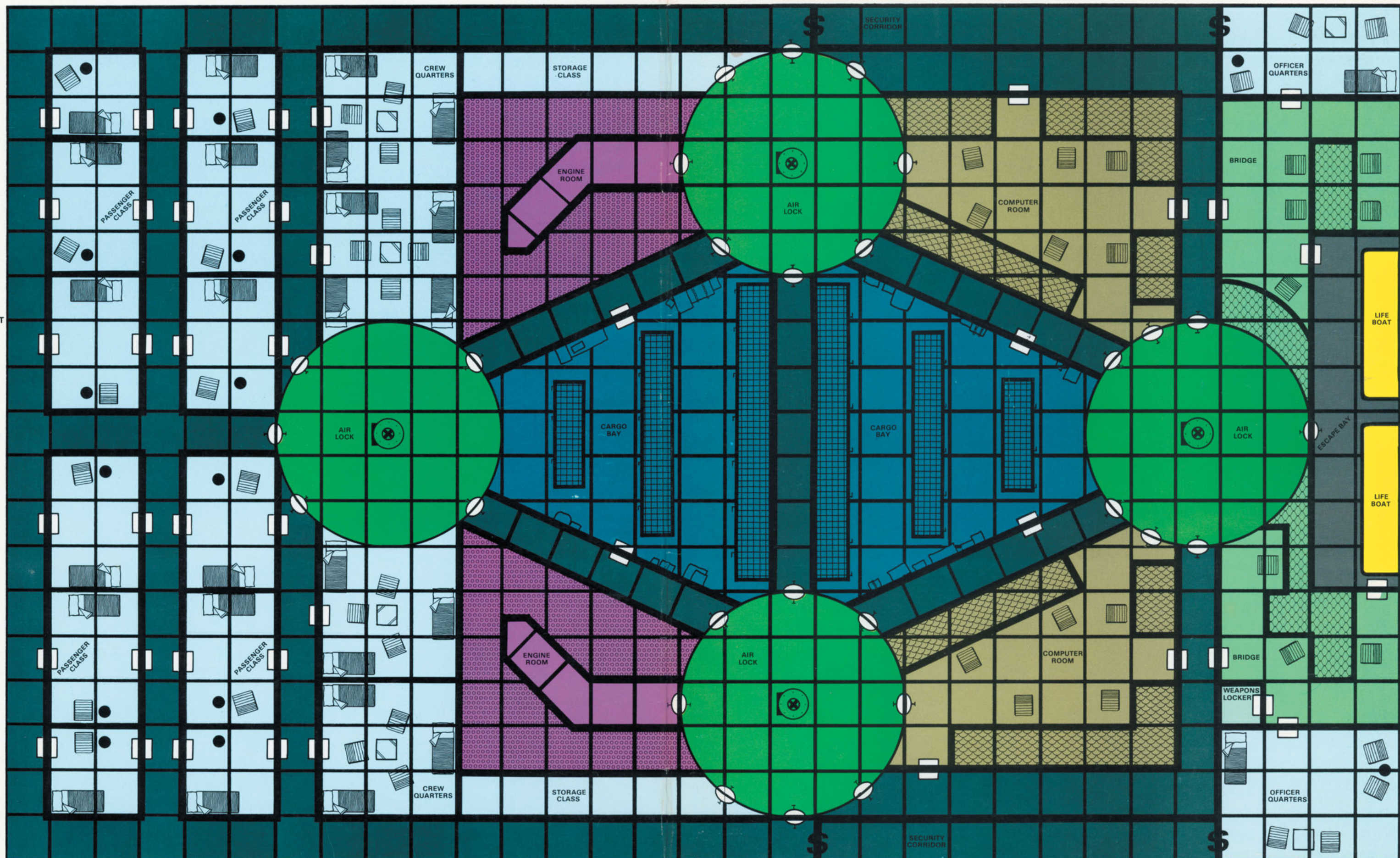
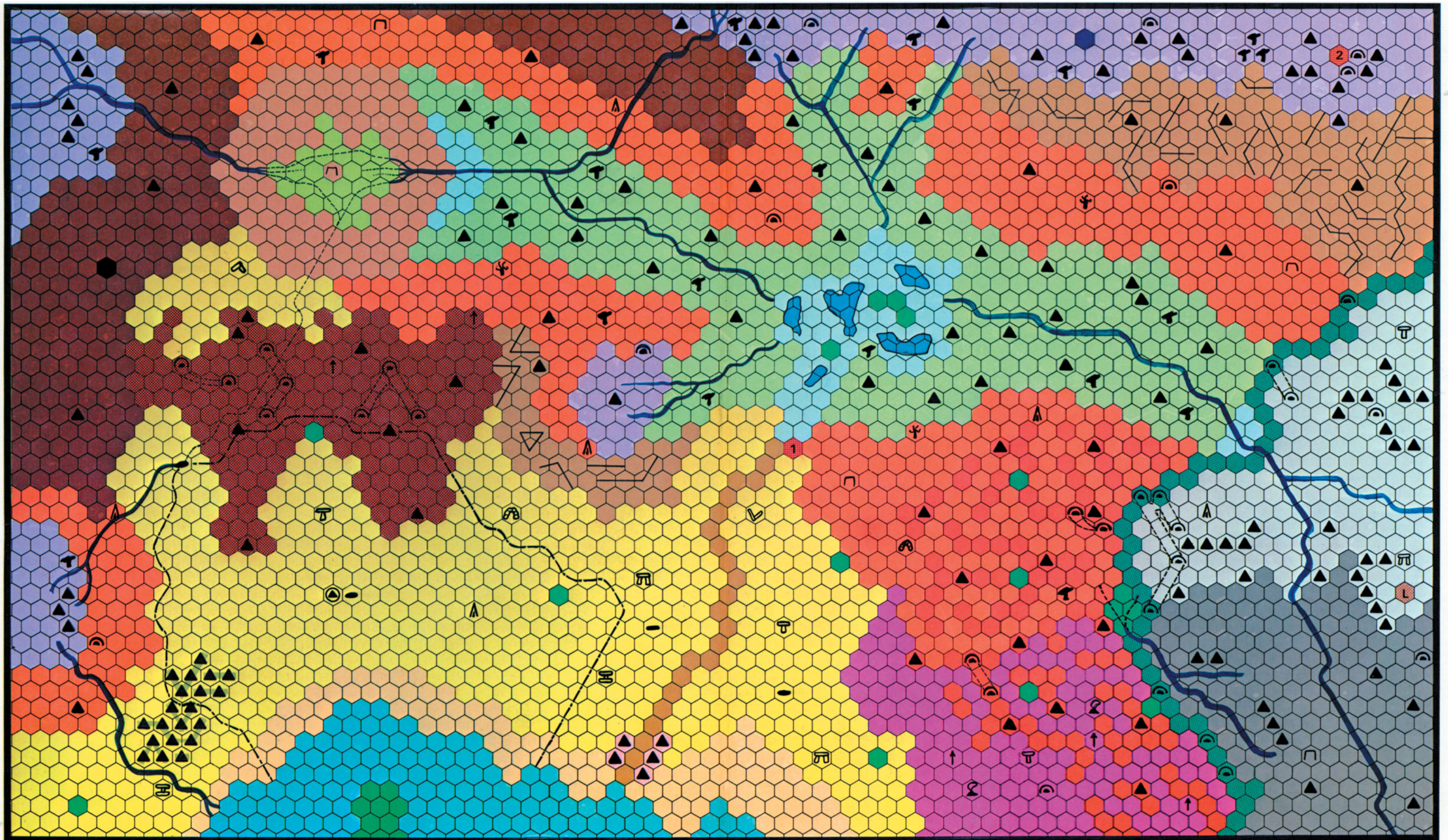


- CORRIDOR
- LIVING QUARTERS
- AIRLOCK CHAMBERS
- LIFE BOATS
- HARD COVER
- ENGINES
- COMPUTER
- INSTRUMENT PANEL
- CARGO CABINETS
- SECURITY DOOR
- PRESSURE DOOR
- REGULAR DOOR
- SOFT COVER
- LARGE TABLE
- SMALL TABLE
- CHAIR
- HATCH
- BED





| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| GAS MIST MOUNTAINS | CLIFFS | CRYSTAL STONEHENGE | FERTILE AREA | SALT FLAT | ARTIFACT | CEREMONIAL BURIAL MOUNDS | UNUSUAL TREE | CAVE | BURNT FOREST | UNDERGROUND RIVER AND SWAMP |
| CRYSTAL MOUNTAINS | SHARD PLAINS | TECHTONIC AREA | BACHANDA TREES | DESERT | SEA | BURNING LANDS | MESA | CAVE TUNNEL | DRY WELL | LANDING POINT |
| LIZARD HEAD ROCK | ROLLER PATH | LAVA BEDS | LAKE | DRY CANAL | PIRATE OUTPOST | METEOR CRATER | NEEDLE SPIRE | GEYSER | RIVER | UNUSUAL ROCK FORMATIONS |
| DRY PLAINS | HILLS | ROCKY BARRENS | OIL SLICK | RUINS | PIRATE TOWN | ALIEN FUNGUS | HIGH ELEVATION POINT | ACTIVE VOLCANO | TRAVEL BOUNDARY | TRAVEL BOUNDARY |

STAR FRONTIERS™ Adventure Module

SF-0: Crash on Volturnus

by Mark Acres and Tom Moldvay with Doug Niles



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Editor: Troy Denning

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ALPHA SECTION: INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the universe of the STAR FRONTIERS™ game! You are now a star-rover, one of the lucky few who spend their lives traversing the black void of deep space. Though you often pass long hours aboard cramped, uncomfortable starliners, you spend most of your time exploring mysterious new worlds. On these planets, you will find strange races of intelligent beings, ancient alien cultures, and creatures more deadly than any in the known universe!

If you are participating in this module as a player, **stop reading now**. Your referee will use this booklet to guide you on a thrilling adventure. If you read it now, you will spoil the excitement and surprise.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 1: REFEREE NOTES

Before beginning this module, read the STAR FRONTIERS Expanded Rules. After familiarizing yourself with the expanded rules, study this module carefully. You must be thoroughly familiar with its contents to run a successful adventure. An intimate knowledge of the maps, encounters, creatures, and non-player characters will prove invaluable when trying to describe fast-paced action scenes to your characters.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 2: MODULE BRIEFING

CRASH ON VOLTURNUS is the first module in the VOLTURNUS series. Two other modules, VOLTURNUS: PLANET OF MYSTERY and STARSPAWN OF VOLTURNUS, may be played after completing CRASH ON VOLTURNUS. While neither of the sequels are necessary to play this module, we recommend you complete CRASH ON VOLTURNUS before playing VOLTURNUS: PLANET OF MYSTERY or STARSPAWN OF VOLTURNUS.

This module is designed for 4 to 8 characters. The character group should include at least one Vrusk, at least one character with medical skills, and at least one character with environmental skills. In addition, the party will find it wise to spend most of their money on items other than weapons when they start the adventure. (All weapons will be destroyed early in the adventure.)

In the middle of the module booklet, you will find several removable sections. These sections include the "Alien Creatures Update File," the "Player Character Background Report," and the "STAR FRONTIERS System Brief." These sections may be removed from the booklet and kept in separate notebooks as expandable files. Simply bend the staples out and pull the sheets from the book, then bend the staples back down. Each section is printed on a solid sheet of paper which can be inserted into a three-ring notebook.

When the adventure begins, give the "Player Character Background Report" to your players. This sheet provides them a basic background statement, pre-rolled characters, and two different kinds of mapping paper.

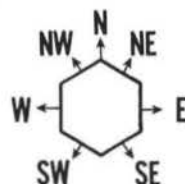
ALPHA SUBSECTION 3: USING THE MAPS

Both sides of the module cover contain maps. The outside cover shows a small interior section of the starliner "Serena Dawn." The adventure begins as a group of space pirates hijack the Serena Dawn. Use this map as a "playing board." Lay it on a flat surface and place your players' counters directly on it. You and your players may then move the counters over the map as needed to represent movement.

On the inside cover, you will find a partial planetary map of Volturnus. Do not show this map to your players at any time, it is for your reference only. The planetary map will be used to keep track of the movement of the characters on the planet.

The planetary map uses hexagons instead of squares to show direction and distance on the planet's surface more accurately. Each hexagon (hex) is color-coded to represent its dominant terrain. In addition, some hexes contain symbols representing unusual features.

The following chart illustrates the six possible directions of movement on a hexagonal map.



When the players tell you their direction of travel, they should use the terms northeast, east, southeast, southwest, west, or northwest. The direction of travel for each hex should be specified separately so there is no confusion about the location of the characters.

You will find maps of the Forbidden Caverns and the Lake of Fire in the STAR FRONTIERS System Brief. Use these special maps when you reach the encounter sections calling for them.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 4: MAPPING

In the Player Character Background Report, you will find two different kinds of mapping paper. The characters should use the hexagonal paper (hex paper) to map their route while outdoors, and the 1/4 inch square graph paper to map their route while in the Forbidden Caverns. (Note: You can buy extra supplies of hex and graph paper at your local hobby shop.)

The simplest way to map terrain is to color code the hexes according to terrain type. If colored pencils are not available, letters or symbols may be used to mark terrain.

Some hexes contain noteworthy features, such as towns or rock formations. The characters should mark these with a symbol they understand. Knowledge of these features may prove useful if the party becomes lost or wishes to rendezvous at a certain place.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 5: SIGHTING ON VOLTURNUS

On Volturnus, the distance to the horizon is 1 hex. This means characters can see into the next hex if their line of sight is not blocked. Note, however, characters cannot identify any objects smaller than a mountain unless in the same hex as that object.

Characters may see farther than 1 hex only when standing in a hex with a high elevation point and an unobstructed view. When this is the case, they can see up to 2 hexes, but cannot identify any objects unless in the same hex as that object.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 6: MOVEMENT ON VOLTURNUS

Movement on Volturnus varies greatly with terrain type and character race. Because of the harsh conditions on Volturnus, characters will rarely find it advantageous to split up. In addition, the terrific heat of Volturnus slows the movement of any race. All movement rates on Volturnus are specified for a mixed party of races, and take the heat into account.

You will find a SIGHTING AND MOVEMENT table below. This table lists movement rates and sighting distances for all major terrain types on Volturnus. Much of the information on the table details areas on the map your characters will not venture into during this module. This information will prove useful to you in future adventures upon the planet Volturnus.

ALPHA 6.1: SIGHT AND MOVEMENT BY TERRAIN TYPE

| Terrain Type | Sight in Hexes | Move per Hour | Move per Day (1hex = 8 km.) |
|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Alien Fungus | 1 | .8 km | 1 |
| Bachanda Trees | 0 | .8 km | 1 |
| Burning Land | 1 | .4 km | 1/2 |
| Caverns* | 0 | .8 km* | 1* |
| Cliffs | 0 | .4 km | 1/2 |
| Crystal Mountains | 1 | .8 km | 1 |
| Desert | 1 | 1.6 km | 2 |
| Dry Canal | 1 | 3.2 km | 4 |
| Fertile Area | 1 | 3.2 km | 4 |
| Hills | 1 | 2.4 km | 3 |
| Lake** | 1 | .8 km | 1 |
| Lava Beds | 1 | .4 km | 1/2 |
| Meteor Crater | 1 | 1.6 km | 2 |
| Mist Mountains | 0 | .8 km | 1 |
| Rocky Barrens | 1 | 1.6 km | 2 |
| Roller Path*** | 1*** | 2.4 km | 3 |
| Ruins | 1 | 2.4 km | 3 |
| Salt Flat | 1 | 1.6 km | 2 |
| Sea** | 1 | .8 km | 1 |
| Shard Plains*** | 1*** | .4 km | 1/2 |
| Tectonic Area | 1 | .8 km | 1 |

*Movement with guide only, movement without a guide varies.

**Movement by swimming (hour only) and raft (hour & day).

***Roller paths cannot be seen except from high elevation points, or from the same hex as the path.

These are average rates; double them to find maximum movement. These rates are only approximate and have been adjusted to map scale. Feel free to alter movement rates when using maps of different scales.

ALPHA SUBSECTION 7:

FOOD AND WATER ON VOLTURNUS

In this module, assume characters can find all the food and water they need, unless there is reason to assume otherwise. The characters may have trouble finding food and water under any number of circumstances, such as travelling in the desert where no water and little food is available. Circumstances that make it difficult to obtain food and water will be specified in this module.

BETA SECTION:

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE

The sections below will guide you through CRASH ON VOLTURNUS. Although we have made every effort to include as much detail as possible, you must often rely upon your own quick wit and imagination to run the adventure effectively. It is important, therefore, that you are equally familiar with the STAR FRONTIERS game rules and the sections below.

BETA SUBSECTION 1: REFEREE NOTES

There are several categories of information at the beginning of each encounter section. These categories include special rules needed for that encounter section (this might include movement, sighting, time, and special combat modifiers), a brief description to read to your characters, and two types of encounter descriptions.

BETA SUBSECTION 2: RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

CRASH ON VOLTURNUS utilizes two types of encounters, random encounters and planned encounters. Random encounters furnish an element of chance and a feeling of surprise to the adventure. They occur any time, any place within an encounter section. All encounter sections list the percentile chance of having a random encounter each time period. (The length of each time period may vary from section to section. The length of each period will be stated under Special Rules in the beginning of each section.) Roll percentile dice once each period; a random encounter occurs whenever you roll that percentile chance or less.

When random encounters occur, use the random encounter table at the beginning of each section to determine the result. On most tables, you simply roll percentile dice to find the title of the encounter, then read the entry below the table for a description of the encounter. Some tables, however, are arranged in order, so particular encounters occur before others. On these tables, do not roll percentile dice.

BETA SUBSECTION 3: PLANNED ENCOUNTERS

Planned encounters provide a plot and sense of direction to the adventure. They occur at specified times, such as when characters enter certain areas or engage in specified actions. Most planned encounters have sections to read to the players and sections to provide you with the background needed to run the adventure.

BETA SUBSECTION 4: ABBREVIATIONS

Your players will meet many characters and creatures during their adventures. You must know many things about these characters and creatures, so it is very important you study the "Alien Creatures Update File" and the "STAR FRONTIERS System Brief."

You need not memorize the creatures and aliens, however. The abbreviations below provide a compact format for presenting the basic information necessary to run each encounter. Study these abbreviations carefully, so you are familiar with them when running your encounters.

BETA 4.1: ALIEN CREATURES FORMAT

MV = Movement Class.
IM = Creature's Initiative Modifier.
RS = Creature's Reaction Speed.
STA = Creature's Stamina score.
ATT = Creature's Attack score.
DM = Damage per successful attack.
SA = Creature's special attacks.
SD = Creature's special defense.

BETA 4.2: NON-PLAYER CHARACTER FORMAT

(All skill levels included in RW and M scores.)

RW = Ranged Weapon Attack score.
M = Melee score.
PS = Punching score.
IM = Initiative Modifier.
RS = Character's Reaction Speed.
STA = Character's Stamina score.

In some cases, you may need unlisted Ability scores for non-player characters to resolve unexpected situations. The average Ability score is 45; use this value for any non-player character Ability scores not provided.

ALPHA 3.1: MAP KEY FOR THE PLANET VOLTURNUS

The area shown on the map is 600 x 400 kilometers, about the size of the state of Colorado (1 hex = 8 kilometers). All action in the Voltornus modules takes place somewhere on this map. The rest of the planet has not been mapped; you may design these areas yourself if you wish.

MAP COLORS

Alien Fungus — This alien fungus came to Voltornus when a meteorite struck the planet.

Artifact — The Sathar left this monolithic artifact to monitor interstellar flight.

Bachanda Forest — Giant thorn plants cover the floor of the forest, so creatures must travel along the limbs of giant bachanda trees. This is the home of the Kurabanda.

Black Lake — Large, black slicks of oil cover much of the lake's surface.

Burning Lands — This barren, rocky ground often ignites when its free phosphorous contacts the atmosphere.

Ceremonial Burial Mounds — Several large mounds covered with floaterroot rise above the desert sands.

Cliffs — The cliffs run along a major fault line dividing the mountains from the lowlands.

Crystal Mountains — These crystal peaks can be seen gleaming in the sun on any clear day.

Crystal Stonehenge — The Eorna built this monument, resembling Stonehenge on Terra, many ages ago.

Desert — Only a few clumps of sparse vegetation survive among the endless sand dunes of the Voltornian desert.

Dry Canal — The canal that connected lake and sea in the height of Eorna civilization now runs dry.

Dry Plains — These rolling plains are covered with grass.

Fertile Area — A fertile area is an isolated outbreak of vegetation, such as a desert oasis.

Gas Mist Mountains — Ash clouds, smoke, and foul gases cover these mountains.

Hills — Edestekai farms dot the sides of these grassy hills.

Lava Beds — These maze-like beds of cooled magma are riddled with caves.

Meteor Crater — This huge crater is nearly covered by an alien fungus spawned when a meteor struck Voltornus.

Pirate Outpost — The pirates at this small base are studying the feasibility of pumping oil from Black Lake.

Pirate Town — The pirate town is the Star Devil's center of operations on Voltornus.

Oil Slick — Oil seeps to the surface of Black Lake in the hexes marked by oil slicks.

River — These rivers drain into the lowest areas on the map, the meteor crater and the sea.

Rocky Barrens — Though desolate and stark, this dry, rocky wilderness has more vegetation than the desert.

Roller Path — As they graze, rollers create a safe path through the shard grass.

Ruins — These are the ruins of Eleonea, an ancient Eorna city destroyed by the Sathar.

Salt Flat — As the ancient seas of Voltornus began their retreat, they left large salt flats behind. These salt flats are not entirely solid; there are many areas where briny rivers flow underneath. Persons crossing these salt flats will sometimes fall through the crust and drown.

Sea — This the remnant of a vast salt sea that once covered the area.

Shard Plains — The shard plains are covered by vast areas of glass-like shard grass. This grass cuts any creature walking through it.

Tectonic Area — This area contains active volcanoes, hot springs, and geysers.

MAP SYMBOLS

Map symbols mark hexes containing landmarks. Players often use these landmarks for reference while mapping or when lost.

Active Volcano — There is an active volcano in this hex.

Burnt Forest — A superhot forest fire recently reduced this magnificent forest to ash and charcoal.

Cave — The entrance to a vast cave.

Cave Tunnel — A system of caverns runs through the hex as indicated.

Dry Well — These wells are usually dry, though there is a 10% chance they will contain 1d10 liters of water.

Geyser — A geyser of water periodically erupts in this hex.

High Elevation Point — High elevation points offer good vantage points from which to observe nearby terrain. Any character in a high elevation hex can identify terrain types 2 hexes around.

Mesa — Mesas are high rocky plateaus, also serving as high elevation points.

Needle Spire — Strange whistles often echo from holes in the top of these rocky spires.

Unusual Rock Formation — Unusual rock formations assume many shapes. Five common types are shown on the map.

Unusual Tree — Unusual trees have abnormal shapes, sizes, colors, and so on. They can be used as map references.

GAMMA SECTION: SPACE PIRATES!

You are about to begin the first encounter section of CRASH ON VOLTURNUS. Study the entire section and be sure you are familiar with the movement scale, the special rules, and the general plot of the scenario before beginning play.

Use the starship map on the outside of the module cover for this encounter section. Lay it flat on the table where all may see it, and place one counter in a passenger-class cabin for each character. Player characters begin the adventure in these cabins. They have no equipment with them except their tool kits. (Note that weapons of any sort are not considered tool kits. All weapons will be locked in the weapons locker on the bridge.)

GAMMA SUBSECTION 1: SPECIAL RULES

SCALE MOVEMENT

In this encounter section, movement is calculated in squares. Each square equals 2 meters. The following table shows the maximum movement per turn for each race.

**GAMMA 1.1:
MAXIMUM MOVEMENTS IN MAP SQUARES**

| Race | Walking or Dodging | Running |
|-----------|--------------------|------------|
| Human | 5 squares | 15 squares |
| Dralasite | 3 squares | 10 squares |
| Vrusk | 8 squares | 18 squares |
| Yazirian | 5 squares | 15 squares |

MOVEMENT MODIFIERS

When moving through a door, a character must stop in the square directly in front of the door and open it. A character opening a normal door may move only 1/2 his normal distance, while a character opening a pressure or security door must spend two full turns opening that door. The character ends his movement directly in front of the pressure or security door, waits two turns, and moves through the following turn.

Under no circumstances may a character move diagonally through any door, whether it is opened or closed. Similarly, a character may open a door only when in the square directly in front of the door.

Normal doors, once opened, will remain open until closed manually. Both pressure and security doors, however, close automatically unless held open. Normal and security doors slide open, but pressure doors swing into the pressure chamber.

Only characters with level 1 or higher Technician skills can open security doors.

SIGHTING

A character can see into any square within his straight line-of-sight, as long as nothing obstructs his view. A character cannot see around corners, through walls, or into any square normally impossible to see into.

This means characters should not know the location of pirates until they can see those pirates according to sighting rules. You should not place any pirate counters on the map until the characters enter an area from which they can clearly see the pirates.

TIME

Use normal six-second combat turns in this section.

COMBAT AND MOVEMENT

Normally, only one counter may occupy a single square. Two

counters may occupy the same square only if one counter represents an unconscious individual, or if the two counters are involved in melee.

A character may move through a square occupied by another character if the occupying character allows him to pass without engaging him in combat, or if the occupying character is unconscious. If a conscious character wishes, he may stop any counter moving through a square he occupies and engage it in combat.

Any character within a square containing a chair, computer, engine, or similar object may use it for cover during ranged combat. The map key distinguishes between hard and soft cover objects.

If the space pirates kill or knock all the characters unconscious, the characters must begin the module again. Their characters are considered dead, and the characters must roll or choose new characters.

(If any characters are killed on Volturnus, you may supply replacement characters on the planet by having the party meet another group of survivors from the starliner. The players who lost their characters should run these new characters.)

INTERROGATION

During the course of the adventure, the characters may try to question a captured space pirate. The pirate will cooperate only if he feels the characters will injure him if he does not. Even then, he will reveal only two things; the weapons locker has been destroyed and the bridge is guarded. Any pirate would rather die than reveal anything more about himself or his home.

COMPUTER

If a character with computer skills attempts to use the computer to gain information, he will find it is engaged in an emergency program. The computer will display only the following information:

EMERGENCY ALERT! EMERGENCY ALERT! SECURITY VIOLATION ON BRIDGE. REPEAT: INTRUDERS ON BRIDGE!

EMERGENCY ALERT! EMERGENCY ALERT! EXPLOSION REPORTED IN WEAPONS LOCKER. REPEAT: WEAPONS LOCKER DESTROYED.

GAMMA SUBSECTION 2: PLAYERS' DESCRIPTION

Read the boxed statement below to your players.

The government of Truane's Star has hired you to carry out a preliminary exploration of a newly discovered planet. You are to journey by starliner to Volturnus and map as much of the planet as possible. The government is especially interested in contacting and studying any intelligent races living on the planet. If you meet an intelligent race, you are to make friendly contact and learn as much about them as possible.

The first expedition to Volturnus disappeared without trace as soon as it entered the Zebulon system. If possible, you are to locate and rescue any survivors of this mission.

As you boarded the starliner that would take you to Volturnus, the steward gave you an interior plan of the starship and urged you to study it carefully. He also searched your luggage and placed all weapons and power packs in the weapons locker. His assistant placed your other heavy gear, such as the military skeinsuits given to you by the government of Truane's Star, in the cargo hold. The only items you were allowed to take to your tiny cabins were your non-weapon tool kits.

During your journey, you have toured the area of the ship not shown on the map. It contains recreation areas, the observation dome, the galley, the first class living quarters, and fuel storage. There is nothing else of interest in that area.

In the event you must evacuate ship, you have been instructed to proceed immediately to the escape bay, where two of the *Serena Dawn's* lifeboats are stored. Each lifeboat holds up to eight persons. If it becomes necessary to use the lifeboats, you have been instructed not to open the hatch until all persons using the lifeboat are assembled and ready to enter it. This is because the lifeboats automatically launch one minute after the hatch is opened. They then seek the nearest inhabitable planet and land in the first safe spot.

FOR THE REFEREE ONLY: If the characters insist on searching any area of the ship not on the map, go directly to random encounter number 5.

GAMMA SUBSECTION 3: RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

After the pirates capture the ship, there is a 10% chance each turn the characters will meet one or more of them. Roll 1d10 each turn. If you roll a "1," consult the random encounter table below. This table is used sequentially, so encounter 1 takes place first, encounter 2 takes place second, and so on.

These encounters take place as soon as logically possible, ideally in the same turn rolled. Do not, however, have pirates suddenly appear where there is no chance they could appear. Pirates should appear as the characters round a corner, open a door, or move into any area not previously visible. If the characters are stationary, the pirates should appear at the closest possible entrance.

GAMMA 3.1: RANDOM ENCOUNTERS TABLE

1.) Pirate A (RW —, M 30, PS 3, IM 4, RS 35, STA 50.)

Pirate A will attack the closest character, attempting to hold this character hostage. If he succeeds in grabbing any character, he will draw a vibroknife and threaten to kill this character, attempting to persuade the rest of the party to accompany him to a passenger-class cabin. If the rest of the party cooperates, Pirate A will lock them all in the cabin and leave. In this event, go immediately to random encounter 5.

2.) Pirate B (RW —, M 30, PS 3, IM 6, RS 55, STA 55.)

Pirate B will attack the closest character with his nightstick. As soon as he has taken more than 20 points damage, he will attempt to flee toward the bridge.

3.) Pirate C (RW 35, M 28, PS 2, IM 6, RS 55, STA 35.)

Pirate C will attack the entire party with his automatic pistol. If he hits, divide the damage according to the rules for firing a burst. If he runs out of ammunition, he will attack with his gun butt until dead or unconscious. He has enough ammunition to fire two bursts.

4.) Pirate D (RW 25, M 38, PS 4, IM 5, RS 45, STA 75.)

Pirate E (RW 35, M 18, PS 2, IM 7, RS 70, STA 35.)

Pirate D will throw his tangle grenade immediately. Any party members within its range must make a Reaction Speed check. If the check is successful, they must move 2 squares away from the center of the tangle grenade explosion. If they fail the check, they are affected normally by the tangle grenade. After throwing the tangle grenade, pirate D will attack the closest party member with his blackjack.

Pirate E has set his laser pistol energy dial at 2 SEU and will not

change it. He thus has a maximum of 10 shots. If he uses all his shots, he will melee using the pistol butt as a weapon.

5.) Ship explosions.

The ship begins to vibrate badly. The characters hear three loud explosions, and the ship lurches. Each character must make a Reaction Speed check or fall to the ground. The second turn, pieces of the ship begin to fly throughout the entire area. There is a 5% chance each character will be struck by one of these pieces, taking 1d10 damage.

If the characters run toward the lifeboats, they will meet no pirates anywhere; all other beings have abandoned ship. There will be one lifeboat left when they reach the escape bay.

GAMMA SUBSECTION 4: PLANNED ENCOUNTERS

Review the following information carefully. You must read the boxed entries aloud to your characters as you begin each encounter, but it is not necessary to provide them with the information below the boxed entry unless they have done something to acquire this information.

1.) BEGINNING

Read the following description to any character:

You hear the sound of scuffling outside your cabin. After the scuffling continues for two seconds, a man cries "Help!" A loud thump follows the man's cry.

The space pirates are hijacking the *Serena Dawn*. One of them is attacking a crewman in the corridor. When the characters investigate, the pirate will attack with his fists. If the pirate is reduced to 10 or fewer Stamina points, he will surrender (most pirates will continue to fight until reduced to 0 Stamina points).

Pirate F (RW —, M 23, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 45.)

2.) FIGHT IN THE CORRIDORS

As the characters enter the corridor between the two rows of passenger-class quarters, read the following description to them:

You see three space pirates in the corridor between the two rows of passenger-class cabins. The first pirate, carrying a bullwhip, stands at the top end of the corridor. The second pirate, carrying a club, stands at the junction of the corridor leading from the airlock and the corridor running between the passenger-class cabins. The third pirate, wearing shock gloves and a power belt, is at the bottom end of the corridor.

Each pirate will attack the first character he sees, and continue attacking until the character or himself has been reduced to 0 Stamina points.

Pirate G (RW 30, M 30, PS 3, IM 3, RS 30, STA 45.)

Pirate H (RW —, M 23, PS 2, IM 6, RS 55, STA 25.)

Pirate I (RW —, M 25, PS 3, IM 4, RS 40, STA 50.)

Space pirate I wears a fully charged belt pack to power the shock gloves.

3.) SEARCHING THE CARGO BAY

If the player-characters wish, they may search the cargo bay for useful equipment. Read the following description as they enter either cargo bay:

You have entered a cargo bay. There are many boxes piled in every square, with just enough room for you to walk between them. You can also see several rows of cargo cabinets. Apparently, these cabinets are unlocked.

As the characters search each square, roll on the cargo search table below. All items are stored in clearly marked cargo boxes. It requires one turn to open a cargo box, and another turn to remove the contents.

Each character may search 1 square per turn. A square may be searched only once; if more than one character searches a square, the second will find the same thing as the first.

If the characters have searched all squares in both cargo bays without finding their skeinsuits, they will find the skeinsuits in the last square.

GAMMA 4.1: CARGO SEARCH TABLE

| % Roll | Type of Cargo Found | Weight/ Item |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 01-05 | Character's military skeinsuits* | 1.5 Kg |
| 06-10 | 10 Laser rifle clips* | — |
| 11-15 | 12 Packets of dehydrated food*** | 1 Kg |
| 16-20 | 1 Computoy | 10 Kg |
| 21-25 | Ship doctor's spare medkit* | 4 Kg |
| 26-30 | Crates of hand axes | 1 Kg |
| 31-35 | Costume jewelry | — |
| 36-40 | 1 Holographic fireworks projector | 5 Kg |
| 41-45 | Chronocom | — |
| 46-50 | Boxes of ball bearings | — |
| 51-55 | Chocolate anchovies in aspic | — |
| 56-60 | Steambath perfume | 1 Kg |
| 61-65 | 1 Prize Vrusk statue | 10 Kg |
| 66-70 | Characters' non-weapon equipment | — |
| 71-75 | Bolts of silk | 5 Kg |
| 76-80 | Galacticana Encyclopedia | 2 Kg |
| 81-85 | Yazirian punching bags | 2 Kg |
| 86-90 | Large machine gears | 10 Kg |
| 91-95 | Vrusk body wax | — |
| 96-00 | High fashion Human dresses | — |

*Can be found only once.

***Each packet will feed the entire group for one day.

There is one pirate guard in each cargo bay. Pirate J guards the left bay, and pirate K guards the bay on the right. Each will stand near the center of his cargo bay. Both pirates will fight until they are knocked unconscious or they win the fight.

Pirate J (RW 18, M 18, PS 2, IM 4, RS 35, STA 35.)

Pirate J will fire his gyrojet pistol until out of ammunition, then use the pistol butt in melee. Assume he begins the combat with a fully loaded clip.

Pirate K (RW —, M 30, PS 3, IM 6, RS 55, STA 50.)

Pirate K will attack with his axe until he wins or is knocked unconscious.

4.) GUNFIRE IN THE AIRLOCK CHAMBER

As the characters enter the airlock chamber closest to the escape bay, they will see two space pirates.

There are two pirates in this airlock chamber. One holds a grenade, and the other holds a sonic stunner. They move to attack you immediately.

The pirates will attack as soon as they see the characters.

Pirate L (RW 30, M 30, PS 3, IM 6, RS 55, STA 55.)

Pirate L will throw his fragmentation grenade immediately. Each character within the blast radius should make a Reaction Speed check; any characters who make their checks take only 1/2 damage from the grenade. One or both pirates may be

caught in the blast radius of the grenade. (Each character should roll damage from the grenade separately.)

Pirate M (RW 25, M 25, PS 2, IM 5, RS 45, STA 40.)

Pirate M will attack with his sonic stunner. Any character hit by the sonic stunner should make a Stamina check. If the check is successful, he is not stunned.

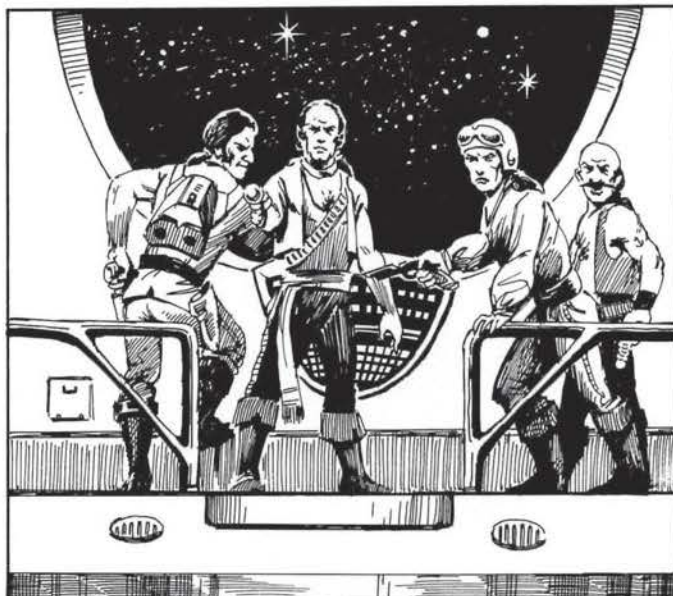
5.) RETREAT FROM THE BRIDGE

If the characters enter the bridge area, read the following description to them:

As you open the door, you immediately realize a struggle has taken place. Chairs, instruments, and even unconscious officers lie strewn about the floor. You see four armed space pirates on the bridge. The first holds an automatic pistol, the second holds a needler pistol, the third holds an electrostunner, and the last holds a laser pistol.

If the characters have entered the bridge section with the weapons locker, read the following statement:

From your vantage point, you can see the weapons locker has been destroyed, along with everything it once contained.



The pirates have orders to guard the bridge at all costs. They will open fire as soon as they see the characters. The guards will not follow the characters if they leave the bridge area.

Pirate N (RW 23, M 18, PS 3, IM 4, RS 35, STA 55.)

Pirate N will fire two shots each turn until he has used the 10 shots remaining in his clip. He will then use the pistol butt in melee.

Pirate O (RW 25, M 10, PS 2, IM 5, RS 50, STA 40.)

Pirate O will fire two shots each turn until he uses his 10 shot clip. He will then use the pistol butt in melee.

Pirate P (RW 40, M 15, PS 2, IM 6, RS 60, STA 30.)

Pirate P will place the electrostunner on the damage setting and fire until he has used his 20 SEU clip. He will then use the pistol butt in melee.

Captain Slag (RW 69, M 47, PS 4, IM 7, RS 67, STA 73.)

Choose any pirate counter to represent Captain Slag. He will fire one 5 SEU shot from his laser pistol each turn until he exhausts its 20 SEU clip. He will then use the pistol butt in melee.

6.) ESCAPE!

As the characters enter the escape bay, read the following description to them:

The escape bay is empty except for one lifeboat. Looking into it, you notice an item inside labeled "Survival Pack." This seems to be locked in some sort of cabinet.

Suddenly, the *Serena Dawn* lurches, and you hear three loud explosions coming from the bridge. The ship trembles for several seconds, then lurches again and you hear another explosion. You hear various squeaks and groans as the ship twists and buckles beneath your feet.

The lifeboat is large enough for eight characters. As soon as the first character opens the entry hatch, a computerized voice will say, "One minute to launch. Please fasten your seat belts." Ten game turns later, the lifeboat will blast out of the escape bay. All characters should be in the lifeboat by this time. (Two characters may enter the lifeboat every turn.) If the characters do not wish to enter the lifeboat immediately, tell them the ship is about to explode. They will see pieces of metal flying about inside the escape bay, and they will notice a crack forming in one of the walls of the escape bay.

After the characters secure themselves inside the lifeboat, it will automatically launch itself. As the lifeboat starts to move, four space pirates armed with automatic rifles will enter the escape bay and shoot at the lifeboat. There is no chance this fire will injure any characters, but they will feel the lifeboat shudder and lurch as the bullets strike it.

The lifeboat will then seek the nearest inhabitable planet and find a safe place to land.

GAMMA SUBSECTION 5: EXPERIENCE POINTS

It is now time to award experience points. Players who took an active part in the adventure receive 2 experience points. Players who were extremely helpful or active in this section receive 3 experience points. Players who managed to escape, but who did not show any initiative, receive only 1 experience point.

Remember, characters may use these experience points immediately only if acquiring a skill they have been practicing or utilizing during the adventure. They may also use these experience points to improve their Ability scores (this may help them a great deal later in the module).

DELTA SECTION: CRASH IN THE DESERT

The characters are about to reach Voltornus. Unfortunately for them, however, they are not arriving with the benefit of all the equipment and preparation they would have liked. Instead of landing in a choice site in a fully equipped shuttle, they are crash-landing in the middle of a hostile desert. They are light-years from their home planets, with no hope of rescue in the foreseeable future. To survive, they must improve their Ability scores, learn new skills, and utilize every shred of imagination they possess.

DELTA SUBSECTION 1: SPECIAL RULES

MOVEMENT

Since the characters will move over a wide range of terrain on Voltornus, it is difficult to specify a standard movement rate. While travelling over the planetary map of Voltornus, characters will move at the rates specified in the planetary movement table in Alpha 6.1.

As the characters move across the planet surface, they should use the hex paper provided in the Player Character Background Report to map the terrain. Mapping has been explained in Alpha Subsection 4.

A dashed line circles the lifeboat crashsite. This is the movement limit for CRASH ON VOLTORNUS. It is important the characters do not pass this line, especially if you plan to play the sequel to CRASH ON VOLTORNUS. If the characters reach this line, turn immediately to planned encounter 3 (the UI-Mor). In addition, if the characters begin to die of thirst or starve, turn immediately to planned encounter 3.

Most characters will spend their time wandering through the desert. They may, however, occasionally wander into the salt flats or the burning lands.

If they do so, allow them to wander through these lands for a few hours, then persuade them to leave. In the burning lands, a volcano will erupt, and the only way to escape the lava flow will be to flee back to the desert. In the salt flats, a small tidal wave will rise and force the party to run back to the desert.

TIME

Normal game turns may prove impractical in this encounter section, since most action on the planetary surface occurs in daily segments. Because of this, the time reference period on Voltornus is 12 hours. These periods alternate between night and day. For the purposes of random encounters, roll once every period, or twice a day. Note, however, that when characters enter combat situations, the game action will change to six-second game turns.

WATER IN THE DESERT

In the harsh Voltornian desert, a character needs 4 liters of water per day to survive. Players can reduce this amount 1 liter if they take two salt pills each day. They can further reduce this amount 1 liter per day by travelling at night and resting in the shade during the day.

If the characters move at their maximum rate, they must double the amount of water needed to survive (after taking into account any precautions taken to reduce water consumption). Thus, a character moving at maximum speed during the day without taking salt pills would need 8 liters of water a day to survive. If, however, the character were taking two salt pills each day, he could move at maximum rate and survive on 6 liters of water a day. Finally, a character moving at maximum rate during the night and taking two salt pills a day would need only 4 liters of water per day to survive.

The amount of water needed to survive includes all water used to rehydrate survival or dehydrated rations.

DELTA SUBSECTION 2: PLAYERS' DESCRIPTION

Read the following description to your players:

As your lifeboat leaves the *Serena Dawn*, you see the starship tremble again. A few metal chunks float out of the escape bay, and then all is quiet. Your lifeboat quickly accelerates toward the forbidding planet of Voltornus. As you approach the daylight side of the planet, you see nothing. A great portion of the planet is shrouded in clouds. Your lifeboat enters a shallow orbit and travels to the other side of Voltornus, where it begins its descent into the dark, clear night.

Sparks begin to fly from the onboard computer. Then, after several seconds of jolting, a rear engine explodes and a fire erupts on the exterior of the lifeboat.



The fire grows larger and hotter as you descend, even entering the passenger compartment. After two minutes of intense heat, the lifeboat crashes into a high outcropping of rocks. The fire seems to die down, but flames still flash from the rear engine and the onboard computer.

FOR THE REFEREE ONLY: Each character has a 5% chance of being injured in the crash. All characters should roll percentile dice. On a roll of 06 or greater, that character takes no damage. Any character who rolls less than 06 takes 1 to 5d10 of damage. The number the character rolled is the number of dice of damage he takes. A character who rolled a 01 during the crash would take 1d10 damage, but a character who rolled a 04 would take 4d10 damage.

After the characters recover from the shock of crash-landing, they will notice the survival kits have popped out of the lockers and are ready to be removed from the lifeboat. They will also notice a foul-smelling liquid seeping from the engine compartment. Some of this liquid is starting to burn.

The characters have enough time to remove the survival packs from the lifeboat, but no other equipment can be removed. The lifeboat will burst into flames as soon as the last survival pack is removed. Two turns later, it will explode. If the characters attempt to remove other equipment before the survival packs, they will be unable to do so because the liquid is covering everything in the shuttle except the survival packs. The liquid is actually a flammable acid which ruins everything it touches. If the characters have not removed the survival packs after two turns, the liquid will start to burn. The characters will then have one turn to remove the survival packs before the lifeboat explodes. Any character within 20 meters of the explosion will take 1d5 damage, and any character actually in the lifeboat when it explodes will take 5d10 damage.

The lifeboat has eight survival kits, each containing 1 machete, 1 box of matches, 1 allweather blanket, 1 first aid pack, 1 chronocom, 2 packages of survival rations (enough food for 1 person for four days), 1 tangle grenade, 1 compass, 1 lifejacket, 10 salt pills, 1 pocket tool, 1 flashlight, 1 dozen grenade, 10m of rope, 1 toxrad gauge, 8 liters of water, 1 pair of sunglasses, 1 pair of stretch coveralls, 1 poly-vox, and 1 laser pistol with a 20 SEU clip.

After the lifeboat explodes, read the following description to the characters:

The night has passed, and it is now dawn. A desolate wilderness of sand and rock stretches as far as you can see in every direction. The desert is occasionally broken by green flat plants similar in appearance to lilly pads. Though it is only a few minutes past sunrise, the heat is already overbearing.

DELTA SUBSECTION 3: RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

When moving through the desert, characters will have random encounters. Check for random encounters at the beginning of each period (every 12 hours). Roll 1d10; a random encounter will take place during the day if you roll 1-3 and at night if you roll 1-2. When a random encounter occurs, roll on the random encounter table to determine which encounter will take place.

DELTA 3.1: DESERT RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

| Die Roll (1d10) | Encounter |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1-2 | Burrower Snake |
| 3-4 | Sand Storm |
| 5-6 | Funnel Worm |
| 7-8 | Sand Shark |
| 9-10 | Lopers |

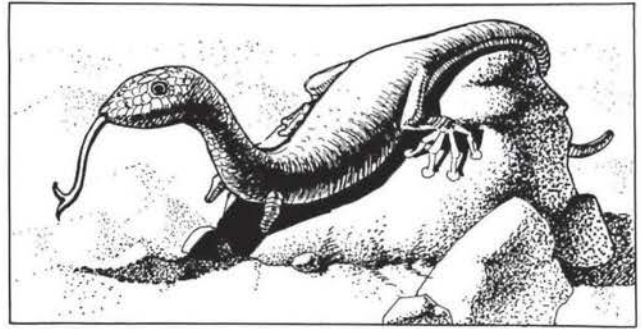
ALIEN CREATURES UPDATE FILE

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The Alien Creatures Update File lists and describes the new creatures encountered in this module. Most plants are not listed because they usually play a minor role in the encounters.

Burrower Snake

TYPE: Medium Carnivore
NUMBER: 1
MOVE: Slow
IM/RS: 8/80
STAMINA: 15
ATTACK: 75
DAMAGE: 1d5 bite
SPECIAL ATTACK: Poison S5/T10
SPECIAL DEFENSE: None
NATIVE WORLD: Volturnus - desert



DESCRIPTION: The burrower snake resembles a 1.5 meter long cross between a snake and a salamander. It has powerful rear legs suited for burrowing into loose sand and rock, but its forelimbs have long since atrophied because of disuse. The burrower snake uses its rear legs to push itself along as it slithers across the desert sands.

After digging a lair in the loose desert sand, the burrower snake waits patiently until an unsuspecting creature wanders within striking range (5 meters). As soon as it senses the presence of its prey, the burrower snake springs forth, hoping to kill any creature it hits with its venomous bite (a shot of antitox will counteract the venom).

Dropper

TYPE: Small Carnivore
NUMBER: 1
MOVE: Very Slow
IM/RS: 2/18
STAMINA: 20
ATTACK: 80
DAMAGE: 2d10 digestion
SPECIAL ATTACK: Attract 2d10 droppers in 1d10 turns
SPECIAL DEFENSE: Immune to projectile weapons, and doze grenades; ranged weapons attack at -10
NATIVE WORLD: Volturnus - caverns



DESCRIPTION: The dropper resembles a giant amoeba. It is a flat, irregular blob up to 1 meter in diameter. The dropper inhabits cavern ceilings all over Volturnus, always ready to drop on any unsuspecting prey walking beneath it. When the dropper senses another creature approaching, it drops a tentacle-like pseudo-pod covered with a sticky digestive acid. If this pseudo-pod strikes the prey, the dropper falls onto the creature in the same turn and attempts to envelop it (treat as a grapple). The dropper then begins to digest the creature, releasing digestive acids that cause 2d10 damage every turn the victim fails to break the dropper's hold. The smell of this digestive acid will attract 2d10 more droppers to the area in 1d10 turns.

Because of its amoeba-like body, projectile weapons will not affect the dropper. It is also immune to the effects of tangle grenades, for it simply oozes out of the tangle strings. Since the dropper never sleeps (even if artificially stimulated), doze grenades will not affect it, either. In addition, any person using a ranged weapon attacks at -10 due to the dropper's ability to blend with its natural rock surroundings (droppers cannot even be seen from distances greater than 5 meters). Very bright light will cancel the effects of the dropper's camouflage.

Flitter

TYPE: Small Carnivore
NUMBER: 10-100
MOVE: Medium
IM/RS: 7/70
STAMINA: 10
ATTACK: 40
DAMAGE: 2 bite
SPECIAL ATTACK: Disease
SPECIAL DEFENSE: None
NATIVE WORLD: Volturnus - caverns

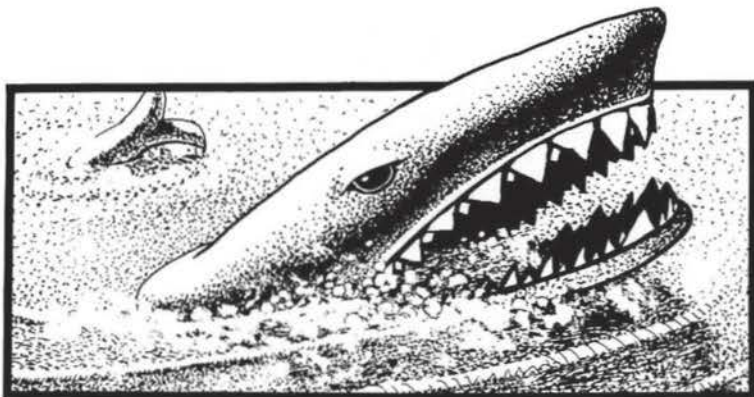


DESCRIPTION: Flitters are small winged mammals that enjoy dark places. They live in the caverns below the Burning Lands, eating insects, small mammals, and carrion. Flitters are generally passive, but loud noises, light, and smoke will cause them to attack.

Each flitter has a 50% chance of carrying a disease that will be transmitted to a bite victim. Eight hours after being bitten, the infected player will begin to suffer from a fever. This will soon be followed by the chills. The fever will continue for three days, during which time the player will be incapable of any action. If the victim is not treated with antibody plus during this time, he will die on the beginning of the fourth day. Even if the victim receives a dose of antibody plus, he must wait 24 hours before he feels healthy enough to do anything but rest.

Jawfish

TYPE: Large Carnivore
 NUMBER: 1-2
 MOVE: Fast
 IM/RS: 5/50
 STAMINA: 100
 ATTACK: 80
 DAMAGE: 3d10 bite
 SPECIAL ATTACK: None
 SPECIAL DEFENSE: Soft cover while in water
 NATIVE WORLD: Voltumnus - fresh water



DESCRIPTION: The jawfish is a large predatory fish similar to a shark. Its jaws, more than a meter wide, are filled with thousands of razor-sharp teeth.

The jawfish will attack anything in the water smaller than 10 meters long. If the players are aboard any type of craft, the jawfish is 70% likely to attack it rather than the players. Any time the jawfish attacks a craft, it will overturn the craft, tossing the players into the water. Note, however, the jawfish will still attack the craft 70% of the time as long as the craft remains afloat. If the jawfish attacks a player, it will attack one of them at random.

The jawfish will attack only once every three turns, circling its intended victim for two turns between attacks. After making five attacks, the jawfish will loose interest and swim away.

Loper

TYPE: Large Herbivore
 NUMBER: 2-20
 MOVE: Fast
 IM/RS: 5/41
 STAMINA: 300
 ATTACK: 40
 DAMAGE: 2d10 bite and claw
 SPECIAL ATTACK: None
 SPECIAL DEFENSE: Needler weapons do not penetrate hide
 NATIVE WORLD: Voltumnus - desert



DESCRIPTION: Lopers are two-legged reptiles the size of horses, inhabiting the deserts of Voltumnus. They are usually found in the presence of the UI-Mor, who use them as cavalry mounts, though it is not uncommon to find them in the wild. They are named for the rapid gait they use to cross the desert sands.

Though normally timid and shy, lopers will attack with their small foreclaws and powerful jaws if provoked. Normally, mounted beasts may not attack in melee, but when mounted by UI-Mor, lopers are capable of attacking at the rider's direction.

Magma Monster

TYPE: Special
 NUMBER: 1 Adult, 100+ young
 MOVE: Very Slow
 IM/RS: 3/30
 STAMINA: 150
 ATTACK: 30
 DAMAGE: 3d10 burn
 SPECIAL ATTACK: Attack up to 50 meters away with no range modifiers
 SPECIAL DEFENSE: Immune to needler, projectile, stun weapons, tangler and doze grenades; takes ½ damage from lasers and fragmentation grenades
 NATIVE WORLD: Voltumnus - caverns



DESCRIPTION: A magma monster is usually indistinguishable from the pools of lava it inhabits. For most of its life, it remains immersed in the lava, feeding off the tremendous heat. When it has stored enough energy to stimulate reproduction, the magma monster enters its "female" cycle. During this cycle, it assumes a semi-solid shape and allows itself to be shot from the pool of boiling lava onto a shelf or shore of solid rock, where it cools over several decades and forms a hard crust.

When this happens, the magma monster is finally ready to reproduce. It opens a small hole in its outer crust and lays nearly 100 little round blobs of magma. Within 10 days of being laid, these blobs of magma form a hard outer crust, taking on the shape and size of billiard balls. After a century of further cooling (sometimes lying dormant, sometimes rolling around the cavern and hitting their siblings), the adult and the young return to the lava pool and begin this 1,000 year cycle again.

If a stranger is fortunate enough to wander into a cavern filled with magma monsters, the adult magma monster will take no action

Continued on page 19.

PLAYER CHARACTER BACKGROUND REPORT

The Zebulon star system was first investigated 20 years ago by an unmanned exploration probe launched by Truane's Star. This probe indicated that Volturnus was the only inhabitable planet in the Zebulon system. It also indicated that great mineral wealth might exist on the planet in the form of molybdenum, tungsten, gold, and other heavy metals. Truane's Star soon made a legal claim to the ownership of Volturnus, and completed exploration of a star route to the Zebulon system one year ago.

The first manned expedition to Volturnus from Truane's Star was launched nine months ago. The four member team of specialists was instructed to set up an outpost, gather data on the possible colonization and mining of Volturnus, and report back.

After passing into the star system, the starship carrying the specialists was never heard from again. The four members of this lost exploration expedition were:

Commander Louis V. Jameson, Truane's Star Military Exploration Force

RACE: Human HEIGHT: 1.9 meters WEIGHT: 88 kg. AGE: 43

SKILLS: 4th level computer

BACKGROUND: 22 years service Truane's Star military forces; combat veteran, Truane's Star Medal of Valor; commander two previous exploration missions

STR/STA 55/60
DEX/RS 45/35
INT/LOG 55/60
PER/LDR 55/70

Geeko-sur-Mang, professor of geology, Capital University

RACE: Yazirian HEIGHT: 2.1 meters WEIGHT: 50 kg. AGE: 52

SKILLS: 4th level computer

BACKGROUND: Recognized authority in geophysics, specialist in planetary crust formation

STR/STA 40/50
DEX/RS 50/50
INT/LOG 50/40
PER/LDR 55/55

Itklikdil, cartographer, Vrusk Atlas Manufacturing Corporation

RACE: Vrusk (female) HEIGHT: 1.5 meters WEIGHT: 85 kg. AGE: 32

SKILLS: 6th level environmental

BACKGROUND: Ph.D., Capital University; experienced explorer and cartographer; loaned to exploration mission by employer in exchange for rights to produce maps of Volturnus.

STR/STA 40/40
DEX/RS 50/60
INT/LOG 40/50
PER/LDR 30/40

Grod, technician, Truane's Star Civil Service

RACE: Dralasite HEIGHT: 1.3 meters WEIGHT: 65 kg. AGE: 85

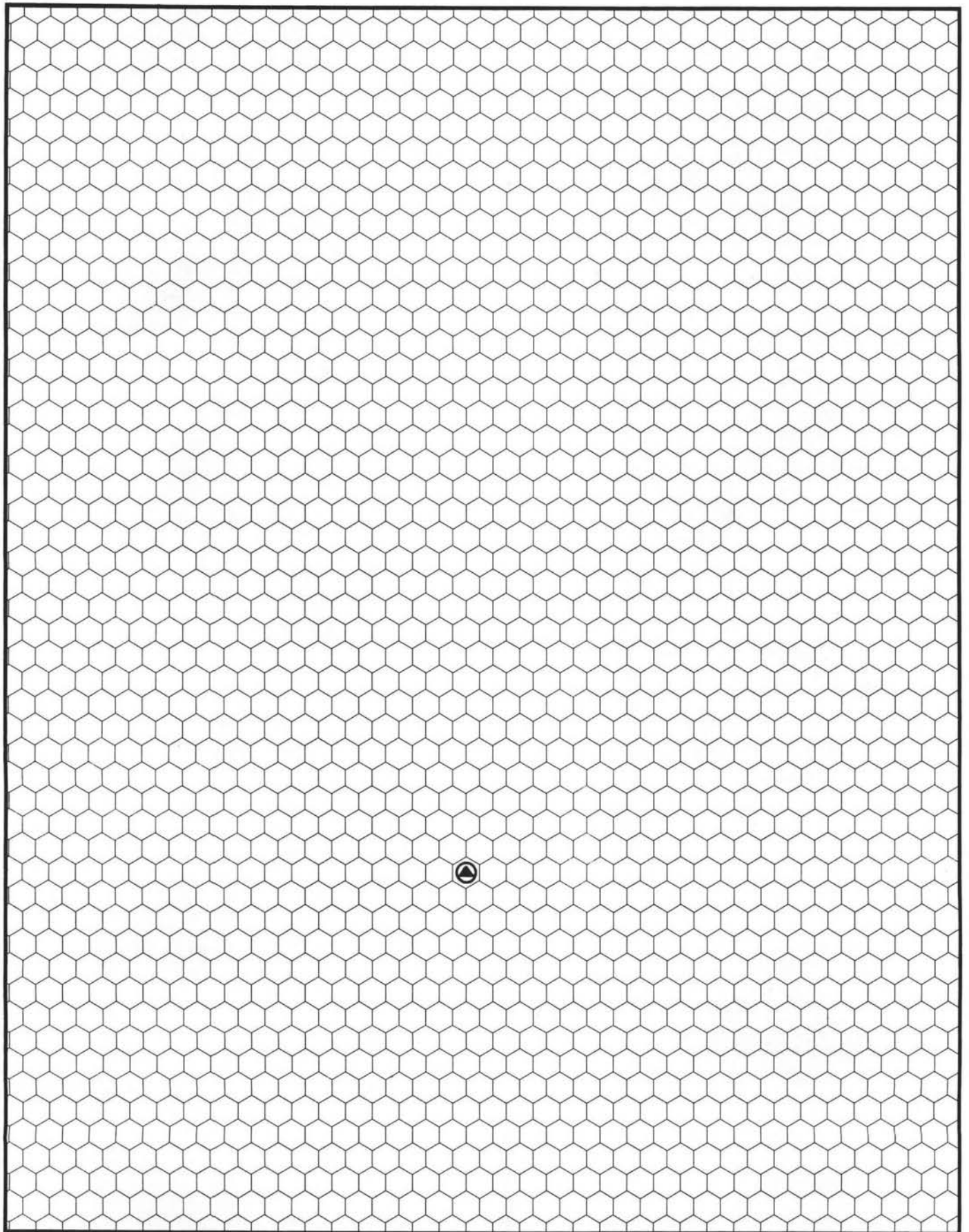
SKILLS: 5th level all skills, Technological Primary Skill Area

BACKGROUND: Developer, hydro-magnetic stabilization system in Dralasite air cars; author, "The Metaphysical Foundations of Dralasite Morality"

STR/STA 60/50
DEX/RS 45/45
INT/LOG 60/70
PER/LDR 40/40

Truane's Star has found itself short of personnel and funds due to colonial troubles and associated police action on Cygnus Omicron IX recently. They have hired you, a team of unknown adventurers, to mount a relief expedition to Volturnus. Your mission is to explore Volturnus, gathering as much information as possible about mineral deposits, life on the planet, and other items of interest to future colonists. You are also to find and rescue the members of the original exploratory mission if possible.

The government has provided you with a minimal amount of equipment, and transportation to Volturnus aboard the starliner *Serena Dawn*. After dropping you on Volturnus, the *Serena Dawn* will return in three months to transport you (and, with luck, the original exploration team) back to Truane's Star.



STAR FRONTIERS™ SYSTEM BRIEF

SYSTEM NAME: Zebulon

STAR COLOR: Yellow

HABITABLE PLANETS: Volturnus

MOONS: 1.) Leo: Completes one orbit every three days, reddish-orange in color
2.) Lulu: Completes one orbit every 27 hours, bluish-silver in color

CLIMATE RANGE: Hot, arid to humid

ATMOSPHERE: 78% nitrogen, 21% oxygen, 1% argon

GRAVITY: 1.0013

DIAMETER: 12,895 kilometers

LENGTH OF DAYS: 24 hours, 03 minutes

AVERAGE SURFACE TEMPERATURE: 25 degrees C

COLONIZERS:

Unsettled; presently claimed by the government of the Truane's Star, explorers of the Zebulon star route.

NATIVE POPULATION:

- 1.) The Ul-Mor, desert-dwelling novepi (nine-limbed creatures). Number and range unknown.
- 2.) The Kurabanda, forest-dwelling bipeds similar to tarsier monkeys. (Encountered in a later module.)
- 3.) The Edestekai, hill-dwelling tripeds, trilaterally symmetrical. (Encountered in a later module.)
- 4.) The Mechanons, a mysterious race of intelligent machines. (Encountered in a later module.)
- 5.) The Eorna, a race of dinosaur-like bipeds. The original intelligence on Volturnus. (Encountered in a later module.)

PLANET HISTORY

Named after the Greek god of the southwest wind, Volturnus is a hot, dry world with many types of hostile terrain. The endless deserts, rugged mountains, volcanic wastes, and dangerous salt flats are constantly scoured by a strong southwesterly wind. Despite these harsh conditions, rare patches of forest and even a few lakes have managed to maintain a perilous existence.

The government of Truane's Star opened a star route to the Zebulon system recently, sending an expedition to the planet nine months ago. Unfortunately, all communication with the starship ceased shortly after it passed into the system. No clues as to the whereabouts of either the crew or the ship have been found.

Because of the cost and time involved in preparing an expedition, nine months have passed since the original mission disappeared. Nonetheless, the player characters have been assigned to locate the remnants of the first expedition, if any can be found. In addition, they are also charged with exploring and mapping the planet.

Only the future can tell what they will find, but the story of Volturnus is a strange one. Once the home of a gentle race of intelligent dinosaurs, it is now a barren, harsh world. The history of its downfall is outlined below for your reference.

The story of the fall of Volturnus begins when the Eorna, a race of intelligent dinosaurs, developed star travel. As soon as the Eorna launched their first colonization starships, they were attacked by a Sathar space armada. Like most Sathar attacks, this one came with no warning; the Eorna were not even aware of the presence of the Sathar until the mysterious worms invaded their system.

The Sathar space armada quickly overwhelmed the Eorna, wreaking destruction across the planet. Within a matter of days, the worms had nearly driven the gentle Eorna to extinction. Still, the Eorna fought valiantly, and were able to resist complete annihilation because the Sathar had overextended their supply lines.

The Sathar retreated, hoping they had destroyed enough of the Eorna civilization to prevent the gentle creatures from ever attempting interstellar travel again. In case they had failed, however, the Sathar left a mysterious artifact behind to alert them of any interstellar travel in the Zebulon system that might occur in the future.

Less than 150 Eorna survived the Day of Death. They soon realized they were doomed as a race, for they knew that their numbers were not large enough to provide a viable gene pool. The survivors chose to dedicate what remained of their lives to the evolution of other intelligent races on Volturnus. The Eorna hoped to prepare these races to meet and defeat the Sathar.

The Eorna are using a subtle process of hypnotic indoctrination and DNA manipulation to accelerate the development of three races toward intelligence. Most of the Eorna survivors have undergone cryogenic sleep, waiting to be awakened until they are needed to continue the project. Despite the fact that most of their young are born physically or mentally deficient because of the limited gene pool, the Eorna continue to breed, relying upon the few normal children to help continue the project.

The development of the star route by Truane's Star has completely upset Eorna plans. Though three races are intelligent, they have advanced only to a primitive state of technology.

More importantly, the presence of Truane's Star starships has triggered the Sathar's artifact, and, unknown to any, the Sathar are already travelling to Volturnus as the adventure begins. This time, the worms are determined to annihilate all life on Volturnus.

Meanwhile, a race of intelligent machines has evolved in the secret caverns. These machines, the Mechanons, are determined to eliminate or control the organic life forms infesting Volturnus. They will stop at nothing to insure their utter and total domination of the planet.

Yet, as merciless as the Mechanons and as wicked as the Sathar are, neither of these races had anything to do with the disappearance of the first Volturnian expedition. A ruthless band of space-pirates have established an illegal mining operation on the planet, and have enslaved Edestekai farmers and many members of the first expedition to work in their mines.

As the player characters explore Volturnus, they may discover all of this information, or none of it. As the referee, you must decide how much of this background information to release to them.

ALIEN CULTURE BACKGROUND REPORT

THE UL-MOR

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

UI-Mor resemble octopi adapted to life on land. Like octopi, UI-Mor have eight large limbs. Each limb ends in five small tentacles useful for grasping and manipulation. They walk on the four largest limbs, using the other four to hold weapons and tools.

The UI-Mor also have a ninth limb, a tentacle about 30 centimeters long. This tentacle is an extension of the spinal cord. The end contains a hard cartilage point encasing a series of nerve-endings. The UI-Mor can insert the tip of this tentacle into the fatty tissue surrounding the spinal cord of other creatures, achieving a nerve link which allows them to communicate directly with the creature's mind. The UI-Mor use this tentacle so effectively they can achieve a direct mind-link with any being.

They do not have a complex spoken language, since they communicate with each other using mind-link. The UI-Mor have, however, developed a secret sign language used in situations where mind-link proves impractical.

CULTURE

The UI-Mor are pastoral nomads inhabiting the deserts and rocky barrens of Voltumnus, where they herd kwidges and cactus whompers. While tending their flocks, the UI-Mor ride a 4 meter tall dinosaur called a loper. They control these animals using mind-link, and, as a consequence, very close ties develop between rider and beast. The UI-Mor's high regard for lopers is apparent to anyone associating with them.

Much of the UI-Mor culture is based on their religion. They believe in the "One Who is Many," a deity that encompasses all things. Though there are many different forms of the One, the UI-Mor believe that all objects, no matter how strange, are part of the One.

As an UI-Mor matures, he identifies with a particular object (such as a tree, rock, or bush). When he dies, he is buried near this object, and is believed to have been transformed into that object. The object is then named after the dead UI-Mor. In this manner, the UI-Mor avoid considering a tribe-member dead. Instead, dead UI-Mor merely assume a new form of the One.

A special historian, called a Remember, memorizes the names and locations of those who have assumed a new form of the One. Usually, these names include a capsule history of the individual's life.

UI-Mor life is filled with pageantry and ritual. The most important ritual is the Time of Oneness. When the two moons of Voltumnus enter conjunction with its sun, the capacity for mind-link is increased greatly. The UI-Mor then have a tribal mind-link known as the time of Oneness. During this mind-link, they undergo a mystical experience, seeing everything as a part of the great Oneness.

Another important ritual is the Great Game. At the end of each year, UI-Mor males ride their lopers in a very rough contest called the Great Game. This contest is similar to a cross

between polo, rugby, and fox hunting. The new year is then named after the victor.

The basic social unit of the UI-Mor is the "clutch," a marriage unit consisting of several UI-Mor that have found themselves compatible during the "Time of Oneness." The adult males of the clutch care for the herds and prepare themselves for combat, while the females take turns incubating the clutch's eggs and maintaining the camp.

Though most decisions affecting UI-Mor life are made on the family level, they do have tribal and inter-tribal councils. These councils make decisions affecting the tribe and the nation. If a family does not agree with a council decision, they may leave the tribe and do as they please.

The UI-Mor legal system is strongly objective, making no allowances for extenuating circumstances. Because the law is designed to protect the tribe, the UI-Mor feel that extenuating circumstances are unimportant. If an individual violates the law, he has injured the tribe and must be punished.

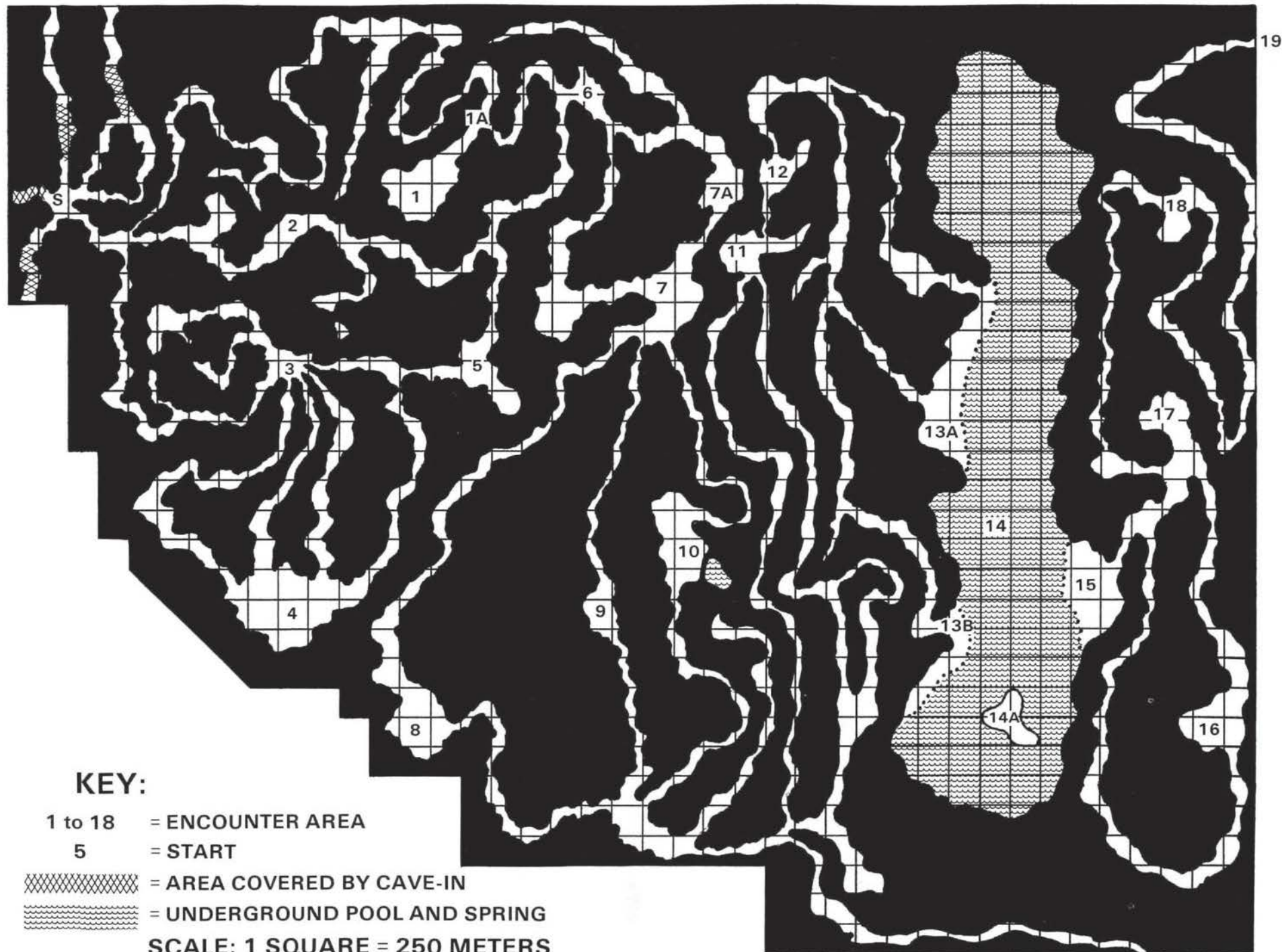
Punishment usually emphasizes compensation for injury inflicted upon the tribe. Some crimes, however, are so serious that the individual can never compensate for his transgression. Such crimes include wasting water, breaking eggs, and desecrating sacred objects. The punishment for these crimes is always banishment. (Most banished UI-Mor quickly die without the comfort of mind-link.)

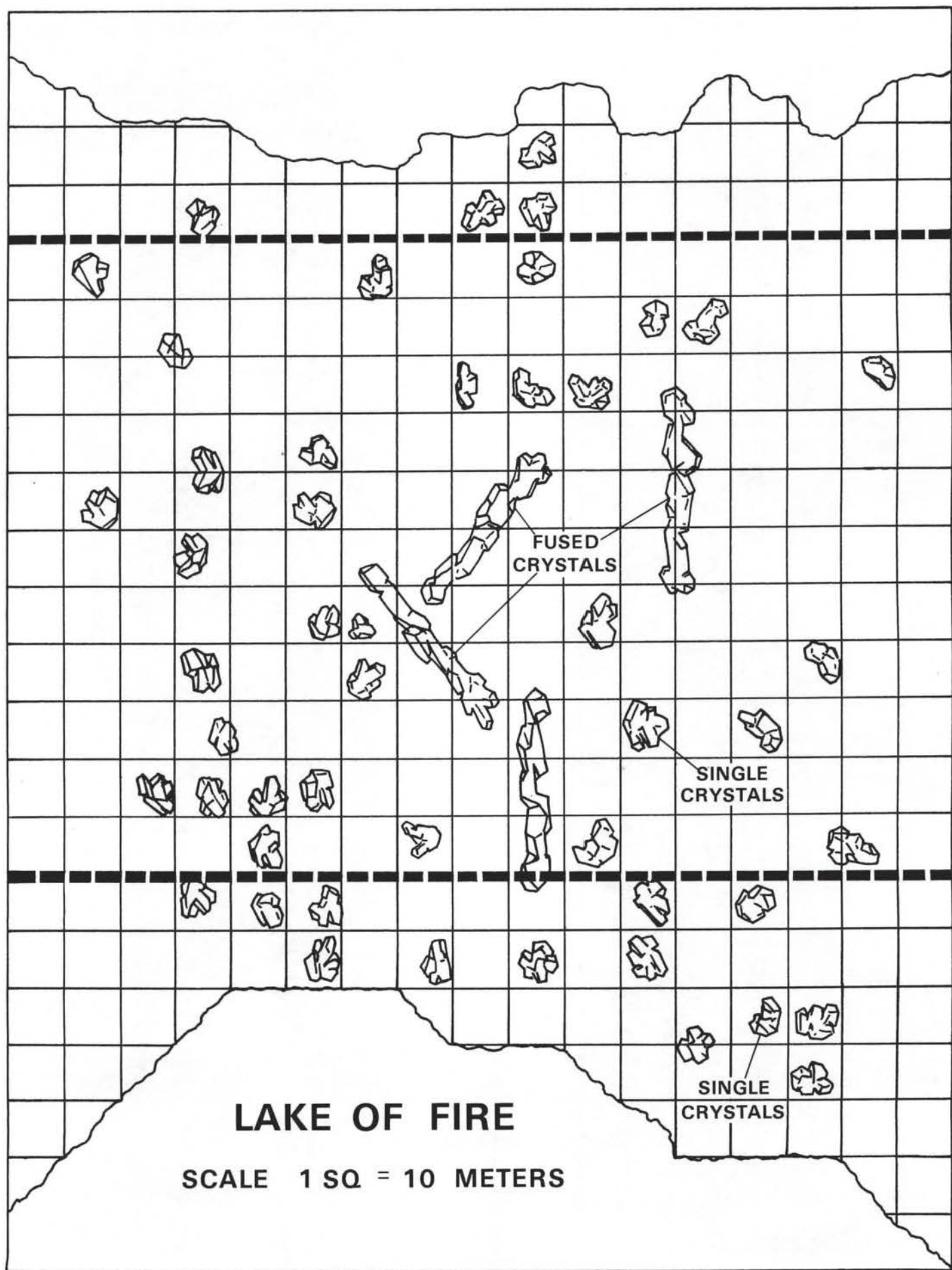
Though the UI-Mor are basically communal beings, they maintain a facade of individualism. The UI-Mor often wear brightly colored headdresses with dyed kwidge feathers, have decorative body tattoos, and engage in a form of ritualized theft designed to display their cunning and battle prowess. An individual may attempt to steal anything he wishes from any being who is not a friend of the tribe's. If he succeeds, the thief divides his prize among all members of the tribe. The easier it is to divide the prize, the more impressive the UI-Mor consider the theft.

UL-MOR REACTIONS TO PLAYERS

Like most explorers meeting a new race, the player characters will find their smallest actions are likely to provoke strong reactions from the UI-Mor. Any selfish or greedy action will be regarded with distaste by the UI-Mor. The UI-Mor will take immediate and forceful action to prevent wastage, but will not punish a character unless he does the same thing several times in a row. Any character who desecrates a sacred object or steals from a member of the tribe, however, will immediately be stripped of his equipment and left to die in the desert. (If an UI-Mor marriage unit is willing to repair the damage and take responsibility for the character, however, the UI-Mor will give the transgressor another chance.)

Any character who gives them gifts and cooperates easily will be well-liked, and treated with courtesy. A character who exhibits courage, battle prowess, or a showy display of ostentation will be greatly admired. The UI-Mor will go to great lengths to impress this character.





PRE-ROLLED CHARACTERS

If the players do not wish to roll up their own characters, you may allow them to choose from the selection below.

Abbreviations:

STR = Strength
STA = Stamina
DEX = Dexterity
RS = Reaction Speed

INT = Intuition
LOG = Logic
PER = Personality
LDR = Leadership

PS = Punching Score
RW = Ranged Weapon
IM = Initiative Modifier
M = Melee

Character Name: Character Race: Human

STR/STA 50/50 PS 3
DEX/RS 55/55 IM 6
INT/LOG 50/50 RW 28
PER/LDR 45/35 M 28
Special Abilities: None
Skills: Military PSA, Beam Weapons 1, Gyrojet Weapons 1
Equipment: Gas mask, Magnigoggles

Character Name: Character Race: Dralasite

STR/STA 65/65 PS 4
DEX/RS 55/45 IM 6
INT/LOG 40/50 RW 28
PER/LDR 55/55 M 28
Special Abilities: Form Change, Perception (05%)
Skills: Technological PSA, Computer 1, Technician 1
Equipment: Techkit, Solvaway

Character Name: Character Race: Human

STR/STA 50/50 PS 3
DEX/RS 45/45 IM 5
INT/LOG 50/60 RW 23
PER/LDR 50/50 M 23
Special Abilities: None
Skills: Technological PSA, Robotics 1, Computers 1
Equipment: Robcomkit, Solvaway

Character Name: Character Race: Dralasite

STR/STA 65/65 PS 4
DEX/RS 45/35 IM 5
INT/LOG 55/55 RW 23
PER/LDR 45/35 M 33
Special Abilities: Form Change, Perception (05%)
Skills: Military PSA, Martial Arts 1, Gyrojet Weapons 1
Equipment: Magnigoggles, Chronocom

Character Name: Character Race: Human

STR/STA 25/35 PS 2
DEX/RS 65/55 IM 6
INT/LOG 55/55 RW 33
PER/LDR 50/50 M 33
Special Abilities: None
Skills: Biosocial PSA, Medical 1, Environmental 1
Equipment: Medkit

Character Name: Character Race: Dralasite

STR/STA 45/45 PS 3
DEX/RS 65/55 IM 6
INT/LOG 45/45 RW 33
PER/LDR 50/50 M 33
Special Abilities: Form Change, Perception (05%)
Skills: Biosocial PSA, Medical 1, Environmental 1
Equipment: Medkit, Chronocom

Character Name: Character Race: Yazirian

STR/STA 45/45 PS 3
DEX/RS 65/55 IM 6
INT/LOG 55/55 RW 33
PER/LDR 35/35 M 33
Special Abilities: Gliding, Battle Rage (05%), Night Vision
Skills: Military PSA, Technician 1, Beam Weapons 1
Equipment: Radiophone, Magnigoggles

Character Name: Character Race: Vrusk

STR/STA 45/45 PS 3
DEX/RS 45/35 IM 5
INT/LOG 45/45 RW 23
PER/LDR 70/60 M 23
Special Abilities: Ambidexterity, Comprehension (20%)
Skills: Biosocial PSA, Medical 1, Environmental 1
Equipment: Medkit, Chronocom

Character Name: Character Race: Yazirian

STR/STA 25/35 PS 2
DEX/RS 65/55 IM 6
INT/LOG 60/60 RW 33
PER/LDR 45/35 M 33
Special Abilities: Gliding, Battle Rage (05%), Night Vision
Skills: Technological PSA, Robotics 1, Technician 1
Equipment: Gas mask, Techkit

Character Name: Character Race: Vrusk

STR/STA 55/55 PS 3
DEX/RS 45/45 IM 5
INT/LOG 40/50 RW 23
PER/LDR 45/45 M 28
Special Abilities: Ambidexterity, Comprehension (24%)
Skills: Technological PSA, Robotics 1, Technician 1
Equipment: Techkit, Robcomkit

Character Name: Character Race: Yazirian

STR/STA 45/45 PS 3
DEX/RS 45/45 IM 5
INT/LOG 50/50 RW 23
PER/LDR 70/50 M 23
Special Abilities: Gliding, Battle Rage (05%), Night Vision
Skills: Biosocial PSA, Medical 1, Environmental 1
Equipment: Medkit, Chronocom

Character Name: Character Race: Vrusk

STR/STA 50/50 PS 3
DEX/RS 55/55 IM 6
INT/LOG 45/45 RW 28
PER/LDR 50/50 M 28
Special Abilities: Ambidexterity, Comprehension (11%)
Skills: Military PSA, Demolitions 1, Projectile Weapons 1
Equipment: Radiophone, Gas mask

5

unless the stranger approaches the young. The magma monster will attack if any stranger touches its young (not if the young touch a stranger). It will open a small aperture and spew a stream of lava at its victim. This spurt may travel as far as 50 meters, and is shot with such force no modifiers for range are necessary.

Due to the magma monster's hard outer shell, it is not affected by tangle grenades, needler, or projectile weapons. Doze grenades and stun weapons of any sort will not affect it either, since the magma monster's life force is based on thermal energy and these weapons are designed to achieve their effects through bio-chemical manipulation. Magma monsters take only ½ damage from lasers and fragmentation grenades.

Mutating Fungus

| | |
|------------------|----------------------|
| TYPE: | Special |
| NUMBER: | 1 |
| MOVE: | Slow |
| IM/RS: | Special |
| STAMINA: | Special |
| ATTACK: | Special |
| DAMAGE: | Special |
| SPECIAL ATTACK: | Replaces body cells |
| SPECIAL DEFENSE: | None |
| NATIVE WORLD: | Voltturnus - caverns |

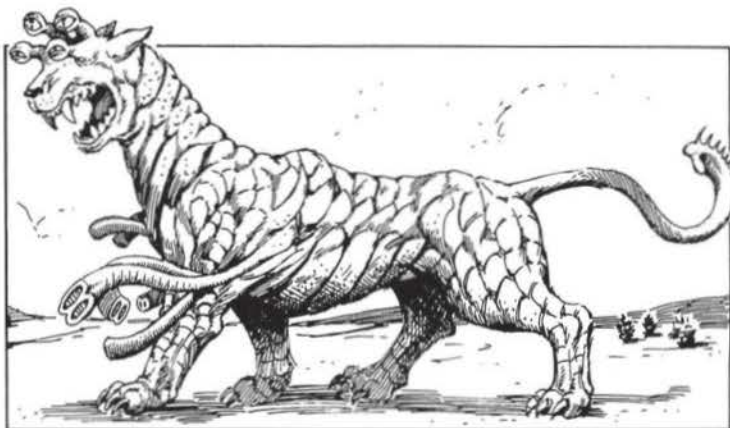


DESCRIPTION: It is uncertain whether the mutating fungus is an animal, a plant, or a cancer, for it has aspects of all three. In outward appearance, it resembles a white, pasty fungus, yet it is capable of self-locomotion, creeping across small areas of land to attack its prey. Its attack form, however, resembles that of a cancer; replacing the normal, healthy cells of any creature with its own mushy cells.

Any character who is exposed to the mutating fungus for eight hours or more, or who sleeps near it for any amount of time, will find a white, pasty growth covering parts of his body. If the character notices the presence of the fungus within three hours of its attack, he may treat the infected part of his body with antibody plus and counteract the effects of the fungus (though he will not be protected from further attacks). If the character is not treated within three hours, the infected body part must be amputated, or the character will be completely consumed by the fungus within three days. Any character exposed to a mutating fungus for three days without treatment will be transformed into a mutating fungus permanently.

Quickdeath

| | |
|------------------|---|
| TYPE: | Large Carnivore |
| NUMBER: | 1-2 |
| MOVE: | Very Fast |
| IM/RS: | 8/75 |
| STAMINA: | 180 |
| ATTACK: | 70 |
| DAMAGE: | 6d10 bite, claws |
| SPECIAL ATTACK: | Poison dart S10/T3, (RW 60, 10/20/30/40/50) attacks extra creature with maw (10 points damage) |
| SPECIAL DEFENSE: | Immune to needler weapons; ½ damage from laser or projectile weapons. 70% chance will remain unseen until within 120 meters |
| NATIVE WORLD: | Sathar Attack Monster - all terrains except mountains |



DESCRIPTION: The quickdeath is the ultimate land carnivore. This creature can propel itself at 100 kilometers per hour with its great legs, which resemble those of a jaguar. Quickdeaths keep the claws on these legs razor sharp, using them to attack prey as well as for climbing. Three sets of smaller, tentacle-like limbs ending in suction cups are attached to the quickdeath's sides. It uses these limbs to catch unwary prey and stuff the unfortunate creatures into its digestive maw. Any creature in the maw takes 10 points of damage until it frees itself (as if breaking free from a hold).

The quickdeath has a long, flexible neck that ends in a snout and large mouth. Its four eyes are mounted on retractable stalks atop the head, while its brain is located at the base of its neck. (The quickdeath is nearly blind when it strikes its prey because it retracts these eyes.) The creature has a long, whip-like tail that can fling a poisonous dart once every four hours. The outer hide of the creature is covered by a moist, reflective armor which provides such good camouflage that the creature is nearly invisible until it approaches within 120 meters. Quickdeaths are constantly on the move, seeking to appease their hearty appetites. They are found in all areas of Voltturnus except the mountains, frequently travelling in mated pairs.

The female lays hundreds of eggs each year, burying them in deep in the sand or soil. These caches sometimes contain as many as 50 eggs. The first of the young to hatch eats the remaining eggs for his or her first meal, and immediately begins its lifelong search for more food.

Quickdeaths are not native to Voltturnus. The Sathar used an advanced form of DNA manipulation to create these hideous beasts from a common type of housecat found throughout the universe. On the "Day of Death," they released thousands of quickdeaths on the surface of Voltturnus to terrorize its inhabitants.

Rasties

TYPE: Medium Carnivore
NUMBER: 2-20; up to 100
MOVE: Medium
IM/RS: 7/65
STAMINA: 75
ATTACK: 75
DAMAGE: 2d10 bite
SPECIAL ATTACK: Lock jaws and rend for 1d10 per turn
SPECIAL DEFENSE: None
NATIVE WORLD: Volturnus - caverns

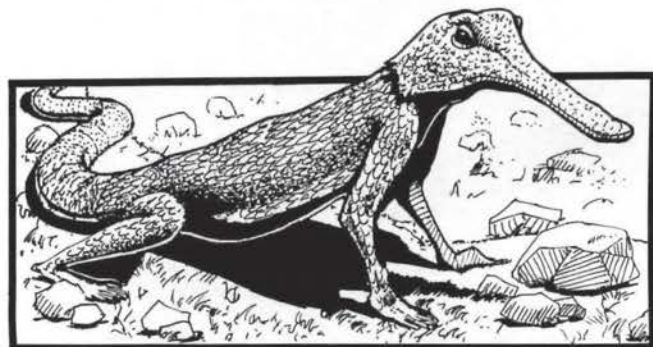


DESCRIPTION: Rasties are vicious mammals of medium size that prey upon hapless shovelmouths and other gentle prey living in the caverns of Volturnus. They average 1 meter in length, and look like a cross between a rat and a small monkey. They have four legs, but can sit upright and use their forelimbs to grasp meat or small prey. Rasties are usually hungry, and will attack anything that looks edible to them.

Rasties are usually found in packs of 20 or more. Once they smell blood, the entire pack will fight until dead. They use their sharp, ripping teeth to bite their prey initially, but once they have locked their teeth into a piece of flesh, they clamp their jaws shut and do an additional 1d10 of damage every turn (automatically) until the creature frees itself or kills the attacking rastie.

Shovelmouth

TYPE: Medium Herbivore
NUMBER: 2-20
MOVE: Medium
IM/RS: 3/25
STAMINA: 60
ATTACK: 45
DAMAGE: 1d10 bite
SPECIAL ATTACK: Stampede for 2d10 per shovelmouth
SPECIAL DEFENSE: None
NATIVE WORLD: Volturnus - caverns



DESCRIPTION: The shovelmouth is a four-legged reptile with a long, flat snout resembling a shovel. It uses this snout to scrape moss and fungi off the walls and floors of the caverns it inhabits. Shovelmouths breed in great numbers, but their population is kept in check by rasties, which prefer them as food.

Shovelmouths are normally quite harmless, but if a herd panics, they will stampede. If a character is unfortunate enough to be caught in a stampede, he will take 2d10 damage from every shovelmouth that tramples him. You must use your discretion to determine the number of shovelmouths that may trample a character. In narrow, confined areas, the panicked shovelmouths will have a difficult time avoiding characters, while in a more open area, they will attempt to run around an object as large as a man.

A shovelmouth stampede may be diverted or stopped by a 1 meter high barricade, as long as the barricade blocks the entire corridor. A blockade that is too low or has a breach in it will not stop the stampede. The shovelmouths will destroy the barricade as they rush past or over it.

Despite their tendency to stampede at awkward times, shovelmouths are generally quite docile, and even affectionate. When a character meets a herd of shovelmouths, one of the reptiles will follow the character for several miles. If confronted, the creature will gaze at the character with its soulful, reptilian eyes and wag its scaly tail. It will not leave until force is used to chase it away.

Volturnian Cave Bear

TYPE: Large Omnivore
NUMBER: 1-2
MOVE: Medium
IM/RS: 5/45
STAMINA: 200
ATTACK: 60
DAMAGE: 4d10 claw
SPECIAL ATTACK: Hug for 2d10 per turn on roll of 10 or less
SPECIAL DEFENSE: None
NATIVE WORLD: Volturnus - caverns



DESCRIPTION: The Volturnian cave bear is a large (7 meters), hairless creature inhabiting the caverns of Volturnus. It attempts to eat any organic substance it finds, including the player characters.

The Volturnian cave bear normally attacks by slashing the victim with its massive foreclaws, attempting to sweep the unfortunate creature into a hug. If the bear's normal attack succeeds on a roll of 10 or less, it has caught the character in its hug. The cave bear does 2d10 points damage each turn until the victim dies or breaks the hold (at -20, due to the bear's great strength).

Other creatures, such as the timid roller or the loud-mouthed scaak, may be found on Volturnus, but are not in this module.

1.) Burrower Snake (MV Slow; IM 8; RS 80; STA 15; DM 1d5; SA Poison S5/T10)

Choose a character at random. This character steps next to a burrower snake hole and is attacked.

2.) Sand Storm

The wind begins to blow 120 kph and creates a sand storm. Any character with an environmental skill should make an Intuition check; modify this roll by +10 for every level above one. If any character makes a successful Intuition check, the party will be able to improvise a shelter and survive the storm without taking damage.

If the characters happen to be in a hex with an unusual rock formation, well, fertile area, or high elevation symbol, the characters can find shelter quickly and avoid taking damage from the storm.

If the characters have no advance warning and are not in one of the hexes listed above, they will take damage from the storm. Have each character roll a Reaction Speed check. If the check is unsuccessful, the character takes 4d10 damage from the sand storm during that time period. If successful, the character takes only 2d10 damage from the storm.

Sand storms will normally last only one 12 hour period, but there is a small chance they will last longer. Roll 1d10; on a roll of 1-8, the storm lasts only one period. On a roll of 9, the storm lasts an extra period, and on a roll of 10, it lasts two extra periods.

If a storm lasts for more than one period, characters will take only 2d10 damage during the second and third periods.

3.) Funnel Worm (MV Slow; IM 3; RS 25; STA 200; ATT 70; DM 4d10; SA See below; SD See below)

The party walks over a funnel worm. Choose one character at random. That character and any other character within 10 meters must make Reaction Speed checks or fall into the funnel worm's trap.

SA: Automatic hit from ambush position. SD: Remains undetected until it attacks.

4.) Sand Shark (MV Medium fast; IM 5; RS 50; STA 80; ATT 50; DM 2d10; SD See below)

The characters are attacked by two hungry sand sharks.

SD: Immune to needler weapons; cannot be attacked until it surfaces.

5.) Lopers (MV Fast; IM 5; RS 41; STA 300; ATT 40; DM 2d10; SD See below)

The characters encounter a dead female loper that has just given birth to two babies. The lopers will believe the first character they see is their mother. The young animals will then follow this character, hoping to receive food and water. (They need 1/2 as much food and water as characters.)

SD: Immune to needler weapons.

DELTA SUBSECTION 4: PLANNED ENCOUNTERS

Because of the vast territory the characters may journey through, the number of planned encounters is limited. There are only three planned encounters in this section; all are designed to accomplish specific goals. The first encounter, the poison well, warns the characters that many things on Volturnus are not as they seem. The second encounter, with the jet-copter, foreshadows later encounters with Volturnian space pirates. The third encounter, with the UI-Mor, is designed to provide clues to the secret of Volturnus, but only after the characters pass the test of tribal membership.

1.) Poison Well

Read the following description to your characters as they start to leave the crash site:

From your vantage point high in the rocks, you see what appears to be a covered well 8 kilometers east of you.

The well is a deep hole lined with rocks. A small rock dome covers the well. This dome has only one entrance, on the northeast. This entrance is 1 meter high. The bottom of the well contains 12 liters of water.

The dome was built by the UI-Mor to protect the well, which is poisonous to Humans, Dralasites, Vrusk, and Yazirians because of its high arsenic content. The water is not poisonous to UI-Mor, however, for they have a special organ that filters out arsenic.

This is not the only poisonous well in the desert. There is a 50% chance that any other well in the desert will be poisonous. If any character uses a toxrad gauge on a poisonous well, he will detect the arsenic.

Arsenic is a cumulative poison, continuing to collect inside the body until death occurs. The first time a character drinks from an arsenic well, there are no undesirable side effects. The second time, the character feels ill, but takes no damage. The third time, the character takes 10 points of damage, and the fourth time the character takes 10 points of damage per melee turn until the poison is countered by an antitox shot or the character dies.

If the characters boil the water and collect the condensed steam (by trapping the vapor under a plastic tarp or similar item and collecting the liquid as it cools), the water will be safe to drink. They may collect up to 8 liters a day in this manner. But simply boiling the water is not enough, since the arsenic will still be in the water.

2.) Pirate Search Craft

Eleven periods after the characters leave the lifeboat wreckage, a pirate search-copter will fly over them.

You hear the distant throbbing of a small jet-copter on the desert air. Looking back toward the lifeboat's wreckage, you see a small jet-copter flying toward you. It is flying very high, but you can see it is an open search-type copter.

If any character uses magni-goggles to look at the jet-copter, they will see it carries three very mean looking men, obviously pirates. They will also see a painting of a red devil surrounded by silver stars on the side of the copter.

If the characters attempt to hide from the jet-copter, it will cross back and forth over their general vicinity several times, then leave. But if the characters attempt to attract the attention of the men in the copter, it will hover overhead. All three men will fire their laser pistols at the party members. Luckily for the player characters, the pirates will miss because of the range and difficulty of firing from a jet-copter.

After firing at the characters several times, the men in the jet-copter will run out of ammunition and fly back toward the life-boat. As they leave, one of the men in the jet-copter will drop a note reading, "We know who you are. You'll never leave Volturnus alive."

3.) The UI-Mor

The characters will encounter the UI-Mor when they have reached the movement limit marked by the dotted line on the planetary map, or are dying of thirst. This encounter is designed to introduce the characters to their first intelligent race on Volturnus, to further the plot of the adventure, and to keep them from dying in the wilderness.

You see a number of individuals riding toward you over a distant ridge. They vaguely resemble octopi, except their bodies are plum-purple and highly decorated with feathers, primitive jewelry, tattoos, and bright paint. They carry spears and war clubs in four of their tentacles, and keep their other four tentacles wrapped around their mounts, which resemble two-legged dinosaurs standing 4 meters tall.

The tallest rider shouts a high pitched command and the riders spread out along the ridge to await another command. The riders are about 500 meters away.

The characters have encountered the advance guard of an UI-Mor tribe changing camps. The UI-Mor will make no hostile gestures.

Five UI-Mor will ride toward the characters slowly and carefully, keeping their weapons handy, but not raised in a threatening manner. The UI-Mor will stop if the characters make any threatening gestures. Once the UI-Mor are within easy speaking distance, they will attempt to establish contact.

At this point, if the characters have the baby lopers with them, the tallest UI-Mor will ceremoniously drop his weapons and raise four of his tentacles. If the characters do not have the lopers, the UI-Mor will simply wait for the characters to make the next move.

Communication will prove difficult until the poly-vox has had sufficient time to study the UI-Mor language. Meaningful communication will be restricted to gestures at first, but the poly-vox will soon enable the characters to communicate with the UI-Mor. Even after the poly-vox is working at full potential, the characters will find the UI-Mor language primitive and limited to basic ideas.

The UI-Mor will soon ask permission to use their primary means of communication, the direct mind link. Any character who undergoes the direct mind link will be able to communicate with the UI-Mor normally. The UI-Mor will explain that food and water are scarce in the desert, and by law they can share food and water only with tribe members. It is obvious, however, that the characters will soon die if somebody doesn't help them, and so the UI-Mor will give the characters food and water if they will join the tribe. If the characters are not willing to undergo the manhood ritual required to join the tribe, the UI-Mor will regretfully leave the characters to die in the desert.

If the characters agree to join the tribe, the UI-Mor will lead them to the oasis just outside the Burning Lands. During this journey, the characters must travel a little behind the UI-Mor and camp separately, since they are probationary members of the tribe. They will be immune to all predictable natural disasters such as sandstorms, flashfloods, starvation, and dying of thirst. Furthermore, the characters will only have to fight for five turns before the UI-Mor will come to drive away the attacking creature. Once they arrive at the oasis, the UI-Mor will insist the characters rest until all of their wounds are healed.

TABLE 4.1: UL-MOR NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

There are 20 average UI-Mor riders in the tribe your player characters meet. Use the set of average characteristics below for these 20 riders. In addition to the 20 riders, there are 5 leaders. These five leaders are shown below the average characteristics. The melee and ranged weapon scores take all skill levels into account.

Average UI-Mor (RW 45, M 45, PS 2, IM 5, RS 50, STA 40.)

Notes: All UI-Mor have four attacks per turn and have mind link ability; almost all have 2nd level skill in thrown and melee weapons. They all ride lopers (MV FAST; IM 5; RS 41; STA 300;

ATT 40; DM 4d10; SD Immune to needlers) and are armed with spears.

Fonn-Ar the Warrior (RW 65, M 65, PS 3, IM 7, RS 65, STA 45.)

Notes: 3rd level skill in thrown and melee weapons; brave to the point of foolhardiness; open and forthright.

Arkadas the Red (RW 60, M 65, PS 3, IM 6, RS 55, STA 50.)

Notes: 3rd level thrown and melee weapons; paints red stripes on body for war; cunning but loyal; something of a dandy.

Thurad Sandy Back (RW 75, M 70, PS 2, IM 7, RS 65, STA 40.)

Notes: 4th level thrown and melee weapons; cautious and quiet, a mystic who often contemplates the One.

Kahai Long Rider (RW 70, M 75, PS 3, IM 6, RS 55, STA 60.)

Notes: 4th level thrown and melee weapons; protector of loper-kind; close friend of Athru.

Athru Sea People's Bane (RW 90, M 85, PS 3, IM 7, RS 70, STA 60.)

Notes: 5th level thrown and melee weapons; courageous but not foolhardy; always shrewd; considers the good of the tribe above his own; a good leader.

DELTA SUBSECTION 5: EXPERIENCE POINTS

This is the end of the second encounter section. It is now time to award experience points. Players who took an active part in this section receive 2 experience points. Players who were extremely helpful or active receive 3 experience points. Players who merely travelled along, but did not do very much to help the party, receive 1 experience point.

EPSILON SECTION: CREATURES OF THE CAVERNS

The UI-Mor will lead the characters to a vast cavern network one 12 hour period's travel inside the burning lands. This cavern is the safest way to cross those perilous lands, though it holds many dangers for the unwary. The first four periods in the cavern will pass uneventfully, but a massive cave-in will separate the characters from the UI-Mor at the beginning of the fifth period. They must then find their way through the Forbidden Caverns to the outside world. If the characters survive, they will once again meet the UI-Mor and finally journey to the Place of True Warriors to fight the ferocious quickdeath.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 1: SPECIAL RULES

MAPPING

Use the Forbidden Caverns map in the STAR FRONTIERS System Brief for this section. You can simplify mapping by sketching or tracing these corridors onto the characters' mapping paper.

However your characters map the caverns, remember to reveal only small sections of the map at one time. The characters must discover the exit to the Forbidden Caverns by themselves. You should not show the cavern map to them at any time.

The characters will not need to map the sections of the caverns they travel during the first two days underground. They will begin mapping only after the cave-in occurs at the location marked "S" on the cavern map. After the cave-in, they will wander through the winding corridors and cathedral-like

rooms of the Forbidden Caverns, trying to find an exit. Several areas are numbered; these are the planned encounter areas. When the characters enter one of these areas, refer to the planned encounter chart for this section.

TIME IN THE CAVERNS

After the cave-in, the characters will enter a new and dangerous phase of their adventure. Because they are lost in the perilous Forbidden Caverns, the time period reference must be changed from 12 hours to one hour. If your characters question this, you may explain that the time period has changed because they are travelling in dark, unknown caverns.

MOVEMENT IN THE CAVERNS

Since the characters will find themselves moving through dark, unknown caverns, their movement rate will be considerably reduced. The movement rate must also be adjusted because the time period has been reduced to one hour. Therefore, the following movement rates will apply while the characters are in the Forbidden Caverns:

EPSILON 1.1:

MOVEMENT RATES IN SQUARES

| Race | Number of Squares |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Human | 3 |
| Dralasite | 2 |
| Vrusk | 4 |
| Yazirian | 3 |
| Mixed Party | 2 |

COMBAT IN THE FORBIDDEN CAVERNS

When encounters and combats occur, the action should be resolved in normal six-second game turns. The distances characters can move in six-second turns are summarized on the following chart:

EPSILON 1.2:

MOVEMENT PER SIX-SECOND TURN IN CAVERNS

| RACE | WALKING | RUNNING |
|-----------|----------|----------|
| Human | 2 meters | 6 meters |
| Dralasite | 1 meter | 4 meters |
| Vrusk | 3 meters | 7 meters |
| Yazirian | 2 meters | 6 meters |

Players will quickly find anyone running in the caverns has an excellent chance of falling. Any character running in the caverns must make a Dexterity check. The character must make a Dexterity check once every five turns spent running. If a character falls, he may move only 1/2 the normal distance that turn.

SIGHTING

Visibility in the caverns is limited. Even with flashlights or torches, party members can see only 30 meters. When in large rooms, this means they may not be able to see the cavern walls.

EXPERIENCE

The Forbidden Caverns encounter section will require more playing time than most other encounter sections in this module. You should award experience three times during the this encounter section (usually at the end of an evening of play). Generally speaking, you will find the best places to award experience points are at the end of encounter area 7, the end of encounter area 13, and after the party exits the caverns.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 2: PLAYERS' DESCRIPTION

After several days travel, you have reached the Burning Lands. Deposits of phosphorous, magnesium, and various salts cover the entire area, and numerous geysers, gas fissures, and lava flows erupt through the crusty ground. Athru says you will spend only a short time on the surface of the Burning Lands; after a period of travel you will reach a large network of caves. The Ul-Mor know a safe path through the caverns and out into the desert on the other side of the Burning Lands. You will follow this underground path to the Place of True Warriors. Athru warns you not to stray from the safe path, for there is an endless expanse of winding caverns teeming with unknown dangers.

You travel through the caverns for 24 hours, walking well behind the main body of Ul-Mor. The tunnels are between 5 and 10 meters wide, while the ceiling rises as high as 12 meters. Occasionally, the tunnels spread into underground rooms as much as 1 kilometer in diameter, with ceilings as high as 20 meters.

You constantly pass large stands of a mushroom-type fungus growing from the cavern floors. The stalk of this fungus is almost as thick as a small tree trunk. There is nothing else unusual in these caverns.

As you move along, you pass many smaller passages leading away from the main path, but the Ul-Mor carefully avoid these passages and warn you to do the same.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 3: RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Roll for random encounters once each one-hour period. A roll of "1" on 1d10 indicates a random encounter; roll again on the following table. No random encounters will occur while the characters are with the Ul-Mor.

EPSILON 3.1:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

| Die Roll | Encounter |
|----------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Small rastie pack |
| 2 | Droppers |
| 3 | Poison gas fissure |
| 4 | Lava flow |
| 5 | Rastie trap |
| 6 | Flitters |
| 7 | Skeleton and drained blaster |
| 8 | Sleep gas fissure |
| 9 | Broom, mop, and bucket |
| 10 | Dead looper carcass |

Do not use an encounter more than once. If you roll the same encounter more than once, ignore the result and roll again.

EPSILON 3.2: RANDOM ENCOUNTER DESCRIPTIONS

1.) Rastie Pack (MV Medium; IM 7; RS 65; STA 75; ATT 75; DM 2d10; SA See below)

A pack of 10 rasties attacks the party. They will pursue if the party attempts to run.

SA: Lock jaws and rend automatically for 1d10 per turn.

2.) DROPPERS: (MV Very slow; IM 2; RS 18; STA 20; ATT 80; DM 2d10; SA See below; SD See below)

A dropper attacks a randomly determined party member. Assume the cavern ceiling is 3 meters high. The dropper will automatically have initiative unless the characters are searching the cavern ceilings for droppers.



SA: Attract 2d10 more droppers in 1d10 turns. SD: Immune to projectile weapons; tangler, and doze grenades; ranged weapons attack at -10.

3.) POISON GAS FISSURE: A crack opens in the cavern wall and poison gas seeps out. The gas fills a 3 meter long section of cavern each turn. The gas is rated S5/T1, and appears to be hot steam when the characters first see it.

4.) LAVA FLOW: A large section of cavern wall collapses, releasing a 250 centimeter deep lava flow 10 meters behind the characters. It will advance toward the characters at a rate of 5 meters each turn.

Any character caught in the lava flow takes 5d10 damage every turn until he escapes.

If the characters choose to jump out of the path of the lava flow, they have a 75% chance of finding a safe place (such as a low-hanging stalactite or a narrow rock shelf). If the characters try to find cover and fail to make the 75% roll, assume they tried for cover, but discovered a turn later this cover was not sufficient. They will return to the cavern floor one turn after trying to find a safe place. They may try again for a safe place or run, at their option.

Even if the characters find a safe place, they must then make a Dexterity check. If they fail the check, they will return to the cavern floor the next turn.

If the characters succeed in jumping out of the flow's path, they must then wait three days for the lava to cool before walking on it. Unless they have found a sufficiently comfortable place to wait (use your own judgement), there is a 75% chance

they will fall into it several hours later, taking 1d10 damage from the cooling lava every turn until they escape.

If the characters run from the flow, it will follow them until they come to a branch in the corridor, and will then flow down the corridor sloping downward (choose one at random). If the characters are foolish enough to run into the corridor sloping down or there are no corridor branches, the flow will stop after chasing them for 1 kilometer.

5.) RASTIE TRAP: Roll a secret Intuition check for the two characters leading the party. If either character makes the check, he will see the rastie trap and neither character will fall into it. If neither character makes the check, both characters in the front will fall into a hidden 4 meter pit with sharpened stakes at the bottom. Each character takes 2d10 damage. (The pirate who lives in encounter area 18 set this trap to catch rasties.)

6.) FLITTERS: (MV Medium; IM 7; RS 70; STA 10; DM 2; SA Disease)

The party meets 10 flitters panicked by a gas explosion in another part of the cavern. All flitters will attack one character immediately, then fly away after two rounds of combat.

7.) SKELETON: The party finds the remains of a Human skeleton. They will find a laser pistol with an empty clip near the skeleton.

8.) SLEEP GAS: The characters hear a faint hissing from a crack in the cavern wall. This crack is releasing a gas into a 10 meter section of the corridor that causes characters to fall asleep for 10d10 minutes. Players may avoid the effects of the

gas by holding their breaths, using gas masks, or making a current Stamina check.

9.) MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT: The characters find a push broom, a bucket, and a mop.

10.) DEAD LOPER: The characters find a dead loper. The loper has obviously been dead only a few days.

EPSILON SUBSECTION 4: PLANNED ENCOUNTERS

Start.) CAVE-IN!

After spending 50 hours travelling through the caverns with the UI-Mor, you are awakened by loud crashes and loper screams. As you get up, you feel the cavern floor vibrating and see whole sections of the ceiling crashing down. You do not see any sign of the UI-Mor, who had camped a considerable distance ahead of you. Three of the five exits from the room are now blocked.

The characters may run (checking for falls) to any of the three corridors not blocked by the cave-in. They cannot take any UI-Mor or lopers with them, since all of the UI-Mor are on the other side of the cave-in, and any lopers near them have been killed.

If the party attempts to dig out either passageway, let them dig for a few turns and then tell them they realize it would take many days to complete the task. The party can retrieve their own equipment from the rubble, as well as enough food and water to last three days.

1.) RASTIE LAIR (MV Medium; IM 7; RS 65; STA 75; ATT 75; DM 2d10; SA See below)

Read the following description to the characters as they approach area 1. If they do not turn toward area 1, but proceed straight through area 1 A, this encounter will not occur.

You hear chittering in the gloom ahead, such as a small mammal might make.

The sounds are coming from the lair of 100 rasties.

If the party continues into area 1 after hearing these sounds, the rasties nearest the party will squeal an alert to the rest of the pack. The entire pack will then attack. If the party retreats toward 1 A after hearing these sounds, only 20 rasties will attack.

SA: Lock jaws and rend automatically for 1d10 per turn.

2.) FLITTER LAIR (MV Medium; IM 7; RS 70; STA 10; ATT 40; DM 2; SA Disease)

The passageway gradually widens into a room. Your lights are not powerful enough to see across the room. A few high pitched squeaks echo toward you from the room. You can also hear a faint fluttering.

There are 95 flitters asleep in this room. The sounds are being made by five restless flitters as they move about the cavern ceiling. These five flitters will ignore the party unless the characters light a fire, shine a light on any of the flitters, make a loud noise, or touch any of the flitters.

If the party does any of these things, the five waking flitters will fly about the cavern squealing and screaming to wake the rest of the flitters. All flitters will then attack the party. No character will be attacked by more than five flitters in any single turn. Players bitten by flitters must make a Stamina check or contract the deadly disease flitters carry (see Alien Creatures Update File).

3.) CORRIDORS OF CONFUSION

You see several more of the mushroom-like fungi you see throughout the caverns in this area. These fungi, however, appear a little larger than most. The air in this area is difficult to breath because of the amount of dust in it.

The "dust" in the air is a concentration of spores from the giant fungi. Any character breathing without special precautions (gas mask, handkerchief over mouth and nose, etc.) will inhale many thousand spores. These spores cause hallucinations one hour after the characters enter the area. The referee should make up an appropriate hallucination, such as being attacked by a giant UI-Mor, seeing a wall of water rushing down the corridor, finding a spaceship to take the party home, etc.

When they start to hallucinate, each character should make a Logic check. If this check is successful, that character will realize he is having a hallucination. If the check is unsuccessful, the character will not realize he is having a hallucination. That character must then act as though the hallucination were completely real. You should temporarily take control of any character who is not acting as though the hallucination is real.

After two hours, the hallucinations will cease, but any character who breathed the spores will still be disoriented and confused for six hours. They will not be able to concentrate or remember where they came from, and their RS scores will be temporarily reduced by 5 points. After this six-hour period is finished, the characters will be immune to any further effects of the spores.

4.) DROPPER CAVERN (MV Very slow; IM 2; RS 18; STA 20; ATT 80; DM 2d10; SA See below; SD See below)

You have reached another large underground room. The ceiling here is only 3 meters high. You cannot see the other side of the room.

Each character stands a 30% chance of walking directly beneath a dropper. Once a character is attacked, 19 more droppers will arrive in 1d10 turns.

SA: Attract 2d10 droppers in 1d10 turns. SD: Immune to projectile weapons, tangler and doze grenades; ranged weapons attack at -10.

5.) BURROWER SNAKE LAIR (MV Slow; IM 8; RS 80; STA 15; DM 1d5; SA Poison S5/T10)

There is a faint glow near the ceiling of this huge room. The glow appears to be about 250 meters away.

Upon closer inspection, the characters will see a deposit of phosphorescent minerals at the base of a 3 meter chimney extending upward farther than the characters can see. This chimney dead-ends in a burrower snake lair about 35 meters up.

If any character climbs the chimney, the burrower snakes will attack immediately to protect the 23 eggs in their nest. If the characters do not climb the chimney, nothing will happen.

6.) VOLTURNIAN CAVE BEAR (MV Medium; IM 5; RS 45; STA 200; ATT 60; DM 4d10; SA See below)

You are entering a large cavern room lit by dim phosphorescent minerals when you see a 7 meter tall creature 60 meters from you. It looks like a hairless, white bear. It has shown no sign of noticing your party.

If the characters do not immediately back out of the room, the bear will attack until killed. If they back out of the room and wait for three hours, the bear will fall asleep. The party can then sneak by without harm. The bear will instantly awaken

and pursue the party 1d10 squares down the corridor if anyone passes within 30 meters of it.

SA: Hug for 2d10 per turn on roll of 10 or less.

7.) SHOVELMOUTH STAMPEDE (MV Medium; IM 3; RS 25; STA 60; ATT 45; DM 1d10; SA Stamped)

The corridor gradually widens into another large room. This room is dimly illuminated by phosphorescent mineral deposits. It is more than half a kilometer long and 250 meters wide. You hear the sound of many running feet, and a number of grunts, hisses, and squeals.

Twenty shovelmouths are stampeding from encounter area 8 into area 7A. If the party stays in the room, each character has a 30% chance of being hit by a shovelmouth and falling to the ground. Any character who has fallen will be hit by at least one shovelmouth and has a 50% chance of being hit by two. Every time a character is hit by a shovelmouth, he takes 2d10 damage.

If the characters attempt to avoid the stampede, use your discretion to determine if they do so successfully. Players climbing the cavern walls, for example, will be safe from the stampede.

8.) EXPLOSIVE GAS FISSURE

As you round a bend in the corridor, you hear an explosion and see a sudden burst of light 300 meters ahead. Ten seconds later, another explosion follows. As you watch, several more explosions occur at random intervals. The bursts of light illuminate a circular room 500 meters or more in diameter.

As the characters try to cross the room, there is 45% chance some of the explosive gas escaping through the many fissures in the room will ignite near the party. (Roll for each group of characters separately if they split up.) Any character caught in one of these explosions suffers 2d10 damage.

If any character strikes a match, fires a laser, or introduces any type of open flame into the room, there is a 90% chance all explosive gas in the room will ignite, causing 10d10 damage to those within the room. (Make Dexterity checks to see if the characters flung themselves to the ground in time to avoid part of the damage. If this check is successful, they take only 1/2 damage.)

9.) SALT DEPOSITS

The walls and floor are becoming rough and loose as you walk down the corridor. A white, granular substance covers increasing portions of the cavern, until, when you enter a large room, it completely hides the floor and walls. Here, the cavern floor appears only in spots.

The white substance is common salt. The bare patches of cavern floor are actually flat rocks that have fallen onto the salt bed from the ceiling. These rocks are large enough for two people to stand upon, and it is readily apparent that the characters could cross the room by jumping from rock to rock.

If the party tries to cross the room, roll percentile dice as each character nears the middle. There is a 25% chance that each rock a character stands upon will sink into the salt bed. If one rock sinks, there is a 15% chance that any adjacent rock also sinks. Players will sink at a rate of 1/2 meter every turn. Players who sink completely before being rescued will suffocate in 20 turns.

10.) WATER!

You are entering another room in this seemingly endless cavern. The air here is much cooler than other parts of the cavern.

There is a spring of fresh water hidden behind a thin wall in this room. If they enter the room quietly, the characters will hear the sound of bubbling water. They can then locate the spring by going to the place where it seems the loudest and digging, blasting, or hacking through the soft wall.

They will then find plenty of fresh water for drinking, washing, and restocking canteens.

11.) THE LAKE OF FIRE

This passage is becoming increasingly hot as you advance. You round a narrow bend and see a large room ahead. A fiery, red glow illuminates this room, and you feel an intense heat coming from it. As you move on, your passage opens onto a narrow ledge overlooking a vast lake of molten rock.

Large pillars of crystal rise out of the lake to the height of your ledge, which is nearly 30 meters above the fiery surface. Near the middle of the lake, two or more of these crystals are fused at the top, forming narrow bridges. Many stalactites hang to within 3 meters of the crystal tops. Some of these stalactites are huge and well-anchored; others appear thinner and shakily attached. As you watch, one of the thin stalactites falls from the ceiling into the lake below. While you study the scene, you notice that jets of flaming gasses and molten rock stream out of the lake, splashing against the crystal pillars and even the ceiling of the cavern.

There doesn't appear to be any safe way across the lake, for your ledge runs only part way around the lake. On the other side, you can see a similar ledge, with a passage leading away from the lake. The distance between the two ledges appears to be about 200 meters.

Lay the map of the Lake of Fire on a flat surface where all may see it. Place the characters' counters directly on the map so that you may see the characters' locations as they attempt to cross the Lake of Fire.

The characters will probably try to use one or more of the following methods to move from pillar to pillar:

1. Jump from one pillar to the next where the distance is not too great (see map).
2. Rope the stalactites and swing from pillar to pillar.
3. Make bridges out of the trunks of the giant mushrooms growing throughout the caverns.

Players who jump must make successful Strength checks (at +25) or fall several inches short of the next pillar. Players who fail these checks should make a Reaction Speed check to see if they grabbed the edge of the pillar as they fell. Any character who fails both of these checks falls into the Lake of Fire and dies instantly.

Players attempting to swing from pillar to pillar must make Dexterity checks to see if they land on the pillar safely. Any character who fails the check misses the pillar; the character must hang from the rope until rescued by another character. (If the rope was not long enough to reach the pillar, the character should make a Reaction Speed check to see if he managed to grab the edge of a pillar as he fell. Any character who fails both checks falls into the Lake of Fire.)

Players will never have any trouble roping a stalactite, since they can keep trying until they are successful. In addition, at least one stalactite will always be within roping distance. There is a 5% chance, however, that a stalactite may break loose from the ceiling before the character completes the swing. If this occurs, the character should make a Reaction Speed check to see if he had completed enough of the swing to fly through the air to the pillar and grab its edge before falling

into the Lake of Fire. Any character failing this check falls into the Lake of Fire.

If the characters use the trunks of the giant fungi as bridges to cross the pillars, they should make a Dexterity check to see if they fall off the trunk while crossing it. Any character failing the Dexterity check should make a Reaction Speed check to see if he grabbed the trunk before falling into the Lake of Fire. Any character who fails both checks falls into the Lake of Fire.

No matter how the characters cross the Lake of Fire, each character stands a large chance of being hit by a lava splash as it streams out of the lake. As the characters cross each dashed line on the map, roll percentile dice. On a roll of 10% or less, that character takes 1d10 damage from a small burst of molten rock.

As the characters cross the lake, the referee should emphasize that the heat is nearly unbearable, and that the smoke and ash in the air make breathing nearly impossible. After completing the crossing, roll 1d5 points of damage for each character that did not take any precautions to protect himself from the heat.

12.) THE MAGMA MONSTERS (MV Very slow; IM 3; RS 30; STA 150; DM 3d10; SA See below; SD See below)

You walk only 500 meters before the corridor widens into a room. The smooth rock floor of this room is littered with hundreds of small balls of hardened lava. Some of these lava-balls are lying quietly on the floor, but others are bouncing around like balls on a pool table. Occasionally, a lava-ball rolls into or out of a small hole in the wall.

The small balls of lava are baby magma monsters. They are harmless to the characters, even if they bump into them by accident.

A very old magma monster guards the babies. This adult appears to be a large black boulder lying against the wall 20 meters away. The adult magma monster will remain motionless unless a character touches one of the small lava-balls, at which time it will attack.

Despite its slow movement, the magma monster is a deadly opponent. It spews a stream of hot lava up to 50 meters in any direction, doing 3d10 damage. This attack, however, is not subject to ranged weapon modifiers because it is the creature's natural attack form.

The magma monster will cease attacking if the characters leave the chamber, but will immediately attack if they re-enter.

SA: Attack up to 50 meters with no range modifiers. SD: Immune to needler, projectile, and stun weapons; immune to tangler and doze grenades; 1/2 damage from lasers and fragmentation grenades.

13.) THE UNDERGROUND SHORE

After wandering through more of the endless passages, you hear the sound of gently lapping water ahead. Soon, you round a corner in the passage and see an underground sea.

This sea, more than 1.5 kilometers wide and 6.5 kilometers long, is nearly a kilometer deep in places; even along the shore the depth is more than 10 meters. The



ceiling above the sea is 50 meters high. The entire area is illuminated by large deposits of phosphorescent minerals.

The shoreline is simply a rocky ledge covered with giant mushroom-like fungi. From any area along this ledge, the characters will see the island (encounter area 14 A). They will also see the opposite shore (encounter area 15) in the far distance.

13 A: This shoreline is exactly like the one described above.

13 B: As the characters enter this area, they will see an UI-Mor sitting at the water's edge. He is totally absorbed in his own thoughts, and will take no notice of the party's approach. If spoken to, he will slowly turn around, revealing that much of his face and two of his tentacles are covered with a pasty white growth. He will introduce himself as Throm the Banished (RW 45; M 45; PS 2; IM 5; RS 50; STA 40).

Throm will give the following account of himself:

"I was once a powerful UI-Mor, who stole many things from our enemies and divided these things many ways. My fellows envied me, and, indeed, I believed they had reason to do so. I had been chosen as the tribe's next leader, and this made me feel as though no risk were too great for me to take. But, alas, the One will not tolerate such foolishness.

"I was riding herd on a large flock of kwidges when a burrower snake startled them, and they stampeded. Many of the kwidges ran under my loper; alas, I was not quick enough to control the noble beast. Left solely to his own direction, my loper panicked and ran into the tribe's egg cache, destroying several of our young. The elders immediately banished me, forever denying me the rights of an UI-Mor.

"Since that time I have wandered these caverns, where I have learned the secret of joining the One without the cold sleep! Perhaps the One has sent you to me, so that I may redeem myself by showing you his secret."

Throm is slightly deranged, and believes the mutating fungus on the island is the key to eternal life. He will make every effort to convince the characters to go to the island, and will not speak of anything else. He does not desire to leave, and could not remember the way out of the caverns if he did. He does remember that his loper wandered off and joined the One some time ago.

Throm will attempt to convince the party to journey to the island, but he will not use force to do so. If questioned about how to get to the island, he will say that he swims, but this is very dangerous because there is something evil in the lake. If the characters attack Throm for some reason, he will defend himself with his spear.

14.) ACROSS THE UNDERGROUND SEA

The characters may cross the underground sea by constructing a raft of fungi trunks or swimming. The characters will need oars or similar devices to steer the raft, or the current will draw them toward the island at the rate of 1 square per minute.

Halfway across the lake, the party will be attacked by a jawfish (MV Fast; IM 5; RS 50; STA 100; ATT 80; DM 3d10; SD Soft cover in water). They will see a fin 90 meters away. One turn later, the jawfish will attack. It will continue to attack once every third turn, circling the raft for two turns between attacks. The jawfish will circle 60 meters away for purposes of ranged weapons. Consider the jawfish to have soft cover, unless it is attacking a character.

The jawfish will normally attack the raft. Roll percentile dice each time the jawfish attacks; on a roll of 30% or less, the

jawfish lifts itself out of the water and attacks a randomly determined character. The first time the jawfish attacks, it will destroy the raft. Once the raft is destroyed, it will be useless, but there is still a 70% chance the jawfish will attack it rather than the characters.

The jawfish will make four attacks after destroying the raft. It will then lose interest and swim away.

14 A.) THE ISLE OF MUTATING FUNGUS

When you reach the island, you see several stands of mushroom-like fungi on its shores. A pasty, white growth covers the ground on the entire surface of the island.

As the characters explore the island, they will notice the fungi resemble some animals they have seen. Many clumps resemble rasties, shovelmouths, and other bizarre creatures. If the characters observe any of these strange formations carefully, they will notice the shapes are moving very slowly. This movement is nearly unnoticeable.

These odd-shaped clumps were once animals. The bizarre fungus which covers the island attaches itself to other living creatures and gradually replaces their cells with its own.

The only living thing the mutating fungus has not devoured is an isolated stand of giant mushroom fungi. (This stand of fungi has not been mutated because it is less than eight hours old. The lifespan of giant fungi is only 36 hours; it grows to its full size in one 12 hour period, fertilizes in the second 12 hour period, and dies by the end of the third 12 hour period.)

Any character who stays on the island for eight hours or more, or who sleeps on the island for any period of time, will find a white, pasty growth covering parts of his body. This growth is identical to the white growth on Throm's face and tentacles. Any character remaining on the island for more than three days turns completely into fungus.

If the characters notice the fungus on their body within three hours, a medic must correctly diagnose the disease and treat it with antibody plus. This will destroy the fungus already diseasing the body, but the characters will not be immune to further attacks. Any body part not treated within three hours of a fungus attack must be amputated, or the entire body will turn into fungus.

Throm is convinced being turned into fungus is a form of eternal life. No amount of pleading will persuade him to leave the island; in fact, he will try to persuade the party members to stay on the island and rest.

15.) THE FAR SHORE

This area is identical to area 13 A.

16.) THE PLACE OF HEALING

If any characters enter this area, read the following description to them:

You have just awakened. Apparently, you fell asleep after entering this area. You have no memory of anything after stepping into this area. Those of you who were wounded notice you have healed a great deal. You notice two large, indistinct footprints leading out of the room.

In fact, each character has healed 4d10 points. The characters met an Eorna in this area, who used his medical knowledge to heal the characters. The Eorna did not wish the characters to know of the presence of his race, so he hypnotized them and erased any memory of the encounter. (It is very important that no hint of the Eorna be given to the characters.)

If some characters remained outside the room, they will be affected as though inside the room.

17.) THE DERANGED ROBOT

You hear many crashes in the room ahead, as if several objects of various sizes are being tossed about a small room.

A deranged maintenance robot brought into the caverns by the pirate in area 18 is cleaning the cavern room. The robot lost its broom and mop some time ago and has become deranged. It throws the rocks, boulders, and gravel from one section of the floor to another and attempts to sweep the dirt with its metallic hands. It will continue sweeping until the rock floor is bare and smooth, then move to another section and repeat the process.

Though the robot will not attack the characters, it is still dangerous. There is a 20% chance a rock will hit a random party member, causing 1d10 points damage. Players more than 15 meters away from the robot cannot be hit by the rocks.

The robot is a level 1 maintenance robot that will ignore the characters unless they attack it or attempt to change its programming. It will attack any character attempting to do either of these things with its hands (1d10 damage).

It requires one turn to open the safety release catch on the robot's instrument panel.

18.) THE MAD PIRATE (RW 30; M 30; PS 3; IM 6; RS 55; STA 55)

From the gloomy passage ahead, you hear a Human voice singing.

"Oh, we hijacked the ship and we took us guns,
Li-dee-di-dee, li-dee-di-dee day-o.
Came to Volturus and drank some rum,
Li-dee-di-dee, li-dee-di-dee day-o."

"Now I'm lost in the caverns, no place to run,
Li-dee-di-dee, li-dee-di-dee day-o.
Anything moves, I shoots it with me gun,
Li-dee-di-dee, li-dee-di-dee day-o."

Read the following description to the characters as they investigate:

You see a lone Human figure about 30 meters ahead, squatting next to a small fire in the center of the room. He appears to be roasting a skinned rastie, though you can't be certain since he is turned sideways to you and his body hides part of the fire. A red splotch on his left arm barely shows through his tattered shirt. A laser rifle attached to a power pack lies on the cavern floor next to him. The floor is littered with rastie bones, a large pile of moss, and a pile of rastie furs the man uses as a bed.

The pirate, Phalen the Black, will attack the characters on sight, using setting 4 on his laser rifle. When he drains the fresh pack attached to his rifle, he will fight with his bare hands. (The pack was his last supply of power.)

If captured alive, Phalen will reveal only his name. Like the maintenance robot he brought into the cavern, Phalen is now slightly deranged, and anything else he says will be gibberish. From time to time he will whisper that he is greatly afraid of turning into a fungus.

Careful inspection of Phalen's arm will show that the red blotch is a tattoo of a red devil surrounded by white stars. Phalen will escape as soon as he can.

19.) EXITING THE CAVERNS

As you stumble along the passageway, you see a beam of light far ahead. The air is warm and fresh, almost overwhelming after the days of breathing the dank cavern air.

This is the exit from the caverns. As the characters stumble out into the daylight, they will find they are once again in the desert. A large party of UI-Mor are camped not more than 250 meters away, and, as the characters come out of the cavern, Athru will ride up to them on his loper. After greeting them, Athru will explain that after the cave-in, the UI-Mor continued through the safe caverns and camped here, hoping the characters could find a way through the Forbidden Caverns. He is very glad to see them, and, after they have rested, he will take the characters to the Place of True Warriors.

ZETA SECTION:

THE RITUAL OF THE QUICKDEATH

Any creature, male or female, wishing to become an UI-Mor tribe-member must pass the ceremonial test all UI-Mor males take upon entering adulthood: the Ritual of the Quickdeath. Those who survive become UI-Mor tribe-members.

This section outlines the encounter between the party and a quickdeath. Study the description of the quickdeath in the "Alien Creatures Update File" carefully before playing this encounter.

ZETA SUBSECTION 1: SPECIAL RULES

THE MAP

Use the small desert map in the boxed STAR FRONTIERS game set for this encounter. For the purposes of ranged weapon combat or movement, 1 square equals 5 meters. The following table gives movement rates in squares per six-second turn for easy reference:

ZETA 1.1: MOVEMENT ON THE DESERT MAP

| Race | Walking | Running |
|------------|---------|---------|
| Human | 1 | 3 |
| Dralasite | 1/2 | 2 |
| Vrusk | 2 | 4 |
| Yazirian | 1 | 3 |
| Quickdeath | 12 | 24 |

TIME

Most of this encounter will be played using six-second game turns, since much of it consists of combat with the quickdeath. Feel free, however, to alter the time reference period when the characters are not involved in combat. (It will not be necessary to roll for random encounters in this section, so a fixed time reference period is unnecessary.)

CHARACTER EQUIPMENT

The party may use any equipment they have with them. In addition, the UI-Mor have prepared a straw dummy for each character. The quickdeath retracts its eyes as it attacks, and is nearly blind when it strikes its prey. The creature will often strike a dummy rather than a person, provided the dummy is directly beside the person when the quickdeath attacks. Though the UI-Mor will not object to the characters' use of their own equipment during the ritual (for they feel the One has given the characters these strange devices to compensate for their lack of limbs), they will give each character a spear.

SET-UP

When the characters reach the Place of True Warriors, they may place their counters anywhere they desire on the map. Give each character an extra counter to represent his dummy. Place the quickdeath counter at the edge of the map, as far as possible from the party members.

ZETA SUBSECTION 2: PLAYERS' DESCRIPTION

After meeting you outside the caverns, the UI-Mor have taken you three day's journey south to the Place of True Warriors. (At this point, let the characters map the area they travelled through.) The Place of True Warriors appears to be an unremarkable section of desert.

Athru comes to you on the morning of the fourth day and says, "It is now time for the Ritual of Manhood. Those who survive will become UI-Mor. Those who do not will become a different form of the One. Take spears." (Athru offers each character a spear.) "It is time."

Athru leads you to the ritual area. The other UI-Mor have withdrawn to a safe distance. Athru gives each of you a straw dummy, shaped roughly like yourself. Athru says, "May you fare well against the quickdeath." He mounts his loper and withdraws to join the other UI-Mor.

Any attempts by the characters to learn more about the ritual will fail.

ZETA SUBSECTION 3: PLANNED ENCOUNTERS

1.) Battle at the Place of True Warriors

Suddenly, you see a tiger-sized creature covered with some sort of reflective armor running toward you. It has a long neck and hideous head. You can see that its gaping jaw is filled with sharp teeth, and that it has four eyes mounted on stalks above its head. Three small tentacles ending in suction cups dangle from each of its sides. This hideous beast is running toward you at an unbelievable speed, and is apparently going to attack.

The quickdeath (MV Very fast; IM 8; RS 75; STA 180; ATT 70; DM 6d10; SA See below; SD See below) will attempt to kill all characters as quickly as possible. As it rushes into combat, it will fire its tail-dart at a character it does not intend to melee immediately. It will then attack the closest character. If more than one character is within melee distance, it will use its special attack and attempt to grab one character, pulling him into its digestive maw. It will continue to attack until it has killed all characters, or until they have killed it.

Any character next to the quickdeath stands a 50% chance of avoiding the quickdeath's attack for one turn. On a percentile roll of 50% or less, the quickdeath will attack the character's dummy, totally destroying it.

SA: Poisonous tail dart (S10/T3; 1d10 damage; RW 60, 10/20/30/40/50); grappling attack with tentacles and maw, 10 points damage per turn.

SD: Immune to needler weapons; 1/2 damage from thrown spears, projectile and laser weapons (spear thrust does normal

damage), ranged weapon attacks made at -25 because of speed.

2.) The Last Encounter?

Use the entry 2 A if you plan to continue the adventure on Volturnus using the sequels to SF 0: CRASH ON VOLTURNUS. These sequels, SF 1: VOLTURNUS, PLANET OF MYSTERY, and SF 2: STARSPAWN OF VOLTURNUS, will be available at your local hobby store. If you do not plan to continue the adventure on Volturnus with TSR modules, use entry 2 B.

2 A.) Ending 1:

As you stare at the body of the hideous beast, you hear the approach of a loper. Looking up, you see Athru riding toward you. When he reaches you, he dismounts and says, "You have done well. We are now One, for you are UI-Mor."

Athru now reveals he has seen creatures similar to the characters living with the Kurabanda, a race of foolish creatures that dwell in trees. Athru will agree to provide an UI-Mor escort to the edge of the Kurabanda's home.

SF 1: VOLTURNUS, PLANET OF MYSTERY, begins with this journey.

2 B.) Ending 2:

Read the boxed section in ending 2 A above. Athru will then reveal that there are others of the characters' kind living in the main UI-Mor tribe. He will then take the characters to the other "strange" tribe-members, who happen to be Lieutenant Colonel Louis V. Jameson and Grod the Dralasite, two members of the original exploration team.

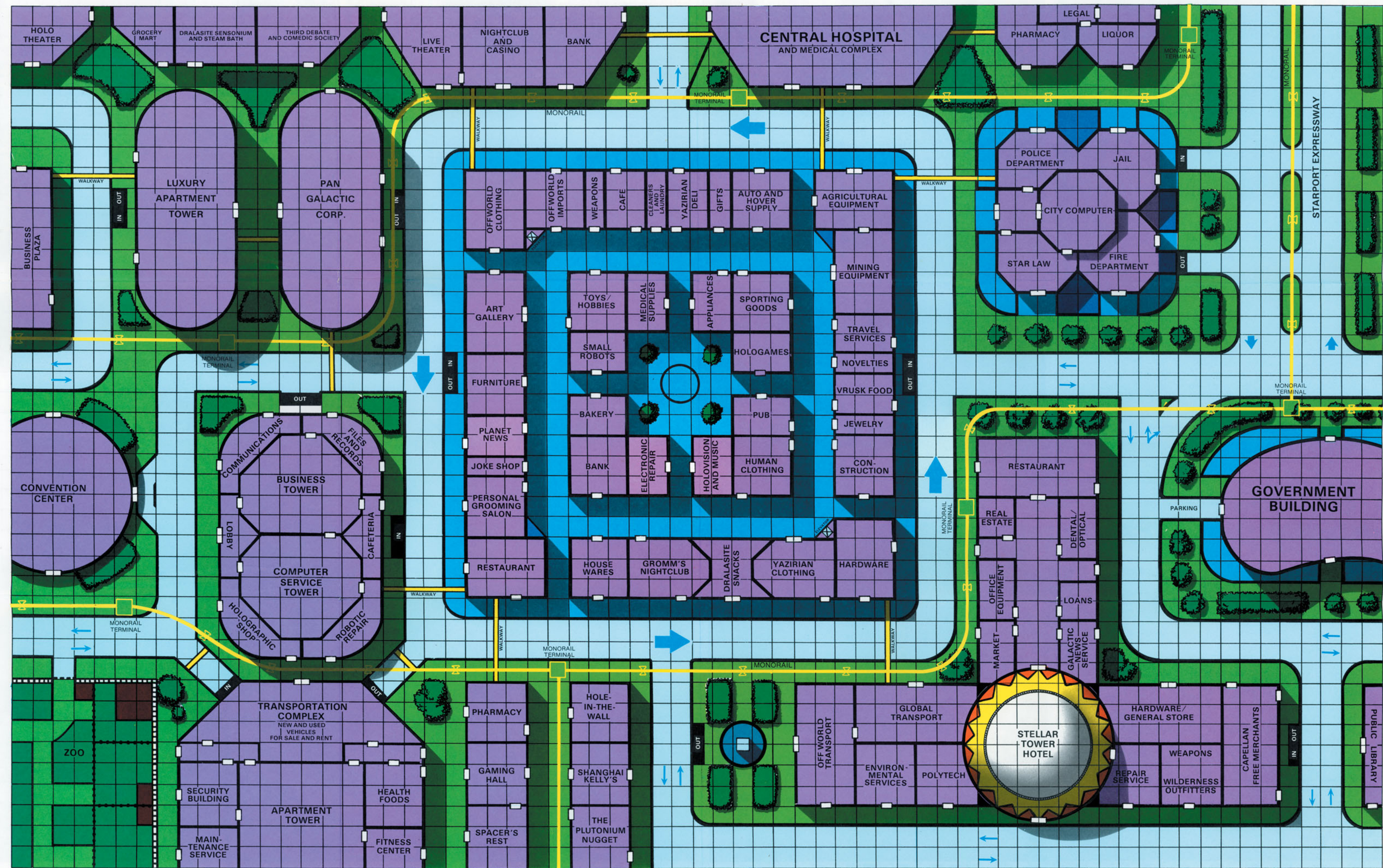
Jameson and Grod will explain that a group of space pirates hijacked their starliner as they approached Volturnus. The other members of their expedition were killed, but Jameson and Grod escaped. The UI-Mor found them, starved and nearly dead from the lack of water, and invited them to take the Ritual of the Quickdeath. They have lived with the UI-Mor since that time.

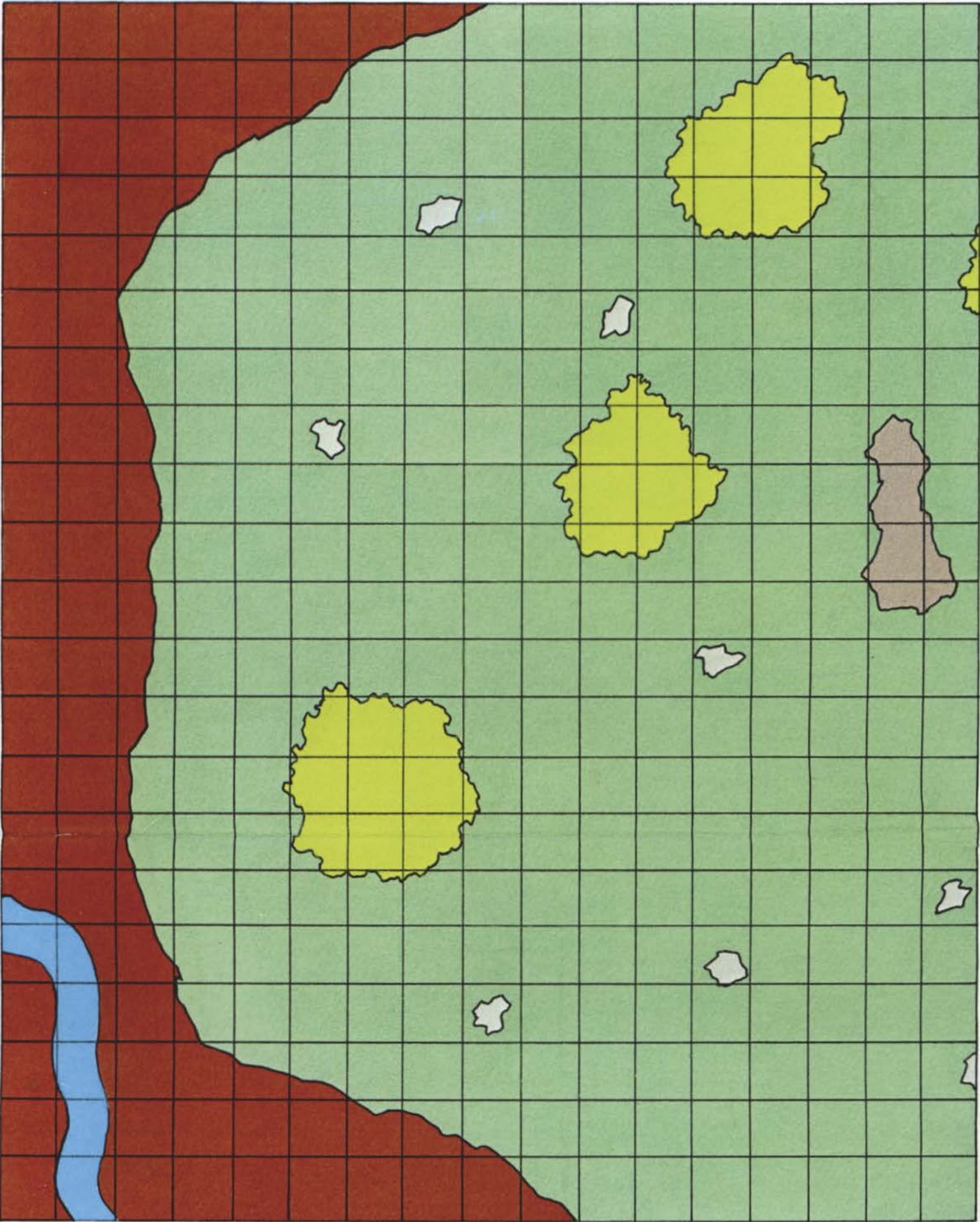
Jameson has almost pieced together a radio. He needs a part found in any poly-vox to complete the radio. If the characters give Jameson a poly-vox, he will take the part he needs, contact Truane's Star and receive word that a rescue ship will be launched immediately. The UI-Mor will treat Jameson, Grod and the characters as tribe-members until the rescue ship arrives.

ZETA SUBSECTION 4: EXPERIENCE POINTS

This is the end of this encounter section and the module. Award each player character 1-3 experience points.







CRATER



DYING
TREE



STREAM



SLOPE



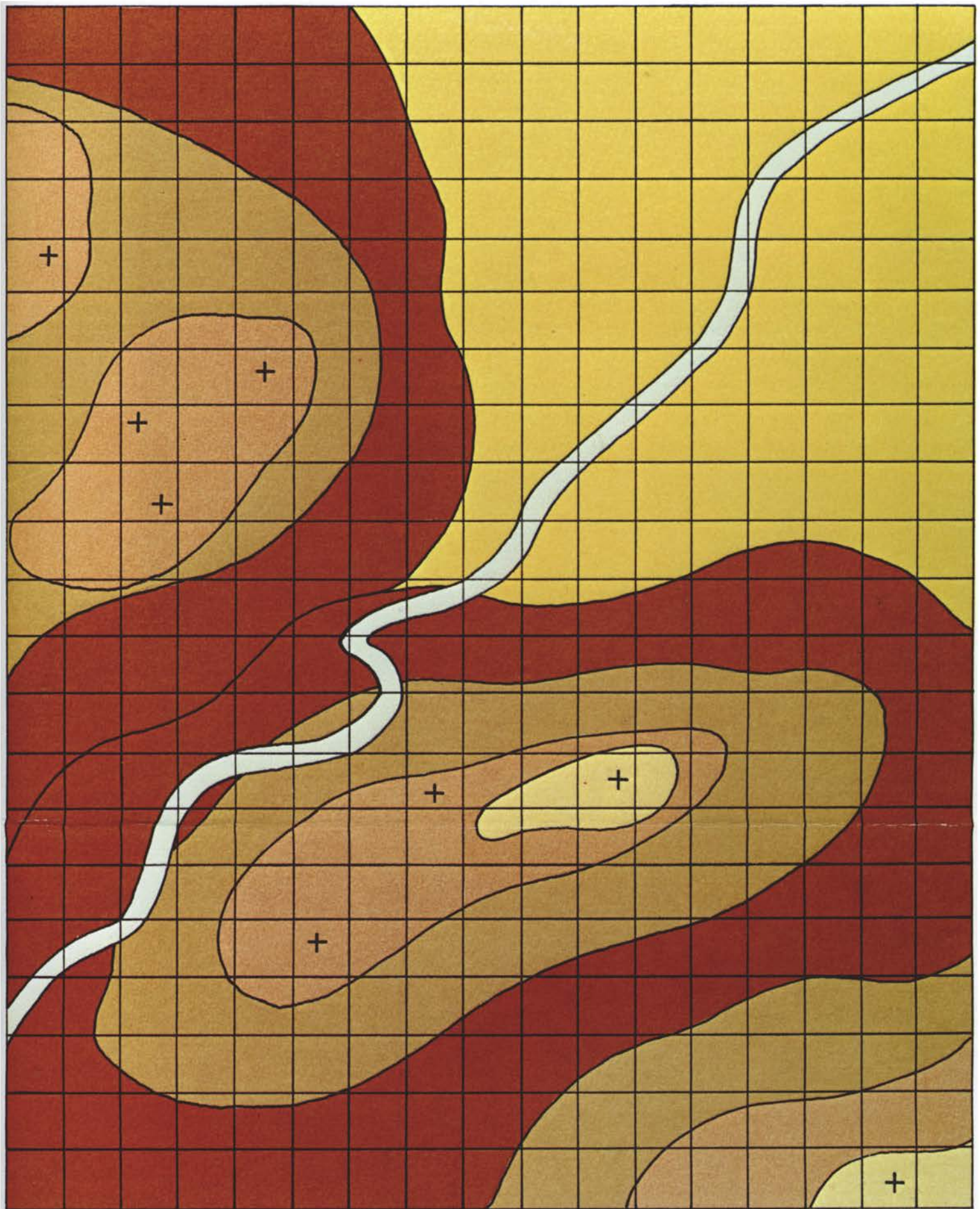
FUNGUS
SWAMP



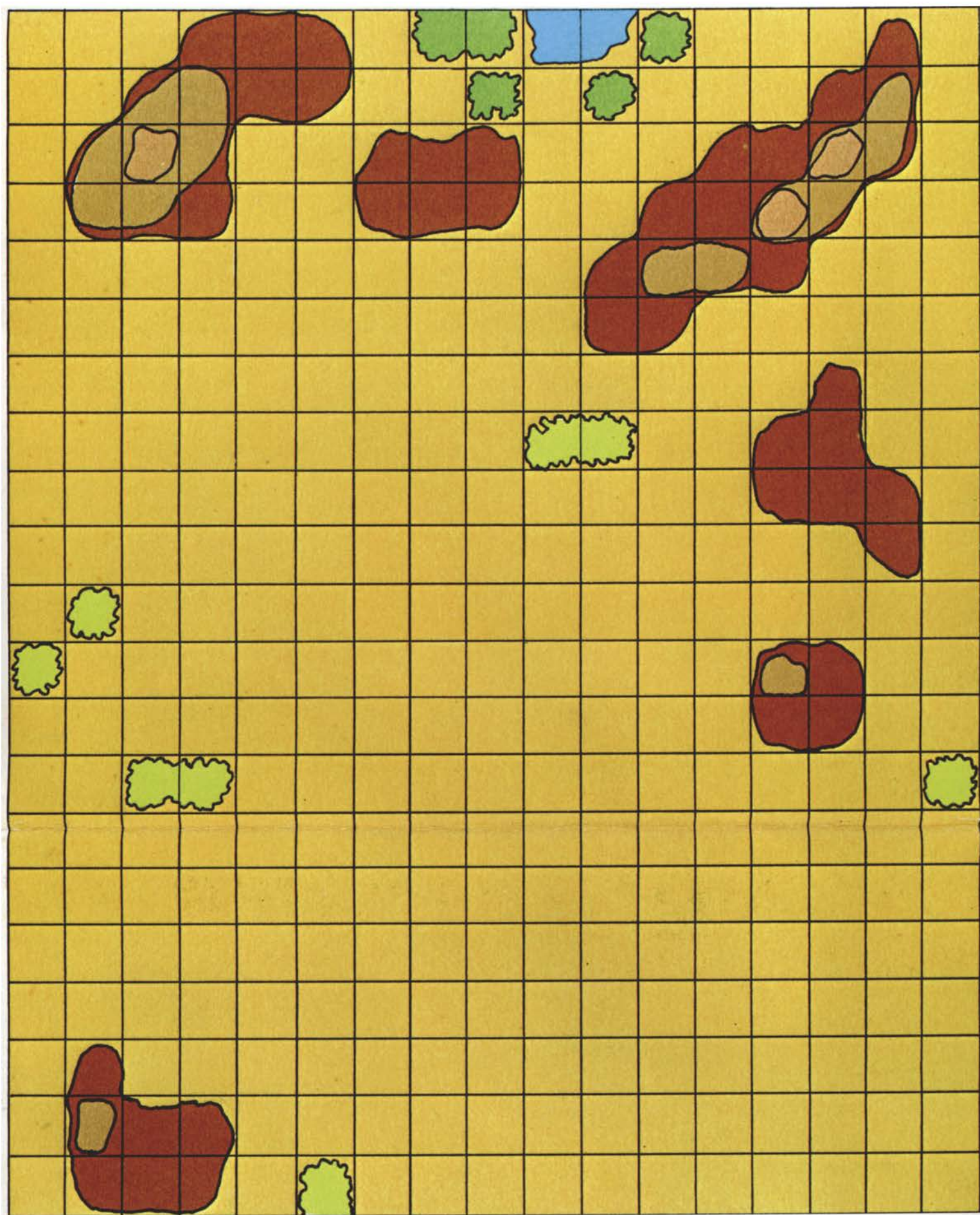
ROCKS



SPECIAL



MOUNTAINS  PLAIN  LOW  MEDIUM  HIGH  VERY HIGH  ROAD  MOUNTAIN PEAK



DESERT



FLOATER
ROOT



TREE



WATER



SAND



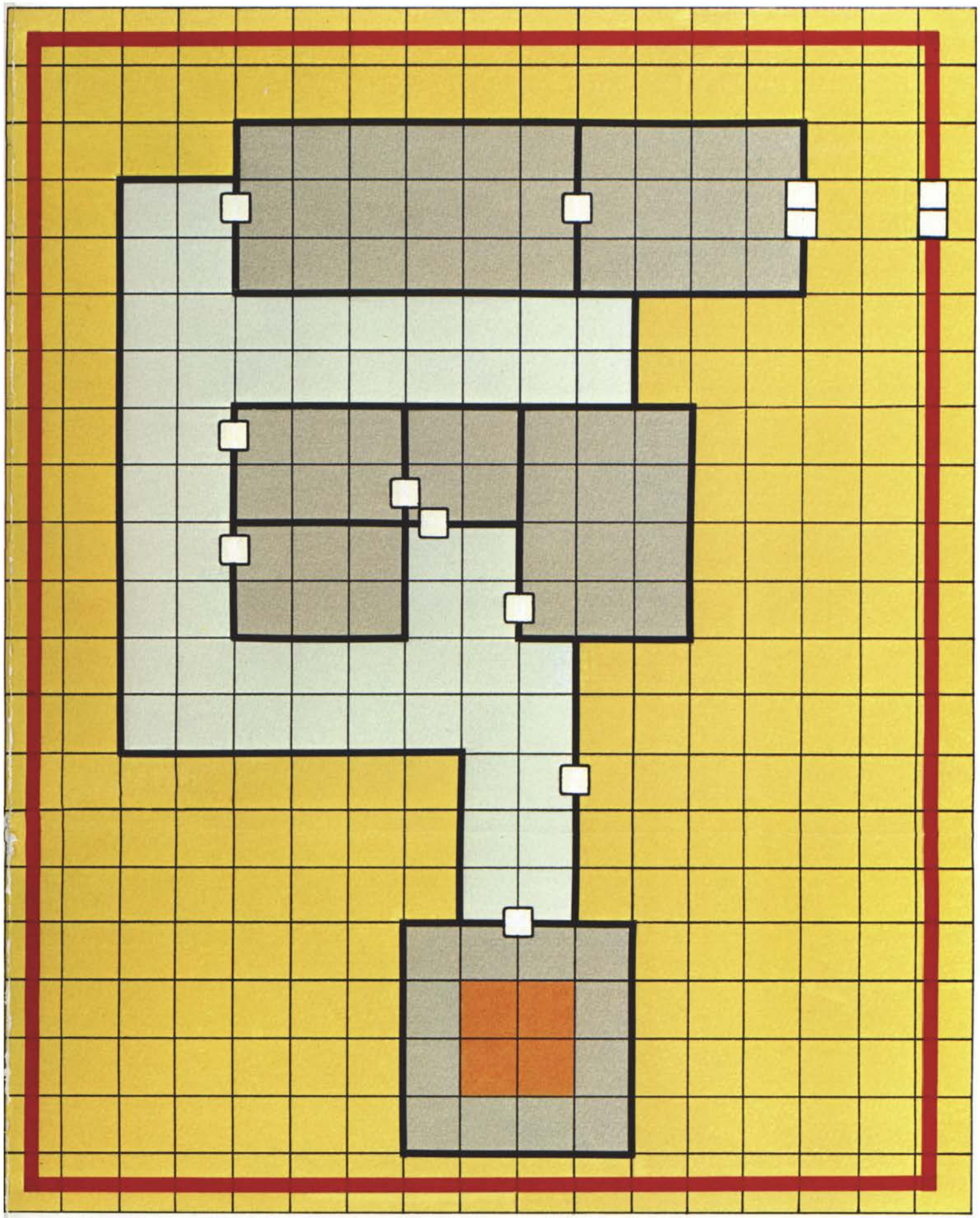
LOW



MEDIUM

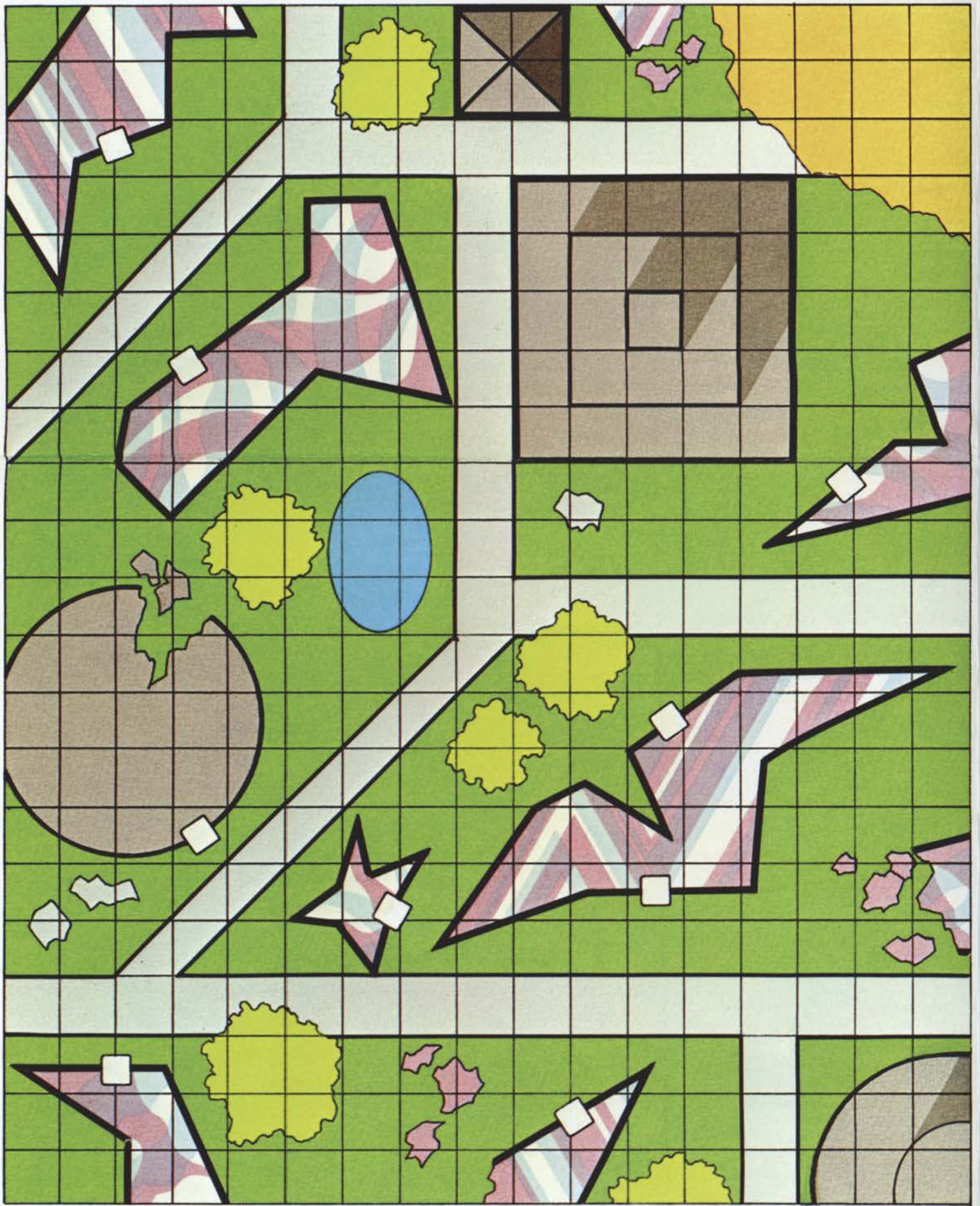


HIGH



FORT

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|
|  ROOM |  CORRIDOR |  SAND |  POWER PLANT |  DOOR |  SECURITY PERIMETER |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|



RUINS



TREE



GROUND



BUILDING



WATER



DRY CANAL



ROAD



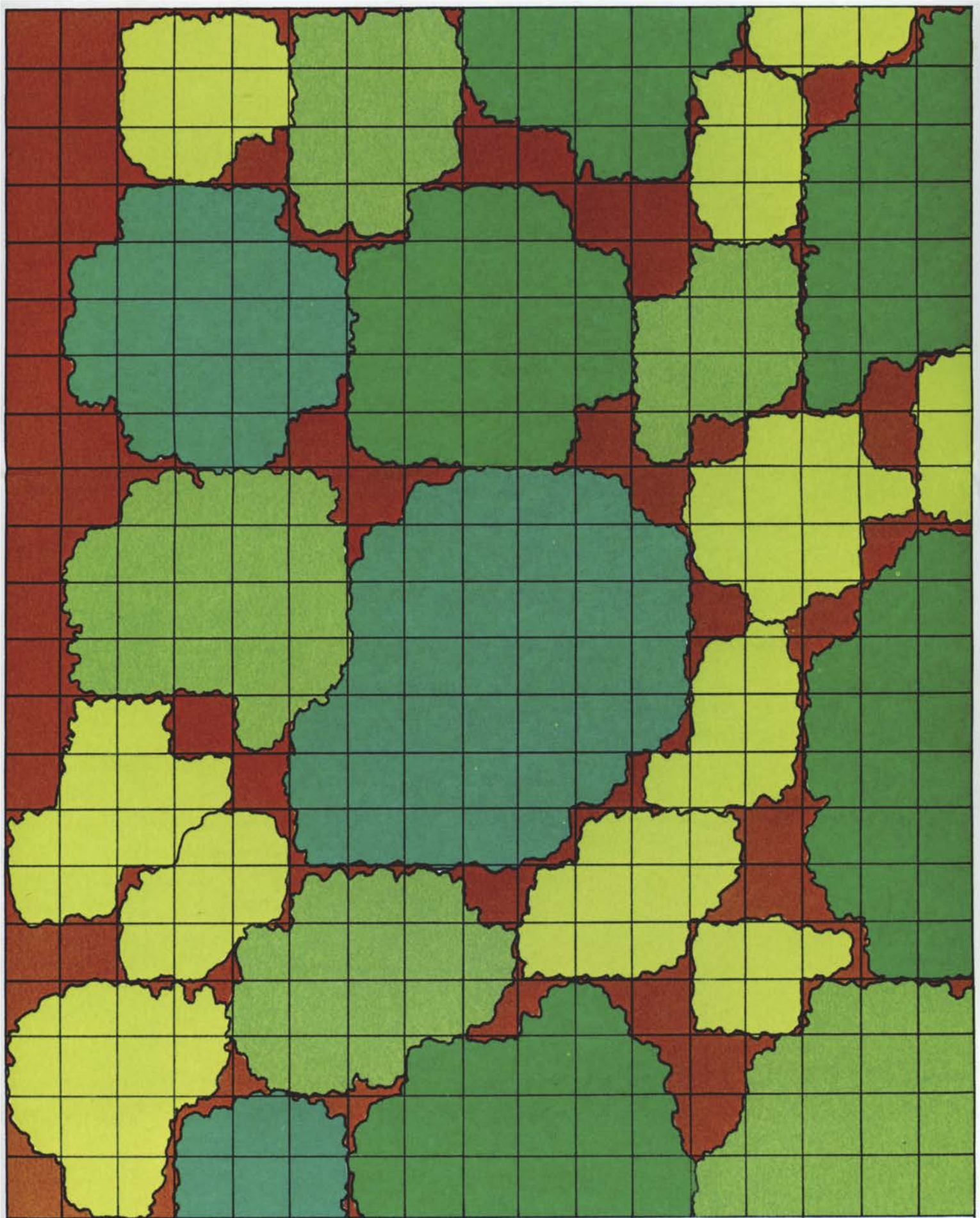
RUBBLE



DOOR



CRYSTAL BUILDING



FOREST



