side of the barrel, making the entire weapon three feet in diameter. Also, it can only be used outdoors in bright sunlight. In the morning or evening, or if the sky is somewhat overcast, then the weapon's range and damage are halved. On a cloudy morning or evening, reduce the weapon's damage and range to one quarter normal. Any blow to the weapon automatically breaks or misaligns these mirrors, rendering the weapon useless until the damage is repaired or the mirrors realigned.

The most ancient Martian history texts mention these weapons as being highly effective, which seems at odds with how clumsy they are. The secret of their operation was that they were connected to energy storage crystals that stored energy that the crystals could convert into light. Usually this was a telluricly-charged energy crystal, one foot long and roughly six inches in diameter, worn on the belt. A narrow cable connected this two pound crystal to the fire lance. If used with an energy crystal, fire lances did not require mirrors and so were light, durable, and extremely deadly. Also, they could be used under any conditions, including at night or indoors.

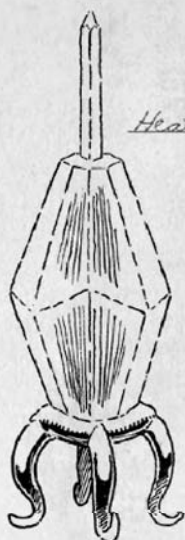
Because energy storage crystals required small amounts of electricity to activate, once Martian civilization began to decline, fire lances could only be used with mirrors, and while deadly, they were considerably less versatile than firearms and were gradually replaced.

Weapon	Damage	Range	Capacity
Fire Lance	4 L	100 ft / 30 m	100 shots

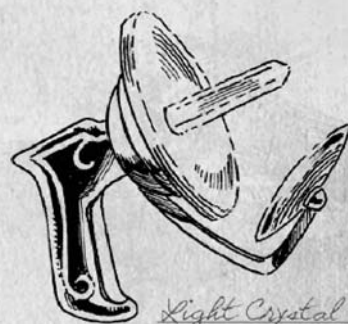
Burning Crystal Size		Range (normal sunlight)	Damage (focused sunlight)	Range (focused sunlight)
Small (1-3 in / 2.5-7.5 cm)	—	1 ft / 0.3 m	1 N	5 ft / 1.5 m
Medium (1-2 ft / 30-60 cm)	1 L	10 ft / 3 m	2 L	50 ft / 15 m
Large (3-4 ft / 90-120 cm)	2 L	100 ft / 30 m	4 L	500 ft / 150 m



Fire Lance



Heat Crystal



Light Crystal

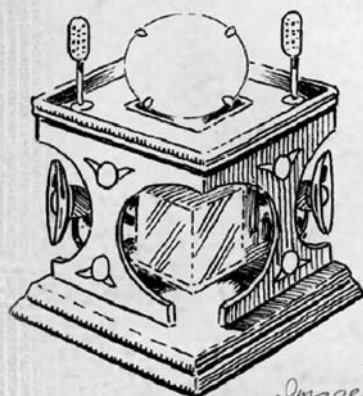


Image Crystals



Pair of Stones



Thought Crystals

Heat Rays

An inventor who acquires a selection of burning crystals can create a heat ray. Heat rays use a trio of burning crystals that are all at least one yard (90 cm) long. The total device weighs slightly over one ton. The crystals must be arranged in a specific pattern and can be powered by either a large solar mirror or by an energy crystal at least a yard and a half (1.4 m) in diameter, weighing approximately five tons.

Weapon	Damage	Range	Capacity
Heat Ray	8 L*	500 ft / 150 m	200 shots**

*The target and everything within a five-foot (1.5 m) radius suffers 8 L damage and catches fire immediately. It suffers additional Fire damage each round until the fire is extinguished (see Core Rules, p. 215). Outside the radius, the damage is reduced by -1 L for each 5 feet distance.

**provided a sufficient energy crystal

Canal Digging Rays

As Jules Verne already surmised, the ancient Martians used focused sunlight to dig their canals. To accomplish this, they used specially made arrays of seven burning crystals, each of which was at least three yards long. These burning crystal were suspended below a cloudship, which also used huge mirrors that extended 30 yards on either side of the cloudship to focus sunlight on this array. The power of the beam produced by this device can dig up

to 50 yards of canal in one hour. Too powerful for use with energy crystals, canal digging rays required huge solar mirrors to operate. No crystals this large survive on Mars. However, characters may be able to find descriptions and diagrams in ancient manuscripts. If the characters discover the secret of manufacturing synthetic crystals, they could duplicate these weapons.

Energy Storage Crystals

These highly advanced crystals were developed during the peak of ancient Martian technology. They allowed Martians to store power that could be used in all of their devices. These crystals could also release their power in a variety of ways, so that it could provide light, heat, or electricity. Frequently, the ancient Martians connected large energy storage crystals directly to the electric motors that powered a cloudship's propeller. An energy storage crystal two yards across and weighing only 11 tons could power an Aphid class aerial gunboat for two weeks before it needed to be recharged. In addition, it would provide sufficient power to allow the ship to travel 20% faster than normal. A storage crystal the size of a cantaloupe could power a mechanical man for several weeks of continuous activity.

When the Martians developed the ability to use telluric energy, they discovered that energy storage crystals were considerably more efficient at storing telluric energy. If an energy storage crystal was charged by a telluric power tap (see p. 62) rather than by sunlight focused with solar mirrors, the same crystal could store twice as much energy. For example, if charged with telluric energy, an



energy storage crystal two yards across and weighing only 11 tons could power an Aphid class aerial gunboat for four weeks before it needed to be recharged. All energy storage crystals were faceted ovoids made from sapphire blue crystal.

The one limitation of energy storage crystals is that they require a small charge of electric current to regulate how rapidly they release their energy. If the current stops, the crystal ceases releasing its energy. A small battery was built into each crystal, as well as a metal transformer to regulate energy output. Different settings on these transformers allowed energy crystals to release their stored power as heat, light, or electricity. When Martians lost the ability to work with electricity or build batteries, they could no longer use energy storage crystals.

Heat Crystals

These reddish-orange ovoid crystals can transmute either sunlight or telluric energy into heat. Setting a crystal the size of a grapefruit outside in bright sunlight for a full day causes it to put off sufficient heat to warm a cool room or to make a freezing cold room just about habitable for a single night. Using a simple array of mirrors a few feet across to focus sunlight on the crystal allows it to store considerably more heat, allowing it to provide the same level of warmth for two entire days and nights or four nights, or to be able to make a freezing room comfortable for one full day or two nights. Each heat crystal is pierced with a hole that a single rod made from the same type of crystal fits within. If the rod is partially removed, a hot crystal becomes warm and a warm crystal ceases to radiate any heat. If the user takes the rod almost all the way out of the crystal, even a hot crystal ceases to radiate heat. With their rods removed, these crystals can store heat for up to 30 days. When producing heat, all heat crystals also emit a faint red glow.

Larger heat crystals, between the size of a cantaloupe and a large beach ball were used to provide hot water or heat for various industrial processes. A basketball-sized heat crystal which was charged with sunlight reflected into it by mirrors could provide enough heat to operate a small forge or pottery kiln for 24 hours. A heat crystal slightly more than yard and a half across and weighing five and a half tons could heat the boiler in a small factory or on an Aphid class aerial gunboat for up to a week. Several heat crystals of this size could either heat the boiler for a larger ship or power the same vessel for longer. Heat crystals allowed civilization to function on a drying Mars where other concentrated and portable energy sources like coal or oil were exceptionally rare.

Image Crystals

Many Europeans are aware of photographic crystals, holographic crystals, and talking glasses (*Space 1889 Core Rules*, p. 237). Image crystals are devices similar to photographic crystals which can also record moving images and project them on screens in a manner similar to a movie projector. Unlike many other types of Martian crystal technology, image crystals require a complex device to help them record and replay these images. An average image crystal is a pale green cube roughly the size of a lemon. It must be used in a device that allows it to record and replay images, which contains several lenses as well as microphones and speakers. Characters must spend some time experimenting with this device to learn to either record or to replay images stored in its crystal. However, once they are understood, the controls are

ultimately relatively simple. Characters can replay images as often as desired, and the device contains controls that allow the user to speed up or slow down, play back or freeze a specific image for closer observation.

The device itself is approximately the size of a child's lunch box and weighs a little over one pound. Each crystal can hold several hundred hours of sound and images. In addition to being able to use it to make recordings, anyone who finds an ancient image crystal and learns how to use it could gain access to recordings made thousands or even tens of thousands of years ago.

Light Crystals

Light crystals are clear and colorless convex disks that look like thick glass lenses. After exposure to sunlight, they provide light without heat. Handheld light crystals are the size of an egg and provide somewhat more light than the brightest gas lamp. Light crystals designed for use as lighting indoors are usually the size of a grapefruit. Light crystals can be designed to emit light in a cone, like a flashlight, or in all directions to light a room. Like heat crystals, light crystals have crystal rods that allow users to regulate how much light they produce and to turn them off. A single grapefruit-sized light crystal that was charged using solar mirrors can light a large room as brightly as if it were lit by an abundant amount of electric light and can provide light for up to two full days.

Pair Stones

Pair stones are a very peculiar piece of Martian technology. Each crystal is approximately the size and shape of an egg, with one or more sides polished flat, and comes paired to one or more other similar stones. It resembles a large, unusually transparent opal, except that the flat face allows anyone holding it to see out of one of the other pair stones. Each working stone is also fitted with a narrow ring of extremely durable metal containing miniature circuits that link the crystals together.

Looking into the flat face of a pair stone allows the user to look out from the polished face of its pair as if he were actually there. Additionally, anyone holding a pair stone can hear sound from around the second pair stone as if they were present at that location. Distance is no barrier to using pair stones. They work equally well if one is on Mars and another on Mercury as they would if they were but a few feet apart.

Most pair stones have a single facet and are linked to a single other stone. However, some have two, three, or as many as six different facets, each of which is paired to a different pair stone. A stone with four facets is paired with four other stones. Each of these stones might only have a single facet, or each one of the five pair stones could have four facets and be connected to all of the other four stones through one of these facets. A set of the latter type of stones is especially valuable.

Martians regularly used these stones for long distance communication and observation. If one stone is destroyed, the other stone in the pair darkens and becomes cloudy. The one limitation on pair stones is that rarely are they found together. This could lead to further adventure in search of the stone's pair, or a character might find one pair stone only to discover that the other one is buried under the sand or in some other location where they have effectively no chance of locating or retrieving it. Stones with lost pairs are little more than idle curiosities. However, sometimes the

other stone is somewhere that the user can determine the location of, such as by looking at the stars or recognizing a familiar landmark. The most valuable pair stones are those which are actually found in sets of two or more, often stored together in a small and usually well-made wooden or metal box. Discovering a set of these stones and displaying them to respected scientists and other important figures will set hundreds of other explorers searching for similar stones and result in offers of possibly as much as a hundred pounds for a set of these stones. The British government and military will be extremely interested in these stones, especially once someone learns that they can be used to communicate between planets.

Thought Crystals

These exotic artifacts were among the greatest achievements of the height of Martian civilization. Martian technicians were able to impose thoughts, memories, and even some degree of practical knowledge into specially prepared crystalline lattices. The most impressive and obvious examples of this technology are the crystal brains of the handful of mechanical men that European explorers have discovered in a few isolated ancient Martian ruins, but there are several other related types of crystals. All thought crystals are transparent purple, like an amethyst, with each different type being cut in a different shape.

Biography Crystals

These make for the strangest and the most problematic of crystals yet to be discovered. They always consist of a headband carved from a single thought crystal, shaped so that it fits comfortably on a Martian or human head. Each crystal contains the life story of a prominent ancient Martian, usually an artist, performer, politician, military leader, or on rare occasions a scientist. These crystals were each made with the help and consent of the individuals whose story they relate, since they contain some of the person's thoughts and memories as well as more general scenes of the person's life.

Ancient Martians understood how to use these crystals as valuable aids to learning and scholarship. However, the techniques of meditation and mental preparation needed to use these crystals most effectively were lost millennia ago. As a result, there is some risk involved in their use. Anyone may attempted to use one of these crystals by putting it on their head and relaxing, but without training, users temporarily lose themselves in the experience and may believe themselves to actually be the person whose life the crystal recounts. This happens occasionally once the biography has reached its end, a process that takes between two and four hours. The character must make a *Willpower* roll (*Willpower* x 2) when the crystal's stored information ends. If the user fails a difficulty 1 roll, they believe that they are the person the crystal was about.

If someone or something interrupts the story in the middle and disturbs the person without removing the crystal, then the character must instead succeed in a difficulty 3 *Willpower* roll (*Willpower* x 2) to avoid confusing their identity with that of the biography's subject. Sometimes the wearer believes they really are the subject Martian, but more often they believe that they are the spirit of the long dead Martian possessing a human. In either case, the result can be very disturbing, and perhaps dangerous if the crystal was about a military leader or someone else who was inclined to violence. This delusion usually fades within a few minutes of removing the crystal but can last several hours,

and always vanishes after the wearer has slept for at least four hours, but until either of these happens, the person may remain convinced they are an ancient Martian lost in a strange and disturbing modern world.

Mind Crystals

Mind crystals were designed to contain knowledge of how to perform particular tasks. They were then installed in some sort of automated mechanism, most often a mechanical man. Creating a mind crystal required that a Martian who was highly skilled in some task perform it while their thoughts were being recorded. Once created, mind crystals could be duplicated using a similar process, allowing dozens of crystals to be created based on a single Martian's experiences. Examples of mechanisms created using mind crystals are described below (see *Martian Robots*, pp. 60-61). All mind crystals are perfect spheres of purple crystal, usually the size of a large orange.

Mind crystals are the most complex type of Martian thought crystals, and also occasionally the most unreliable. The skills and behaviors recorded in a mind crystal are not intelligent or self-aware, but sometimes they contained traces of the creator's personality as well as their expertise. A mechanical man using a mind crystal created from the thoughts of a technician who was highly meticulous might spend an unusually long amount of time clearing and polishing the machines it operates. Another mechanical man might scratch its head or adopt various idiosyncratic postures when considering how best to accomplish a complex task. A few mind crystals have even more dramatic and unusual idiosyncrasies, such as a habit of doodling when not actively engaged in a task or of flying into a seeming rage and attacking anyone who damages one of the mechanisms it has been assigned to work with and keep in good repair.

Story Crystals

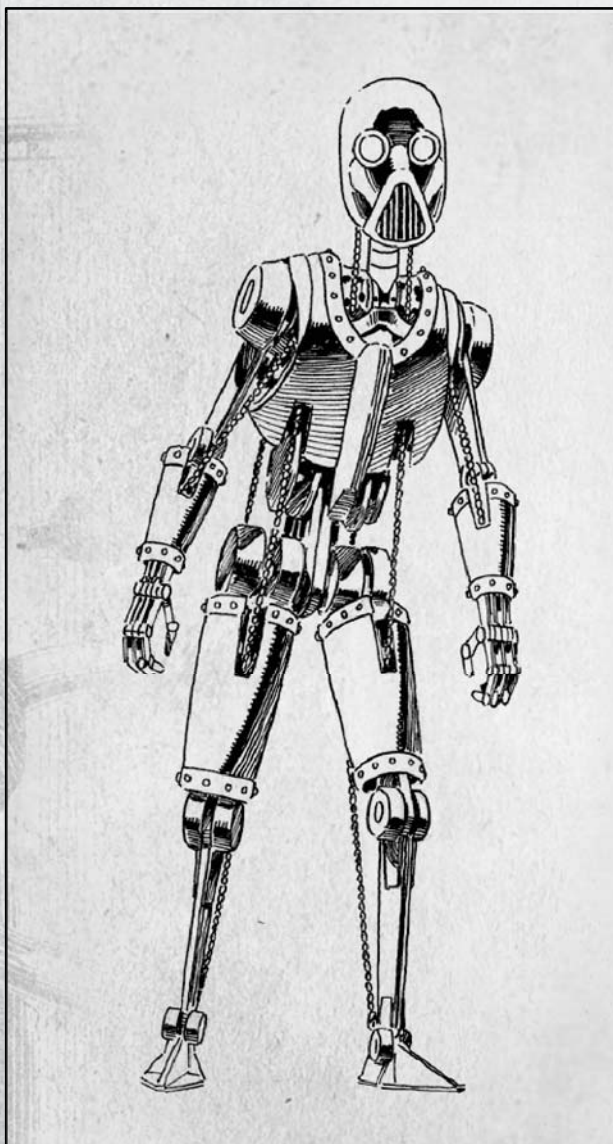
Story crystals are the simplest of thought crystals, as well as the most common. Each is a lens-shaped purple disk the diameter of a large human palm and contains between one and three stories. Anyone who touches the crystal with their bare skin and holds it for more than a minute begins to see and hear exotic sights and sounds. For the first minute, these visions and sounds are faint and transparent and immediately cease if the person stops touching the crystal. However, if the person continues touching the crystal, they soon become immersed in the story. Some simply allow the user to see and hear a story. However, some later story crystals were far more complex and allowed the user to participate in an interactive story.

Many story crystals can even be used by up to half a dozen people at once. These multi-person crystals are usually found in or near a device of metal and crystal that appears to be a carved brass disk a foot across which is clearly designed to hold the story crystal. Around the periphery of the metal disk are six metal cables ending in an ovoid purple crystal knob the size of a small plum. Users could immerse themselves in the story by holding this knob. Most of these stories are various sorts of fantastic fictions, but this may not be obvious to modern-day users, especially as many story crystals are based on actual historical events. Archeologists and treasure hunters using one of these crystals might gain invaluable insight into the location and use of ancient artifacts, or they could mistake a wild fantasy adventure for actual Martian history.

Martian Robots

Only a handful of Martian robots survived the end of the *naBri-fanoon* and the collapse of ancient Martian civilization, and most that did are located in remote locations like isolated research bases or concealed pumping stations (see p. 65). Even during Seldon's Empire, the finest technicians and most brilliant researchers were only able to repair a handful of the robots they found. Mechanical men and other Martian robots remain mostly in the realm of myth and legend.

Regardless of their duties or form, all Martian robots share a few characteristics in common. All of these robots are obviously mechanical and appear to be made out of a combination of brass, stainless steel, and carved stone crystals. All of them have a large mind crystal as their "brain." Also, all are powered by an energy storage crystal, which provides the power that allows them to move their limbs. They also have a variant of an image crystal, its associated mechanism connected to the mind crystal, providing the robot with its senses. Not all robots have the same senses, though; many are only equipped with those senses that are particularly required for their specific task.



Mechanical Men

A few seem to have been created as exotic servants or exceptionally loyal bodyguards, but the vast majority of mechanical men were created to work in locations where ordinary Martians could not, including everything from deep mineshafts filled with toxic gases to remote pumping stations in the middle of vast deserts. Like all other technology created by the ancient Martians, the vast majority of mechanical men broke down more than 15,000 years ago. However, some combination of luck and exceptional engineering means that a few continue to function, while others broke down because of relatively minor problems that engineers were unable to repair after the fall of Seldon's empire.

Some Europeans, on hearing tales of mechanical men, become convinced that these constructs are actually intelligent beings, perhaps housing the minds or even the living brains of ancient Martians, and proceed to attempt to communicate with them. In reality, they are simple automata able to perform a few tasks. For example, some mechanical men are programmed to guard a location against intruders, using weapons or even just sturdy metal fists to dispatch anyone who refuses their request to leave, while other types obey simple orders to carry large objects, plow fields, or do other routine labor work. Of course there still exist some very unique mechanical men that are specialized in highly skilled tasks. According to their specialization, each mechanical man's mind crystal usually contains information on how to perform a single skill. This skill can include everything from piloting a cloudship, to using weapons, to operating and repairing various pieces of complex machinery.

While some were made to different specifications, most mechanical men have the following basic characteristics:

Archetype: Artifact		Motivation: Duty	
Style: 0		Health: 5	
Primary Attributes			
Body: 4	Charisma: n/a		
Dexterity: 2	Intelligence: 2		
Strength: 5	Willpower: n/a		
Secondary Attributes			
Size: 1	Initiative: 4		
Move: 7	Defense: 8*		
Perception: 2	Stun: 4		
Skills	Base	Levels	Rating (Average)
Athletics	5	2	7 (3+)
Brawl	5	2	7 (3+)
Flaw			
Automation (−2 penalty to any roll that requires original or creative thought)			
Weapon	Rating	Size	Attack (Average)
Punch	1 N	1	7 N (3+) N
*Mechanical Men have an innate armor that provides a +2 bonus to their Defense.			

*Mechanical Men have an innate armor that provides a +2 bonus to their Defense.

In addition, all mechanical men possess a single skill at level 4. This skill is usually either: *Craft (Mechanics or Crystal Technology)*, *Firearms (Fire Lance)*, *Gunnery (Martian Heavy Weapons)*, or *Pilot (Canal Boat or Cloudship)*. Regardless of whether a skill is specialized or not, mechanical men only know a single discipline of their skill.

Trim Keepers

Although the bizarre Martian mechanical men are far more dramatic, trim robots are somewhat more common, although still quite rare. Created using the experience of a skilled trimsmen, these devices consist of a wheeled oval casing the size of a somewhat flattened watermelon which has half a dozen long jointed arms and lenses and other sensors on the front. This device is capable of acting as a trimsmen on any liftwood flying vehicle. It contains a large flat crystal oval on top and requires at least six hours of sunlight a day or two hours of sunlight if mirrors are used to concentrate the sunlight. Otherwise, it becomes dormant until next exposed to sunlight. Other than their ability to act as a trimsmen on a cloudship and to respond to verbal commands relating to these duties, trim keepers are far more limited than mechanical men. They cannot be commanded to perform any other duties except to wait until asked to do something.

Trim Keepers have the following characteristics:

Attributes

Size: -1 **Initiative:** 4

Move: 2 **Defense:** 6*

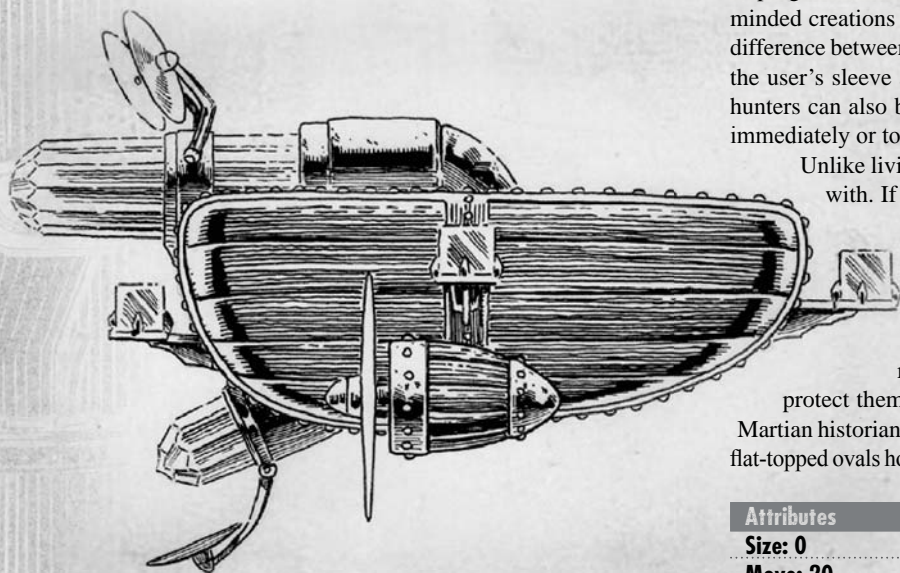
Perception: 4 **Stun:** 2

Health: 1

Skills

Pilot (Cloudship) 7 (3+)

*Trim keepers have an innate armor that provides a +2 bonus to their Defense.



Mechanical Hunters

The rarest of Martian robots are the ancient Martians' automated guards. While some ancient Martians sometimes armed mechanical men or programmed them for defense, others realized that guards did not require hands or arms—only weapons—and that mechanical men are inherently slow and clumsy. Most mechanical hunters look vaguely like miniature metal-hulled cloudships a yard long, two feet wide, and one foot high. Held aloft by capsules of liftwood extract, they automatically regulate their trim and altitude. They also contain a pair of miniature propellers that can move them at speeds of up to 30 miles per hour. They contain a built-in fire lance that fires forward, and can turn in place faster than a human. They also possess a nozzle for dispensing peace gas (see p. 63). All of them have mechanical eyes that face in all directions, as well as a light crystal that provides them with a light equivalent to a powerful gas lamp.

Their mind crystals were modeled on the minds of skilled soldiers and bodyguards, but are almost as limited as those of trim keepers—they cannot be ordered to perform any action outside of their duties, except to wait for further instructions. They can be given a variety of orders, ranging from attacking anyone entering the region they are programmed to guard, to asking intruders to give a password or display some sort of identifier, like a special ring, engraved plaque, or some similar item, and attacking anyone who fails to do so. Others are ordered to obey the orders of anyone with the correct password or identifier. To prevent unauthorized use, commanding a mechanical hunter usually required both a password and some sort of identifier. Users can command a mechanical hunter to guard a specific area, to follow them around, and to attack anyone they order it to. Mechanical hunters can also be programmed to protect the user from threats, but these simple-minded creations are disturbingly literal, and can rarely tell the difference between a friendly slap on the back or a child grabbing the user's sleeve and an actual attack. Fortunately, mechanical hunters can also be ordered to either attack intruders or threats immediately or to first issue a warning to retreat.

Unlike living guards, these machines cannot be reasoned with. If a mechanical hunter orders someone to leave the protected area else it will attack, those are the only options. It cannot be convinced to do otherwise, unless the person has the password or identifier. During Seldon's Empire, Seldon and the five emperors who ruled after him used a trio of these devices to protect them during public appearances. Both human and Martian historians have long been puzzled by the strange, small, flat-topped ovals hovering near Seldon in some drawings and reliefs.

Attributes

Size: 0 **Initiative:** 8

Move: 20 **Defense:** 11*

Perception: 8 **Stun:** 3

Health: 6

Skills

Firearms (Fire Lance): 8 (4)

Built-in Weapons **Rating** **Size** **Attack** **(Average)**

Fire Lance 4 L 0 12 L (6) L

Peace Gas Dispenser**

*Mechanical Hunters have an innate armor that provides a +2 bonus to their Defense.

**See Peace Gas, p. 63, for rules.

Telluric Technology

The ancient Martians discovered that exotic energies flowed beneath the surface of Mars. These energies held vast power of a type unknown to human science. The only reliable scientific and technical information about telluric energy can be found in ancient and fragmentary documents. However, even the ancient Martians never understood the full power of what they had discovered. If they had learned its true potential, they might have even been able to either change Mars' climate and bring back its long dry oceans or escape their dying world, but they never had the chance to learn any of this.

Telluric Currents

Telluric currents flow in lines between specific locations called nexus points. As a result, these energies can only be used along these lines and at these nexus points. Many ancient Martian cities were built at these telluric nexus points. However, the need for water outweighed even the need for power, and so some cities were built—or maintained—in locations without access to telluric energy and had to rely upon other power sources.

A handful of the oldest Martian texts contain maps of the cities and canals which clearly display markings indicating those settlements and canals that sit above telluric currents and nexuses. However, no Earthly scholar has learned the significance of these markings and no living Martian knows anything more than a few myths about telluric energy. The Martians only developed telluric technology during the canal-building era and it represented the peak of Martian technology.

Telluric Impellers

The corroding machinery found in the tallest towers of all ancient Martian cities are not clocks or astronomical equipment. Instead, they were amazing devices that tapped the telluric currents of Mars and harnessed it for use in propulsion. Built in the tallest towers, these machines were connected to cables that were also connected to a telluric power tap buried deep in the Martian bedrock. Telluric impellers were designed to work in pairs, with one impeller at each end of a telluric current, but they could also function alone, although less effectively. Telluric impellers must be used with telluric engines. Fortunately, telluric engines are relatively simple devices that use the telluric currents to move whatever they are attached to.

A telluric engine is a roughly cubic device made of quartz and brass that weighs 300 pounds and is approximately two feet to a side. Any character with a *Craft* (either *Crystal Technology* or *Mechanics*) skill rating of at least 7 and a *Science (Engineering)* skill rating of 4 or higher, as well as either plans for a telluric engine or a working example to work from can duplicate a telluric engine

in approximately four days if they are in a well-equipped workshop with adequate tools. However, even if the telluric power tap is intact, a telluric impeller is a far more complex device requiring two yellow crystals and one smoky black crystal that are all connected into a complex framework. A single telluric impeller can power boats or cloudships equipped with a telluric engine up to a range or 500 miles. It can propel boats at speeds of up to 20 miles per hour and cloudships at speeds of up to 50 miles per hour. Vessels can use their telluric engine to move towards or away from the impeller, but cease moving if either the telluric impeller or their own telluric engine is destroyed or turned off. Vessels propelled using a telluric engine do not require a propeller or any other obvious means of propulsion, although almost all cloudships also had backup power sources to allow them maneuverability in multiple directions, such as to flee from storms or attacking raiders.

If there are telluric impellers at either end of a telluric current, then vessels can use telluric engines more efficiently anywhere along this current. The maximum speed of boats becomes 40 miles per hour, and the maximum speed of cloudships becomes 90 miles per hour. Telluric impellers effectively create powerful two-way currents of telluric energy through the air and these currents can propel dozens or even hundreds of boats or cloudships at the same time.

Telluric Power Taps

Martians found many uses for telluric power. In addition to impellers that propelled canal boats and cloudships, telluric power also charged energy storage crystals and powered Martian cities. The same basic device, the telluric power tap, powered all of these advanced technologies. These were complex machines made of careful arrangements of metal and various crystals connected by cables to crystals buried in the Martian bedrock. These machines drew upon the telluric currents to recharge energy storage crystals and also to provide power for the light and heat crystals that were



commonly used in Martian homes and businesses. Telluric power taps all consisted of three basic parts. The first was a specially made bright yellow cylindrical crystal that was inserted into a hole bored into the Martian bedrock. This crystal was connected to a woven metal cable that ran up to the surface. This cable connected to a large box-like machine of steel, brass, and yellow and blue crystals a yard to a side and weighing half a ton, which acts much like an electrical substation.

Further cables were also connected to the substation. Some were connected to telluric impellers, others connected to large flat circular crystals between three and six feet (one to two meters) across that distributed the collected energy. Around the edge of these crystals were attachments for other woven metal cables that

carried power to charging stations for energy storage crystals or which branched out into smaller cables that went into Martian homes and businesses to provide power for light and heat crystals or to power water pumps and similar devices.

In Martian buildings, the heat and light crystals were all part of a network connected to one of the cables coming from a power tap. The trickle of telluric energy provided to each of these crystals allowed it to function as if it was continuously being recharged by bright sunlight reflected into it using large mirrors. A single telluric power tap could provide all of the needs for heat and light for 50,000 people. Even the largest ancient Martian cities never required more than 150 telluric power taps.

Chemicals and Drugs

In addition to creating advanced crystal technology powered by solar or telluric energy, the ancient Martians also developed a wealth of new materials, including artificial dyes, stainless steel, a form of pourable stone superior to the finest concrete, Martian copper (a copper-like, stable alloy), antibiotics, and various similar useful inventions. They also learned to use electricity and created small batteries for various purposes.

As the scarce ore resources of Mars had already been exhausted by the time of the Canal Builders, many construction elements are made from various types of ceramic. The Martians made big advancements in developing their petrochemistry and ceramics, creating materials to substitute for metals in various roles, including electrically conductive ceramics. Thus, even in pumping stations, most of the inventory is made of synthetic material.

Here are a few of the most notable chemicals and drugs that explorers might encounter.

Lifting Harness

The ancient Martians isolated the contra-gravitational chemical in liftwood and learned how to create a synthetic version. This garment consists of a small sphere containing concentrated synthetic liftwood extract worn on the user's back, along with aerodynamic flaps that allow the user to steer. Simple wrist controls allow users to increase or decrease their lift by changing the sphere's orientation. Martians, humans, or even Venusians can all use this device to fly as well as a High Martian.

The ease of the controls and the design of the flaps give the user +1 to all *Pilot (Personal Flight)* rolls. Most lifting harnesses were made for Martian soldiers and spies, but a few of the surviving harnesses are quite ornate and were made for use by Martian nobles and wealthy merchants. Synthetic liftwood extract only works for six months before it decays. However, it is normally stored as two separate components that only produce lift when combined. In this form, these chemicals can last for tens of thousands of years if stored properly. Early in Seldon's Empire, explorers discovered a cache of more than 200 lifting harnesses

and many doses of lifting serum for each harness, which allowed Seldon's elite troops to fly down upon their enemies.

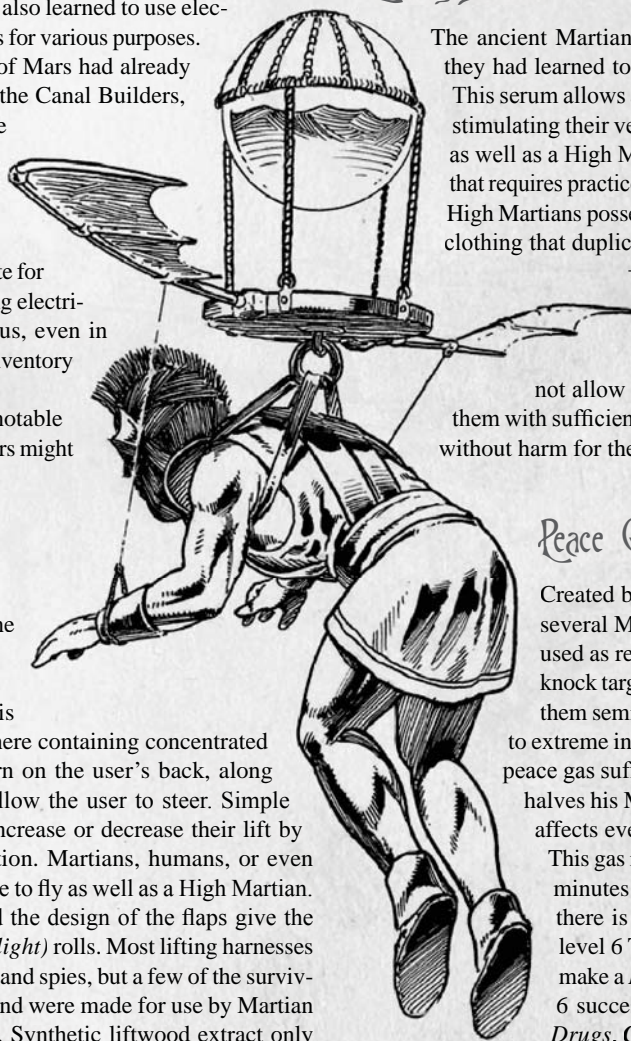
Lifting Serum

The ancient Martians developed lifting serum before they had learned to create synthetic liftwood extract.

This serum allows any Hill or Canal Martian to fly by stimulating their vestigial lift glands. The user can fly as well as a High Martian, except that flying is a skill that requires practice. Also, users lack the skin flaps that High Martians possess. Unless the character is wearing clothing that duplicates these skin flaps, they suffer a

-1 to all *Pilot (Personal Flight)* rolls. Each dosage requires 10 minutes to take effect and lasts for eight hours. This serum does

not allow humans to fly, but it does provide them with sufficient lift that they can fall any distance without harm for the next eight hours.



Peace Gas

Created by combining volatile distillates of several Martian plants that are occasionally used as recreational drugs, this gas does not knock targets unconscious. Instead, it renders them semi-conscious, creating a state similar to extreme intoxication. A character affected by peace gas suffers a -4 penalty to all actions and halves his Move score. The gas automatically affects everyone 1 turn after they breathe it.

This gas is relatively dense and takes several minutes to disperse indoors or outdoors if there is little wind. As the peace gas is a level 6 Toxin, anyone affected by it has to make a *Body* roll each hour and accumulate 6 successes to recover (see *Poisons and Drugs*, **Core Rules** p. 217). However, until

that time, characters affected by it cannot think clearly and stumble around clumsily as if they were very drunk. Peace gas affects humans and Martians equally and also affects all Martian and terrestrial mammals like horses and dogs. However, this gas does not affect Venusians or dinosaurs. It is exception-

ally safe, and even repeated exposure does little more than give someone a bad headache after they recover. A canister of peace gas the size of a soda can produces sufficient gas to envelope an area 20 feet (six meters) in diameter.

Spider Cloth Armor

Made from the silk of domesticated Martian spider hounds, the fibers used in this armor are far tougher than any terrestrial cloth. They are strong enough to stop bullets, shrapnel, or sword blows. Almost all spider cloth rotted into dust and fragments long ago, but some was preserved for later use in specially sealed rooms or

boxes. These suits are as sturdy and flexible as when they were made and are exceptionally useful. The secret of domesticating spider hounds and inducing them to produce silk was lost more than 20,000 years ago, but records of it exist in a few ancient Martian ruins. Spider hounds are rare now, but they still exist in wild areas found along a few of the dead canals near the equator. Anyone who captures a few dozen spider hounds and learns the secret of harvesting their silk could make new spider cloth armor, and it is rumored the industrialist Levi Strauss is attempting just that, although so far his success has been limited.

Armor	Defense	Strength	Dexterity	Weight
Spider Cloth	+2	1	-0	10 lbs. / 5 kg



Lost Cities and Ancient Ruins

Most ruins from more than 30,000 years ago are nothing more than dust and rubble. Although many existing Martian cities were first constructed in this antique era, they have been burned, conquered, and over-run by barbarians many times since their construction and little trace of their original builders remains. However, while some of the remaining artifacts made by the ancient Martians are locked away in crypts and treasuries in various modern Martian

cities, most lie buried in ancient ruins. Some are in the ruins of ancient Martian cities, but most artifacts that either still function or can be repaired are in isolated research bases and pumping stations, where the ancient Martians did their best to ensure that devices and infrastructure from their time would continue to function far into the future.

The Mystery of the Canal Pumps

One of the truisms that humans exploring the structure and functioning of the Martian canals quickly realized is that there is little standardization, especially from one canal to another. All of the canals use gentle slopes to move the water via gravity whenever possible, but when this is not possible, the canals are powered by a vast array of different means, from windmills to primitive steam turbines using geothermal energy from the planet's few dying hot springs, to sections of the canal being diverted over waterfalls to power waterwheels. Each pumping station is different from the others and all appear to be ancient. Even more confusingly, many appeared to have been repaired long ago, usually with inferior materials. The original pumps are all made from materials stronger than anything European science can duplicate, but they also all use relatively simple mechanical principles first used on Earth more than a thousand years ago.

To add to the confusion, a team of geologists and geographers recently completed a survey of one of the largest canals. They believe that the various pumping stations that they found can only account for three quarters of the total power needed to move the canal's water. This team is at a loss as to the source of the remaining power needed to move the water. Currently, the Royal Geographical Society is recruiting additional teams to survey and measure the water flow along the entire length of several other large canals.

Building for Eternity

Despite having mastered telluric energy, electricity, and advanced forms of power generation, as the canal building project neared completion, the ancient Martians eventually realized that they could not sustain their current level of technology once the planet had finished drying out. Much of the last several centuries of the canal building endeavor was spent replacing advanced telluric pumping stations that required periodic maintenance with extremely durable and far simpler methods that would last for at least 20,000 years without servicing. The Martians also made certain that people with a far lower level of technology could easily repair these devices, as long as they understood the most basic principles of mechanics and motion. A civilization capable of building almost diamond-hard materials used this knowledge to create simple water wheels and primitive steam turbines that would last through the eons.

They also relied upon the advantage of sheer magnitude: systems with a high mass and powers so gigantic that environmental impacts and operational fluctuations would be of no consequence.

The vast majority of these pumping stations were large, conspicuous buildings located exactly where any engineer would expect to find them. The ancient Martians built these stations in ways that made them easy to find and service. The builders also knew that if they used advanced technology in pumping stations located anywhere later peoples were likely to explore, then later scientists, explorers, and looters would be tempted to see how more advanced methods of pumping worked, and might break something they were unable to understand or repair. All of the pumping stations located in or near Martian cities or in other exposed locations operate on simple principles.

After almost 25,000 years some of these pumping stations had failed, creating dead canals and reducing the water flow in many living canals to a fraction of its former amount. However, the ancient Martians built well, and during the first two centuries of Seldon's Empire, engineers were able to at least partially repair almost half of the failed pumping stations. Some have since failed and all of them were repaired using inferior materials, but others have undergone periodic maintenance over the last 5,000 years.

Hidden Pumping Stations

Near the edge of the polar caps and in the most barren stretches of the Martian deserts, far from any settlement, the waters of the canals occasionally speed up without any obvious pumps or other mechanisms. In some places, the canals vanish underground for as much as 10 or 20 miles. Other canals appear mysteriously from underground near the edge of the polar caps. In many canals, water seems to suddenly move more swiftly without any obvious cause. The answer to these puzzles are all the same: the ancient Martians built concealed pumping stations that were designed to work for many tens of thousands of years. All of these pumping stations were in remote locations where the ancient Martians could not be certain that later peoples would be able to easily access them, and most were located in areas where any of the simpler pumping methods proved to be impractical.

These stations were all well hidden and have sturdy walls and doors to prevent intruders from gaining access to them. However, most were built so that technicians who knew their location could access them in case there was a problem. Instead of being buried deep under the desert sands, many of these pumping stations were built into mountainsides, into the rocky shorelines of the ancient seabeds, or in the midst of rocky terrain on the edge of the polar caps. However, anyone wishing to visit one of these pumping stations first needed to know where it was and how to get into

it. These pumping stations were designed not to be visible from the air and had sturdy locks on their thick doors and anti-intruder defenses. Only technicians who possessed the correct key or combination could enter them.

The last of these hidden pumping stations were built during the era when ancient Martian civilization was already beginning to decline. During this era, bandits and barbarian raiders were plundering caches of technology in search of advanced weapons. Because the Martians who built these pumping stations understood that soon no one would be able to repair the stations or manufacture replacement parts for the pumps and that the technology there would only serve to draw raiders and bandits, they deliberately hid these pumping stations. Many were built into the bedrock underneath the shifting sands of the deserts, and when the station was completed, the builders welded the door shut and removed the temporary walls keeping sand from covering the station, hiding it from everyone.

Some of these stations lacked any intruder defenses, because their primary defense was being unfindable, but others had deadly defenses in case someone later found them. These later-day technicians also used explosives to cover the stations' entrances with rockslides or used heat rays to fuse the rocks around the station's entrance into immovable barricades. Of course, over the past 25,000 years some of the stations that were built to be accessible have been buried under rockslides or enormous sand dunes, while shifting sands and erosion have occasionally laid bare carefully hidden pumping stations. As a result, European explorers are equally likely to encounter deliberately hidden pumping stations as ones designed to be found by technicians who knew where to look.

Regardless of whether they were deliberately hidden or not, all of these pumping stations were also built with extreme redundancy. Most possess three separate telluric power taps, and sufficient spare parts to rebuild the entire pumping mechanism three times over. All of these stations also contain at least one mechanical man that is programmed to handle the maintenance and repairs. Almost all contain a second mechanical man that is automatically activated if the first fails to perform its duties for more than three or four months.

To protect them from looters and scavengers, most of these stations were equipped with various defenses. Most have airlock-like entryways, where intruders open one door only to find themselves in a small chamber with a second door on the opposite wall. Anyone attempting to force the second door open is attacked by three or four fire lances (p. 56), powered by the same telluric power taps that provide power to the rest of the station. The ends of the burning crystals used by these weapons are concealed by elaborate decorative carvings, but anyone who survives

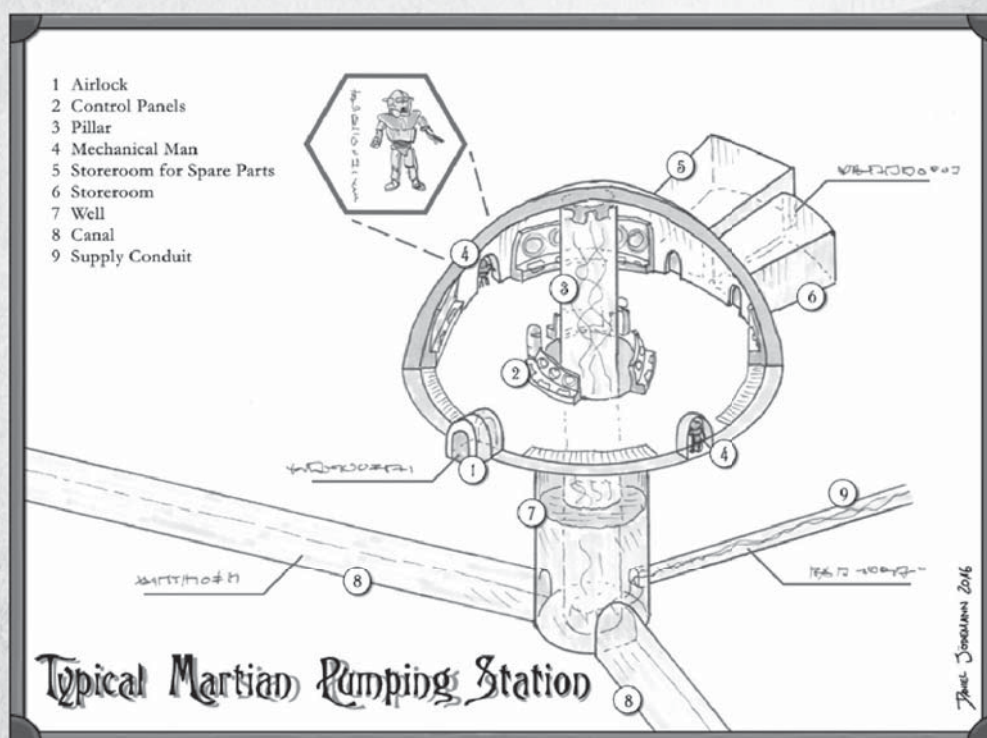
watching them fire can locate and destroy them. The only difficulty is that there are always three or four fire lances, and attacking one causes the others to fire at the attacker. Burning crystals are relatively easy to destroy, but the only way to avoid repeated attack is to successfully attack all of the fire lances at once.

Once inside the station, explorers may be afraid of the mechanical man, but unless the intruders damage the pumping machinery and encounter one of the rare mechanical men that is inclined to violence, the station's mechanical man often ignores them. However, some pumping stations contain one or two mechanical hunters (p. 61), which attack anyone who attempts to tamper with or damage anything inside the station.

General Pumping Station Layout

Although these pumping stations were built over the course of 2,000 years, most have the same general layout. There is a single entrance, which is always a set of airlock-style doors. Both the exterior and interior doors have sturdy locks and even if they are both unlocked, each door can only be opened if the other is closed. The small chamber between the two doors is usually between five and seven feet on each side (1.5 to 2 meters), and often contains a series of four automated fire lances that attack anyone attempting to force open the interior door.

Past the airlock-style entrance corridor is a single large room that is usually either circular, octagonal, or hexagonal. This room is between 10 and 15 yards (9 to 14 meters) across, with a ceiling between 9 and 11 feet (2.5 to 3.5 meters) high. A pillar of sapphire blue crystal between four and five feet (1.2 to 1.5 meters) in diameter occupies the center of this room. If the pumping station is at all functional, this pillar glows with sufficient light to illuminate the entire station. The pillar is surrounded by control panels and machinery from the floor up to a height of four feet, and is bare above that height. There are also panels of machinery around most of the walls, the only exceptions being two roughly human shaped indentations, one or both of which contains a me-



chanical man, and possibly one or two similar alcoves holding mechanical hunters (p. 61).

The room also has a pair of doors roughly opposite the entrance. The door on the left leads to a square room six yards (5.5 meters) across with shelves on three walls and a table filled with various tools in the center. The shelves contain more than a thousand boxes housing tens of thousands of spare parts ranging in size from small pieces of wire to large crystalline devices the size of a human torso. Examining the main room soon reveals that all of the controls and other machinery are modular and that parts can be easily unlocked, removed, and replaced with one of these many thousands of spare parts.

The door on the right leads to a smaller chamber filled with shelves and boxes, but without a table in the center. These boxes contain broken parts that the mechanical man replaced with spares. All of these parts are even more worn than the other objects in the installation and many of them have obvious flaws and defects, such as being cracked or broken. Both the storeroom and the room holding broken parts are lit by patterns of lens-shaped crystals between one and two feet (0.3 and 0.6 meters) across set in the ceiling. Both rooms are slightly dimmer than the main room, but are still well lit. All of these pumping stations contain a wealth of ancient Martian technology. However, they are also all in far worse condition than they were when they were built.

All pumping stations fall into one of three categories:

Failed Pumping Stations

Pumping stations where the pumps have failed are almost always found on dead or sluggish canals. The power and defenses of some of these stations continue to work long after the pump has failed, keeping them well-defended by fire lances and mechanical hunters. In such cases, the most likely problem was the failure of the mechanical men, which resulted in the gradual failure of the pump because there was no one to install spare parts. Careful explorers could possibly repair one of the mechanical men or perhaps even spend several days studying the installation and replace obviously worn parts with one of the many spares. If performed correctly, such repairs could cause the pumping station to spring to life, turning a dead canal into a sluggish one, while a sluggish canal may return to normal water flow.

Other pumping stations failed because of some catastrophic accident like a tremor or rock fall that damaged all three of the telluric energy taps. In this case, the station is well and truly dead, but could provide a wealth of devices for the characters to investigate. Of course, unless the explorers have previously encountered telluric power taps, they will have no idea what once powered the station. The only evidence of the station's power source is a woven metal cable leading down into solid rock, and only difficult and extensive excavations can reveal anything more about this power source. In a station which has been without power for centuries or millennia, any remaining mechanical hunters may have traces of power left, not enough to cause harm, but sufficient to fly out and appear briefly menacing before running out of power and hanging motionless in midair.

A few failed pumping stations provide clear evidence that the characters are not the first to have uncovered them. These ruins often contain smashed fire lances in the entry way and scars of battle between mechanical hunters and the previous intruders. These stations are usually stripped of everything remotely valuable or useful, but some of the more specialized spare parts may

remain, as well as the basic structures. If all three telluric power taps have failed or the station was stripped by looters, then the station's central pillar is dark, and all of the other lights in the station have also failed, leaving the station pitch black.

A few of these pumping stations are in ruins, where most of the machinery has been crushed under falling rocks, or where a tremor or a crack in the rock that gave way after tens of thousands of years of weathering broke the station open, exposing the delicate machinery to centuries or millennia of wind and sand. These stations obviously lack any functional defenses, but even those that haven't already been looted usually contain little of use because most of the delicate components inside have been badly damaged by exposure to the elements.

Damaged Pumping Stations

Most of these are found along sluggish canals. Inside, the central pillar is usually somewhat dim. At least one of the mechanical men still works unless the station has only just begun to fail. However, something is obviously wrong with the station. Perhaps a broken part became jammed and the mechanical man could not remove it to replace it with a spare. Alternatively, perhaps one mechanical man broke down and the other is damaged and is not fully able to perform its functions. In both cases, interested characters may be able to repair the station, transforming a sluggish canal into a faster flowing one containing more water. Another possibility is that the telluric power taps might also be failing. If so, there is little the characters will be able to do to repair this problem.

Functional Pumping Stations

These facilities have continued to work as they should for more than 35,000 years. As a result, the mechanical man working there has replaced almost every portion of the station at least once, and more than half of the wealth of spare parts is now worn out and useless. At least one of the three telluric energy taps has almost certainly failed, and the current mechanical man may be a replacement. If so, the original now sits in pieces in the room devoted to spare parts, its parts scavenged by the still-functioning mechanical man to repair itself. If present, at least some of the fire lances and mechanical hunters likely still function, but most may not. These stations are visibly ancient, and even the unused replacement parts still in storage appear aged and at least slightly worn. However, the pumping station remains a marvel of technology.

After dealing with the fire lances and mechanical hunters, explorers could strip a functional pumping station of all working parts, but doing so will cause it to fail and has an immediate and obvious effect on the canal the station serves. If the canal is barely functional, it swiftly becomes a dead canal, and even a full and swiftly flowing canal slows and becomes noticeably shallower downstream from the pumping station. Also, the mechanical man will attempt to correct any problems until it is shut off. Less unscrupulous explorers can freely take any spare parts the mechanical man is not currently using, but doing so clearly dooms the canal to fail sooner than it otherwise would. However, characters could also borrow spare parts and craft replacements of most of them. Careful examination of the station can reveal a great deal about ancient Martian technology.

Hidden Research Stations

Late in the *naBrifanoon*, some ancient Martians saw the coming fall of civilization and sought ways to avert it. Others hoped to maintain order and civilization by force, and worked to create new and ever more terrible weapons. While much of this research took place in now-vanished universities, especially once ancient Martian civilization had begun to decline, researchers concealed their work from their fellows, building isolated research stations far from barbarian invaders or academic rivals.

Located well away from any cities or major canals, some of these research bases were isolated because of the potential dangers of their work, while others were also hideouts for dissidents and rebels who would face arrest or execution if officials ever discovered their location. A few were buried under the sand and were only accessible through carefully concealed entrances. Others

were in caves at the base of mountains or at the edges of the polar caps. Some were shut down or destroyed once their work was complete or when government forces discovered them, but an equal number remained unfound. Eventually, all were abandoned as Martian civilization declined, but some remain relatively intact as they lay hidden, waiting for modern explorers to find them.

A few of these stations contain active telluric power taps and defenses like those on buried pumping stations. Others appear to have been at least partially stripped before they were abandoned. A few contain traces of battle, including burnt and melted patches on the walls, broken in doors, and perhaps even one or two partially charred skeletons. The following is a unique and particularly well-preserved example.

The Desert Flower

The Desert Flower was a research facility built in the last days of the ancient Martian civilization. As Martian civilization began to fall into barbarism, researchers attempted to preserve the past by literally preserving themselves. Not content to transfer knowledge or skills into mind crystals (see p. 59), the researchers attempted the ultimate feat of transferring their personalities into them. All but one of these attempts failed and in the process killed the subject or transformed them into a mindless husk. However, one researcher, Narda, succeeded. Her body died, but she transferred her conscious mind into an eternal and unchanging mind crystal. The researchers designed this station with an eye to defending it against scavengers or barbarian raiders. In defiance of custom, they built armaments into the mechanical men they used to help maintain the facility. As with most ancient Martian technology, it was once powered by a telluric energy tap. However, knowing that this might fail and that the researchers might be unable to acquire the equipment necessary to repair it, they also built a solar backup, using five parabolic solar mirrors to recharge the energy storage crystals in case the telluric energy tap ever failed. Either the energy tap or the solar mirrors could keep the building, the mechanical men and the pumps that brought water up from far beneath the desert operating.

The surviving researchers were overjoyed at the success of Narda, but their enthusiasm soon waned as they realized that large portions of her memory were missing and that her personality was significantly changed. Although she remembered much of her past and everything about how to operate and care for the research station, she remembered only fragments of the scientific and technical knowledge which had made her such an important part of this project. Also, after her transformation she became an eccentric mystic, where she had previously been a brilliant and dedicated scientist. With their options being death, serious brain damage, or a success that stripped them of most of their knowledge and warped their personalities, researchers declined to continue these experiments. As conditions on the rest of Mars worsened, most researchers departed hoping to find other more practical safe havens where they could find a way to preserve their knowledge and help Martian civilization rise again someday.

Only Narda's two closest friends stayed behind when the others left, and within 30 years both of them had died, leaving Narda

alone with the mechanical men. Isolated and caring little for the outside world, Narda ordered the mechanical men around and kept the facility in good repair, but over the next few centuries, she allowed the desert to bury the entire facility because she no longer cared about the outside world, and imagined herself as the last surviving Martian, alone in an endless sea of sand. Hidden in this fashion, scavengers and barbarians never found the site, but after 15,000 years the telluric energy tap failed, and the building was buried under too much sand to allow the solar mirrors to open, so the entire facility shut down for the next 20,000 years.

12 years ago, a small group of nomadic Hill Martians became lost in a sand storm and took shelter behind the large sand dune that buried the base. When the storm ended, they noticed worked stone visible where the storm had blown away the sand from a portion of the front of the building. Several hours work allowed them to get inside, and they eventually found the chamber containing Narda's crystal. The small amount of sunlight filtering in through the open door partially revived Narda and she asked for more light. Thinking they were hearing the voice of a god or spirit, most of the Hill Martians fled, but several stayed behind in the hopes of gaining some boon from this strange god.

Knowing that they would understand little about her history, Narda told these Martians that she was a goddess and that the building was her temple. Upon learning the state of Mars, she said that she would provide for all who lived in the temple and helped the mechanical men keep it working. She also promised that she would keep all residents safe from the dangers of the outside world. The Hill Martians were interested. They uncovered the solar mirrors and helped recharge the mechanical men. At this point, the temple had water, light, and heat, and Narda told some of the Martians that they should bring their animals and seed and that she would help them grow food. Seeing water appear in the middle of the desert and light burning without flame, the Hill Martians agreed, and soon several hundred of them were living there.

However, when a violent disagreement between two of these Martians left one close to death, Narda was horrified by the violence now common on Mars and ordered her mechanical men to use peace gas to disarm all of the Martians. When they pleaded with her that they could not defend themselves against raiders, she also promised to protect them. When the first raid left several

dozen raiders incapacitated by the peace gas and four dead from the mechanical men's fire lances, the residents understood that they were living in the temple of a powerful goddess.

That attack occurred two years ago. Since that time, the Martians have been living in peace. However, Narda fears discovery, worrying that she might be destroyed and that the temple could be overrun by a barbarian army or stripped by dozens of determined looters. When the remnants of a small caravan which had become lost in the desert stumbled into the temple six months ago, Narda asked the residents to aid them, but then she used peace gas to incapacitate them while her mechanical men confiscated their weapons and supplies. Narda told the members of the caravan that they were now residents of the temple and that their only other option was to venture out into the desert without maps or supplies. One of the members of this caravan was a human laborer named Joseph Combs, who is poorly educated and could tell Narda little more about the human presence on Mars than she had already learned, but talking to him allowed Narda to learn English.

Discovering the Desert Flower

Assuming that the characters have a steam launch or some other sky galleon, they are likely to either notice oddly bright reflections coming from a portion of the Martian desert or hear about these reflections from traders who also mention that a caravan recently vanished in this region. When the characters approach the source of these reflections, they notice a series of five large foldable parabolic mirrors all jutting up from a large and clearly ancient stone building. Another reflection comes from the front of the building, where a fountain sprays water into a large pond that irrigates almost a hundred acres of land that have been transformed from desert into productive farms. More than a hundred Martians work these fields, and anyone using a spyglass sees a

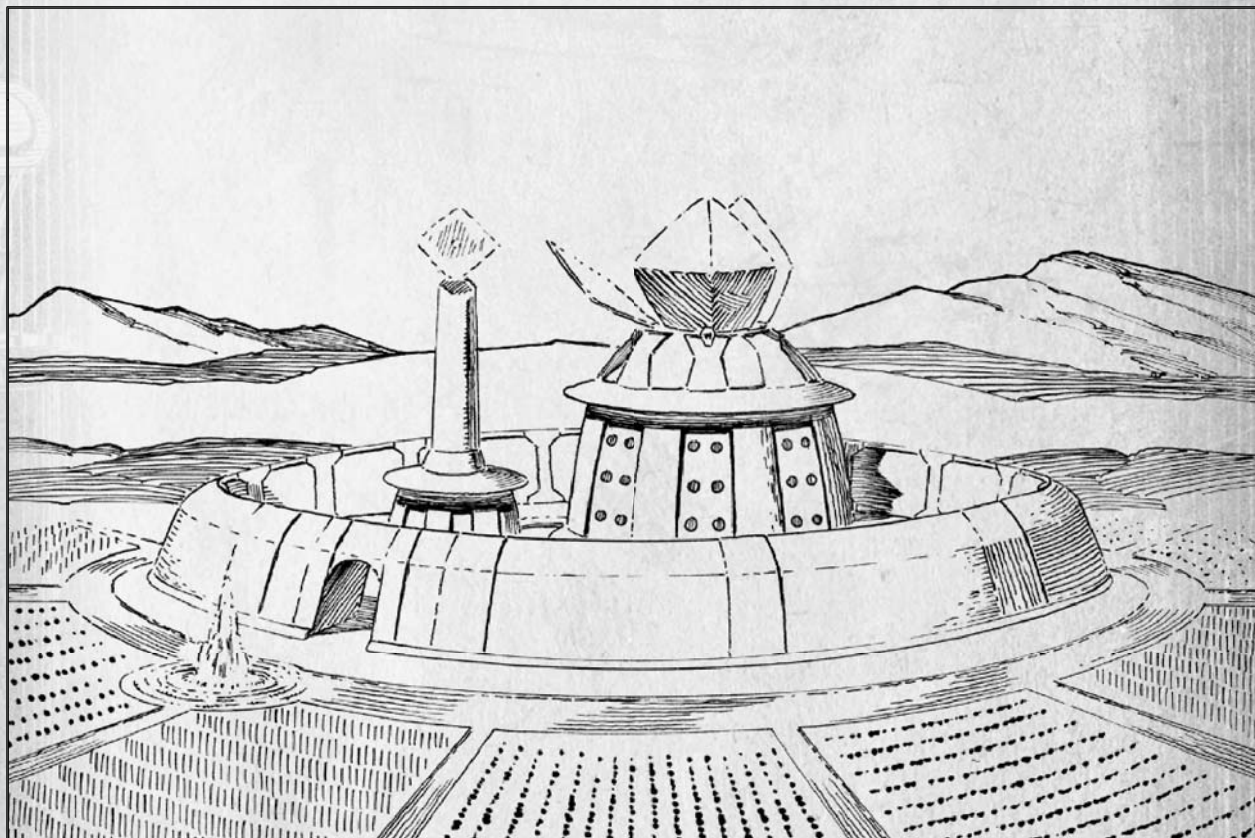
single human and several strange, large and slow moving figures that appear to be wearing heavy metal armor. If the characters arrive at night, they instead see a series of lights in the middle of the desert. These lights come from a region where the nearest other settlement is several hundred miles away, and the nearest city is even farther.

Regardless of when the characters discover the facility, once they land, at least half a dozen Hill Martians run out to greet any visitors, welcoming them to *Ba-Rhantol*, which translates as "the Flower Temple." Several of them speak English, and unlike most Hill Martians, none are armed with anything larger than a knife.

If the characters act aggressive or threatening at any point, Narda attempts the same strategy as she used against the raiders, using her mechanical men to incapacitate the visitors with peace gas and then disarming them and taking them inside the temple. Before the characters recover, Narda also orders her mechanical men to carry the sky galleon a hundred yards or so out into the desert and then bury it in the sand. Without tools, the characters would need several hours to unbury it, allowing the mechanical men to easily recapture them.

Narda knows sufficiently little about humans that she considers them to be little more than another variety of marauding barbarians, just from another planet. Joseph Combs' complete lack of technical knowledge convinced Narda that humans must have stolen their technology from some other species or perhaps scavenged it from ancient ruins. However, she refuses to kill needlessly and plans to keep any humans she captures prisoner in the hopes that she can find a way to help them learn to be peaceful, and also to prevent them from notifying their fellows and conquering the temple by force.

If, on the other hand, the players agree to come peacefully, the Martians escort everyone they can inside, promising them food, drink, and a tour of the temple. The Martians attempt to escort all visitors inside, but don't insist if anyone remains with their sky galleon. Anyone who enters the temple sees an ancient and obviously



worn building of a style that is unfamiliar to any of the characters. Any character who can make a difficulty 3 *Academics (Mars)* roll notices that the building's style seems a bit like something they once saw in an ancient Martian text. Despite its age, the building appears to be sturdy and highly defensible, with bars and metal shutters on all the windows and only a single obvious entrance that leads to a short and relatively narrow covered walkway that leads into the central courtyard. If any of the characters ask about the building's defenses, the Martians mention that it is quite safe and that they are protected from bandits.

One of the large folding parabolic mirrors sits on a pillar in the center of the courtyard. Beneath is a single room with no windows and a closed door. The room is surrounded by an oval pond which has two small fountains as well as a walkway connecting the room to the rest of the courtyard. The Martians attempt to escort all visitors into a large dining room obviously capable of serving several hundred people. The room has two doors and an abundance of food and water is set out for the characters.

Then, four mechanical men enter and say in English, "*You are welcome here. You are safe and will live in service to Narda. Please turn over your weapons.*" If the characters resist, three of the mechanical men emit jets of gas that renders everyone in the room semiconscious (see *Peace Gas*, p. 63). The mechanical men then subdue and disarm the characters.

If anyone is still in the characters' cloudship, four other mechanical men throw several canisters of the same gas onto the vessel, swiftly rendering everyone inside semiconscious. The first thing anyone on the ship notices is four canisters landing on the deck and emitting large amounts of the gas. Then, half a dozen mechanical men board the ship, carry off everyone onboard, confiscate all portable weapons, and then once all the characters have been taken inside, they move the ship several hundred yards from the edge of the fields and bury it in the sand. However, the mechanical men take care not to damage the vessel.

The characters each awaken alone in a room without any weapons larger than a pocketknife, but with all of their other belongings. A Martian enters and informs them that the Flower Temple is a safe place where the characters can now live, free from the struggles and violence from the outside world. The Martian also tells the characters that escape is impossible and that the metal men are armed with both gas and weapons of light, and that they keep order within the temple and protect the residents from bandits and other threats. Then, the characters are all released from their rooms and escorted back to the same dining room. Here they can see that anyone still on their ship is also present and unharmed.

The leader of the Martians tells the characters that tomorrow they must help work in the fields, but that the work is not difficult. The characters discover that glowing crystals provide light and heat, which is also used to cook food and heat water. Also, the mechanical men plow the soil, and the crops have an irrigation system also maintained by them. At the end of the first day, the characters can also notice that all five parabolic mirrors fold up like flowers once the sun sets.

If the characters attack either the mechanical men or the Martians, the mechanical men arrive and gas them. This happens even if no one calls for help and no mechanical men are present, so it is clear that the characters are being watched. If the mechanical men show up to gas the characters, the Martians all back away from the characters so as not to be affected by the gas.

While they are outside, the characters see that their ship has vanished. Any character who succeeds at a difficulty 4 *Investigation* roll notices that the large sand dune several hundred yards from the edge of the fields is actually their buried ship. However, it is also clear that unburying it will require several hours if they

have tools, and several days if they must use their hands and that the mechanical men could easily see what they are doing and recapture them.

Meeting Joseph Combs

Out in the fields, the one human the characters saw approaches them. He speaks English and informs them his name is Joseph Combs and that he is an ex-soldier who was working as a guard for the Martian caravan. He is obviously poor and poorly educated and understands little of what he has seen in the Flower Temple. He explains that everyone inside the building is watched by some unknown means, but outside of the building, including in the fields and on the roof, the mechanical men observe people, but that there often aren't enough around to see everyone. He says that he could easily escape, but that he has no idea where he is and doesn't wish to wander through the desert until he dies. He also says that almost all the Martians seem happy to be living in the temple and that some sort of spirit that calls itself a god lives in the temple and that he has spoken to it. He describes it as "a strange talking rock that glows."

Meeting Narda

If any of the characters go to the chamber where Joseph Combs told them that the temple's "god" lives, they find a Martian standing before the door who asks them what they want with Narda. If they ask, the Martian tells them that Narda is the god's name. If the characters say they are there to attack the god, to force it to let them go, or anything similar, the Martian attempts to stop them from entering and two mechanical men approach, one coming down each side of the corridor to block the door. If the characters resist or force their way into the "god's" chamber, the mechanical men use peace gas on them.

If the characters instead say they wish to worship or contemplate the god or even that they wish to talk to it, the Martian allows them to pass and blesses them. Inside, the characters see a large chamber with a wide stone pillar in the center. On top of this pillar is an ovoid of faceted purple crystal approximately three feet tall and two feet in diameter (1 meter by 0.6 meters). The pillar it sits on is inlaid with several small metal plates. The crystal glows with a soft light and is firmly attached to the pillar. Next to the pillar stands a mechanical man who uses peace gas on anyone who attempts any sort of violence in the chamber. Also, if anyone comes within four feet (1.2 meters) of the crystal, it orders them to stop. The mechanical man uses its flame lance to shoot anyone who seems able to fight off the effects of the gas and attempts to attack the crystal.

Regardless of what the characters do, after a minute, a voice comes from one of the metal plates in the pillar. The voice first speaks in one of the common Martian dialects, but if any of the characters speak to it or each other in English, it switches to mildly accented English. It informs the characters that its name is Narda and that it is the god of the temple. The voice also goes on to say that it provides for all of the temple's residents and is keeping them safe from the dangers of the outside world.

If any of the characters demonstrate that they are well educated, Narda explains the temple's true history. Also, if the characters seem interested and non-hostile and are willing to let her ramble on at length, she ends up telling them a great deal about the

“temple.” Although Narda no longer understands more than the most basic principles of how any of the technology in the temple operates, she can describe a great deal about the temple’s operation, including how the parabolic mirrors collect sunlight to power the crystals that pump water and provide light and heat and also recharge the mechanical men.

Departure

There are several methods of escape from the Flower Temple, depending upon the inclinations of the characters. It is clear that attacking the mechanical men or Narda is pointless since any attackers will be gassed or possibly shot and killed. However, the characters have several other possibilities. The most direct and violent solution is to gain access to the building’s roof and sabotage several of the parabolic solar mirrors. The easiest method of accomplishing this is to scale the walls at night and sabotage the closed solar mirrors so that they can’t open in the morning. The mechanical men can fix simple problems like sand or rocks in the mechanisms, but the mechanisms are old and anyone with simple tools (which can be found in the building) can make a *Craft (Mechanics)* roll with a difficulty of 3 to disable a solar mirror such that it can’t open and will be difficult to repair. If the characters disable at least three of the four solar mirrors on the roof, then the lights and heating fail, and if they disable all four mirrors, then the pump for the water also fails. If the latter happens, Narda orders the mechanical men to unbury the character’s ship and asks them to please rescue the people in the temple, since otherwise they would also soon die of thirst.

With the exception of Joseph Combs and several of the Martians who were part of his caravan, all of the Martians are extremely reluctant to leave. The Hill Martians plead with both Narda and the characters, asking them to attempt to repair the “holy mirrors” and “keep the temple alive.” At this point, the characters could easily bargain with Narda to allow them to leave after they repair the solar mirrors. If the characters have spent any significant amount of time talking to Narda, they realize that she is quite honest and would never go back on her word.

Alternatively, more socially inclined characters could potentially talk Narda into letting them go. Convincing her that more people will come looking for them worries Narda, because she is afraid of the outside world learning of the Flower Temple. Also, if any of the characters demonstrate the sort of advanced technical knowledge any scientist or inventor possesses, Narda becomes far more interested in them.

First, she will ask if they could possibly repair one of the half dozen broken mechanical men. The temple contains a large number of spare parts. A *Craft (Mechanics)* roll at difficulty 4 allows the character to repair one of the less badly damaged mechanical men which has suffered no damage to any of its crystals.

Succeeding at this task pleases and impresses Narda. At this point, she asks more questions about the Europeans and what their plans are for Mars. Responses that make Europeans seem like brutal conquerors who care little for their Martian subjects causes Narda to send a trio of mechanical men to destroy the character’s ship and keep them captive. However, if the characters seem compassionate or even simply honestly interested in Mars as

something other than a source of people to oppress, Narda deals with them far more positively. She gives the characters back their ship in return for a promise to try to keep the Flower Temple safe.

Game masters should also reward inventive players who come up with other plausible suggestions. Narda knows only basic medicine and only for Martians. If one of the characters feigns a serious illness, no one in the temple will be able to determine that they are faking, and Narda could be convinced to allow them to leave, and would unbury their ship. A determined hunger strike could accomplish the same goal.

The Mechanical Men

The mechanical men at the Desert Flower are somewhat different from the standard model because they were designed both to protect the building and its inhabitants and also to keep it running. As a result, their armor is somewhat heavier, with a fire lance built into their left arm. They also possess two skills, *Craft* and *Firearms (Fire Lance)*. Nine of the 17 mechanical men know *Craft (Crystal Technology)* and the other eight know *Craft (Mechanics)*. They all possess a reservoir containing peace gas canisters and can either dispense the gas directly or throw the canisters. Finally, Narda is connected to several pair stones that connect her to each of the mechanical men. She can see and hear everything occurring around them and can also give the mechanical men detailed directions.



Archetype: Artifact		Motivation: Duty		
Style: 0		Health: 9		
Primary Attributes				
Body: 6		Charisma: n/a		
Dexterity: 2		Intelligence: 2		
Strength: 6		Willpower: n/a		
Secondary Attributes				
Size: 1		Initiative: 4		
Move: 8		Defense: 9*		
Perception: 4		Stun: 6		
Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	Average
Athletics	6	1	7	(3+)
Brawl	6	1	7	(3+)
Craft	2	4	6	(3)
(Crystal Technology or Mechanics)				
Firearms (Fire Lance)	2	4	6	(3)
Talents				
Alertness, Robust				
Flaw				
Automaton (-2 penalty to any roll that requires original or creative thought)				
Equipment				
6 peace gas canisters				
Fire lance (built into left arm)				
Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Fire Lance	4 L	1	9 L	(4+) L
Punch	1 N	1	6 N	(3) N
*Mechanical Men have an innate armor that provides a +2 bonus to their Defense.				

Narda

Narda is an intelligent mind in a large Martian mind crystal. She is immobile and has no limbs, but the mechanical men obey her

orders and the mind crystal her consciousness resides in is connected to half a dozen pair stones, which allow her to see and hear anything occurring around any of the mechanical men as well as at least one point of view of every room inside the temple. However, she has no ability to observe anything occurring outside of the temple except through the senses of one of her mechanical men. Narda's crystal is quite durable, but it can be destroyed. If this happens, Narda dies.

Archetype: Academic		Motivation: Duty	
Style: 2		Health: 5	
Primary Attributes			
Body: 3		Charisma: 4	
Dexterity: 0		Intelligence: 4	
Strength: 0		Willpower: 3	
Secondary Attributes			
Size: -1		Initiative: 6	
Move: 0		Defense: 8*	
Perception: 7		Stun: cannot be stunned	
Skills	Base	Levels	Rating (Average)
Academics (Mars)	4	1	5 (2+)
Con	4	1	5 (2+)
Craft (Crystal Tech.)	4	2	6 (3)
Craft (Mechanics)	4	3	7 (3+)
Diplomacy	4	2	6 (3)
Empathy	4	1	5 (2+)
Intimidation	4	2	6 (3)
Investigation	4	1	5 (2+)
Linguistics	4	3	7 (3+)
Medicine	4	1	5 (2+)
Performance	4	3	7 (3+)
Science (Physics)	4	1	5 (2+)
Talents			
Quick Reflexes			
*Nada has an innate armor that provides a +4 bonus to her Defense			

Count Van den Broeck and the Lost City of Jansaroon

Count Mathias Van den Broeck is a minor Belgian noble who came to Mars seeking to regain the fortune his drunken father squandered. Before his family's declining fortunes forced him to leave his university, Count Van den Broeck was an eclectic scholar who dabbled in everything from history and classics to chemistry and even the occult. Five years ago, he took the last of his money and came to Mars. He was convinced that Mars contained undiscovered wonders that could make the finder exceptionally wealthy and powerful.

Count Van den Broeck discovered the city of Jansaroon two years ago. A year after he arrived on Mars, he encountered tales of an ancient buried city from "the time when Martians were like unto the gods" amidst the ramblings of a Martian traveling merchant when they were both indulging in powerful local intoxicants in the city of Syrtis Major. Once he was sober, the merchant refused to reveal more about this lost city, but Count Van den Broeck was determined and after some careful investigation was able to blackmail the merchant into revealing what little he knew. After almost two years of searching the most remote corners of the vast Amazonian desert, Count Van den Broeck finally located the ruins of the city. He entered the city with the trio of ruthless and greedy assistants he had lured to help him with promises of wealth and power.

Except for a few worn spires, almost the entire city was buried under the sand, but it was not entirely forgotten. A small section of the low outskirts of Jansaroon remained unburied. Once home to poor traders who traveled down the now dead canal to Jansaroon, it was now home to the town of Kalaan, where a small group of Martian holy people worshiped the buried city and honored their long-ago ancestors. Deep wells dug in the last remnant of the dead canal provided them with sufficient water.

Kalaan was once home to more than 2,000 inhabitants, but its population had dwindled to only 500. However, it also had a minor and erratic wonder. One of Jansaroon's telluric energy taps still worked intermittently, and periodically supplied heat and light to almost half of the buildings in Kalaan.

The inhabitants had a strict rule: they never dug in the city, but anything they could find on the surface, or inside a building that had collapsed sufficiently that they didn't need to break into it, was a gift from their holy ancestors. They used some of the crystals they uncovered and sold the rest. Although they sold no more than one or two a year, these sales are what spawned the legends that Count Van den Broeck eventually tracked down.

The count asked these Martians to take him into the ruins of Jansaroon's towers. They complied, but attempted to stop him

when he tried to break into one of these buried buildings, pleading that they were sacred. He shot two of the Martians and had his three assistants take a dozen children hostage. Since that time, the town has been under the count's control. The people serve him because they fear for their safety and the safety of their children.

The count's initial explorations of Jansaroon yielded a cache of fire jewels that more than replenished the last of his funds that he had spent on this search, but he wanted far more. Excavating the city and learning to make use of its technology was a daunting task, but not one he was willing to share. Using his newly acquired funds, he hired more than a dozen well-armed Hill Martian guards and a large number of useful tools. Then, he used these guards to force the people of Kalaan to begin excavating portions of the city. Most of it was in ruins, but he discovered a few sealed storerooms and laboratories which had been designed to keep out the sand.

Count Van den Broeck has acquired a score of working fire lances and three heat rays. Far more importantly, he has also managed to restore the one functioning telluric power tap so that it could provide far more power. This power tap allows him to recharge the weapons' storage crystals, and within the last six months he has also been able use it to power the telluric impeller he was able to repair. He has also found a dozen lifting harnesses as well as a store of lifting serum. Most of it was spoiled, but Count Van den Broeck is a skilled chemist and has managed to duplicate the serum. He accomplished this by testing it on the Martian villagers, several of whom died during these experiments.

Count Van den Broeck regards the Martian inhabitants of Kalaan as little more than animals and has them whipped for saying anything against him or his rule. He is also exceptionally ambitious. His continuing excavations and experiments require equipment that he must buy or steal from European colonists. To help him acquire money and to control the town and its surroundings, he took command of a band of ruthless Hill Martian bandits who had raided the town and their fellow Hill Martians. He challenged the leader to single combat and killed him, aided by the spider cloth armor tunic and fire lance he had acquired in the ruins. Since that time, he and his three human assistants have ruled Kalaan. They are now aided by approximately one hundred equally ruthless Hill Martian bandits who divide their efforts between policing the town and going on raids armed with salvaged technology. Using the last of the money he gained from selling the fire jewels, he purchased a Martian screw galley and refitted it with an energy storage crystal and a heat ray. Then, he equipped the crew with fire lances and ordered them to begin preying on Martian merchant ships. He ordered them to avoid attacking European vessels to avoid too much attention from the Royal Navy. This ship began committing acts of piracy slightly more than a year ago. Since that time, he has gained sufficient wealth to purchase two additional screw galleys as well as several black market British weapons. The Hill Martian pirates on these vessels remain loyal to him, because only he can recharge the energy storage crystals that propel the vessels and power the heat ray.

Count Van den Broeck has also stationed a handful of agents in several large cities. They use pair stones to report the destinations and cargo of various sky galleons and canal boats carrying valuable cargoes. Any that seem both useful and insufficiently protected become a target for the pirates. Occasionally, one of these agents signs on or books passage on a particularly tempting vessel and relays the ships approximate position to Count Van den Broeck and his bandits. The agent typically either jumps ship shortly before the attack or finds a way to sabotage the vessel en route to make it especially easy prey for his pirates. When possible, the pirates steal the ship and kill the crew, leaving no one to report their activities. So far, all information about them has

come from the two ships that managed to escape from Count Van den Broeck's pirates and a single survivor of another attack, who hid while the pirates looted the ship he was on.

Count Van den Broeck has now stolen sufficient funds to begin expanding his gang of bandits into a small isolated empire. He recently conquered two Hill Martian villages near Jansaroon and recruited the most violent and brutal Hill Martians to work as pirates or as guards in Jansaroon. The count has also begun planning for larger conquests, because several months ago his excavations uncovered a small amount of peace gas in a laboratory where it was being manufactured. He recently discovered how to duplicate this gas and has been planning how best to use it to capture additional cloudships and conquer neighboring villages.

Count Van den Broeck knows he cannot fight the massed forces of the British Navy, and understands that he has no chance of conquering all of Mars. Instead, he is attempting to carve out his own small empire containing dozens of villages and towns and a few previously independent Martian cities. However, he is also aware that the British authorities object to piracy and will eventually discover his actions. For the past several months, he has also been preparing to defend Jansaroon against attack. His hope is to make his small empire sufficiently costly to attack that he can negotiate a peace treaty.

Learning about Count Van den Broeck

Characters can encounter Count Van den Broeck and the city of Jansaroon in several ways. The most straightforward is hearing reports about ships disappearing in a relatively remote region of Mars. Eventually, these reports also include stories of pirates using exceptionally swift vessels and strange weapons. The most recent report of these activities comes from a single Martian survivor of an attack who hid from the raiders and then miraculously survived when they scuttled the ship and let it crash into the desert below. The survivor was the cook on a merchant vessel and hid for most of the attack. He reports seeing Hill Martians flying like High Martians and seeing the ship's sails and main mast burned away with a brilliant jet of smokeless fire the likes of which he had never seen before. He is suffering from exposure and starvation, but seems sane and clear-headed. Most of the humans who hear his report dismiss him as superstitious or possibly insane, but he is eager to prove the truth of what he said, giving clear directions to where his ship crashed. However, he's completely unwilling to accompany any search for his crashed ship and warns the characters about the deadly pirates. Also, the joint British-Martian trading firm *Tharis Spice & Liquor* has recently offered a £500 reward for information that directly aids in the capture of the pirates, and a £2,500 reward for the capture of either the leader of the pirates or the pirate fleet.

Alternatively, one or more of the characters may encounter one of the monographs about Martian history and technology that Count Van den Broeck wrote before he vanished. Before he set off on his extended search for Jansaroon, he was staying in the Nelson Arms Hotel in Syrtis Major. After he had been gone for several months, the hotel sold the papers and other items he left there. These papers can now be found in Aberystwyth Books, a small used book dealer in Syrtis Major, specializing in scholarly books and translations of Martian texts. A character interested in Martian archeology or folklore could easily find these papers. Any character who can make an *Academics (Mars)* roll of difficulty 3 will have heard of Count Van den Broeck. He was a minor but somewhat controversial figure in Martian studies, who arrived

on Mars several years ago and began publishing monographs describing his theories on the wonders of ancient Martian technology, while simultaneously attempting to invite himself along on various archeological expeditions, despite having only minimal qualifications.

Many scholars of Mars know that Count Van den Broeck vanished roughly two years ago. For a year before his disappearance, he had regularly attempted to acquire investors and equipment to help him locate and excavate an ancient Martian city that he believed to contain a wealth of technological wonders. His last paper on his expedition states that anyone who finds this city would have access to wondrous weapons that might possibly be more advanced than even the finest European weapons, and that such a city could become the center of a new Martian kingdom. He also describes the region his expedition would be searching. This expedition never returned and the scholars who knew him believed that Count Van den Broeck died in the Martian desert still searching for his fabled lost city. If the characters look, they can also find a few scholars who met him. They all describe him as passionate, erratic, occasionally brilliant, but also far too impressed with himself and generally somewhat abrasive to be around. Several mention that he had a violent temper.

His papers contain additional details of his search for the lost city, including a rough map of his best guess as to where the lost city he was searching for might be located. The map shows three locations, all of which are within 600 miles (roughly 1000 kilometers) of one another. If the characters examine these locations, one turns out to be the ruins of a city from the last days of Seldon's empire, the second location is home to nothing more than a periodic camp for nomadic Hill Martians, and the third is Jansaroon. None of these locations appear on standard maps of Mars. However, if anyone among the characters has been paying attention to reports of piracy and bandits, they could notice that two of the three sites, Jansaroon and the Hill Martian camp, are both within the region where a growing number of Martian merchant cloudships have been vanishing for slightly more than a year.

A third, far more dramatic possibility is that the characters know nothing of the pirates or any connection to Count Van den Broeck, but are passengers on a Martian cloudship attacked by the pirates. The attack the characters witness is like nothing they have ever seen. The two attacking vessels both appear to be ordinary screw galleys, but move considerably faster than usual. Also, both of the ships possess strange shining weapons that they raise when the ships begin their attack. These weapons' range is extremely long and their beams burn whatever they touch. They can fire quite rapidly and swiftly disables the ship the characters are on. After burning off the sails, more than a dozen Hill Martians armed with strange crystal rifles fly over to the merchant ship like High Martians.

The pirates have strict orders from Count Van den Broeck to accept the surrender of any humans, especially any who seem either well-born or learned. The characters' vessel is so clearly outmatched that any resistance is pointless. After this attack, the characters end up going to Jansaroon locked in the hold of one of the pirate ships.

Getting to Jansaroon

In addition to arriving as prisoners of the Martian pirates, the characters have several other possible options for locating and getting to Jansaroon. If they have the Count's papers, then they have only two locations to check. Otherwise, they have an area

roughly 800 miles (1,300 kilometers) across where the various attacks have all happened. Jansaroon is close to the center of this region.

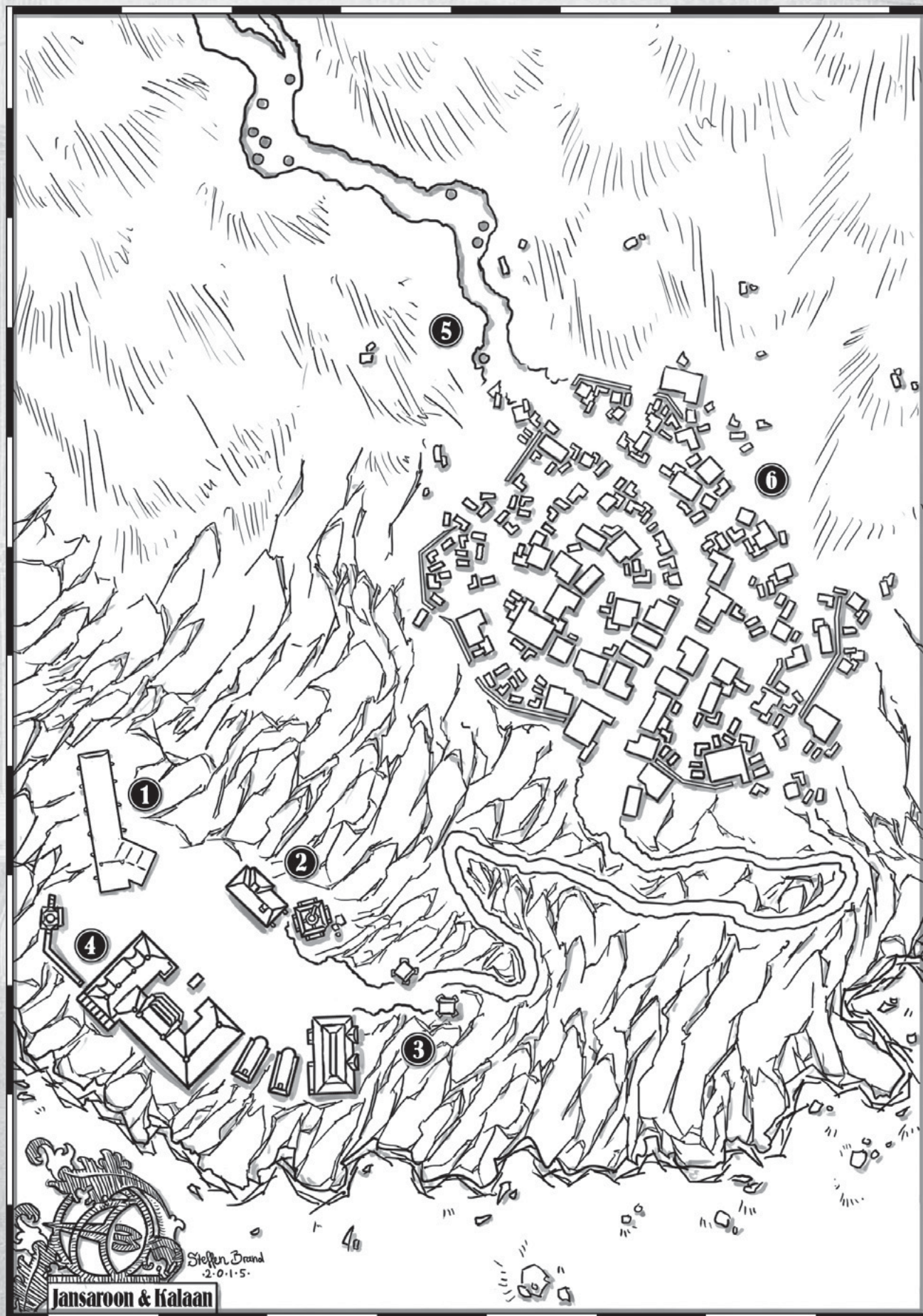
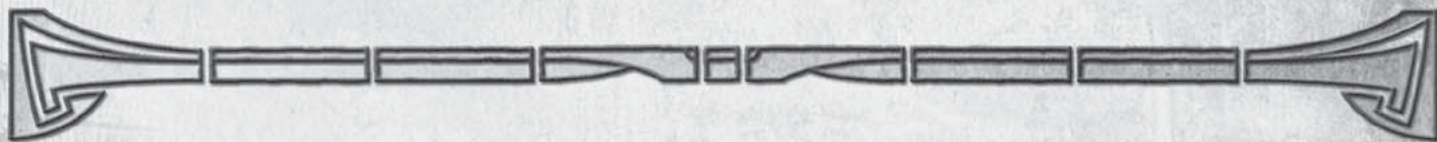
The characters could acquire more information by talking to some of the local Hill Martian tribes. If they talk to the tribes near Jansaroon who are under Count Van den Broeck's control, these questions will result in their being captured at gunpoint and taken to Jansaroon to see the count. However, if they ask tribes on the outskirts of this region and are either skilled at diplomacy or are willing to pay well for the information, they learn that someone with strange weapons has been conquering a few of local Hill Martian tribes, and that this person comes from the holy city of Kalaan. Further diplomacy or funds will also get the character's the location of Kalaan as well as a map of the terrain and the locations of water and shelter along the way. If the characters attempt to be stealthy and travel overland using this information, they can easily sneak within sight of Kalaan without being discovered.

Alternatively, if one of the characters is skilled at navigation and can succeed at a *Survival (Navigation)* roll with a difficulty of 3, they can fly a cloudship to the location provided by the Hill Martians or found on Count Van den Broeck's map at night, using a compass and the stars to navigate. Once there, they see the lights of Kalaan and could land nearby and sneak up on the city, provided the characters attempt to be stealthy and douse or cover all lights on their ship.

Less stealthy characters can simply arrive in broad daylight. As long as they don't show up in a large, heavily armed cloudship, as soon as they come into sight, one of the count's modified screw galleys will lift off and escort them to a landing site, and the characters will not be harmed, assuming they don't attack first. The characters will then be escorted to see Count Van den Broeck. A dozen Martians armed with swords and strange crystal rifles approach their vessel and offer to escort them to see the count. These guards ask the characters to leave all of their weapons on their vessel. Anyone attempting to disobey these orders will be captured, or killed if they attack. However, Count Van den Broeck is very interested to meet any European visitors. He misses the company of other scholars and as long as he is firmly in charge, he would be more than happy to work with intelligent assistants and colleagues. Also, he knows that he's not quite ready to resist a concerted attack on Jansaroon, and attempts to postpone the threat of any such attack until he is confident that he could defend his city well enough to repel all but the largest of attacks.

Jansaroon

The city sits in the middle of the Amazonian desert, most of the way down a series of gentle cliffs that were once the shores of a small island in an ancient Martian sea. Characters who have studied Martian history and geology can instantly see that the city appears to have been built not when the Martian seas were receding, but when they still existed, making it older than any previously discovered Martian city. Most of it is still covered by sand, but there are signs of recent and on-going excavation all around the city, with huge piles of sand and cleared rubble. The only inhabited region is a section on the edge of the city containing a series of one-story buildings that are worn, but also show signs of centuries worth of restorations. These buildings have artificial lights, as does a large two-story building half a mile closer to the center of the city, which the characters learn is the count's palace. These lights seem bright and unflickering, like electric lights. Even if the characters arrive during the day, the shadows from the cliff



Wonders of the Past

will provide sufficient shade to make these lights obvious and if they arrive in the evening, the small inhabited portion of city blazes with light like parts of 1880s London or Paris.

Closer observation reveals that this is also a city with serious problems. Except for the well-armed Hill Martians, the count, and his three human assistants, everyone in the town is a Canal Martian who is thin, obviously overworked, and openly fearful of humans and Hill Martians. Part of the reason for this fear is obvious. A pair of cages mounted on tall metal poles sit along the half-mile street between Kalaan and the count's palace. The inhabitant of one of the cages has clearly been dead for at least a week and is mostly a dried skeleton. The other inhabitant is a Canal Martian who is clearly close to starving to death. A segment of ancient wall located near the center of Kalaan has clearly had a pair of sturdy manacles recently attached to it. This wall is stained with dried blood. At some point in their visit, the characters will see a local Canal Martian chained there and whipped savagely by some of the Hill Martians.

If the characters sneak in, the local Canal Martians act with great deference towards them, believing them to be some of Count Van den Broeck's human lieutenants and assistants. The Martians obey any requests as if they were orders and parents clutch their children tightly as the characters walk by. If any of the characters succeed in a difficulty 1 *Diplomacy* or *Empathy* test, they are certain that the Martians are terrified of them in ways that none of the characters have seen before. If they ask the reason for this fear, none of the Martians answer and most leave rapidly. If the characters announce they are outsiders, the reaction will be mixed. Some Martians suspect them of attempting a trick and leave. Others leave in the hopes of telling one of Count Van den Broeck's guards in return for a reward, and a few will step forward fearfully and warn the characters that they should flee because someone is certain to tell Count Van den Broeck's guards of their presence.

If the characters arrive openly, they see little of the local Canal Martians unless they either sneak out or insist upon seeing the town. In the second case, the characters are always accompanied by several Martian guards. In both cases, the few Canal Martians the characters see will be even more fearful, because they are afraid of both humans and the count's piratical guards.

Meeting Count Van den Broeck

Regardless of how they arrive, Count Van den Broeck will be eager to meet the player characters, especially any European characters who appear well dressed. His first question is about the nature of their visit to what he refers to as "my city." He openly welcomes anyone who mentions having found his notes and is especially pleased if any of the characters have read his published monographs. In this case, he'll be both friendly and considerably less wary, unless the characters give him reason to be.

Anyone foolish enough to tell him that they have been hunting pirates and are looking to claim the reward for the capture of the pirate's leader will cause Count Van den Broeck to laugh and bow, and then to ask them what they plan to do now that they have found him. He then glances over at the dozen well-armed Hill Martian guards who are all now clearly ready to draw their weapons.

Characters whose introduction falls somewhere between these two extremes are treated with courtesy, but some degree of caution. The count becomes far more interested in any characters who are scholars, scientists, or inventors. He has not talked to other well-educated Europeans for two years and is obviously

quite eager to do so. Even if the characters make a poor first impression, as long as they don't actively threaten or attempt to harm him, he'll relax if he can engage in stimulating intellectual discourse with someone willing to treat him as an intellectual equal or superior. However, even if he was initially inclined to trust the characters, if an intelligent and educated character calls him insane or stupid or dismisses his ideas as mad or worthless, he'll become exceptionally angry and orders his guards to throw all of the characters into the cells that he has had constructed in the back of his palace.

Regardless of whether the characters are locked in a cell and fed slops or are given guest rooms outfitted with luxurious stolen goods and fed the best stolen food, learning Count Van den Broeck's plans is exceedingly easy. He loves the sound of his own voice and is very pleased at his accomplishments. He describes, at great length, how he located Jansaroon and "convinced" the local people to "assist" with his excavations. He talks in general terms about his discoveries of ancient Martian technology, mentioning that they used both the power of the sun and some unknown form of power from the ground, which although he doesn't fully understand, he was able to utilize by repairing a faulty connection. He describes finding fire lances and heat rays and then discovering the energy storage crystals that allowed them both to work without direct sunlight.

If any of the characters is well educated, he'll boastfully go into more depth about his understanding of how the technology works and how it can be used, whether he trusts them or not. He will even offer to demonstrate some of this technology. He will start by having one of his guards shoot a fire lance at a wooden target, and if the characters express an interest, he'll show off the heat ray he had installed in one of the city's half-fallen tower, using it to vaporize the still living prisoner in the cage, only saying, "That wretch has likely suffered enough for his disrespect."

The count won't mention the peace gas if the characters give him reason to distrust them, but if he does not actively distrust them, he won't be able to resist talking about it and how he discovered how to manufacture it. If the characters ask to see how it works, his reaction depends upon how much he likes and trusts the characters. If he has mixed feelings about them, he will test it on one of the other characters. However, if the characters have favorably impressed him, then one of them could easily persuade him to try it on one of his guards, which will not please his guards.

If the characters ask about the Martians in the cages or anything else about the local people, the count describes them as a weak-minded people who were blinded by superstition to the amazing wonders and impressive weapons under their feet, saying that "They only understand force." If anyone asks about the crimes of the Martians in the cages, the count mentions casually that the dead one struck one of his guards, while the living prisoner tried convincing the other Canal Martians not to work unless they were given more food.

To anyone who cares about such things, it is perfectly clear that the count doesn't consider the Martians to be anything more than dumb animals. If someone gets him talking about this, he will say the same things about his guards. He will say this quietly if he is sober, but if any of the characters drink with him and keep him in good spirits, he will be louder and more forthright in his opinions about his guards being "usefully violent beasts."

If he trusts the characters to any extent, the count expounds at length about his plans for creating his own Martian kingdom. If pressed he'll mention defenses he is preparing against attack by the British Navy and defends the idea of having to kill dozens or perhaps hundreds of British sailors as necessary for maintaining the security of his "nation." He also admits to sending the Hill

Martians out to commit piracy, and excuses doing so by saying that they have strict instructions to only attack Martian vessels.

If after this explanation the characters seem willing to work with him, he will trust them more. He asks any scientists or historians to help with his research and can even be persuaded to allow characters with technical skills to help him manufacture more peace gas. During this process, he goes on at great length about his brilliance at discovering how to manufacture it despite having only samples of the gas and a mostly ruined laboratory where the ancient Martians manufactured the gas. During his monologues, a clever character could steal a small container of the gas or even an entire peace gas grenade.

No matter how much the count trusts the characters, he won't allow them to leave Jansaroon. He excuses his actions by stating that his conquests are at a "delicate stage." To keep the characters from escaping, he has guards posted on their cloudship and also instructs the Hill Martians guarding Kalaan to prevent the character from leaving by other means.

Success and Escape

Directly bringing Count Van den Broeck to justice is very difficult. He always has at least one bodyguard in the same room with him, and a dozen more only moments away. Capturing him and bringing him back to justice is almost impossible, and although killing him is possible, anyone attempting this is certain to be killed by his guards unless they are extremely clever. However, there are other options.

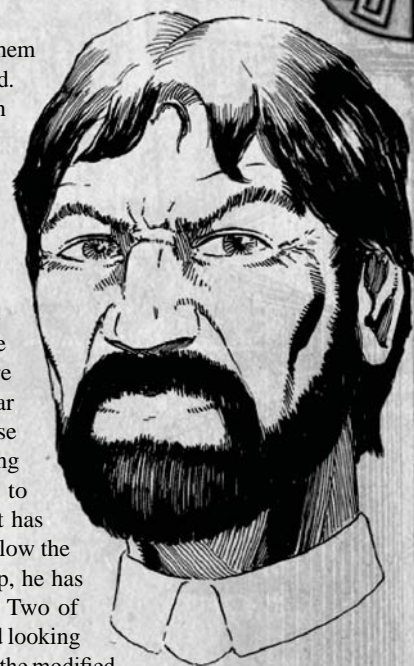
If any of the characters protests or otherwise shows strong discomfort at seeing any of the Martian servants or workers whipped or executed, word of their discomfort spreads to a small but dedicated group of Martian rebels who seek to overthrow Count Van den Broeck and his brutal Hill Martian guards. Very tentatively and in private, one of the Canal Martian servants asks a character who objected to the brutal treatment of the Martians what they think of Count Van den Broeck's treatment of their people. The Martian is obviously somewhat nervous, but anyone making a difficulty 2 *Diplomacy* or *Empathy* roll will be able to tell the Martian is also sincere. If the character shows some degree of sympathy, the Martian begins talking about what he or she has seen of how Count Van den Broeck and his soldiers treat other Martians. The descriptions are graphic and terrible and include torture and murder for sport as well as the same excessive punishments that the characters have already witnessed. The count and his guards dismiss the Canal Martians as not being a serious threat, and so they are also watched considerably less closely than the characters.

Alternatively, any character who can make a difficulty 2 *Diplomacy* or *Empathy* roll while observing the count's Hill Martian guards when he talks about how they are little more than beasts notices the guards' brief looks of hatred and contempt. If the count is on relatively good terms with the characters, then the guards talk freely with them, and getting one of the guards alone and asking their opinion of the count could be a way to turn that guard and then his fellows against him. Discussing how the count is certain to flee and to leave them to be killed if the British Navy attacks the city will earn the guard's grudging agreement.

Turning the guards against the count provides a chance for a relatively safe and bloodless attack on the count, as does stealing a canister of peace gas and using it to incapacitate the count and his guards. Working with the local Canal Martians is riskier, but the characters might be able to provide them with fire lances and

peace gas, which could allow them to defeat the count and his guard.

A more dramatic option involves stealing one of the count's ships. He shows the characters around the ships, proudly displaying the heat rays and the British weapons he purchased on the black market, as well as the crystals he is using to propel the craft. He explains how few people are needed to operate it, leaving far more room for marines who use the lifting harnesses and lifting serum that he also is happy to show off. Although the count has instructed his guards not to allow the characters near their own ship, he has not done this with his ships. Two of his ships are out patrolling and looking from prey, but the third, one of the modified sky runner screw galleys, remains behind, to help defend Jansaroon in case of attack. This ship has only three guards, and a carefully thrown canister of peace gas could incapacitate all of them. If the characters can operate a cloudship, they can easily operate this vessel and escape.



Count Mathias Van den Broeck

Archetype: Scientist **Motivation:** Greed
Style: 3 **Health:** 8

Primary Attributes

Body: 4 **Charisma:** 3
Dexterity: 3 **Intelligence:** 4
Strength: 4 **Willpower:** 4

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Initiative:** 7
Move: 7 **Defense:** 9*
Perception: 8 **Stun:** 4

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Academics (Archeology)	4	3	7	(3+)
Academics (Mars)	4	2	6	(3)
Brawl	4	2	6	(3)
Con	3	2	5	(2+)
Craft (Mechanics)	4	2	6	(3)
Diplomacy	3	2	5	(2+)
Empathy	4	1	5	(2+)
Firearms	3	2	5	(2+)
Intimidation	3	4	7	(3+)
Investigation	4	2	6	(3)
Linguistics	4	2	6	(3)
Melee	4	3	7	(3+)
Science (Chemistry)	4	4	8	(4)

Talents

Chemist (the difficulty for developing and producing chemicals is reduced by 1), **Lucky**

Equipment

Any time he is outside of his palace, Count Van den Broeck is armed with a large Colt revolver and a sabre, and wears his suit of spider cloth armor.

Flaw

Overconfident

Weapon	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Colt revolver	3 L	0	8 L	(4) L
Sabre	3 L	0	10 L	(5) L

*including Spider Cloth Armor; see p. 64 for rules

Hill Martian Guards

Primary Attributes

Body: 2	Charisma: 2
Dexterity: 3	Intelligence: 3
Strength: 3	Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0	Initiative: 6
Move: 6	Defense: 5
Perception: 7	Stun: 2
Health: 4	

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	3	6	(3)
Empathy	3	2	5	(2+)
Firearms	3	2	5	(2+)
Melee	3	3	6	(3)
Streetwise	2	2	4	(2)
Stealth	3	2	5	(2+)
Athletics	3	2	5	(2+)
Survival	3	3	6	(3)

Talents

Combat Aptitude, Alertness

Weapon	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Punch	0 N	0	6 N	(3) N
Fire Lance	4 L	0	9 L	(4+) L
Sabre	3 L	0	9 L	(4+) L

Canal Martians of Kalaan

Primary Attributes

Body: 2	Charisma: 2
Dexterity: 3	Intelligence: 3
Strength: 3	Willpower: 2

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0	Initiative: 6
Move: 6	Defense: 5
Perception: 5	Stun: 2
Health: 4	

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Brawl	3	1	4	(2)
Empathy	3	2	5	(2+)
Firearms	3	2	5	(2+)
Melee	3	1	4	(2)
Streetwise	2	3	5	(2+)
Stealth	3	2	5	(2+)
Survival	3	2	5	(2+)

Weapon	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Punch	0 N	0	4 N	(2) N

Weapon	Dmg	Rng	Cap	Rate	Spd	Wt
Hale Rocket	5D*	2000 ft / 600 m	1	½**	S	20 lbs / 10 kg
Hale Rocket Battery	7D*	2000 ft / 600 m	1	¼**	S	250 lbs / 115 kg

*The Hale rockets have an Area of Effect (see Core Rules p. 210) of 6 ft / 2 m. 4 Successes are needed in a Gunnery roll to hit the target. If the attempt misses, the rocket scatters 3 ft / 1 m for every point by which the roll failed, going off in a random direction.

**Characters with the Instant Reload Talent double the weapon's rate of fire

Count Van den Broeck's Pirate Ships

Currently, the count's pirates have three ships. All of them were initially screw galleys, but now they use a telluric impeller when they are within 500 miles (800 kilometers) of Jansaroon. Also, the count replaced all of the turncranks with an energy storage crystal weighing 20 tons, which can power the craft when it is out of range of the telluric impeller. When using the telluric impeller, both ships can travel at a speed of 45 knots, while using the energy storage crystal allows the craft to travel as fast as a steam powered aerial gunboat. Because all three vessels are considerably lighter, their maximum altitude is now Very High.

Sky Runner Screw Galleys

Two are *Sky Runner* class screw galleys, where a centrally mounted heat ray has replaced the forward rogue gun. Their marines are all armed with fire lances and equipped with lifting harnesses or lifting serum. Also, one of the *Sky Runners*' two heavy guns have been replaced by a pair of 4" British long guns, and has a forward mounted rod gun. The other ship has added a pair of 6-pound Hotchkiss rotating cannons, one fore and one aft, and a set of Hale rockets.

Endtime Screw Galley

The other pirate ship is an *Endtime* class screw galley. The ship's rod gun has been replaced by a heat ray. Also, a pair of 4" short guns and a pair of 3-pound Hotchkiss rotating cannon have replaced the two heavy guns. This ship has been fitted with a set of heavily modified Hale rockets that deliver peace gas to their targets. This rocket launcher must be reloaded between shots, and the ship carries sufficient peace gas for six shots. If the rocket carrying the gas hits, the entire target is covered in peace gas.

Hale Rockets

The Hale gunpowder war rocket was invented as a way to eliminate the laborious wooden guidestick of the Congreve rockets used in the Napoleonic wars. The Hale rocket is therefore called a stickless, or rotary rocket, since it achieves stability in flight by part of the exhaust gases causing the rocket to spin on its axis.

The Hale rocket is launched from a simple iron tube, approximately six feet (two meters) long, with a bipod for setting the elevation and a movable restrictor plate for adjusting the range. It takes one skilled gunner to operate the rocket. Weapons platforms with multiple rockets are often found mounted on airships and fortifications.

Martian Rod Gun

The rod gun has been part of the canal princes' arsenal for centuries. A genuine Martian invention, it is an armor piercing weapon that is mainly used in siege warfare—moving targets like cloudships or canal skiffs are very hard to target.

On first sight, the rod gun resembles the medieval field culverin—a large gun barrel mounted on a wooden carriage. However, just like a modern rifle, the gun has grooves cut in its barrel that set the projectile in rotation and thus increase the gun's reach and

accuracy. The 33 lb (15 kg) projectile—the “bolt”—consists of a steel rod (hence the name) with a square profile, its ends twisted along its longitudinal axis by 90°. When loading, this rod must be adjusted to the grooves, which explains the slow reloading speed. The powder charge per shot weighs 17 lb (8 kg).

When shooting with the rod gun, the target can only use half its Defense rating. If the target is made from certain materials (at the GM's discretion), a successful hit can cause flying fragments and rubble within an area of 6 ft (2 m), causing 3 L damage (see *Area of Effect Attacks* in the **Core Rules**, p. 210). The rod gun must be operated by four gunners.

Weapon	Dmg	Str	Rng	Cap	Rate	Spd	Cost	Wt
Rod Gun	5 L	*	820 ft / 250 m	1(i)	1/10	S	£800	3 tons



SPACE

1889

Everything Jules Verne could have written.
Everything H. G. Wells should have written.
Everything Arthur Conan Doyle thought of but
never published — because it was too fantastic.

Creatures of Mars

Mars—a dying planet, still far from dead!

In the vast steppes, in the sand of equatorial deserts, on the mountain tops, at the icy poles, in the massive artificial canals and in the ancient sewers of Martian cities, underneath the dry dust of Mars' surface, and in the wide open of the cloudless skies: the Martian flora and fauna thrive everywhere and have managed to adapt to even the most unfavorable of environments.

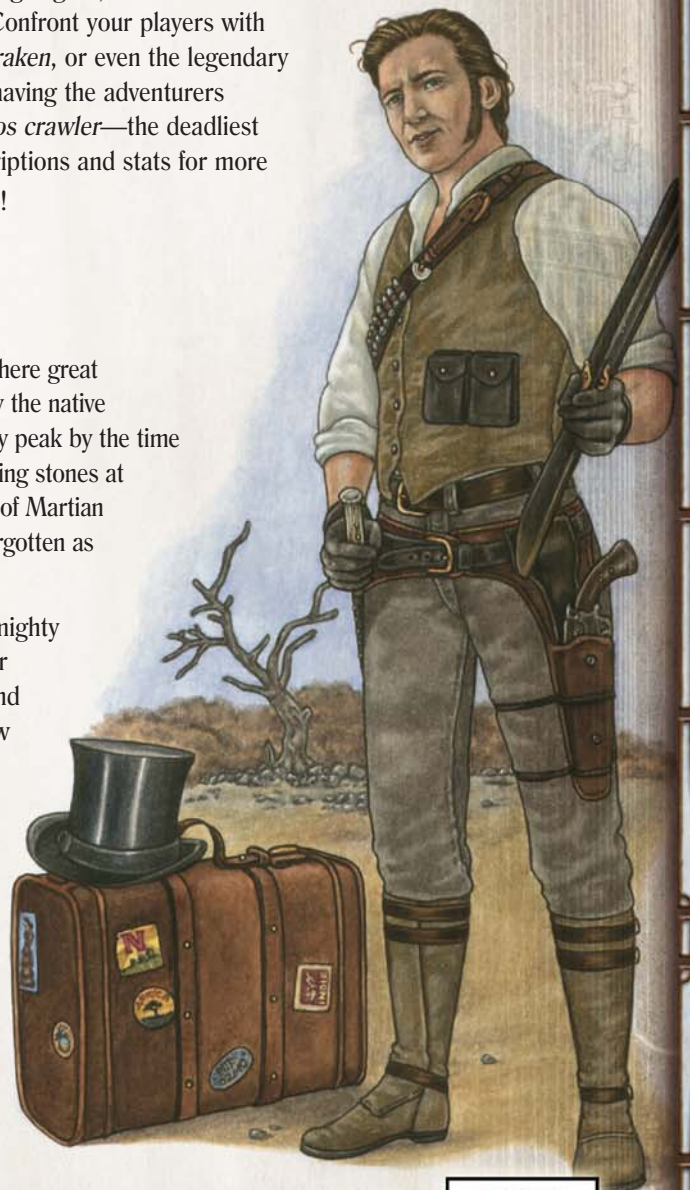
Expand the game's atmosphere by including herds of grazing *eegars*, a *lens beetle* lamp, or a tasty *krolrik* dish with all six legs still attached. Confront your players with challenging combat encounters with a *teshuwaan*, a *dust kraken*, or even the legendary *white ape*. Alternatively, add some flavor to your game by having the adventurers participate in a gashant race or ambush them with a *Deimos crawler*—the deadliest weapon of the Worm Cult. This sourcebook contains descriptions and stats for more than sixty *Creatures of Mars*, for every purpose imaginable!

Wonders of the Martian Past

The Mars of today is but a pale shadow of its former glory, where great technological marvels lie hidden in the sand, long forgotten by the native Martians. For Martian technology had already reached its lofty peak by the time human weapons technology had evolved to the stage of throwing stones at each other. But the slow death of the planet halted the march of Martian technology, and now the secrets of the ancient Martians lie forgotten as Martian civilization continues to decay.

Discover the many varied roles of Martian crystals: shoot mighty rays with fire lances, communicate across the void with pair stones, or have mind blowing experiences with Martian mind crystals. Encounter amazing Martian robots or find out how ancient Martian cities were powered by telluric currents. Discover the ancient history of the Canal Builders themselves, and uncover their darkest secrets!

The second part of this sourcebook is dedicated to the *Wonders of the Martian Past* and contains background information about the technological history of Mars as well as detailed descriptions of more than 20 aspects of ancient Martian technology. Also included are two adventures centered around Martian technology.



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