TOMB WORLDS

GRAVEYARDS OF THE ELDER RACES

BEFORE AMINO ACIDS ORGANIZED INTO EARTH'S FIRST single-celled organisms over three billion years ago, entire civilizations had risen, reached out to distant stars, colonized vast empires that spanned galaxies, fell into decline, and eventually collapsed. The remnants of these once proud and powerful empires litter the galaxies—ancient and mysterious home worlds, dangerous experiments still continuing after their creators have gone extinct, and military outposts brimming with weapons of unimaginable power. Now, as humanity and other races explore the vastness of the Milky Way and beyond, hints and rumors of these lost civilizations spread, drawing treasure seekers, archaeologists, and mad cultists hoping to uncover the truth of these once grand empires. Ancient defenses still function and unknown dangers lurk in the ruins jealously protecting the secrets of the elders.

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Below you will find a series of tables and descriptions that will help you create worlds were ancient and powerful civilizations thrived. The tables will describe the type of world discovered, the level of the civilization at its peak, the cause of the civilization's decline, the current state of the population, and the state of the world's ruins. These rules are fully compatible with the world creation rules found in *WOIN Building A Universe*.

How Common Are Tomb Worlds?

The GM will need to decide how common tomb worlds are in the game setting. Typically, the choices will be between *rare* and *very rare*; very rare is the default option. During the Creating a Civilization step of Designing a Star System, roll the dice shown below. If all the dice show sixes, the civilization is dead. Then use the following steps to create the dead civilization.

Rarity	Dice	Context
Common	2d6	1-in-36
Rare	3d6	1-in-216
Very Rare	4d6	1-in-1,296

1. Determine type of world.
2. Determine Advancement Level (See Peak Technology below), wealth (See Wealth Table on Page 21 of *Building a Universe*), and society type.
3. Determine current state of population.
4. Determine demographics, government, and law (See Government Table on page 22 of *Building a Universe*).
5. Determine how the civilization fell.
6. Determine state of the ruins.
7. Create a new species if necessary.

Creating The Tomb World

When setting down on a new world, PCs may discover that they have inadvertently set foot on the ancient home world of a collapsed empire, an abandoned colony, or a small frontier outpost.

1d6	World Type
1	Core World
2-3	Colony
4-6	Outpost

Core World. At the heart of the empire, these worlds were once the seats of powerful governments—democracies, monarchies, republics, dictatorships, or theocracies. While this world may not have been the capitol, it was home to many of their institutions of government, learning, religion, art, and culture. Core worlds were among the most populous worlds before the empire's decline.

Colony. A vast empire requires a vast amount of resources to function. Colonies provided these gargantuan empires with a variety of resources through mining, agriculture, manufacturing, and other specialized tasks. These worlds had a modest population of farmers, miners, and mechanics along with their families. Many of these worlds housed military bases and shipyards that built the enormous ships that once provided protection to thousands of worlds.

Outpost. At the very edges of the fallen empire are the remnants of outposts that marked its ancient borders and furthest expansion. An outpost world will usually contain a single settlement, perhaps nothing more than a research station or a small military base. The empire may have intended to colonize the world, but the empire contracted before those plans could come to fruition.

Civilization's Peak Technology

While civilizations that are struggling through the Bronze Age or sputtering into the Industrial Age have their own charms for anthropologists and xenobiologists, these civilizations once reached out to the stars and developed extraordinary technology. Use the chart below to determine exactly what level of technological development this civilization had reached prior to its downfall.

To determine the fallen civilization's highest level of technology, use the Technology Table from *Building a Universe* and roll 1d6+6.

Current State of the Population

The end of a civilization does not necessarily mean that death of the entire population. Sometimes survivors remain behind. Advanced species may even have found ways to avoid their own deaths.

1d6	State of Population
1	Extinct
2	Remnants
3	Suspended Animation
4	Mutated or Evolved
5	Lone Survivor
6	Artificial Intelligence

Extinct. The catastrophe that befell this civilization wiped out the entire population. Only dust remains.

Remnants. Somehow, someway, life found a way, and a few scattered pockets of this race survived. They still propagate their ancient traditions, but the meanings may have been lost or evolved in the intervening centuries. They may still have access to their ancient technologies, but more likely, their knowledge of technology has regressed back to a much earlier state.

Suspended Animation. With foresight and quick thinking this civilization foresaw its doom and survived the collapse of its society by entering suspended animation.

However, they have sleeping for centuries and the machines supporting the sleeping chambers may have failed. Those who survived the centuries of suspended animation a well-equipped medical facility could awaken them. How will they react when they discover that the galaxy doesn't remember them or their civilization?

Mutated or Evolved. Whatever catastrophe destroyed their civilization, the species somehow survived, but in the intervening millennia they have changed—devolving from a powerful star-faring race into barely sentient beings incapable of higher order thinking. Conversely, they may have evolved beyond the need for a mortal body and become beings of pure energy. Whatever the case, they are no longer the same species they once were.

Lone Survivor. A single member of the species survives. He/she/it is thousands, millions, or even billions of years old and biologically immortal (it does not age nor would disease or poison kill the individual). This being remains as a caretaker of the ruins or guardian of the secrets of the fallen empire.

Artificial Intelligence. An artificial intelligence was the only survivor of the calamity which destroyed this civilization. This powerful intelligence could hold the answers to many mysteries or blueprints to lost technology. The AI has its own agenda as well. And, like any intelligent being, the centuries of isolation could have had a detrimental effect. Have centuries of loneliness driven it insane? Has damage to its circuits and processors caused it malfunction? Do ancient orders from its creators endanger the universe?

How Did The Civilization Fall?

Collapse comes in many forms. Did the species bring on their decline themselves? Was an external threat responsible?

1d6	Reason for Collapse
1	Disease
2	Scientific Blunder
3	Internal Strife
4	External Threat
5	Environmental Catastrophe
6	Evolutionary Leap Forward

Disease. The disease did not kill rapidly and spread with surprising ease, carried to the thousands of planets the civilization had colonized. As the death toll mounted, medical staffs and researchers couldn't find a cure and many of them died from exposure. The origins of the disease were a mystery to them and remain so to this day. Is the disease still out there? Has it evolved to affect the player characters' races?

Scientific Blunder. They were on the verge of a great discovery and an exciting leap forward in their technology, but everything went wrong. Perhaps they were attempting to harness the energies of a black hole or maybe they were testing a new faster-than-light drive. Whatever the case, the failure of the device disrupted their civilization to such a degree that they could not recover.

Internal Strife. The greatest threat to an empire is not external forces but internal stresses caused by political disagreements, economic stagnation, civil unrest, civil war, and coups that destroy the civilization from within. This empire fractured into dozens and then fractured again into hundreds of smaller entities that were much weaker than the whole.

External Threat. After the war ended, nothing remained. No beings, no buildings, even the seas boiled away. Whoever or whatever destroyed this civilization were determined that nothing should be left. The only word worthy of this level of utter annihilation is "genocide."

Environmental Catastrophe. More deadly than earthquakes, volcanoes, or hurricanes, the death of a star is the most violent and powerful release of energy known. If the star is massive enough and spinning fast enough, the explosion sends out a gamma ray burst that can end life on every planet in its path bringing destruction to an entire civilization. A common supernova releases enough energy to disrupt nearby star systems, and the resultant black holes can render thousands of parsecs uninhabitable. Not even the most advanced species can overcome the power unleashed by a supernova.

Evolutionary Leap Forward. Having evolved beyond the need for a physical body, these beings now inhabit higher order dimensions or have become beings of pure energy. They abandoned their worlds to explore the multiverse. The planets that these beings once called home may house secrets to powerful technologies and new sciences, but ancient defenses may still guard these worlds.

State of the Ruins

The passage of centuries or even millennia can do far more to destroy a civilization's architecture than warfare. The table below describes the state of the civilization's ruins.

1d6	State of the Ruins
1	Heavily Defended
2	Looted
3	Buried
4	Demolished
5	Untouched
6	Underground Only

Heavily Defended. Wise beings avoid this planet. Ancient defenses are still active and capable of destroying the most heavily armed cruisers. Explorers unfortunate enough to land on the planet find automated defenses stalking them—self-repairing androids, high-powered turrets, and armed flying drones patrol the planet.

Looted. You arrived too late. In the intervening centuries, scavengers and archaeologists have stripped this world bare. Anything of value is long gone and now resides in a museum or the private collections of the wealthy elite. A lucky explorer might find some secrets still hiding in the ruins.

Buried. For millennia, earthquakes, volcanoes, glaciers, and other natural phenomena have combined to raze any evidence that this world was ever inhabited. Deep scans of the planet's surface may uncover some ruins, but explorers would learn very little from these remnants.

Demolished. The collapse of this civilization was incredibly violent. Atomics, pulse weapons, or another exotic weapon destroyed the buildings leaving only gutted ruins behind. If this civilization fell to an ancient enemy or civil war, the ruins could be radioactive. Their enemies "salted the earth" to ensure that the civilization would never rise again.

Untouched. The eerie quiet of the streets is unnerving. No creatures—not citizens of the planet and not the indigenous animal life—exist on this world. The buildings are pristine and appear untouched despite centuries of being unoccupied. Plant life has taken over the cities. Whatever happened here must have happened fast and all at once.

Underground Only. Devastated by orbital bombard, the surface of this world is one enormous ruin. The attacks left nothing but craters. The species that inhabited this world built vast underground complexes as a final defense against attacks. They also warehoused incredible amounts of information including archives that contained their civilization's history.

Clarke VII
Medium ruined terrestrial home world
Astronomical Data
  Parent Star Clarke (F main sequence yellow-white star)
  Orbital Position 7; **AU** 2; **orbital period** 2.5 years;
    rotation 28 hours
  Size average (radius 7,341 km); **gravity** 1.1G (standard)
  Atmosphere earthlike; **composition** earthlike
  Type terrestrial (capital) (Ruined World)
  Satellites 2 (Clarke VIIa & Clark VIIb); **Rings** -
Civilization Data
  Civilization home world (capital)
  Advancement Level 10
  Wealth -
Population Data
  Population 0/Extinct (Scientific Blunder)
  Government NA
  Lawfulness NA
Habitability Rating 9; **Sociological Rating** 10
Catalog Code F14-m7Mc-U10i

Discovered by Jonathan Harkin, Clarke VII is one of the many mystery worlds of the galaxy. When Cmdr. Harkin set foot on the planet, he could not believe his eyes. Every building, bridge, starport, vehicle, and starship was still in immaculate condition; yet, when his sensors dated the remains, they showed that the structures were at least 1,000 years old. Harkin and his crew explored the largest metropolis but found no remains of the species. They had all vanished. Harkin did collect several portable computers, and once their data was analyzed, Harkin learned that the civilization was on the cusp of a great scientific experiment. What he assumed were news reports explained little of device, but it was supposed to be the harbinger of a new phase in their society. After the last story that talked of the imminent activation, Harkin could find no further information. Harkin's conclusion was that the device had destroyed the civilization. Currently, Terran science teams are exploring the world seeking to understand the civilization and locate the device.