

A Night To

REMEMBER

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game for 5 players

by

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Crash course in Cthulhutech for Gms:

Cthulhutech is fairly simple. Your characters have attributes and skills. When rolls are necessary, you're trying to beat a certain number based on difficulty. Start with the number of the relevant attribute. Then take a number of d10s equal to the relevant skill, and roll them. The roller has 3 options now:

- You can add on the highest die.
- If pairs or triples (or, very rarely, quadruples) are rolled, you can add them together, so if you rolled 3 dice and the results were 5, 5 and 8, you could add the two 5s together for 10, and add them on to the base attribute.
- If 3 or more dice come up with consecutive numbers, you can add them together, so if you rolled 4 dice and got 3, 4, 5 and 10, you could add the 3, 4 and 5 together for 12 and add that on instead of 10.

The higher one rolls, the better they do. If anyone succeeds by 10 or more, it's a critical success, and if anyone fails by 10 or more it's a critical failure. Criticals are at the discretion of the GM. Usually the results are twice as good as expected: Research is done twice as quick or uncovers twice as much information, repairs cost half the price, stuff like that. It's different in combat, see the relevant section.

The range of difficulties and required rolls to beat them are in the table below. Use the standard of you want to keep things quick:

Degree	Difficulties	Standard	Example
Easy	7-9	8	Stitching a small cut
Average	10-14	12	Hacking a home computer
Challenging	15-19	16	Searching for specifics of cult practice in a library/online
Hard	20-25	22	Noticing a tiny blood spot
Incredibly hard	26-31	28	Fixing a cracked D-Engine
Legendary	32+	34	Translating an ancient dead language

Automatic success: For routine or boring tasks that don't really add to the drama or story, you can automatically succeed at such tests if you would beat the target difficulty with your attribute+7. So if your Strength is 5, and the target difficulty of clearing away rubble is 12, you don't have to roll because your Strength+7 beats the difficulty. Now, if you were trying to clear away rubble speedily so you can hide in a cave from something horrible that's closing in on you, THEN you'd probably have to roll...

When a player doesn't have the required skill for a roll, they can still try. They roll 1 die, and HALF the result before adding it to their base attribute.

Drama points: Everyone starts with 5 drama points. They can be spent to add 1 extra die to their roll or an ally's roll, before or after the original roll. They can also be spent before an enemy roll to subtract 1 die from their roll. NB: They cannot be spent on Initiative, Armour or Damage rolls!

Combat - How to do it:

Determine Initiative:

Everyone rolls a die and adds it to their Reflex stat. Highest goes first, and so on in descending order.

Declare number of actions:

You can make one action at no penalty. You can make 2 actions at -2 to both, or 3 actions at -4 to all.

Make combat rolls:

Attacker makes an attack roll, defender makes a defence roll, according to this table:

Attack	Defence
Fighting	Armed fighting, Dodge or Fighting
Armed fighting	Armed fighting or Dodge
All other skills	Dodge

If shooting/throwing a ranged weapon, the following modifiers are applied depending on range:

Range	Difficulty modifier
Short range	+2
Mid range	0
Long range	-2
Extreme range	-6

Roll damage:

Compare the attack/Defence rolls. Add dice due to weapon type, and (if in close combat or throwing a weapon) the attacker's strength: A successful attack ALWAYS rolls at least 1 die of damage.

Result greater by	Damage	Strength	Damage
1-5	1 die	1-3	-1 die
6-10	2 dice	4-7	None
11-15	3 dice	8-9	+1 die
16-20	4 dice	10-11	+2 dice
		12-13	+3 dice
		14-15	+4 dice

Determine Wounds:

If target is wearing armour, they roll the armour's rating in dice and subtract the total from the incoming damage. PCs will have wound levels, each one equal to their Vitality, and each one imposing a penalty when reached.

Repeat the above for each player, and each action they have taken. Remember to apply multiple action penalties.

Called shots: If someone wants to a precise shot, apply a penalty to hit. For every -2 applied, give them a bonus damage die. So aiming for the eye might be -8 to hit, but +3 damage dice.

Full auto: Weapon stats will say the number of targets that can be hit, how many hits each target takes, and the total ammo spent. Eg:

AR-25 has 4/1-5/30, which means you can hit up to 4 targets in front of you, they each take 1-5 shots, and you use up 30 rounds doing so, whether they hit or not.

Make your roll, targets defend @-2. ROLL ARMOUR ONCE ONLY, ALL HITS STACK DAMAGE!

Fear and Insanity:

Fear is an immediate in-game reaction to a mental or physical threat. Insanity is a permanent distortion of a character's perception. Players may start with some insanity-based disorder (They've witnessed some horrible things in the Aeon War), but mostly the game will be using Fear.

Call for Fear checks when something horrible or creepy happens. A Fear check is just a Tenacity Feat roll at a difficulty determined by the GM, same as any other roll.

If the Fear roll is passed, then you take it in your stride. If the roll is failed, however, you do not. Roll 2d10 and consult the following table:

2d10 total	Result
2	Physical effect: Your hair turns white, or you develop a permanent twitch or speech impediment. Lose a turn as you process the fear.
3	Lose bodily control: You are stunned into inaction. Lose a turn as you process the fear. You also lose control of bodily functions, with the associated embarrassment and discomfort.
4	Forget: -1 to all rolls for the rest of the scene. Afterwards, you completely forget the incident. You may still be plagued by nightmares and have several sleepless nights.
5-6	Faint: The fright hits you so deeply you just can't take it, and faint. You are unconscious for 5 minutes (1 minute if someone actively tries to revive you).
7-8	Cower: You cower in fear and feebly attempt to escape the source of the fear. The fright makes you too uncoordinated to run, the best you can do is crawl and whimper. -2 to all rolls for the scene and pass a Hard Tenacity test to take any direct action against the source of fear.
9-10	Scream: The sight terrifies you and you cry out in terror. Lose your next action.
11-12	Stunned: You are shocked beyond the capacity for thought. Lose a turn.
13-14	Twitch: You are shocked out of your skin. Causing you to retreat inside yourself. You can take no actions as you twitch and drool for 1d5 minutes. 50% chance of not remembering the event, as per Forget above.
15-16	Terror: You are utterly terrified and run screaming from the source. You'll do anything it takes to get away from whatever scared you. Once you escape, you suffer from the effects of Cower above for 1d5 minutes, likely sobbing and screaming all the while.
17-18	Morbid fascination: The sight frightens you but you find yourself drawn to the source, and have an obsessive urge to study and learn more about it for 1d5 days.
19	Temporary disorder: The experience is so scarring, you develop a permanent behavioural disorder of the GM's choice, as well as the effects of Twitch above.
20	Phobia: You become permanently terrified of whatever scared you, as well as the effects of Twitch above.

Examples of disorders players can receive include: Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), Post-traumatic stress Disorder (PTSD), panic attacks (under stressful situations roll on the fear table again), mood disorders (mania, depression, anger management etc), paranoia, hallucinations. Pick as appropriate.

Regaining sanity lies outside the scope of this scenario. They're stuck with their problems.

Setting in a nutshell (for players and Gms)

- In 2019, A PhD student named Teresa Ashcroft discovered a book called *The Mysteries Within* while searching the archives of Miskatonic University (Arkham, Massachusetts). Contained within were detailed non-Euclidean mathematical principles which allowed her to pioneer a new field of science: Arcanotech. She is driven mad by her work.
- Her colleagues picked up where Teresa left off and eventually by 2026 an unlimited arcanotech power source is developed, the Dimensional Engine, or D-Engine. Many scientists are driven mad during the project, but eventually safeguards are put in place to make arcanotech research relatively safe.
- The Ashcroft Foundation is created to drive arcanotech R&D. It becomes the largest corporation in the world by the end of 2034.
- Things are good, humanity starts colonising the solar system.
- In 2058 humanity's farthest outpost, on Neptune, goes dark. Earth slowly begins losing contact with other colonies.
- In 2059 the Nazzadi attack. The First Arcanotech War begins. The UN and other nations establish a New Earth Government (NEG) to deal with the global threat. Its capital is established in Chicago in 2062.
- In 2064 the Nazzadi force begins to fracture: The highest ranks know that they are not a proud warrior race, but were created by the Migou who live on Pluto to eradicate humanity before it can become a threat. Nazzadi Marshal Vreta broadcasts the truth to the fleet and Earth alike. Three quarters of the force follow Vreta and eradicate the loyalists.
- In 2065 the Nazzadi meet with Earth's president to discuss peace. The Schaumburg Treaty integrates the Nazzadi into NEG society, and they take Cuba for their own, renaming it Nazza-Dhuni. The First Arcanotech War ends.
- By 2074 the Migo have arrive to Earth to finish what the Nazzadi began. A moon-sized mothership enters orbit over Antarctica and a full war of extermination begins with twice the original firepower of the First War. The Second Arcanotech War begins.
- In 2076 the Esoteric Order of Dagon emerges as a fully-fledged power, reclaiming the seas. Ships go missing, hybrids begin spawning in coastal populations, and underwater cities are eradicated.
- The Rapine Storm rises in Asia. Followers of the Dead God Hastur, they consume much of Southeast Asia in bloodshed and terror and begin threatening China and Indonesia. By 2080 they reach the north coast of Australia, and as far west as Turkmenistan.
- 2078: The Second Arcanotech war ends and the Aeon War begins as the NEG recognises the Cult threat and the Migou divert resources to fight mankind and cult both.
- Over the next years new biological mecha called Engels are developed to give the NEG an edge in the war. They manage to improve the odds a little: There is now something of a stalemate between the various battle forces.
- 2085: Present day. Humanity still fights for survival. Most NEG citizens live in massive city arcologies where crime is fairly low, there are well-paying jobs and living standards are comfortable. About 40% of Earth's population is Nazzadi, and considering the horrors of the Migou and monsters of the various cults, racism is almost unheard of. The Ministry of Information takes great care to ensure civilisation is protected from the worst of the truth. There is a quiet fear hidden deep within each community, but overall, people believe they will win the war and that the worst is over. Those on the front lines know differently. The term "Aeon War Syndrome" has been created to label the unique kind of mental stress caused by living in what could very well be Humanity's final days.

Game in a nutshell (GM's eyes only!):

The players are a squad of New Earth Government veteran mecha pilots, stationed in China, holding out against the Rapine Storm while at-risk cities can be evacuated. They start off in The Hellfire Club, a dingy nightclub that hosts auctions and dubious sports to help those fleeing the war earn passage on an evac ship. Tonight was advertised as something very special, a magnificent sculpture rescued from a destroyed museum and dating from 16th century Imperial China. Bidding quickly goes beyond their salaries and the sculpture goes to a man who unlocks its magical power to open a gateway through which several horrors pour through. A fight to escape ensues as the building collapses.

The squad will have to report to their commanding officer, joined by an operative from the Global Intelligence Agency who will interrogate them magically, and point to a lead that might help explain what they witnessed. At this point alarms will go off indicating a major attack that could breach the city's defences. The military will organise a fighting retreat to evacuate as many people as possible, but the GIA operative requires the players to help her identify the sculpture they saw at the auction and figure out what they're dealing with.

Some excitement might occur as the players get to grips with their respective giant robots.

The players will escort the operative to a library holding physical records of the museum the idol was originally kept in. She'll request the players leave their mecha on autopilot while they escort her into the basement archives to begin research. Accessing the worldwide datanet on the library's 6th floor she'll be injured in an attack from Rapine Storm cultists ranging ahead of the main attack force. The players will be forced to take her information and end the threat.

The squad will learn that the sculpture in question is one of the Ten Brothers from Chinese folklore, only they represent demons that were trapped in jade statues, such as the two eldest who became servants of the Chinese sea goddess Mazu. It is a gateway, as well as a living being at the same time, through which the Rapine Storm is sending shock troops deep behind enemy lines to prepare the way for an invasion. They'll need to track it down (heading to the worst fighting should do it) and destroy it to free the demon and then kill it.

Opening scene: The Hellfire Club

A little background:

Xiamen city is a port city on China's southeast coast, a little over 500 miles from the defensive killzone set up to halt the Rapine Storm. Nearly 3 million people lived in Xiamen before the First Arcanotech War and the eruption of the Rapine Storm. Now it's an evacuation point where the NEG slowly but steadily transports citizens away from danger to better protected parts of the world. Of course "critical personnel" tend to be evacuated first, followed by the rich and famous, leaving the average Joe twiddling their thumbs and watch society crumble as they wait for their number in the lotteries.

The Hellfire Club is an infamous nightclub that skirts the borders of legality by providing citizens with a chance to skip the queues in the evacuation plan. Fighting tournaments, motorbike races, and auctions of family heirlooms or items rescued from the advance of the Storm are all common occurrences, as desperate people compete and gamble to try and win enough money to bribe their way onto the next transport. As such, it's open to rich and poor alike. They're nice like that.

It's not somewhere the NEG expects its military personnel to frequent, which is why the players treat it as their regular. They've spent time on the front lines and as the final part of their psychiatric recovery are currently on low-risk duty, overseeing the evacuation effort, where combat mecha are extremely good at encouraging orderly lines and good behaviour.

They came along tonight because, as regulars, they were targeted by the marketing algorithms and promised a particularly entertaining night with some especially interesting contests.

Getting in:

They're regulars, the bouncers Chen and Roberta know them well enough to smile and welcome them back, and the scanners ID them as NEG soldiers and don't raise a fuss about any handguns/combat knives they have concealed under their jacket or trousers.

The bouncers will update their "peeks" (fancy word for what's essentially an Apple watch, only holographic, and good) a complimentary drink of their choice, as the manager likes the added security of highly trained and armed customers capable of breaking up fights between civvies.

Things for them to do before it goes to hell:

Use this as an opportunity to pick up bonus Drama Points!

Break up a fight between gamblers after a fight went unexpectedly: Players have waaaaay better dodge/stats/attack than plebs, so it should be easy. Security offers a drink for their help.

Take part in a sharpshooting competition: With harmless BB guns of course. As soldiers they'll do really well (add in a contestant with Perception 7 and Marksman 2 if you want to challenge them?) Prize is free drinks or the house hotwings or something.

Regale punters with war stories: Attractive civvies would LOVE to hear (pre-approved and appropriately sanitized by the Office of Internal Security, of course) tales of their fight against the Migou or the Rapine Storm. Presence and Charm/Persuade or similar.

DANCIN': Correct use of Agility/Performance lets a player bust some moves and serve haters to the thumping new-age-electro-rock beat, to the cheers of an appreciative crowd.

The auction:

(Players here who've been drinking can take up to -3 on their rolls depending on how hard they've been at the sauce)

An hour or two into the night, as a nice break from the adrenaline of the pitfights and motorbike races, things calm down for the nightly auction, presided over by DJ Bobby Long. He flat out says that this is their best collection of lots in years, and there's something that should interest everyone.

Those who win a bid are expected to come up on stage, transfer the funds electronically, and say a few words, usually something wishing a speedy journey to whoever provided that item.

Players can bet on a couple of lots they might find interesting, they can just about spend 1,000Tn, or club together for 5,000Tn, but for most of the stuff bidding quickly gets above their paygrade. Those who aren't interested in the auction can pound a few drinks at the bar. Remember any players who win a bid have to come up on stage and say a few words!

Things the players could bid on:

- Pre-war Chinese officer's sword, ceramic composite, well-balanced and sharp. 1,000Tn. If won, they get a close combat weapon with +2 damage
- CS-44 Enforcer handgun with custom additions, recovered from Rapine Storm territory 2,000Tn. If won, add +1 damage and shots to their existing Enforcer profile

The Statue: This should be paraphrased to players by the auctioneer as bidding begins at 4,000Tn and quickly picks up (it is an exquisite piece, and will sell for tens of thousands).

- It is a depiction of Qianliyan, a servant of the Chinese sea goddess Mazu which dates back as far as about 900AD and gained popularity in China again around the end of the 20th century.
- In some stories he is a great general defeated in combat by Mazu, or a demon she tricked. Either way, Qianliyang swore to serve the goddess for eternity.
- His name roughly translates as "He of the Thousand-Mile eyes", and he was supposed to have legendary eyesight and clairvoyance.
- He is often depicted with his partner Shufeng'Er, who was said to hear all that occurred, who also served Mazu.
- The statue is made of red chalcedony, a bright, almost creamy texture, just translucent enough to catch the light in a way that makes it appear to glow from within. The eyes are yellow sapphires
- The statue is in excellent condition, and allegedly rescued from a museum now deep in Rapine Storm territory

Eventually the statue goes for 50,000Tn, and the winner is invited on stage to swipe his credit card and say a few words.

Announcer: "Well you paid a fortune for it, what'cha gonna do with it?"

Bidder: "Open it."

The statue glows so bright most people are blinded, the lights blow, the music stops, and a sphere of heat distortion remains where the bidder was. Through it pour cultists and monsters. Bloodbath happens.

Hellfire Club Fight:

“The statue glows blindingly, and reality twists around it and the man holding it, before shattering, and behind the shards is a tide of horrific monstrosities. Packs of howling ghosts leap upon the patrons, biting and tearing. Here and there a couple of humans emerge, some with flamethrowers, others with poisoned needle pistols. They fire indiscriminately into the panicking crowds. The flame weapons set off the fire alarms and sprinklers, but at least the way to the emergency exits light up clearly. The public are too terrified to notice, however, and run aimlessly in fear. They are being slaughtered.”

Make Hard (20+) fear tests: Failure means 2 insanity points. The Rapine Storm just keeps coming. You have to get out, report to HQ.

Endless waves of ghosts, attacking everything they can.

A few cultists with weapons. Flamethrowers and needle pistols

You might let players realise that the needlers are for paralysing only. They're taking prisoners. It should be obvious they have to get out. Throw a pack of ghosts in front of them, and maybe a cultist with a flamethrower near the exit. The idea should be to get out and back to base. Allow them to hotwire a car (or perhaps a few motorcycles?) and explain things going to hell around them: Integrity scale beasts tearing out into reality and smashing into buildings, trying to avoid monstrous feet as they get away.

Mention Shabus Morgo or Gibbering Horrors. More fear tests to avoid them.

After a nerve-wracking few minutes, they'll get to HQ a couple of miles away. On the way they'll get pinged to report to Captain Morrigan.

Scene 2: HQ, Captain Morrigan and an OIS guest

The military base is a disused highschool. Brightly lit corridors, touchscreen interfaces and holographic displays, soldiers rushing everywhere with rifles, and once they're safely indoors, the players hear the thump of weapon emplacements. Things are obviously getting worse.

They're shown to Morrigan's office. Morrigan is a severe-looking woman in combat fatigues. This was her day off.

"We're getting reports of Storm forces appearing out of thin air! Civilian casualties are bad, and getting worse. They're supposed to be stuck behind a mile of napalm five hundred miles away! The appearances started downtown, and I *know* you were at that scummy Hellfire den or whatever you call it, so tell me what you saw."

When they explain, Morrigan will call in Katherine Forde. Players never met her before. A small, smartly dressed woman with no apparent rank or name badge will arrive.

Morrigan: "This is Katherine Forde from the Office of Internal Security. She arrived earlier today tracking rumours of an arcanotech relic. Sounds like you might have found it."

Katherine will psychically interrogate the players. It's an unpleasant feeling, having someone else rifle through your memories. Sort of like flashbacks while you can feel someone in your head, staring and tut-tutting quietly.

Forde will tell them:

- Her team were tracking cult activity in the Americas, unusual thefts from private collectors and such
- One such item matches the description she got from the characters
- NEG archives place that statue in multiple historical events/locations:
 - An old photograph of Erwin Rommel, the Desert Fox of World War 2, soon after he took command of Deutsches Afrika Korps in 1941, legendary for their speed and cunning.
 - It seems to have changed hands at the battle of El Alamein
 - Markings on the base suggest it belonged at one point to Sun Hao, a particularly cruel emperor in 3rd century China, not long before he was deposed.
- It's obviously key to what happened, and to stopping it.

Agent Forde will commandeer the players as an escort to the city's chief library: As the Storm advanced across Asia, rescued museum pieces and records were moved further east, and records were copied and archived in as many places as possible. There should be images and research records to give her an idea of what they're dealing with.

Forde: "Your captain has generously provided me with an APC, but given how things have escalated, I will need some lookouts and firepower. Given your eye-witness accounts, I will be commandeering you to provide an escort with your battle mecha. Gear up and meet me at the west gates in ten minutes. We have no time to lose.

(At this point, hand the players their mecha profiles and explain mech rules. Aw yiss.)

Scene 3: To the Library!

In their mecha, players can swat aside anything smaller than them. They just have to prevent the APC from taking damage.

Spring an ambush at a crossroads: A feint by a few packs of ghouls tearing at the APC to distract (Forde has a mounted machine gun and is a pretty good shot), while from a building several floors up some rocket launchers fire off at random targets (have one hit the APC with no real damage).

Sensor checks and a few brute force moves will remove those threats.

Give the players a perception test to see a very large heat signature on sensors: A gigantic kaiju, a Grave Thing, has heaped a few dozen corpses together and is focused on laying its eggs in the pile. It's an opportunity for them to

- Sneak attack it stealthily
- Use long range missiles to fry it
- take a cunning detour (may require a fear test as sensors pick up faint sound and movement from the pile- not all of those people are dead)

Anyway, the library is really big, a converted 30 story office building. This part of the city is relatively quiet- the Rapine Storm is looking to hurt/kill as many people as possible and this isn't a residential/entertainment area.

They'll have to leave the mecha patrolling outside, grab their rifles and follow Forde into the basement. Flashlights and emergency lighting create an eerie atmosphere. A tap drip echoes down the hall, dull thumps and roars from the destruction above.

Research happens! Forde is able to track down the right vaults to search for information in. Anyone with a mind to help can get stuck in too. Research/Intellect rolls!

Things they piece together:

- It passed into the hands of multiple Chinese emperors, empresses and high-ranking officials. All infamous, or deposed by infamous rivals:
 - Gao Yang (529-559)
 - Yang Guang (569-618)
 - Lu Zhi (241-180BC)
 - Jia Nanfeng (257-300AD)
 - Wei (8th century)
 - Photographs of the statue appear in Chinese Revolution and 2nd Sino-Japanese War
- 25+ on an Occult roll will turn up an almost identical statue identified as Qianliyan, a demon/god associated with Mazu
- 20+ on Occult can place Mazu as a sort of ocean goddess who developed around the end of the 1st millennium. But the statue is at least 900 years older than Mazu.
- There are fragmentary records That Mazu's twin guardians, Qianliyan and Shunfeng'er were referred to in a 13th century folk tale about Ten Brothers who had special powers, but which ones are relevant here?

They'll need to get back to the worldwide datanet to cross-reference what they've found. Of course there's a massive storm brewing and the wifi won't cut it. Even their mecha's sensors are acting fuzzy. They're going to have to find a functioning hard physical line to the net. Upstairs in the library ought to do it...

Scene 4: The Plot Advances Further!

A floorplan by the entrance can indicate floors with public datanet access. The first 5 floors are books, comics, art pieces and such, with internet access terminals starting from the 6th.

As they trek up the stairs or elevators, the AI from the players' mecha pings them to inform them of enemy sightings:

“Alert. Enemy forces sighted. Estimate 78.4% probability our position is known to the enemy.
Option: Power down – reduce signature by 89%. Passive sensors only.
Option: Assume sentry mode, engage all hostiles approaching within 500m.
Awaiting orders.”

Either way, the players will get Forde to an internet terminal on the 6th floor (around shoulder height for the largest mecha, this is important for escaping), Pretty much an office floor littered with office cubicles containing a chair and computer. She'll do her thing, overriding local firewalls and establishing a secure connection with her own sources, looking for references to the Ten Brothers and which of them matches this statue most closely.

While she does this, the mecha will ping again. If they were powered down they'll note forces infiltrating the library and storming up the stairs. If they were in sentry mode, they'll engage ground forces and note appearance of larger kaiju. Grave things, perhaps a gug (unpleasant news all round)

This gives us a scene where the players hold out against Storm cultists and ghosts until Forde can collect her data. Add in some horrifying scenes as their mecha do battle outside and a Grave Thing slams them into the building, shattering windows and making everyone lose balance.

After a dramatically appropriate length of time, Forde downloads the relevant data and yells “GOT IT! We need to leave, now!”

If tied for time, Forde can order an air strike to clear out the majority of beasties outside and get on with things. The airforce are soon overcome by Shantaks and don't get used again!

Otherwise, it's high time everyone leapt from a window into the cockpit of their mecha. Or, y'know, fails their jump, the mecha catches them and places them inside and they take 1d10 falling damage.

In any case, she's hit as she escapes, a stray needle coated in extradimensional toxins that starts folding certain body proteins in and out of space time. She begins haemorrhaging in seconds and crumples in on herself. Someone will have to collect her memory stick. As they get the hell out.

As they look over Forde's data, they'll learn the following about the Ten Brothers, in order of age

(Give them the next page as a handout)

Agent Forde,

You are correct, it looks like the Ten Brothers folk tale. Ten extradimensional entities which have been defeated or trapped in statues over many centuries across Central Asia. The statues may grant powerful abilities to someone who knows how to contact and control the demon inside. 1st and 2nd Brother may be disregarded, fireteams [REDACTED] secured their statues several years ago, confirmed defeated by a shaman who later became known as the goddess Mazu, pending destruction or [REDACTED].

This leaves us with the following possibilities:

- 3rd Brother: Possessed immense strength.
- 4th Brother: Could stretch his body, was apparently indestructible
- 5th Brother: Capable of flying (cf Shantak? Quetzalcoatl?)
- 6th Brother: Had an indestructible head, was the smartest (cf Bhaki? N'athm?)
- 7th Brother: Could change size at will
- 8th Brother: Could travel quickly by burrowing through the grounded (Bhole?)
- 9th Brother: Had a giant mouth that could cause gales
- 10th Brother: Youngest, had huge eyes that could cry rivers to wash his enemies away

Further complications: Depending on the region the tale is told, the number of brothers varies from ten down to five, but enough similarities remain in the story proper to narrow the search down. If there are fewer Brothers, they likely share multiple powers from the larger set. For example 10th Brother is likely an offshoot of 1st Brother, considering the large eyes and the water aspect, and may thus be disregarded.

Based on the psychic imprints you describe from your witnesses and the nature of the invasion, we believe the "tunneling" aspect of 8th Brother is being invoked to teleport Rapine Storm forces past the kill-zones and into relatively unprotected regions. This suggests a bhole, or magical entity resembling a bhole. I suspect several of the other Brothers are just different aspects of this bhole-like 8th Brother, 3rd and 9th Brothers particularly.

You will have to find the statue first. This should not be difficult, as I am certain from your reports of Rapine Storm appearances the summoning effect has a range of no more than 500 metres. The pattern suggests the statue and its bearer are heading to Gu Shan Zhong National Park, the old forests are strong with mystical energies and could fuel a full-blown gateway from Leng to Xiamen. Based on the manuscripts of [REDACTED] and our own [REDACTED] experiments, destroying the statue may release the demon inside or cause it to manifest, whereupon it may be destroyed, should it be vulnerable to conventional weapons.

On that note, a common theme in the legends is that the Ten Brothers are impaired by limestone, which impairs or even negates their powers. Xiamen city's geological records note an abundance of Ordovician period limestone, and there is a quarry in the north of the city's outskirts. Such an area may be of use to trap and then destroy what I suspect is a bhole imbued with intelligence and potentially magical knowledge. Even with limestone impairing its legendary abilities, it is still at least 150-foot long, 35 feet wide, and covered in slime corrosive enough to destroy a mech in seconds, if it does not just swallow it whole. You will need to requisition at least a squad of mecha from the local garrison, ideally veterans who have already witnessed a bhole and thus less likely to panic when it manifests.

Good luck, Agent Forde. The Society is praying for you.

S.

Scene 5: Nicking the statue, being Quarried to the Quarry

Stormclouds have rolled in from the sea at this stage, and the wind has picked up. It is, as they say, a dark and stormy night.

Finding the statue is pretty easy, the flashes of light and 30-foot tall beats suddenly appearing is a dead giveaway when you start to look for the pattern. The summoned creatures are indeed getting closer to Gu Shan Zhong Forest Park. Fortunately the players' mecha are all equipped for aquatic use and can avoid most of the creatures by hopping off the island and swimming around into Maluan Bay or Dongju Harbour, where the forests begin and will provide a +5 stealth bonus to all mecha. This is good, because all the monsters being summoned are heading straight back into the city.

The Rapine Storm doesn't care to cover its tracks, they're confident all the creatures and cultists making a mess in the city will keep the military occupied until it's too late. So catching up with them is easy. Hiding in forests, waiting for Gugs and shantaks and gibbering horrors to pass (add in a fear check (22+ on tenacity) as the Horrors pick up the scent of city humans and start screaming.)

The hunt ends in a large clearing by a small lake, where the strange man from the auction and about a dozen Storm cultists are enacting some ritual in a 20 foot diameter circle. There are 5 Chiranae guarding the area from the treetops. The players don't know this, the chiranae have conjured illusions to make the place look empty. A very good (20+) observation check will let them know there's something off, like more heat signatures than can be seen, or the clouds not looking quite right as they pass over the clearing. If they spot them then there's no ambush, or the players might manage to ambush them.

The Storm cultists are no match at all for the mecha, but if you're tight for time then killing the man also takes out the statue and 8th Brother breaks free prematurely. If they have the foresight, one of them will use a handheld weapon to take him out.

If they take their time, the cultists have rocket launchers capable of damaging mecha.

Once they have the statue, they'll be dogged all the way to the quarry by every creature around Xiamen as they feel the change in fortunes. Make them want to leg it. Horrors, Grave things, Gugs, whatever it takes behind them!

Scene 6: The 8th Brother

Here it is, the end fight. It has begun to rain heavily, and the sky is streaked with lightning.

“The Xiamen quarry hasn’t seen much use in the last couple of decades. Advances in material engineering has made stone less important as a building material, and the business downscaled to cater to sculpture, niche construction projects from the rich and so on. The locals dug deep, and you can see hundreds of millions of years of history in the quarry walls as igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rock seams layer and intermingle erratically, thanks to the occasional strong earthquake.”

A decent (15+?) roll on science should determine that the company has been mining limestone (they’ll see large cut blocks of it off to one side, but if they have their geological periods correct, the main Ordovician limestone seam is just beneath them. And the pre-cut blocks would make useful ammunition if a mech were to fling it at something.

It’s a simple matter for a mech to stomp on the statue, crush it in a fist or just blast it at range with a laser or lightning gun. As soon as that happens, the forces chasing the players immediately turn tail and flee. From what anyone can pick up if they try to pursue, it’s not the players they’re fleeing from. The earth starts to rumble, and lightning strikes the earth where the statue’s remains lie, several times in quick succession. A sinkhole develops quickly (players who were too close may want to leap out of the way with Athletics or take 2d10 damage) and suddenly EXPLODES in a shower of electric sparks, and flying rocks of all sorts (another 1d10 damage from the shower of boulders), as the biggest hole anyone has ever seen ploughs out from the earth, lightning arcing between the stubby spines across its body.

“8th Brother has a mouth easily 40 feet across, its hide is pitted and scarred from fights in time immemorial, and while it has no organs with which to see, you can feel a cruel, ravenously hungry will focusing its attention on each of you. You hear sounds booming in your mind that could well be some ancient, forbidden language. You’re certain that roar sounded like ‘fhtagn’, the rest is gibberish to you. But you do know it sounds BLOODY ANGRY.”

8th Brother is your boss fight. It’s a massive, terrifying bhole, like a Dune sandworm, only bigger, covered in Xenomorph acid, and far more malicious. This one also has more intelligence than usual. It’s a Personality.

Better hope the players saved up a few of the big weapons, because this is it.

Victory:

“8th Brother thrashes about and screams hard enough to shatter the quarry walls, as reality tears open once again, this time above the gigantic bhole, sucking everything towards a hole in spacetime. You dig your mech into the quarry walls and fire your grapple to tie yourself to earth, as the eldritch forces pull harder at 8th Brother, intent on banishing it from existence. With a sickening tear of gristle and bone that makes you want to throw up in your pilot’s helmet, 8th Brother is torn from its moorings and the shredded remains swirl into the maelstrom above, which suddenly winks out. The clouds are gone, and the night is still. Then your radios crackle to life. NEG forces re-establishing contact and reporting the enemy just vanishing or exploding into a shower of gore. The Rapine Storm has been driven from Xiamen.”

Judith Simmons:

Attributes:

Attribute	Rating	Feat level	Secondary attributes
Agility	6	3	Actions 2
Intelligence	4	2	Move 6
Perception	9	4	Reflex 8
Presence	4	2	Orgone n/a
Strength	6	3	Vitality 12
Tenacity	7	3	Drama points 10

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Survival	1	Athletics	3
Marksman	3	Dodge	3
Melee	2	Savoir-faire (military)	2
Intimidate	3	Demolitions	3
Stealth	1	Observation	4

Wounds:

Level	Vitality	Current
Flesh wound	12	
Light	24	
Moderate	36	
Serious	48	
At Death's Door	60	

Equipment:

CS44 Enforcer Pistol:

Damage +2d10 **Shots** 2 **Clip** 15+1

AR-25 Assault Rifle:

Damage +1d10 **Shots** 3 or auto: 4/1-5/30 **Clip** 60

Sentrytech Mk IV light combat armour:

1d10 damage reduction after being hit by non-mech attacks

Bernard Werner:

Attributes:

Attribute	Rating	Feat level	Secondary attributes
Agility	7	3	Actions 2
Intelligence	7	3	Move 6
Perception	7	3	Reflex 7
Presence	5	2	Orgone n/a
Strength	5	2	Vitality 11
Tenacity	6	3	Drama points 10

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Medicine	4	Observation	4
Science (life)	4	Dodge	4
Marksman	4	Melee	1
Stealth	2	Savoir-faire (military)	2
Athletics	2	Survival	1

Wounds:

Level	Vitality	Current
Flesh wound	11	
Light	22	
Moderate	33	
Serious	44	
At Death's Door	55	

Equipment:

CS44 Enforcer Pistol: **Damage** **Shots** **Clip**
 +2d10 2 15+1

SSG-6000 Scoped Rifle: **Damage** **Shots** **Clip**
 +3d10 1 12

Special: High power scope eliminates range penalties, UV/thermal optics allow night sight and spotting targets through thin obstacles

Sentrytech Mk IV light combat armour:
1d10 damage reduction after being hit by non-mech attacks

Ezra:

Attributes:

Attribute	Rating	Feat level	Secondary attributes
Agility	8	4	Actions 2
Intelligence	6	3	Move 7
Perception	5	2	Reflex 7
Presence	8	4	Orgone n/a
Strength	5	2	Vitality 10
Tenacity	5	2	Drama points 10

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Stealth	4	Fighting	2
Misdirect	2	Persuade	2
Athletics	4	Observation	2
Marksman	3	Savoir-faire (military)	2
Dodge	2	Melee	2

Wounds:

Level	Vitality	Current
Flesh wound	10	
Light	20	
Moderate	30	
Serious	40	
At Death's Door	50	

Equipment:

CS44 Enforcer Pistol:

Damage +2d10
Shots 2
Clip 15+1

Special: Silencer: -2 to hear at close range, add to-hit range penalties depending on distance.

Composite Combat Knife:

Damage +1d10
Special Ceramic composite: Ignores 1 armour

Sentrytech Mk IV light combat armour:

1d10 damage reduction after being hit by non-mech attacks

Nomany:

Attributes:

Attribute	Rating	Feat level	Secondary attributes
Agility	6	3	Actions 1
Intelligence	9	4	Move 5
Perception	5	2	Reflex 7
Presence	5	2	Orgone n/a
Strength	4	2	Vitality 11
Tenacity	8	4	Drama points 10

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Arcanotech	4	Computers	2
Dodge	1	Observation	4
Occult	4	Stealth	2
Technician	4	Marksman	2
Research	3	Savoir-faire (military)	1

Wounds:

Level	Vitality	Current
Flesh wound	11	
Light	22	
Moderate	33	
Serious	44	
At Death's Door	55	

Equipment:

CS44 Enforcer Pistol: **Damage** **Shots** **Clip**
 +2d10 2 15+1

RPG-7 rocket launcher: **Damage** **Shots** **Clip**
 +0 (Hybrid) 1 1

Special: Smart payload: Uses Integrity damage vs Mecha, 5' blast vitality-scale radius otherwise.

Sentrytech Mk IV light combat armour:
1d10 damage reduction after being hit by non-mech attacks

Gordon MacMillan:

Attributes:

Attribute	Rating	Feat level	Secondary attributes
Agility	7	3	Actions 2
Intelligence	5	2	Move 6
Perception	6	3	Reflex 6
Presence	5	2	Orgone n/a
Strength	6	3	Vitality 11
Tenacity	7	3	Drama points 10

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Appraisal	2	Security	2
Stealth	1	Athletics	3
Melee	4	Observation	3
Dodge	3	Marksman	2
Unarmed fighting	2	Savoir-faire (military)	3

Wounds:

Level	Vitality	Current
Flesh wound	11	
Light	22	
Moderate	33	
Serious	44	
At Death's Door	55	

Equipment:

CS44 Enforcer Pistol:	Damage	Shots	Clip
	+2d10	2	15+1
M-87 Combat Shotgun:	Damage	Shots	Clip
	+2d10	3	10

Special: Can use slugs for +1 damage but -2 to hit.

Composite Machete:	Damage	Special:
	+2d10	Ceramic composite: Ignores 1 armour

Sentrytech Mk IV light combat armour:
1d10 damage reduction after being hit by non-mech attacks

Judith Simmons:

You were born in 2020 and you grew up in a technological revolution, Arcanotech and the D-Engine promised an end to energy shortages, flying cars and nanotechnology. It delivered, and more. Sure, there was tension with the oil-producing nations, and there was probably going to be a war, but it would have been a short one, and it would have been a human war, following human rules. The future looked bright as a child.

It didn't turn out that way though. The Nazzadi attacked, red-eyed, midnight-skinned warriors we thought were aliens. As a veteran mecha pilot you saw some of the fiercest fighting. A lot of people lost friends. You gained one- Bernard Werner, the chief medic in your unit, stitched you up after the worst battles. He was a good man, compassionate, brave. More than once he defended his patients from enemy assaults. The two of you became firm friends, then lovers, and when the war ended, you got married. You have a child, Jonas, Being cared for by family in Europe.

When the Migou arrived to exterminate life on earth, you and your husband were posted to a mecha battalion in eastern Europe. It was horrible and brutal, but you were on the way to fighting the Migou to a standstill, and could eventually push them back, when suddenly central Asia became Hell on Earth. The Rapine Storm rose up in an orgy of insanity and bloodshed. Monsters out of nightmare slaughtered indiscriminately, survivors becoming as insane and twisted as them, devoted to desecrating and destroying humanity in any way possible. They rolled over most of south-eastern Asia, refugees terrified beyond anything you'd ever seen before. The NEG rapidly redeployed to counter the new threats, and your unit has seen action throughout most of Asia now. Mostly fighting retreats, at that- The Storm is rolling across Asia, and the only thing that stopped them was the fact the Migou turned to fight them just as hard as they fight you. The NEG had enough time to set up a massive kill-zone across half of China, which has been keeping the Storm at arm's length with nuclear fire and long-range artillery for months now. They're held back, but not beaten; they're encroaching on northern India, and island-hopping in the direction of Australia. And constantly testing the kill-zone for weaknesses.

The things you've seen in the front lines, fighting alien invaders and then the insane minions of a dead god... It has taken its toll several times over. The stigma of mental illness is long gone and the military health services are excellent, but the mind can only take so much. You're plagued by constant nightmares. Bernard is your rock; he's always there to hug away the relived memories of fire and terror.

After a particularly gruelling tour fighting the Storm, your unit has been through standard counselling and rotated out to a low-stress posting hundreds of miles from the front lines. Now you patrol Xiamen city, keeping order near the docks as refugees are evacuated or simple guard duty at the main garrison. After fighting 30 foot beasts that hurt just to look at, shooting trespassers or breaking up civilian fights is practically a holiday. You have free time where you don't have to worry about your entrails being splayed across 6 dimensions. Perhaps it's natural you'd all gravitate to the weirdest nightclub in town. The Hellfire Club has pit fighting, street racing, auctions of some of the weird shit recovered from Storm territory... The occasional raids from Internal Security due to dangerous relics showing up just adds to the thrill, helps you feel alive in a time where humanity stands a worryingly high chance of extinction.

Bernard Werner: My great love. A great healer, a kind man. Afraid of the dark, thanks to the Migou's night assaults. We can lean on each other. So far, we've held up.

Ezra: We fought in the first war. Getting past that wasn't easy for either of us, but I'd trust her with my life now. Frequently do, in fact. Excellent scout, and nobody is better at discreetly eliminating a lone target, whether they're 5 or 50 feet tall. Bit stuck in her ways, but so am I. That's career soldiers for you.

Nomany: The young new generation of Nazzadi personified. Loves pop culture, busily making any and all of it part of her identity with traditional Nazzadi flavour. She's a very talented engineer too, both mundane and mystical. Her care for the squad's equipment has saved us all several times over.

Gordon: There's a damn good reason the Migou advance stalled at Scotland and Ireland. The bugs can count themselves lucky nobody designs beer bottles big enough for mecha to use in a fight. A ferocious fighter, with bravado to match. I know he uses it to mask the fear we all go through. But the enemy doesn't.

Bernard Werner:

These are dark days. Back in 2017 when you were born, nobody could have expected that humanity would be at war for survival against insectoid aliens, insane cultists and creatures from Beyond that hurt just to look at. All you wanted to do was help people. You did well in school and college, academically and socially, and the medical profession was definitely your calling. You can clearly remember the day you decided to join the military. Seeing pictures of a man on a stretcher, bleeding from bullet wounds and burns, you just... Needed to help people like that. With the introduction of mecha to the front lines, you thought maybe things would get quieter. They didn't. Weaponry advanced as fast as medicine, and things stayed much the same.

It was in the First Arcanotech War you met your partner, Judith. Your medical skills often made you more valuable in a hospital than in a combat mech, so despite joining your unit as a fresh pilot, when you first met her she on a stretcher, missing an arm, half her face torn off and covered in blood. She often returned the favour by saving your life in the field when you were required to pilot a mech. The friendship between you grew into love, and after the Nazzadi surrendered and joined the NEG, she asked you to marry her. You couldn't have been happier. You'd never really found the time to look for love. It just... found you. You have a child, Jonas, waiting for you both back in Europe.

You needed that love to get you both through the Migou invasion. Not only did you have to treat serious wounds, you sometimes had to hold off attacks while doing so. Years of keeping a handgun next to your scalpel made you an excellent shot. The war still took its toll on you. The Migou liked night assaults. One night in Argentina found you hiding in the dark, listening to alien monsters murder defenceless patients, unable to help because you'd fired your last shot an hour ago. It left you terrified of the dark. Judith, bless her, got used to the night light very quickly. When the Rapine Storm erupted in central Asia, your unit was rapidly redeployed to try and counter the new threat. To say it was horrifying would be gross understatement; If Migou cruelty left you irrationally afraid of the dark, the misshapen beasts and grotesquely twisted human cultists of the Storm gave you very good reason to fear it, and what it hides.

After a particularly gruelling tour fighting the Storm, your unit has been through standard counselling and rotated out to a low-stress posting hundreds of miles from the front lines. Now you patrol Xiamen city, keeping order near the docks as refugees are evacuated or simple guard duty at the main garrison. After fighting 30 foot beasts that hurt just to look at, shooting trespassers or breaking up civilian fights is practically a holiday. You have free time where you don't have to worry about your entrails being splayed across 6 dimensions. Perhaps it's natural you'd all gravitate to the weirdest nightclub in town. The Hellfire Club has pit fighting, street racing, auctions of some of the weird shit recovered from Storm territory... The occasional raids from Internal Security due to dangerous relics showing up just adds to the thrill, helps you feel alive in a time where humanity stands a worryingly high chance of extinction.

Judith Werner: My beloved. We have survived everything the universe has thrown at us together. She has terrible nightmares. I do what I can to soothe her. She, in turn, is the light that helps conquer my fear of the dark.

Ezra: As a Nazzadi conqueror she sent many comrades to my operating table, my wife included. It was difficult to put that aside, but the shared threat of extinction is a powerful incentive. An honourable soldier, which is why the truth about her Migou creators was such a blow to her – A war based on a lie was abhorrent to her. She would die for a just cause.

Nomany: One of the new, free generation of Nazzadi. She's fiercely individualistic, and an excellent technician, our mecha are the envy of the battalion thanks to her upgrades. Doesn't fully realise the horrors of this war yet, despite what we've been through together. Her naiveté is charming, even uplifting.

Gordon MacMillan: One of nature's sergeants, I think he may in fact work to get busted down a rank every time someone promotes him. Excellent brawler, far too brave for his own good. So far his loyalty to the team has won out, but who knows how long that will last these days?

Ezra:

Most of your life was a lie. Trained from an early age in the military arts, proud scion of an empire that spanned the stars, born and raised on your impossibly long journey from the Nazzadi homeworlds to the next conquest, a blue-green planet of creatures that looked quite like your own people. You were an assassin, adept at slipping behind enemy lines either on foot or in scout mecha and eliminating high-profile targets. You would be instrumental in securing victory against these “humans”.

At least, that’s what 20 years of implanted memories told you. When Field Marshal Vreta revealed the truth - that you were all born in vats on Pluto, created from human DNA, implanted with synthetic memories by the cruel insectoid Migou to fight a war in their stead – there was uproar. Most Nazzadi accepted the truth, and what humans called “the First Arcanotech War” ended soon after, as the Nazzadi surrendered and became part of the NEG. Insofar as Migou can be said to feel, they were **furious**. They would come and attempt to wipe out human and Nazzadi both. The NEG quickly assimilated Nazzadi technology and tactics into their forces, and together, we prepared for the Second Arcanotech war.

That’s not to say integration was easy. The war justifiably left a lot of animosity among the veterans of both armies who had lost friends and family. And now Nazzadi were free, they faced the fact that their entire civilisation was fabricated. You and your people had no real identity of their own, a profound blow to the psyche. Some clung to their past, however synthetic. Others were driven to fuse their favourite aspects of human and Nazzadi culture into an intense melting pot of new ideas. You were never very comfortable with the latter. You were a soldier almost from birth. Let the new generation of free Nazzadi reinvent themselves, you’re content with the warrior’s life.

When the Migou came, it was worse than anyone expected. You thought they created Nazzadi because they were not warriors themselves. Such beliefs vanished when a Moon-sized mothership entered Earth orbit and swept all defences aside. They landed swarms of dropships at the frozen poles, massive uncontested beach-heads, and spread their considerable forces from there. Bad as it was, the Nazzadi war against humans was conducted with at least some rules of honour on both sides. There was no such honour from the Migou- they exterminated soldier and civilian, young and old, and reserved a particular hatred for the Nazzadi who betrayed them.

The NEG was losing against the Migou, and the rise of the Rapine Storm made a mockery of initial attempts to contain it, but the Migou diverted some of their forces to tackling the Storm. The shift allowed NEG forces to set up kill zones and contain the Storm’s advance. Contain, not defeat; They probe here and there, and they broke through around the Vietnamese coast and spread along the Philippines to threaten Australia. The situation in China is grim. The news doesn’t mention it, but the military has accepted that China will eventually be lost. Fighting against extinction requires some terrible choices. You’re glad you’re not the one making them, but the knowing still pains you.

After a particularly gruelling tour fighting the Storm, your unit has been through standard counselling and rotated out to a low-stress posting hundreds of miles from the front lines. Now you patrol Xiamen city, keeping order near the docks as refugees are evacuated or simple guard duty at the main garrison. After fighting 30 foot beasts that hurt just to look at, shooting trespassers or breaking up civilian fights is practically a holiday. You have free time where you don’t have to worry about your entrails being splayed across 6 dimensions. Perhaps it’s natural you’d all gravitate to the weirdest nightclub in town. The Hellfire Club has pit fighting, street racing, auctions of some of the weird shit recovered from Storm territory... The occasional raids from Internal Security due to dangerous relics showing up just adds to the thrill, helps you feel alive in a time where humanity stands a worryingly high chance of extinction.

Judith: We actually met as enemies in the first war. Even before the Nazzadi knew the truth, I respected her courage and ferocity in battle. Now we fight side by side, and I respect our friendship even moreso. I fear some of her nightmares were my doing, but I am glad her husband helps her sleep soundly at night.

Bernard: A gifted healer, and talented killer. His wife Judith helps him balance those conflicting aspects. We must have faced each other as enemies in the first war, but he was never one to seek recognition or glory in killing, and for me to attack medical aid would have been disgraceful. I am glad we were able to become friends after the war.

Nomany: It’d be funny to see the newest generation of Nazzadi volunteer for the military when they have choices my generation didn’t, if we didn’t sorely need the troops. Nomany is an extremely skilled mechanic and arcanotechnician, and keeps the squad’s gear in perfect condition. Or, with a choice upgrade or two, better even than that.

Gordon: Gordon scares me. Not that I’d question his loyalty or friendship for a moment, both are limitless. It’s the way he seems to actively **enjoy** a fight. Other humans have told me those from the Scotland/Sweden region had a bizarre cheery fatalism in their culture. This must be what they meant.

Nomany:

You're Nazzadi. Pitch black skin, silver tattoos, blood red eyes. Beyond that... Well, you're 25 years old, and your entire race's cultural identity is younger than you. Your parents were vat-grown clones, intended to be a proxy army for the insectoid Migou. Fake culture, sham memories, and a horrible war they fought only because they didn't know the truth. You'd have been just shy of 4 years old when the Field Marshal Vreta chose her conscience over her creators and broadcast the truth to the whole Nazzadi invasion fleet. Planet Earth and everyone on it might have been destroyed without us ever knowing we were engineered from human DNA. Three cheers for Vreta.

Your early life was confusing. Your parents' generation were dealing with the fact that their whole way of life and identity was synthetic. They weren't sure how to raise their children as citizens of earth. This led to a lot of Nazzadi children getting very creative with what they adopted from their families and what they adopted from their human friends as they grew up together. The desire and will to carve out a place for themselves has led to Nazzadi quickly becoming a massive driving force in the world's fashion and entertainment circles.

You had a knack for technical things, and the aptitude tests suggested a talent for arcanotech, the bizarre non-Euclidean mathematical principles behind tapping extradimensional power sources. Not an easy path at all, and most students drop out or move to a different college course due to the mental strain of peering into impossible spaces beyond what's conventionally known as reality. But you could take it. Well, you had a psychotic episode or two after too many late nights on your thesis, but that's no worse than most arcanotech graduates. You recall one boy in your class tore his own eyes out after seeing inside a malfunctioning arcanotech power generator.

You're the first generation of free Nazzadi, not bound by the military culture invented for you by the Migou. But you always knew another war was coming. Older Nazzadi, like Field Marshal Vreta who knew the truth, told stories of the Migou, and the whole world knew they'd be along to finish the job the Nazzadi refused to do. Partly to honour your parents and what they suffered for the Migou lie, partly because Earth is **your** homeworld, you signed up to help prepare for the war that was coming. The mecha battalions always needed good engineers, and you were **very** good.

It was worse than anyone expected. The Migou were PISSED, and they threw everything they had at you. A moon-sized mothership, legions of mecha, extremely advanced technology, they came to exterminate all sentient life. And they were winning until the Cults came out of hiding. A Great Old One appeared in central Asia, his followers corrupting life in the most debased ways they could invent, steamrolled across all NEG opposition until the Migou turned to fight them. The shift in the balance gave the NEG enough time to redeploy, set up containment zones, and even now barely hold the line. None of your parents' stories about the first war, none of the horror of fighting the Migou in the second, could prepare you for the Rapine Storm's sickening crimes against sanity itself. You've spent as much time in therapy as you have on active duty. Sometimes it's a struggle to feel anything. This has led to a certain amount of... thrill-seeking, shall we say?

After a particularly gruelling tour fighting the Storm, your unit has been through standard counselling and rotated out to a low-stress posting hundreds of miles from the front lines. Now you patrol Xiamen city, keeping order near the docks as refugees are evacuated or simple guard duty at the main garrison. After fighting 30 foot beasts that hurt just to look at, shooting trespassers or breaking up civilian fights is practically a holiday. You have free time where you don't have to worry about your entrails being splayed across 6 dimensions. Perhaps it's natural you'd all gravitate to the weirdest nightclub in town. The Hellfire Club has pit fighting, street racing, auctions of some of the weird shit recovered from Storm territory... The occasional raids from Internal Security due to dangerous relics showing up just adds to the thrill, helps you feel alive in a time where humanity stands a worryingly high chance of extinction.

Judith: She's a veteran of the first war, a tough fighter and brave mech pilot who leads from the front. I think she and Ezra faced off against each other in the first war, but despite (or because of?) it, they're firm friends now. Warrior's honour or some such thing. She wishes I'd just pick one fashion trend and stick with it.

Bernard: Another human vet of the first war, really talented field medic and support mech pilot. Saved my life so many times I've just stopped counting. I'll do everything I can to return the favour.

Ezra: Nazzadi veteran of the first war, gruff and big on honour. I can't imagine what it was like for someone like Ezra to suddenly find everything you were fighting for was a lie. It has something to do with her friendship with Judith and Bernard now. She won't let me paint her stealth mech. Stick in the mud.

Gordon: Gordon is my kinda human! He'll live life to the full of it kills him (having once tried to match him drink for drink, I think it actually might before the Migou or the Storm). Bravado aside he's dependable and loyal.

Gordon MacMillan:

Your family has always been a military one. Your great grandparents served in the old UK's SAS, after Scotland became an independent EU nation in 2018 your parents served in the Scottish armed forces and UN peacekeeping operations, and later in the first Arcanotech War. You were still in training when the war ended and the Nazzadi suddenly became allies. You'd say they were strange times, but compared to what followed...

In the NEG military you showed an aptitude for close combat and mech piloting both. You also displayed a talent for getting reprimanded for disrespecting superior officers (they never remember that you did actually help the lieutenant find all his missing teeth after he insulted your mates...), and got busted down once or twice. That's fine, really, you're keeping up a family tradition. Sergeant suits you, too; your average soldier will follow a sergeant into hell if he puts you before stupid orders or certain death. And that's handy, seeing as the world's pretty much gone there.

Bloody hell, what a century. Alien invaders trying to conquer us, then **different** alien invaders trying to exterminate us, and now there are mystical cults springing up and summoning fishmen and dead gods and all sorts of nightmarish crap and the gods only know what THEY want to do to us, but to all intents and purposes humanity is looking extinction right in the face.

It's important, then, that people see someone spit on Extinction's shoes and smash a beer glass in the bastard's face.

That's you. After nearly dying hundreds of times from insectoid mecha blades, or extradimensional talons, or just meeting the gaze of something that hurts you just by existing, you don't really fear death any more. You don't seem to fear much of anything actually, and that, ironically, is a terrifying thought that keeps you up at night. It could be worse, you suppose. A crippling fear of the enemy, having the emotions burned clean out of you... You can still take pleasure in life, and frequently do. But there's a nagging certainty that it'll get you killed some day.

Friends and commanders die, people get shuffled around, and you've found yourself in... Well not **technically** Judith's squad, she's not the CO, but she and Bernard got more experience than most commanders these days, and Bernard prefers the support role in all things. You and Nomany are nearly children compared to the other vets, but you fight as hard as any of 'em and everyone's earned their place here. "Brute force close combat" isn't the most **refined** squad specialty, but it's a damned necessary one and in or out of your Broadsword mech you have become very, very good at it.

After a particularly gruelling tour fighting the Storm, your unit has been through standard counselling and rotated out to a low-stress posting hundreds of miles from the front lines. Now you patrol Xiamen city, keeping order near the docks as refugees are evacuated or simple guard duty at the main garrison. After fighting 30 foot beasts that hurt just to look at, shooting trespassers or breaking up civilian fights is practically a holiday. You have free time where you don't have to worry about your entrails being splayed across 6 dimensions. Perhaps it's natural you'd all gravitate to the weirdest nightclub in town. The Hellfire Club has pit fighting, street racing, auctions of some of the weird shit recovered from Storm territory... The occasional raids from Internal Security due to dangerous relics showing up just adds to the thrill, helps you feel alive in a time where humanity stands a worryingly high chance of extinction.

Judith: Hell of a soldier. Old enough to retire after another tour or two, but age has toughened her like an oak door. Think she has a wee kid with Bernard, waiting back in Europe for 'em. Followed her into hell more than once, still here.

Bernard: A fine medic and a crack shot, he once cut me out of mangled mecha wreckage and still got a dozen confirmed bug kills while stitching my arm back on. He's got my back, I'll have his until one of us is dead. Heh, probably me first, to be honest.

Ezra: Bit stuffy, might be some residual culture shock after the whole "your entire life was a lie" thing the Nazzadi went through. You need some trustworthy recon or someone killed on the sly though, there's no better woman. Glad she's on the team.

Nomany: Brilliant mechanic, and absolute party animal, my favourite drinkin' buddy on those rare nights off. Her thrill-seeker thing is reaching psycho levels, but as long as it don't get in the way of the job, who am I to judge? We're probably all screwed, might as well try to enjoy the ride!

Judith Werner's mech: MV-16 Broadsword

Multi-purpose Main Battle Mech

Size: Medium (26' tall)

“Stocky, sturdy, heavily armoured, and reliable as hell – these are the signature characteristics of the New Earth Government’s multi-purpose main battle mech. The Broadsword has become the standard to which all other NEG mecha are measured. Its stocky torso is built for heavy armor and frame strength. Its versatile weapons array can manage any close or ranged combat situation. The Broadsword is the most widely deployed mech unit among the NEG military and can be effectively used for any tactical application.”

Attributes:

Control Response (Agility) 0

Sensors (Perception) +1

Frame (Strength) 5

Multi-task systems (Actions) +1

Warning systems (Reflex) +1

Targeting: +2 bonus to Marksman tests with projectile weapons

Movement: 30mph

Grapplers: Twin grappling hooks, each with a range of 200 feet and winch capable of supporting the mech

Jump pods: Can jump 20 horizontal yards from stationary without rolling, Roll 15+ on Athletics to jump an extra 20 yards, 20+ to jump another 20, etc Max 100 yards total

Sensor systems:

Broadband audio: +1 to hearing tests, can also hear supersonic/subsonic ranges

Nightvision: Passive sight in low light condition, IR spotlights in zero-light (these are instantly visible to other nightvision sensors)

Radar/IFF: Detects large objects, approx. size, speed, bearing, references to database for identification and marking as a potential threat or ally

Structure:

Armour: 3 **Damage control systems:** 1/turn

Damage:

Level	Integrity	Current	Disabled at this level
Cosmetic	20		
Light	40		
Moderate	60		Charge beam
Serious	80		Jump pods, Radar
Critical	100		Laser, H/edge blades

Weapons:

Laser cannon:	Damage	Shots	Ammo
	+2d10	3	Infinite

Charge Beam:	Damage	Shots	Ammo
	+6d10	½	Infinite

2x Hyperedge Blades:	Damage	Special
	+2d10	Retractable



Bernard Werner's mech: MV-14 Scimitar

Artillery Support Mech

Size: Medium (22' tall)

"No mecha formation in battle is complete without the Scimitar. Utilizing long-range sensors and information relays from other recon mechs, along with spec ops laser painting, the Scimitar provides crushing artillery support with deadly accuracy. Its pair of charge beams and its long-range missile rack can lay flat a given area in seconds. The Scimitar is built on a shorter and wider frame than the Broadsword, making the mech a lower profile target and easier to conceal among battlefield terrain."



Attributes:

Control Response (Agility) +1

Sensors (Perception) +1

Frame (Strength) 4

Multi-task systems (Actions) 0

Warning systems (Reflex) +1

Targeting: +2 bonus to Marksman tests with projectile weapons

Movement: 30mph

Grapplers: Twin grappling hooks, each with a range of 200 feet and winch capable of supporting the mech

Jump pods: Can jump 20 horizontal yards from stationary without rolling, Roll 15+ on Athletics to jump an extra 20 yards, 20+ to jump another 20, etc Max 100 yards total

Sensor systems:

Long range sensors: +2 to all perception-based tests (not marksman!)

Broadband audio: +1 to hearing tests, can also hear supersonic/subsonic ranges

Nightvision: Passive sight in low light condition, IR spotlights in zero-light (these are instantly visible to other nightvision sensors)

Radar/IFF: Detects large objects, approx. size, speed, bearing, references to database for identification and marking as a potential threat or ally

Structure:

Armour: 2 **Damage control systems:** 1/turn

Damage:

Level	Integrity	Current	Disabled at this level
Cosmetic	25		
Light	50		
Moderate	75		Charge beam
Serious	100		Jump pods, Radar, Missile racks
Critical	125		

Weapons:

2x Charge Beam:

Damage	Shots	Ammo
+6d10	½	Infinite

Long-range missiles:

Damage	Shots	Ammo
+10d10	1	4

Special

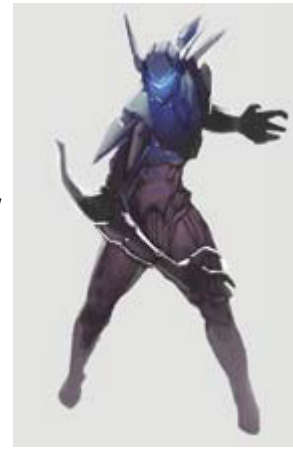
Stationary targets only. 30' blast radius Use extreme caution!

Ezra's mech: Eclipse (Nazadi: Sunadi)

Tactical Stealth Combat Mech

Size: Small (16' tall)

"The Eclipse is the true original stealth combat mech. The original Sunadi was incredibly effective in the First Arcanotech War as early New Earth Government stealth systems were anything but dependable. When Nazadi Systems Design was formed to keep the Nazadi martial tradition alive, the NEG asked them to help redesign its stealth units. The Eclipse remains the fastest of all, leaving most units in the dust. Used for any of the same missions as other stealth mecha, the Sunadi is most often utilized for surgical strikes where a fast, agile mech provides the best edge. Though light and fairly fragile, the Eclipse has its speed and a lightning gun to make hunters miserable.



Attributes:

Control Response (Agility) +2

Sensors (Perception) +0

Frame (Strength) 3 (-1 physical damage)

Multi-task systems (Actions) 0

Warning systems (Reflex) +1

Targeting: +1 bonus to Marksman tests with projectile weapons

Stealth system: Invisible to all but x-ray sensors at rest. 20+ on perception test to be seen moving. Drops to 15+ when within 15' of observer. Use of Stealth skill adds +10 to challenge. Attacking or moving faster than half speed ends invisibility, 2 combat rounds or 10 seconds to re-establish.

Movement: Ground: 120 mph

A-pods: Flight seed 180 mph

Sensor systems:

Long range sensors: +2 to all perception-based tests (not marksman!)

Broadband audio: +1 to hearing tests, can also hear supersonic/subsonic ranges

Nightvision: Passive sight in low light condition, IR spotlights in zero-light (these are instantly visible to other nightvision sensors)

Radar/IFF: Detects large objects, approx. size, speed, bearing, references to database for identification and marking as a potential threat or ally

Structure:

Armour: 2 **Damage control systems:** 1/turn

Damage:

Level	Integrity	Current	Disabled at this level
Cosmetic	25		
Light	50		
Moderate	75		Lightning gun
Serious	100		Jump pods, Radar, Acid drip
Critical	125		Hyperedge Claws

Weapons:

Lightning gun:	Damage +1d10	Shots ½	Ammo Infinite	Special Hits <u>all grounded objects</u> within 25' of target, including you/allies! Use caution!
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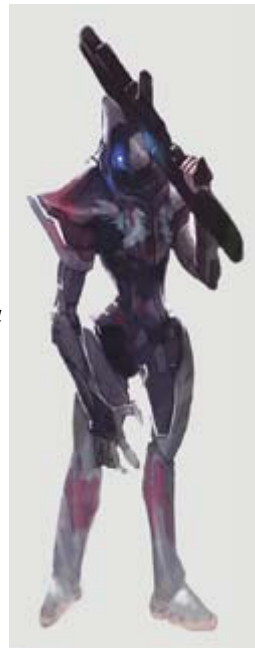
2x Hyperedge Claws:	Damage +1d10	Special Retractable. Acid drip: +1 damage, 10 uses
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Nomany's mech: Storm (Nazaddi: "Vadoni")

Multi-purpose Main Battle Mech

Size: Medium (24' tall)

"The Storm is a part of the Nazzadi racial identity of which they remain proud. It is the mold from which all other Nazzadi designs are made. The modern day version of the Vadoni is an updated version of the very same mech that terrorized the nascent New Earth Government in the First Arcanotech War. Some older vets don't like being around them due to the memories they dredge up. Overall, it's built to hit fast and hit hard. It can function as an amphibious troop if necessary, though it loses its significant speed advantage. Like the Sword-class Broadsword, the Storm is effective for a wide variety of tactical applications and therefore sees the most deployment of any Nazzadi mech."



Attributes:

Control Response (Agility) +2

Sensors (Perception) +1

Frame (Strength) 5

Multi-task systems (Actions) +1

Warning systems (Reflex) +2

Targeting: +2 bonus to Marksman tests with projectile weapons

Movement: Ground: 120 mph

Grapplers: Twin grappling hooks, each with a range of 200 feet and winch capable of supporting the mech

Jump pods: Can jump 20 horizontal yards from stationary without rolling, Roll 15+ on Athletics to jump an extra 20 yards, 20+ to jump another 20, etc Max 100 yards total

Sensor systems:

Broadband audio: +1 to hearing tests, can also hear supersonic/subsonic ranges

Nightvision: Passive sight in low light condition, IR spotlights in zero-light (these are instantly visible to other nightvision sensors)

Radar/IFF: Detects large objects, approx. size, speed, bearing, references to database for identification and marking as a potential threat or ally

Structure:

Armour: 1 **Damage control systems:** 3/turn

Damage:

Level	Integrity	Current	Disabled at this level
Cosmetic	15		
Light	30		
Moderate	45		Lightning gun
Serious	60		Jump pods, Radar, Acid drip, Plasma cannon
Critical	75		Hyperedge Claws

Weapons:

2x Hyperedge Claws: **Damage** **Special**
 +2d10 Retractable. **Acid drip:** +1 damage, 15 uses

Plasma cannon: **Damage** **Shots** **Ammo** **Special**
 +3d10 2 Infinite Ignites flammable materials

Rocket pod: **Damage** **Shots** **Ammo** **Special**
 +1d10 each 1 or salvo 10 **Salvo:** fire up to 5 rockets at target. Roll once, resolve damage for each rocket separately.

Gordon MacMillan's mech: MV-16A Gladius

Close Urban Battle Mech

Size: Medium (26' tall)

"The urban battlefield is a place where most mecha units fear to tread. Filled with unknown dangers and the threat of ambush around every corner, fighting within city streets has taken an enormous and costly toll among the lives of NEG mecha pilots. Yet, where other mecha may fear, the Gladius makes its home. Built on the frame and design principles of the Broadsword, the Gladius sports enhanced ground speed for rapid urban deployment, a flamethrower for clearing ground units, and two deadly forearm hyperedge blades for close quarter combat. Advanced thermal sensors allow the Gladius to detect possible threats that may lie among the debris and structures of the urban environment."



Attributes:

Control Response (Agility) +1

Sensors (Perception) +1

Frame (Strength) 8 (+1 physical damage)

Multi-task systems (Actions) +1

Warning systems (Reflex) +1

Targeting: +2 bonus to Marksman tests with projectile weapons

Movement: Ground: 45 mph

Grapplers: Twin grappling hooks, each with a range of 200 feet and winch capable of supporting the mech

Jump pods: Can jump 20 horizontal yards from stationary without rolling, Roll 15+ on Athletics to jump an extra 20 yards, 20+ to jump another 20, etc Max 100 yards total

Sensor systems:

Broadband audio: +1 to hearing tests, can also hear supersonic/subsonic ranges

Nightvision: Passive sight in low light condition, IR spotlights in zero-light (these are instantly visible to other nightvision sensors)

Radar/IFF: Detects large objects, approx. size, speed, bearing, references to database for identification and marking as a potential threat or ally

Thermal: Registers heat signatures, including IR spotlights from other mecha using Nightvision

Structure:

Armour: 3 **Damage control systems:** 2/turn

Damage:

Level	Integrity	Current	Disabled at this level
Cosmetic	20		
Light	40		
Moderate	60		Flamethrower
Serious	80		Jump pods, Radar, plasma cannon
Critical	100		H/edge blades

Weapons:

Flamethrower:	Damage +2d10	Shots 2	Ammo 20	Special Fire damage: +1d10 cumulative damage/turn
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Plasma cannon:	Damage +3d10	Shots 2	Ammo Infinite	Special Ignites flammable materials
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2x Hyperedge Blades:	Damage +2d10	Special Retractable
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Cultists: Think Firefly's Reavers, only the Storm makes them look like UNICEF

Attributes:

Attribute	Rating	Secondary attributes
Agility	6	Actions 3
Intelligence	5	Move 6
Perception	5	Reflex 7
Presence	7	Orgone n/a
Strength	7	Vitality 10
Tenacity	7	Drama points 3

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Marksman	2	Athletics	2
Unarmed Fighting	3	Dodge	3
Intimidate	3	Observation	2
Armed fighting	2		

Damage: HF-5 Hellstorm flamethrower +1 fire, takes a full action to put out.

UT-7 Hornet needle pistol: +0 damage, 3 shots, 15 clip

Special: If damaged, roll 16+ Tenacity Feat or lose an action due to paralysis

Ghasts: Horrible cannibalistic humanoid things, smart enough to use weapons, feral enough to not bother and use their claws instead.

Attributes:

Attribute	Rating	Secondary attributes
Agility	9	Actions 2
Intelligence	4	Move 6
Perception	8	Reflex 7
Presence	5	Orgone n/a
Strength	8	Vitality 13
Tenacity	8	Fear factor 13

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Marksman	3	Athletics	2
Unarmed Fighting	3	Dodge	3
Armed fighting	2	Observation	3
		Stealth	3

Damage +1 (claws)

Gaunts: Cunning silent flying predators, but not the bravest in a straight fight**Attributes:**

Attribute	Rating	Secondary attributes
Agility	11	Actions 2
Intelligence	3	Move 6
Perception	7	Reflex 7
Presence	5	Orgone n/a
Strength	8	Vitality 14
Tenacity	10	Fear factor 12

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Stealth	4	Athletics	4
Unarmed Fighting	3	Dodge	3
Armed fighting	3	Observation	3

Horns: +2 damage

Barbed tail: +3 damage, entangling

Armour 1

Regeneration: 1

Chiranae: Gigantic spiders with too many legs/eyes, cast illusions**Attributes:**

Attribute	Rating	Secondary attributes
Agility	11	Actions 3
Intelligence	8	Move 6
Perception	8	Reflex 9
Presence	6	Orgone n/a
Strength	5	Integrity 10
Tenacity	6	Fear factor 16

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Stealth	3	Athletics	4
Fighting	3	Dodge	2
Performance	4	Observation	2

Leg talons: +1 damage

Armour 1

Grave Thing: 20 ft. tall mantis-like insectoids that hunt in packs and lay eggs in corpse piles

Attributes:

Attribute	Rating	Secondary attributes
Agility	9	Actions 2
Intelligence	5	Move 6
Perception	7	Reflex 7
Presence	6	Orgone n/a
Strength	9	Integrity 14
Tenacity	9	Fear factor 16

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Stealth	4	Athletics	4
Fighting	3	Dodge	3
		Observation	4

Slashing claws: +2 damage

Stinger: +3 damage (requires both actions)

Armour 1

Gug: 25 ft. ape-like thing with a huge vertical mouth and vast strength

Attributes:

Attribute	Rating	Secondary attributes
Agility	7	Actions 1
Intelligence	6	Move 6
Perception	6	Reflex 6
Presence	7	Orgone n/a
Strength	8	Integrity 18
Tenacity	8	Fear factor 16

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
		Athletics	2
Fighting	3	Dodge	3
		Observation	2

Slashing claws: +3d10 damage

Armour 0

Shantak: 25 ft. lizard-birds with wicked bloodlust**Attributes:**

Attribute	Rating	Secondary attributes
Agility	8	Actions 2
Intelligence	2	Move 6
Perception	6	Reflex 5
Presence	7	Orgone n/a
Strength	11	Integrity 15
Tenacity	10	Fear factor 16

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Stealth	2	Athletics	4
Fighting	3	Dodge	3
		Observation	2

Slashing claws: +2d10 damage

Bite: +3d10, requires both actions

Armour 2

8th Brother: A colossal demon worm from nightmare, and your boss fight for the evening**Attributes:**

Attribute	Rating	Secondary attributes
Agility	6	Actions 1
Intelligence	5	Move 0
Perception	7	Reflex 4
Presence	8	Orgone n/a
Strength	35	Integrity 100
Tenacity	10	Fear factor 22

Skills:

Skill	Level	Skill	Level
Fighting	3	Dodge	2
		Observation	3

Smash: +10 damage

Swallow whole: -10 to hit, but target is swallowed and must do 50 damage in 2 turns or be destroyed. (discretionary)

Xiamen City, circ. 2080

