

# ESCAPE FROM THE MICRO-UNIVERSE

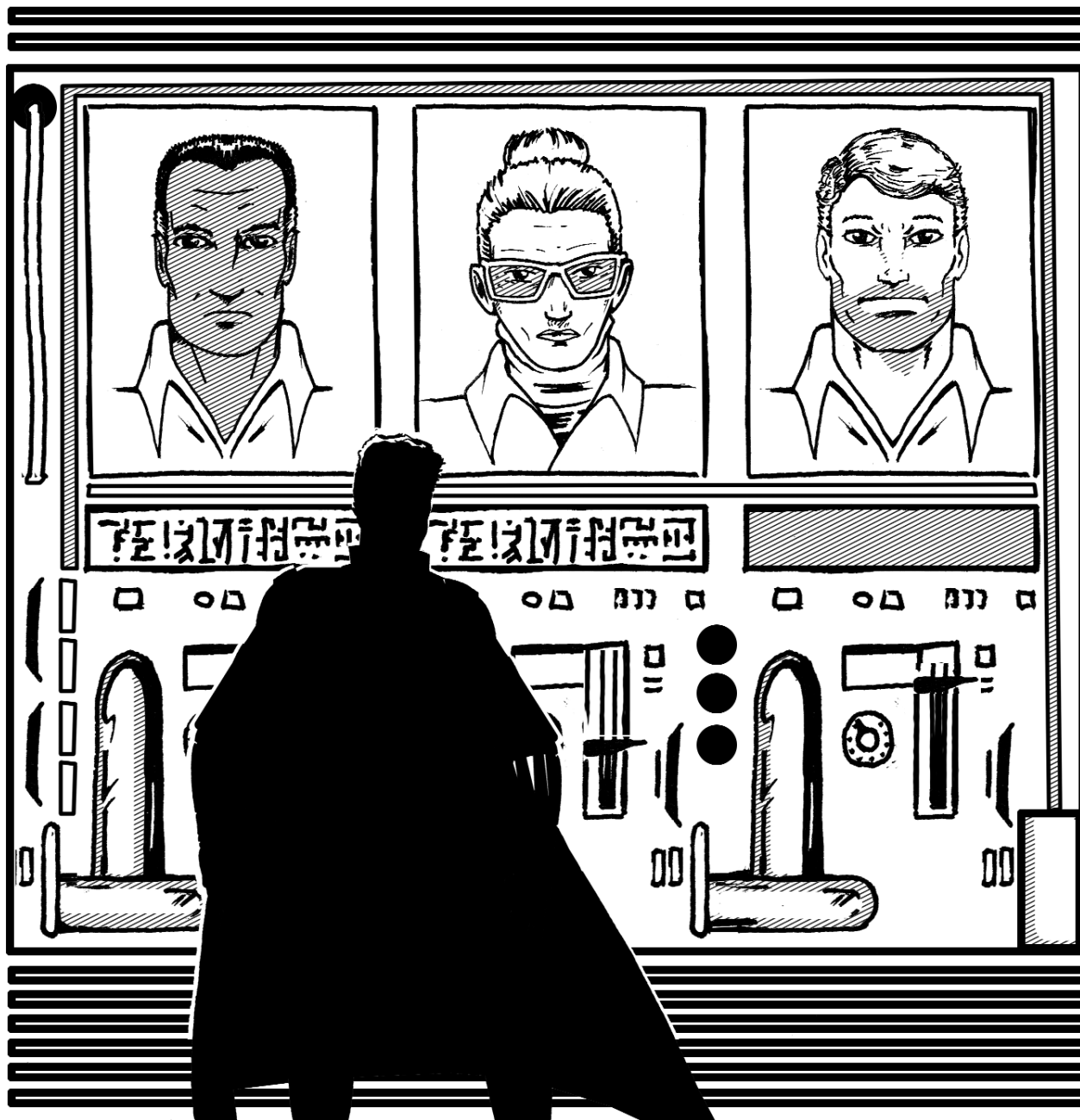
**BY  
JAMES SATTER**



NEW FOR USE WITH VILLAINS AND VIGILANTES: AN ADVENTURE LIKE NO OTHER!

THE STRANGE MURDERS OF PRIZE-WINNING RESEARCHERS ROCKS THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY ON THE EVE OF A SPECTACULAR SYMPOSIUM EVENT HOSTED BY SOME OF THE MOST BRILLIANT MINDS ON EARTH. WHAT SORT OF CHAOS COULD BE AFOOT? WHEN THE HEROES ARE CONTACTED BY A TERRIFIED PROFESSOR, THEY ARE DRAWN INTO THE VERY VORTEX OF A MADMAN'S PLOT. CAN YOUR HEROES...













































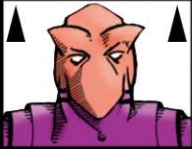

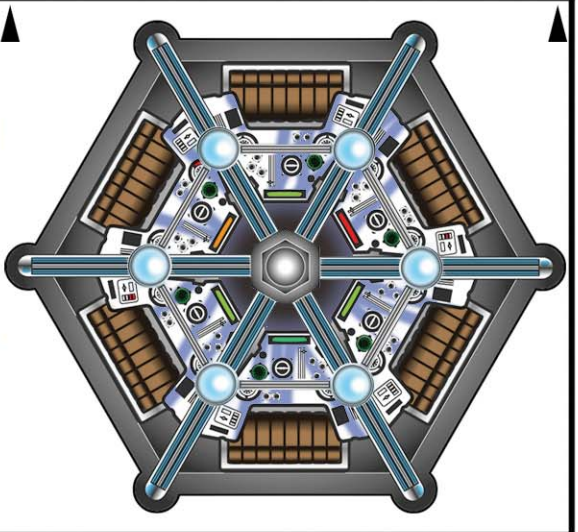




*... ESCAPE FROM THE MICRO-UNIVERSE??!!!*



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TORRID	IPZIN ALPHA	IPZIN ALPHA	IPZIN ALPHA	IPZIN ALPHA	IPZIN ALPHA	IPZIN ALPHA
						
UNDERSTUDY	IPZIN BETA	IPZIN BETA	IPZIN BETA	IPZIN BETA	IPZIN BETA	IPZIN BETA
						
AMPHIBIA	IPZIN GAMMA	IPZIN GAMMA	IPZIN GAMMA	IPZIN GAMMA	IPZIN GAMMA	IPZIN GAMMA
						
BUGBEAR	SHANNEN AIMES	UUB	IPZIN ALPHA	IPZIN ALPHA	IPZIN ALPHA	IPZIN ALPHA
						
PILLAGER	RED HAWK	ROY NEWBECK	IPZIN BETA	IPZIN BETA	IPZIN BETA	IPZIN BETA
						
VIBERON	REPLICA	SLITHERING OOZE	IPZIN GAMMA	IPZIN GAMMA	IPZIN GAMMA	IPZIN GAMMA
						
NAQLID	NAQLID	NAQLID	NAQLID			
						
DEMOCRITUS	INVERSION BOMB					

# ESCAPE FROM THE MICRO-UNIVERSE

**A**  
**VILLAINS  
AND  
VIGILANTES™**  
**ADVENTURE**

**written by James Satter**  
**illustrations by James Bishop**



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## AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

The Villains and Vigilantes rules mention the possibility of shrinking down small enough to actually enter a new dimension. That thrilling premise inspired this adventure.

Escape from the Micro-Universe takes the player-characters to a mysterious world that resides just beyond subatomic space. The adventure works best if the heroes are already established or have government connections. But some sections offer ways to adapt the encounters based on the number and strength of the player-characters.

The micro-universe is a vast place. The GM may develop additional challenges if the player-characters are up for a return trip.

Enjoy the adventure!

James Satter

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## EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

Escape from the Micro-Universe is the second Villains and Vigilantes adventure from James Satter. It is also second time he has teamed up with artist James Bishop – or, as we term it, “the James Boys” have teamed up again.

This time the adventure leaves the normal confines of our everyday world and enters into a subatomic universe as has often been a theme in the comics. The usual challenges are combined with the challenge of finding a way to and from the subatomic world on which much of the action takes place. Adequate provision is made for the player-heroes to be able to successfully transit and, hopefully, return.

It is hoped that players find this new setting to be exciting and that James Satter will continue to write and demonstrate his creativity with more V&V adventures.

Scott B. Bizar

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# 1. GREAT EXPECTATIONS

## 1.1 THE SUBATOMIC SYMPOSIUM

The local scientific community is abuzz. The city the heroes call home is slated to host this year's meeting of the Subatomic Physics Society (SPS). Scientists from around the globe travel to attend the annual, three-day event.

The opening reception is this Friday at 7 PM at a major convention center in town. Throughout the weekend, leaders in the field will present scientific papers about the workings of subatomic space.

One of the presenters is scheduled to discuss how string theory proves that each point in our "standard" universe (where the player-characters reside) must align to a distinct point in the subatomic dimension (popularly called the "micro-universe"). Another expert



argues that any links between the standard universe and the micro-universe perpetually shift, so no stable correlation arises. Still another scientist speculates that an infinite number of subatomic universes exist (not just one). In such a theoretical field, almost every paper topic for the conference has another paper refuting it.

None of the scientists, however, plan to address superhuman powers or the possibility of sending humans into subatomic space. Many researchers worry that examining "pop science" could hurt their credibility.

At the GM's discretion, various characters in this adventure might be familiar with the villain Parasite from *Most Wanted*, Vol. 3. But he does not play a part in *Escape from the Micro-Universe*.

## 1.2 BREAKING NEWS

Tragedy strikes late Thursday — the night before the symposium begins — when two of the scheduled presenters are found murdered in their homes. Although they were in different cities at the time, both scientists died from multiple energy blasts, according to preliminary medical reports. There were no witnesses to either killing, and police are still investigating the crimes.

Each of the murdered scientists had airline tickets to leave Friday morning for the player-characters' city — with plenty of time to check into their hotels before the evening reception.

News coverage Friday gives general information about the two victims:

- **Yvonne Edmond**, 53, was best known for theorizing that the standard universe splintered off from a subatomic dimension during the big bang. She held numerous scientific advisory posts for federal agencies over the course of her career.

- **Luis Masso**, 40, spent the last several years examining evidence that light trapped within black holes flows into a subatomic dimension. He recently gained tenure at a prestigious university on the East Coast.

The GM should situate Edmond and Masso in cities that make sense within the campaign.



## 1.3 THE SECRET HISTORY

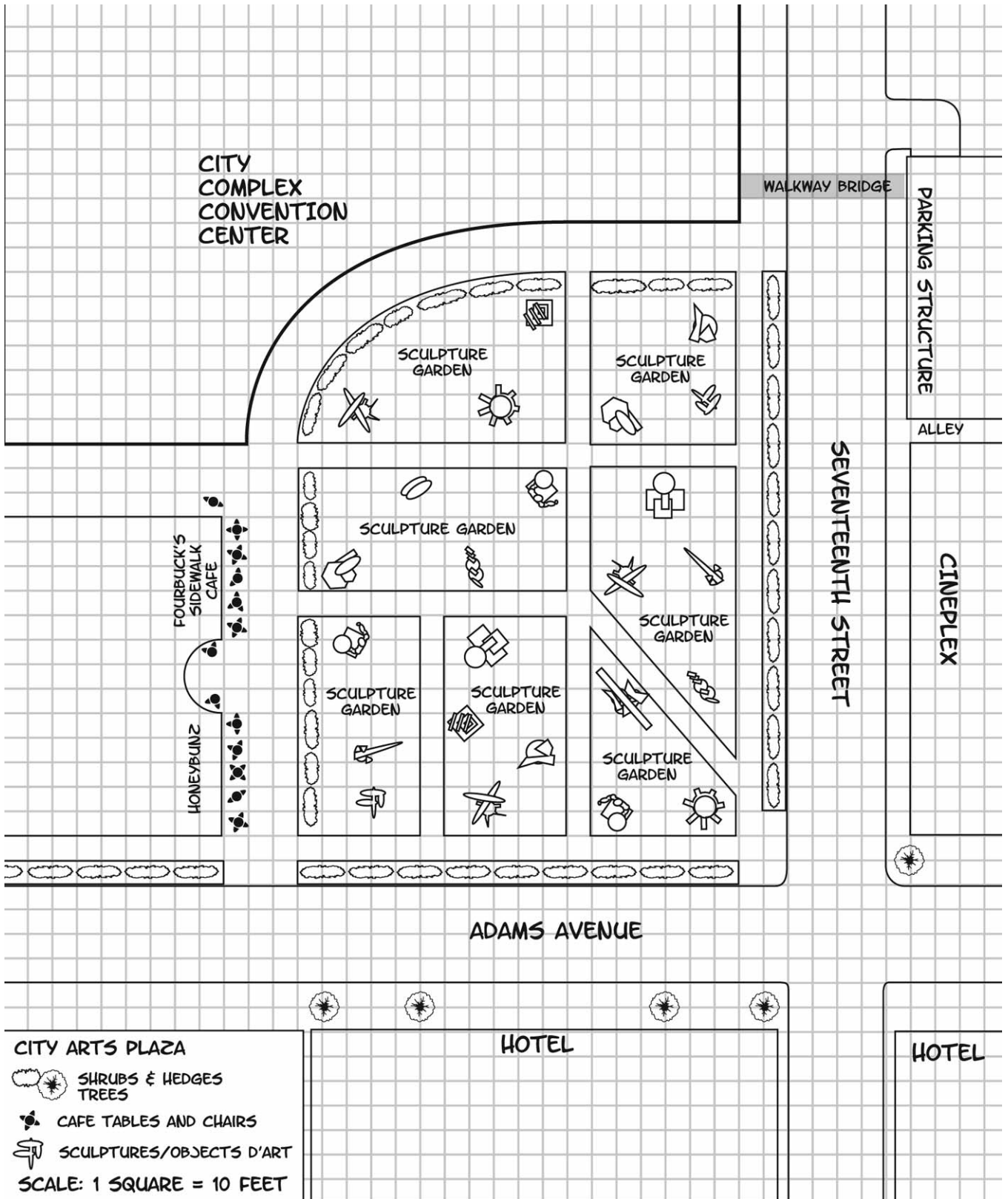
Eight years ago, a team of quantum physicists were making great strides in their research at Project Zacchaeus, a federally funded endeavor to study subatomic space. When budget cuts threatened to shut down Zacchaeus, four physicists assigned to the project ignored regulations and secretly boarded the experimental Micro-Craft vessel to shrink through the subatomic barrier and enter the micro-universe. Only stationary probes had gone down before, making them the first humans to board the vehicle.

Yvonne Edmond and Luis Masso were two of those scientists. Roy Newbeck and Keith Mikkelsen were the others.

Arriving on an unfamiliar world, the four explorers were astounded to discover a city just beyond where the probes had scanned. But as they set out on foot, a booby trap sprang under Mikkelsen, the youngest in the group, ripping through his limbs.

Fearing for their lives, the other three scientists ran back to the Micro-Craft and returned to Earth, leaving their dying colleague behind. Newbeck (the senior physicist on the project), reset the controls of the Micro-Craft to send the vessel back into the micro-universe. Newbeck reported to authorities that Mikkelsen stole the Micro-Craft on his own. Edmond and Masso held to that story, Project Zacchaeus discontinued, and Mikkelsen never returned to clear his name.

All information about the Micro-Craft remains classified, and public records about Keith Mikkelsen simply describe him as missing (and presumed dead).



CITY  
COMPLEX  
CONVENTION  
CENTER

WALKWAY BRIDGE

PARKING STRUCTURE

ALLEY

CINEPLEX

SEVENTEENTH STREET

ADAMS AVENUE

CITY ARTS PLAZA

HOTEL

HOTEL

SHRUBS & HEDGES  
 TREES

CAFE TABLES AND CHAIRS

SCULPTURES/OBJECTS D'ART

SCALE: 1 SQUARE = 10 FEET

## 2. A CALL FOR HELP

### 2.1 MEETING DR. NEWBECK

Soon after news of the murders breaks on Friday morning, SPS president Roy Newbeck contacts the heroes directly, if possible, asking them to meet with him in person about matters of security.

If the heroes are not easy to reach, Newbeck uses his government connections to get in touch with them. Similarly, if the player-characters contact anyone connected with the symposium beforehand, they are referred to Newbeck.

A pioneer in the field of subatomic physics, Dr. Newbeck earned acclaim early in his career for postulating that it is possible to compress matter so tightly that it becomes too small to exist in the standard universe and enters another dimension. With a save vs. Intelligence (d20), characters with a background in physics or scientific theory have previously heard of him.

Newbeck recommends meeting the heroes at a sculpture garden next door to the convention center. There's actually more privacy out there than inside, where other symposium organizers are setting up. Any bystanders who might be in the garden maintain a respectful distance.

Roll Newbeck's reactions to the heroes when they arrive. If his reactions are suspicious or neutral, he stalls with small talk about how one sculpture looks like a giant molecule and another looks like a Möbius strip. There are 24 sculptures in the garden, and several weigh as much as 2000 pounds. Most of the pieces are highly abstract.

In time, Newbeck asks the heroes if they would guard the convention center over the next few days to protect against the mystery assailants who are targeting subatomic researchers. He takes a particular interest in heroes with shrinking powers, and reasons that standard law-enforcement officers will not be equipped to handle the magnitude of the threat at hand.

Characters with lie detection or related abilities may sense that Newbeck is withholding important information. In truth, Newbeck suspects that whoever killed Edmond and Masso knows his "secret history" and will specifically target him next. On a subconscious level, Newbeck wants to clear his conscience by telling someone what really happened eight years ago. The scientist never returned to the micro-universe and does not know what transpired there after he left.

### 2.2 THE GROWING THREAT

During the Micro-Craft's secret voyage eight years ago, the vehicle recorded the quantum signatures of the scientists on board. Keith Mikkelsen (now Viberon) recently invented technology that can use that data to pinpoint the whereabouts of his former colleagues and send the Micro-Craft to them. Driven by revenge, he sent a team of Ipzin on two missions Thursday evening to murder Edmond and Masso. Roy Newbeck is next on his list of targets.

While meeting with the heroes, Newbeck stays in place long enough for Viberon to get a lock on his position in the sculpture garden. (If the

heroes insist on meeting Newbeck somewhere else, the GM should adapt to that location.)

The Micro-Craft seems to grow out of the ground as it enters standard space. Bugbear and five Ipzin soldiers ride inside the vessel. (If six or more heroes are present, use Alpha soldiers; otherwise use Betas.) The villains clearly state their intention to murder Newbeck. But first they tackle any heroes who stand in the way.

Newbeck immediately recognizes the Micro-Craft but does not know any of the opponents. He evades and counts on the heroes to protect him. All other bystanders in the area flee as the battle begins.

### 2.3 IF THE HEROES WIN

No matter how the battle resolves, the convention center closes for the next few days. Some of the scientists may compare research notes with one another in their hotel rooms or at a local bar, but everyone involved on the planning committee agrees to cancel the event for safety.

If the heroes save Newbeck, he is likely to clear his conscience and divulge his entire secret history. He hopes that super-powered individuals might sympathize with the unusual circumstances of his past.

Bugbear and the Ipzin know Viberon came from the standard universe, but they do not know his real name or details about his former life. If apprehended, they openly mention that Viberon is working on another attack against the "outer-verse" (as they call it), but they do not know specifics about Viberon's plans (see Section 4.3).

### 2.4 IF THE HEROES LOSE

If Bugbear and the Ipzin defeat the heroes, they assassinate Newbeck, and then board the Micro-Craft to return to their headquarters (see Section 4.2).

Should the heroes lose, or if the Micro-Craft is destroyed during the fight, the player-characters may find themselves at a standstill. In this event, Red Hawk enters the picture after the battle, having just arrived in town with plans to attend the symposium. While not a trained physicist, a personal interest in subatomic theory prompted him to register for the event in his real-life identity as Todd Kaster.

Red Hawk has a lay person's knowledge of the heroes' previous adventures, but roll his reactions to the player-characters to determine how he interprets those events. Even if his impressions are negative, the new hero understands that aiding the player-characters is in the public interest.

If the heroes stand on the flattened grass where the Micro-Craft had parked, Red Hawk can magically shrink each of them down to the spot in the micro-universe where the vehicle returned (just outside the enemy outpost in Section 4.1). As a caveat, following this "footprint" in this instance gives him a 100% chance of sending the player-characters to the right place. The same holds true if the player-characters use other forms of subatomic shrinking to follow the Micro-Craft.

Red Hawk does not accompany the player-characters to the micro-universe but stays back to defend the city while they are away.



## 2.5 THE MICRO-CRAFT USER'S GUIDE

Engineers at Project Zacchaeus built only one Micro-Craft before funding cuts shut down the facility.

Newbeck can easily show someone how to work the basic controls to take the vehicle to its pre-set coordinates in the micro-universe (or return to the standard universe). Pushing the right combination of buttons requires one action and movement.

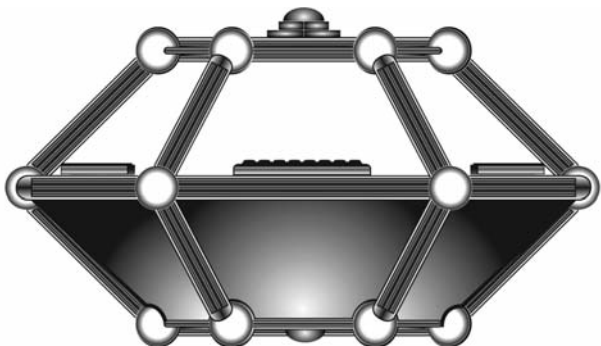
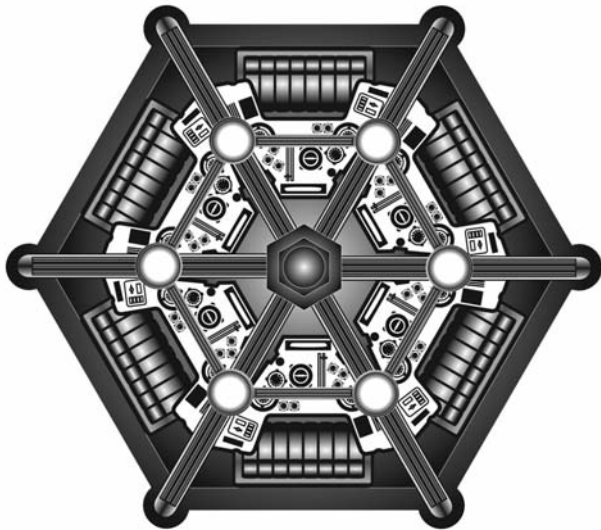
Learning how to reset the dials to change coordinates on one's own requires an Inventing Point or one level of training.

Unless mind control is involved, the captured Ipszin do not show the heroes how to operate the Micro-Craft. Bugbear is not particularly loyal to the Ipszin or Viberon, but he doesn't betray them either. He is confident in his ability to survive on Earth.

As a last resort, a character's Security Clearance plus 1d20 is the number of hours it takes to receive schematics from the government after making a request.

### THE MICRO-CRAFT

Weight: .....4500 lbs.  
 Passengers: .....1 + 5  
 Cargo: .....2200 lbs.  
 Speed: .....N/A\*  
 Hits Disable: .....23  
 Hits Destroy: .....90



\* The vehicle travels only by shrinking to and from the micro-universe. Each day, the Micro-Craft can make two round-trips.

There is a door on each side of the Micro-Craft, and the open framework above the passenger area is open to the outside. Any one of the six seats can serve as the pilot's station. If the GM's group consists of more than six players, each seat in the craft may uncomfortably seat two passengers.

### ROY NEWBECK

President of the Subatomic Physics Society

Level: 1  
 Side: Good  
 Age: 59

Weight: 150 lbs.  
 Strength: 10  
 Endurance: 9  
 Agility: 10  
 Intelligence: 18  
 Charisma: 9  
 Hits: 4  
 Power: 47  
 Damage: +1  
 Accuracy: -  
 Carry Cap.: 143 lbs.  
 Movement: 29"  
 HTH: 1d4



### BUGBEAR

Identity: buhg-bae'rr  
 Sex: Male  
 Level: 6

Side: Evil  
 Age: 29  
 Training: Strength

#### Powers:

1. Heightened Strength B (x2): +54
2. Natural Weaponry: +2 to hit, +4 damage with his bare-hands.
3. Stretching Powers: max. body length = 240", max. area = 120" square, max. volume = 60" cube. PR = 1 per use as a defense.
4. Body Power: Bugbear does not fall backward from attacks, no matter how many Hit Points he loses, PR = 0.
5. Reduced Endurance: -6

Weight: 210 lbs.  
 Agility Mod.: -  
 Endurance: 9  
 Intelligence: 13  
 Reactions from Good: -2  
 Hit Mod: 8.8  
 Damage Mod.: +1  
 Accuracy: +2  
 Carry Capacity: 37,676 lbs.  
 Movement Rates: 96" ground, 216" while stretching  
 Detect Hidden: 10%  
 Inventing Points: 7.8

Basic Hits: 5  
 Strength: 71  
 Agility: 16  
 Charisma: 16  
 Evil: +2  
 Hit Points: 44  
 Healing Rate: 1.25/day  
 Power: 109  
 Basic HTH: 4d10  
 Detect Danger: 14%  
 Inventing: 39%

**Origin and Background:** When a plague struck the subatomic planet of Thaul, almost everyone infected died. But a mutant strain of the disease had an altogether different effect on buhg-bae'rr. Greatly altering his physiology, the disease left him with stretching powers and strength far superior to the rest of his species. (Most natives of Thaul have stats comparable to the average human.)



With his newfound abilities, buhg-bae'rr became a soldier of fortune and sought-after smuggler. To escape authorities in his own micro-system, "Bugbear" recently went into hiding on the Naqlid planet. He agreed to join forces with Viberon for the chance to visit the so-called "outer-verse" and see what criminal opportunities lay there.

**Combat Tactics:** Bugbear enjoys attacking flying targets most, to show off his stretching powers. When facing a formidable foe, he likes to say, "This universe isn't big enough for the both of us." He evades only when his side is losing badly.

## RED HAWK

Identity: Todd Kaster  
Sex: Male  
Level: 1

Side: Good  
Age: 18  
Training: Endurance

### Powers:

1. Wings (mystic symbols): +3 Agility, max. speed = 59 mph, PR = 1 per hour of flight. The wings themselves are patterns borne into his arms. The mystic impression of wings can manifest behind Red Hawk when flying.

2. Special Weapon: +3 to hit, HTH +1d10 damage with his magic mace. Red Hawk requires only movement to draw the weapon into standard space—or return it to the extra-dimensional "pocket" permanently at his side (undetected and unreachable to others). The mystic weapon cannot be controlled by magnetic powers or damaged by non-magical attacks.

### 3. Magical Spells:

A. Diminish: range = 26", attacks as Transmutation, those effected shrink into the micro-universe for a duration of one hour, PR = 8 per use. This spell cannot affect targets larger than Height Factor 2 (approximately twelve feet tall).

Red Hawk has not learned any additional spells.

Weight: 160 lbs.  
Agility Mod.: -  
Endurance: 14  
Intelligence: 13  
Reactions from Good: -  
Hit Mod: 3.088  
Damage Mod.: +1  
Accuracy: +1  
Carry Capacity: 288 lbs.  
Movement Rates: 40" ground, 260" flying  
Detect Hidden: 10%  
Inventing Points: 1.3

Basic Hits: 4  
Strength: 13  
Agility: 13  
Charisma: 11  
Evil: -  
Hit Points: 10  
Healing Rate: 1.2/day  
Power: 53  
Basic HTH: 1d6  
Detect Danger: 14%  
Inventing: 39%



**Origin and Background:** When eight-year-old Todd Kaster accidentally shrank the neighbor's dog into nothingness, his father decided it was time to tell the boy the truth. Todd's mother (who died when he was an infant) was a sorceress from the micro-universe.

Embarrassed by his fairy-tale origins, Todd tried to lead a conventional life. He wore long sleeves to cover the wing-shaped birthmarks on his arms until he was old enough to pass them off as tattoos. Now that he's an adult, Todd would like to use his mystic powers for good instead of pretending they don't exist. He still knows little about his mother's side of the family.

**Combat Tactics:** Red Hawk usually evades on his first action, then attacks with his mace. He doesn't use his Diminish spell against enemies.

# 3. GETTING THERE IS HALF THE BATTLE

## 3.1 THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING PROCESS

When characters shrink to subatomic size, they have the option of leaving the standard universe and entering the micro-universe. While crossing the subatomic barrier, characters may see themselves surrounded by numerous spheres bonded together like atoms in a molecule. This is a metaphysical experience. Though sometimes envisioned as existing within molecule (or as a collection of subatomic particles), the micro-universe is a unique dimension unto itself.

If shrinking characters wish to go to a specific location within the micro-universe, they navigate similarly to Dimension Travel (Type 3): The chance of arriving at the intended location = Intelligence + 1% per Power Point expended. If the character has been there before, the base percentage chance increases to Intelligence x 4%. If the roll fails, the GM determines where the characters arrive.

No matter how far they travel within the micro-universe, when characters return to standard height they usually return to the place where they left (GM's discretion).

## 3.2 SUBATOMIC ASTRONOMY

This micro-universe contains numerous star systems (or microsystems) of planets revolving around stars. Planetary orbits are usually circular (instead of elliptical), and some stars in the micro-universe resemble clusters of protons and neutrons at the center of atoms. Hyperflight allows characters within the micro-universe to travel from one microsystem to another. Microsystems are closer to each other, relatively speaking, than solar systems are in the standard universe.

Planets in the micro-universe often have gravity and atmospheric conditions similar to Earth. Yet many of these same planets also have a permanent nighttime sky, brightened by the light from nearby stars and reflected off neighboring planets and moons. Unless characters

have night vision, telescopic vision, or similarly heightened senses, range-based accuracy penalties on these planets are doubled (as shown below).

Effective Range in Inches:	Modifier to Hit:
Up to 30	..-2
31 to 60	..-4
61 to 120	..-6
121 to 240	..-8
241 to 480	..-10
481 to 960	..-12
961 to 1920	..-14
1921 to 3840	..-16
3841 to 7680	..-18
7681 to 15,360	..-20
15,361 to 30,720	..-22
30,721 to 61,440	..-24
61,441 to 122,880	..-26
122,881 to 245,760	..-28
245,761 to 491,520	..-30
491,521 to 983,040	etc.

## 3.3 RELATIVE SIZE

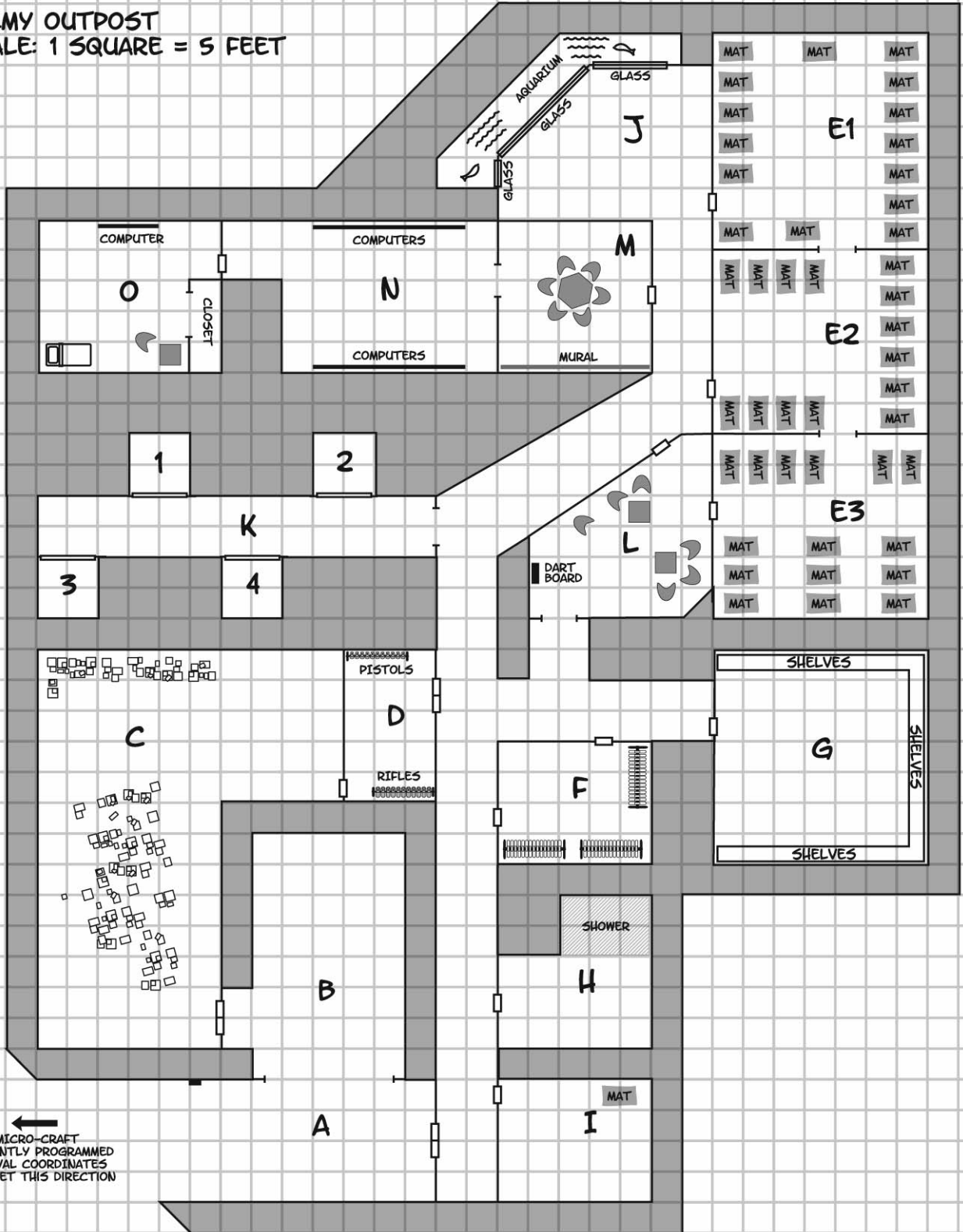
Visitors arrive in the micro-universe at the same scale they exist in their home dimension, so the GM does not need to alter any character stats. Characters who use standard Dimension Travel to enter the micro-universe automatically fit to scale even if they do not experience the sensation of shrinking.

Inside the micro-universe, Size Change/Larger calculates Height Factor as though the default size there is Height Factor 1. Size Change/Smaller works the same way, as characters can even become microscopic within the micro-universe.

There is one exception, however. Characters within the micro-universe who try to shrink to subatomic size yet again do not get any smaller. Rather, they either stay as they are or loop back to the standard universe (GM's choice, but this should operate consistently).

# ENEMY OUTPOST

SCALE: 1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



←  
 MICRO-CRAFT  
 CURRENTLY PROGRAMMED  
 ARRIVAL COORDINATES  
 200 FEET THIS DIRECTION

# 4. VILLAIN QUEST

## 4.1 A GRAND ENTRANCE

If the player-characters do not reset the Micro-Craft's instruments, the vehicle shrinks down into the micro-universe and materializes approximately 40" away from the entrance of the villain's outpost at the edge of Naqlid City. If this is the case, the entrance guards spot the player-characters. Roll initiative and proceed with Section 4.2.

If more than six heroes take part in this adventure, they may require two trips in the Micro-Craft to transport everyone. This could pose a logistical challenge if combat begins when the first group arrives.

If for any reason the heroes arrive somewhere within the Naqlid City ruins instead of at the outpost entrance, proceed to Part 5.

## 4.2 THE ENEMY OUTPOST

Viberon and the squadron of Ipzin who survived the Naqlid war use this building as their base. The interior chambers are lit by phosphorescent crystals naturally embedded inside the granite walls (Structural Rating 6). Unless otherwise noted, doors are an iron alloy (Structural Rating 10) and unlocked. The ceilings are twenty feet high.

**A. Entryway:** Guarding the entrance stand three Ipzin soldiers: one Alpha (with energy rifle), one Beta (with energy pistol), and one Gamma (unarmed).

If intruders appear, one of the guards (probably the Gamma) spends an action evading while using movement to push a yellow button just inside the entrance. This action sounds an alarm throughout the corridors until the end of the turn.

The following turn, Replica and the Gamma soldier in the machine shop use their first actions to move to the entrance and attack the intruders. If Bugbear escaped during Part 2, he leaves the guest quarters and does the same.

Any Ipzin in the barracks or rec room spend their first actions moving to the armory for energy pistols/rifles. The action after that, they move to the entrance and join the fight.

Soldiers already stationed at the armory, aquarium, and brig hold their positions.

Viberon spends one action setting up his vibratory defense. But he may wait in the observatory for another turn or two before joining the battle.

**B. Dock.** When not in use, the Micro-Craft stays parked inside. Because the vehicle does not literally grow when moving from subatomic to standard size, the Micro-Craft is safe to use indoors. But the villains take it outdoors to reduce the chance of invaders from the standard universe using the vessel to materialize within the complex. With Bugbear's strength or Replica's gravity powers, relocating the vehicle is not difficult.

**C. Machine Shop:** Replica and one Gamma soldier are stationed here (until the entrance alarm sounds). They are taking inventory of the equipment retrieved during a recent trip into the city ruins. On the floor lay numerous machine parts (weighing up to 30 lbs. each).

This room also holds spare parts in case Replica, Viberon, or the

Micro-Craft need repair. Any unusual devices confiscated from the heroes are placed here as well.

**D. Armory:** Charging holsters along a wall hold six spare energy rifles and six energy pistols. These recharging weapons have 1d10 shots apiece. One Alpha soldier guards the room (even if an alarm sounds).

**E. Barracks:** Any Ipzin who escaped during Part 2 are now unarmed and recovering here (unless an alarm prompts them to leave). If they are unable to get their weapons from the armory, they fight HTH.

Archways divide the barracks into three, separating the 1) Alphas, 2) Betas, and 3) Gammas. Sleeping mats are on the floor in each section. The room is otherwise unoccupied.

**F. Locker Room:** Spare Ipzin uniforms hang inside, and extra pairs of boots are on the floor.

**G. Pantry:** The shelves are stocked with enough nutrition tablets and hydration pills to sustain the outpost for several months.

**H. Washroom:** A customized weather-control device installed in the ceiling creates rain in the shower, with 20 charges per day. The mechanism has no other functions.

**I. Guest Quarters:** A large sleeping mat rests on the floor. Bugbear has been using this room during his stay at the outpost. Other than a change of clothes, the only personal item inside is a souvenir from his homeworld of Thaul. Writing on the poster translates to the word WANTED. The picture on the poster shows Bugbear (see Page 18).

**J. Aquarium:** A ceiling-high aquarium built into a wall holds numerous salt-water fish from the planet's oceans. Life-support equipment affixed inside keeps the tank clean. The fish are harmless and cannot survive out of water.

The exterior glass has Structural Rating 5. If the glass breaks, everyone up to 1" from the aquarium must save vs. Agility (d20) or take 1d10 damage from the wall of falling water, and everyone 2" away must save vs. Agility (d20) or take 1d6 points of damage. Afterward, anyone moving across the wet floor must save vs. Agility (d20) or slip and take 1d6 damage.

An armed Alpha soldier watches this the area at all times, and would happily sacrifice some fish to stop intruders.

The sound of shattering glass gets the attention of Viberon (if he is in the observatory), Bugbear (if he is in the guest quarters), and any Ipzin in the rec room or barracks. They respond with the same urgency as they would to the entrance alarm.

**K. Brig:** An armed Alpha soldier stands outside the four cells at all times (even if an alarm sounds). Each cell is locked with translucent door made of bulletproof glass (Structural Rating 12).

Cell #1 holds a Gamma soldier (with standard stats) by the name of Uub. He broke rank two days ago by grabbing an energy pistol to ward off the Slithering Ooze immediately after the creature murdered a Beta by the entrance.

Roll Uub's reactions to the player-characters, keeping in mind his evil intentions. Uub might pretend to be on the side of good to trick the heroes into freeing him—but then turn against them to earn an Ipzin promotion. Or he could ask for asylum in the "outer-verse" and perhaps pursue a life of crime there.

The Ipzin may place any captured heroes in the other cells (up to four per cell).

**L. Rec Room:** Two unarmed Beta soldiers are inside (unless an alarm prompts them to leave).

The room contains two square tables (150 lbs. SR 3) and six chairs (50 lbs. SR 2). A hexagonal dart board hangs on a wall, and a shelf holds a dozen darts. Ipzin rules of fair play require Gammas to lose to

Betas, and Betas to lose to Alphas most of the time.

If encountered before they can retrieve energy weapons from the armory, the guards either fight HTH or throw darts: attack HTH +2, damage = HTH +1, range = Agility.

**M. Conference Room:** This room holds a hexagonal table (400 lbs. SR 5) surrounded by six chairs (50 lbs. SR 2). A mural on one wall shows Naqliid City before it was destroyed.

**N. Observatory:** Viberon usually remains here.

Computer consoles built into the wall alerts him when the Micro-Craft returns to subatomic space. The sensors also detect how many passengers are on board—and if those quantum signatures match Bugbear and the Ipzin from Part 2 or if they are intruders.

So even if the heroes defeat the entrance guards before they can sound the alarm, Viberon probably already suspects the outpost is under attack. It is possible, however, that characters with illusions or transformation manage to disguise their quantum signatures even without trying (GM's discretion).

A computer screen along one wall shows a simulation of the Naqliid planet and several asteroids orbiting a star. There are no other planets in this microsystem.

**O. Viberon's Quarters:** Because of his ability to walk through walls, Viberon keeps the door to his chambers permanently locked.

This is the only room with a bed (700 lbs. SR 6). A walk-in closet contains a full-length mirror and hangers for his costume.

A large computer monitor on the wall currently displays preliminary blueprints for the Inversion Bomb. By saving vs. Intelligence (d100), characters with a background in military, research/technology, or related areas of science may grasp the general concept of the device. But a successful inventing attempt is still necessary to build it.

## 4.3 THE INVERSION BOMB

On top of his hostility toward specific individuals, Viberon feels a generalized bitterness toward the research station that once headquartered Project Zacchaeus. The GM is free to determine the location of that facility and what type of work (if any) continues there today.

No matter what became of the site, Viberon wants the area destroyed—and is in the process of engineering a device to do just that.

Building the Inversion Bomb requires an additional 20 + 1d4 uninterrupted days (and a successful Inventing attempt) following the events from Part 2. This should give the heroes more than enough time to intervene. Based on Viberon's intelligence, the invention has an 84% of working successfully (and a 5% of having unexpected results left up to the GM).

If all goes as Viberon plans, the Inversion Bomb would materialize at the designated location in the standard universe, and then detonate at the end of that turn. The effect would cause matter to collapse inward, with implosive force comparable to a medium nuclear bomb: attacks HTH +15, damage = 2d100, blast radius = 1/2 mile (528"). All matter destroyed during the implosion (and the remains of any bystanders who might die from the damage) would collapse into a mound of rubble.



## REPLICA

Identity: \*\*\*/ = /

Sex: (Female)

Level: 5

Side: Evil

Age: 20

Training: Intelligence

### Powers:

1. Android Body: 19% human appearance, 40% internal repair (heals the first 10 points of damage).

A. Heightened Endurance: +19

B. Body Power: Her computer brain defends as Willpower against Emotion Control and Mind Control attacks, PR = 1 per use.

2. Gravity Control: range = 10", PR = 1 per +/- 1 weight multiplier, requires one action to maintain each turn.

3. Absorption: range = touch, attacks HTH. With a successful hit, Replica can duplicate the powers of one non-magical device, PR = 2. Afterward, the Power cost of using the acquired device matches the PR of the original. Or, when applicable, a mimicked device has the same number of charges that the original had at the time of absorption. Replica can retain only one pirated device at a time; duplicating a new device automatically replaces the last one she absorbed.

Replica's appearance may superficially change as a result of absorption. For ease of play, the GM may rule that she cannot absorb devices that would alter her weight or ability scores.

Weight: 140 lbs.

Agility Mod.: -

Endurance: 33

Intelligence: 17

Reactions from Good: -1

Hit Mod: 8.064

Damage Mod.: +2

Accuracy: +2

Carry Capacity: 301 lbs.

Movement Rates: 58" ground

Detect Hidden: 12%

Inventing Points: 8.5

Basic Hits: 3

Strength: 10

Agility: 15

Charisma: 14

Evil: +1

Hit Points: 25

Healing Rate: 3.0/day

Power: 75

Basic HTH: 1d6

Detect Danger: 16%

Inventing: 51%



**Origin and Background:** Originally designed as an animated servant to assist Naqlid engineers, android \*\*\*/ = '/' attacked her creators instead. When several attempts to reprogram her failed, authorities disassembled the non-compliant machine. Viberon reactivated the android during the destruction of Naqlid City. Now dubbed Replica, she assists Viberon out of her own free will.

**Combat Tactics:** Replica begins by multiplying an opponent's weight by 10. When possible, she may use her second action to absorb a device from a foe immobilized by increased gravity.

## VIBERON

Identity: Keith Mikkelsen  
Sex: Male  
Level: 9

Side: Evil  
Age: 32  
Training: Strength

### Powers:

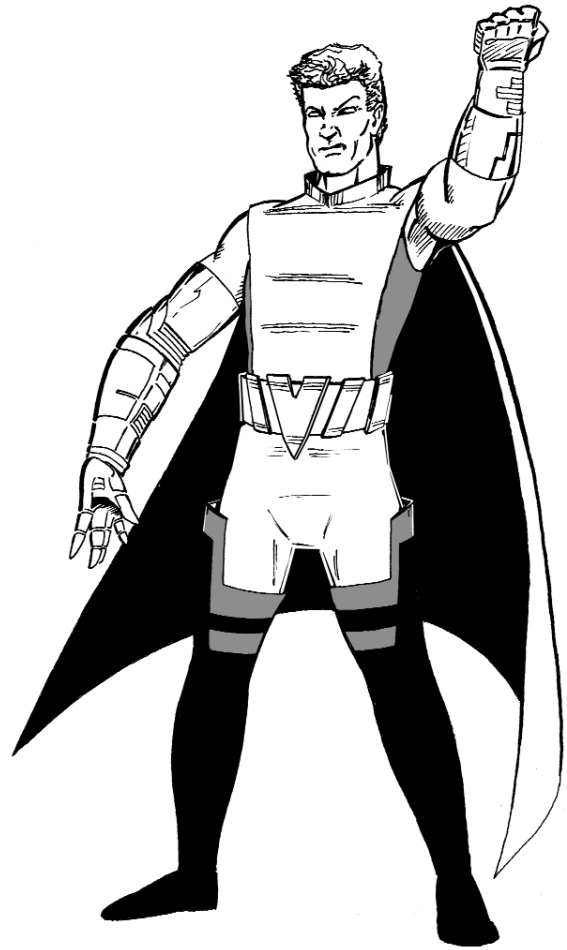
1. Size Change/Smaller: permanently subatomic.
2. Heightened Intelligence A: +10
3. Heightened Charisma A: +12
4. Heightened Endurance B: +14
5. Vibratory Powers: Requires one action to set up defense. PR = 5 per attack, range = 30", 2d8 damage or 52% to destroy device on a special attack. PR = 2 to vibrate through objects.
6. Bionics:
  - A. Heightened Strength: +10 (arms)
  - B. Speed Bonus: +30" ground (legs)
  - C. Armor: ADR = 30, damage to armor must be repaired.
7. Vulnerability: Viberon's body is physically bonded to the micro-universe. Returning to standard space means instant death. Only a saving throw 1d100 against his current Power (and the GM's discretion) could allow Viberon to miraculously survive.

Weight: 180 lbs.  
Agility Mod.: -  
Endurance: 25  
Intelligence: 28  
Reactions from Good: -4  
Hit Mod: 15.36  
Damage Mod.: +4  
Accuracy: +2  
Carry Capacity: 1807 lbs.  
Movement Rates: 96" ground  
Detect Hidden: 20%  
Inventing Points: 23.2

Basic Hits: 4  
Strength: 26  
Agility: 15  
Charisma: 23  
Evil: +4  
Hit Points: 62  
Healing Rate: 2.8/day  
Power: 94  
Basic HTH: 1d10  
Detect Danger: 24%  
Inventing: 84%

**Origin and Background:** See Section 1.3 for the first part of Viberon's secret history.

Eight years ago, Naqlid officials were distraught to discover that a trap meant to protect their borders had critically injured Keith Mikkelsen, a peaceful explorer from the "outer-verse." Naqlid medics did their best to restore him to health, replacing 30% of his body with cybernetic parts.



The medical technology that stabilized Mikkelsen's condition had unexpected side effects—giving him vibratory powers and heightened endurance while permanently acclimating his body to micro-universe, making it unsafe for him to return home.

Condemned to live out his days in another dimension, Mikkelsen believed that conventional ethics no longer applied to him. Taking the name Viberon, he abandoned all prior notions of right and wrong and turned against the Naqlid—before seeking revenge against the humans who deserted him to begin with.

**Combat Tactics:** Viberon sets up his vibratory defense on his first action, then fires vibratory blasts. He enjoys using special attacks to destroy opponents' devices.

After he is hit once or twice, Viberon uses movement to exit through a wall and return from another direction to attack an unsuspecting opponent from behind. If his Hit Points or Power Points fall below 20, Viberon may retreat for good.

# 5. NAQLID CITY

## 5.1 BACKGROUND

The Naqlid civilization built up around one major city, covering a region about 12 miles in diameter. Though technologically advanced, the isolationistic species remained uninvolved in the various wars within the micro-universe.

When an off-course Ipzin warship crash-landed on the Naqlid homeworld several years ago, the Ipzin invaders set out to conquer the inhabitants. The Naqlid built defensive weapons to protect their city, but the Ipzin eventually eradicated them (especially once Viberon joined their side). Almost all of the Ipzin invaders died as well. The few who remain reside in Viberon's outpost (Section 4.2) or patrol the surrounding area.

Now Naqlid City lies lifeless, filled with toppled buildings, fallen monuments, and industrial debris. Outdoor conditions match those described in Section 3.2.

## 5.2 RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

If heroes walk through the city, they see crumbled statues of Naqlid leaders, derailed vehicles, and the broken war machines that helped destroy a population of 150,000. An inventing point is necessary to make anything useful out of the wreckage.

After every hour spent exploring the city, there is a chance to encounter three Ipzin on patrol: one Alpha (with energy rifle), one Beta (with energy pistol), and one Gamma (unarmed). Each soldier carries nutrition tablets and hydration pills in a pouch, but they have no other equipment.

The base chance of an encounter each hour equals a character's Det. Danger percentage. (With groups, use the character with the highest percentage.) Then make the following adjustments:

- + 1% for each additional character in the group.
- + 5% if anyone uses heightened speed, flight, or other powers that increase movement.
- + 5% if anyone uses telepathy or other related psionics/senses not already covered by Det. Danger.
- +/- anything else the GM deems relevant.

Alternately, the GM may decide that the player-characters find one Naqlid who managed to stay in hiding and survive the destruction. Should this occur, roll reactions to each of the heroes. The Naqlid may feel relief, trepidation, or even rage toward the player-characters, who might be mistaken for allies of Viberon. Typical Naqlid stats appear to the right.

### NAQLID

Identity: untranslatable  
Sex: Male or Female  
Level: 1

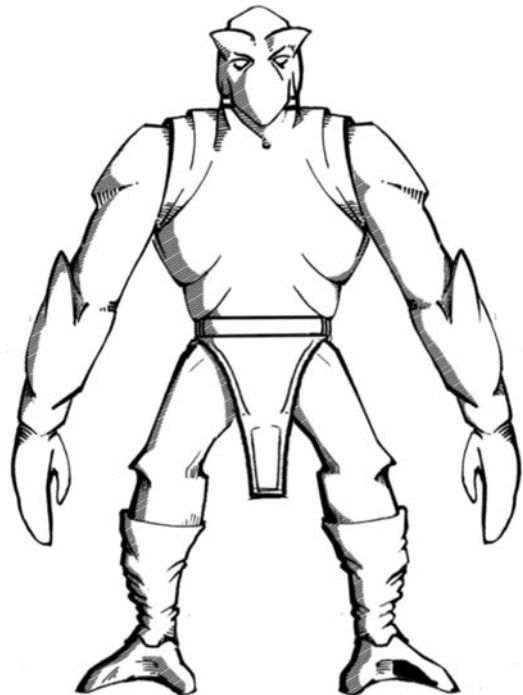
Side: Good  
Age: adult  
Training: Intelligence

#### Powers:

1. Crustacean Powers: Strength +4, Agility -4
  - A. Armor: ADR = 40, Weight x 1.2, heals 5 points per day.
  - B. Natural Weaponry: +1 to hit, +2 damage HTH.


Weight: 180 lbs.  
Agility Mod.: -  
Endurance: 10  
Intelligence: 11  
Reactions from Good: -  
Hit Mod: 0.84  
Damage Mod.: -  
Accuracy: -2  
Carry Capacity: 337 lbs.  
Movement Rates: 31" ground  
Detect Hidden: 8%  
Inventing Points: 1.1

Basic Hits: 4  
Strength: 14  
Agility: 7  
Charisma: 10  
Evil: -  
Hit Points: 4  
Healing Rate: 1.0/day  
Power: 42  
Basic HTH: 1d6  
  
Detect Danger: 12%  
Inventing: 33%



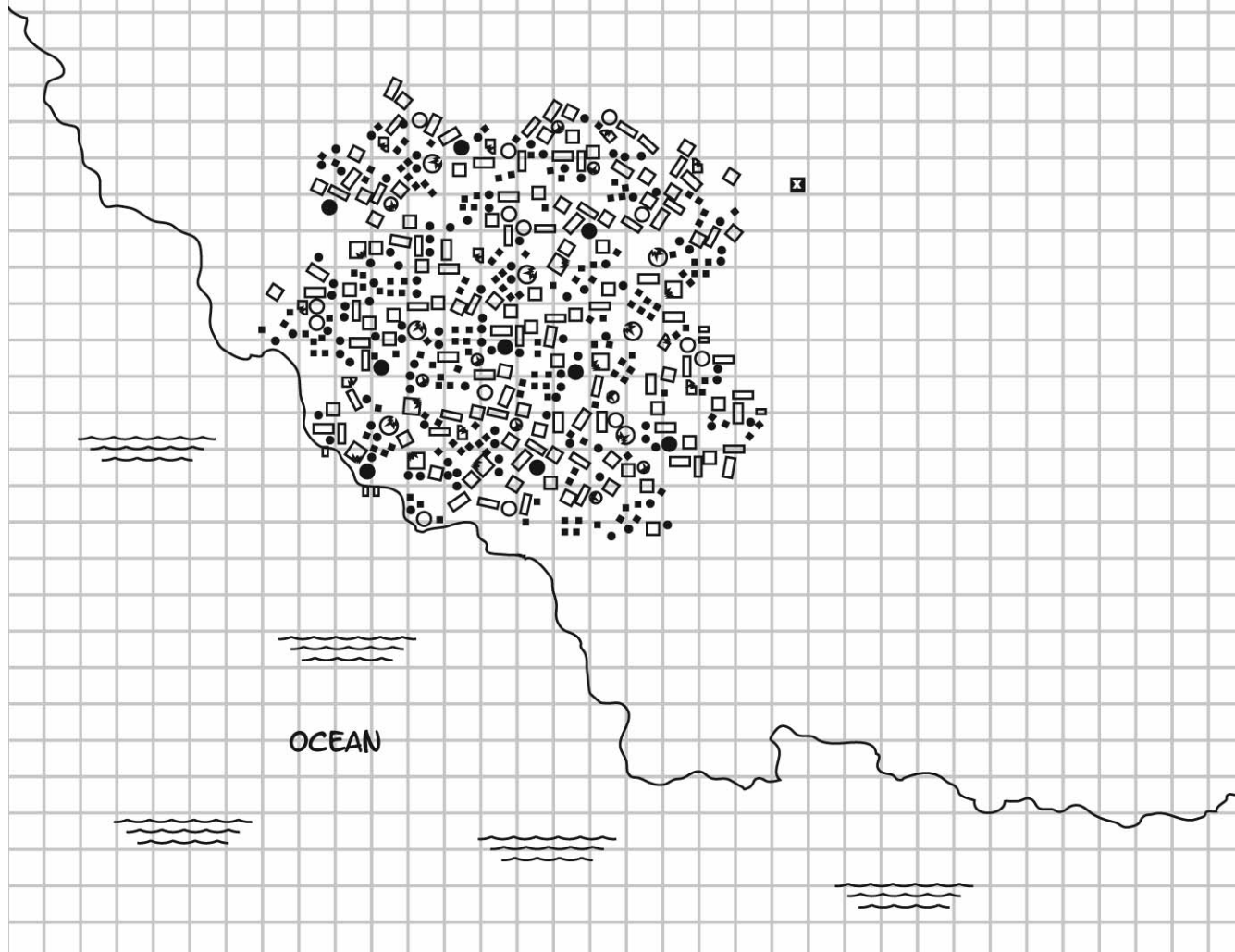


# NAQLID CITY AND SURROUNDS

-  CRUMBLING UNSTABLE RUINS
-  INTACT DECAYING RUINS
-  RUBBLE OR COLLAPSED STRUCTURE
-  ENEMY OUTPOST

SCALE: 1 SQUARE = 1 MILE

DESERT



# 6. HEADING HOME

## 6.1 STOWAWAY

If the heroes rely on the Micro-Craft for transportation, then leave the vehicle unattended outside the outpost, they may be in for a surprise encounter with the Slithering Ooze. The Ipzin drove off the creature two days ago, but it remains lurking near the outpost entrance.

Finding the Micro-Craft unattended, the creature slips through the open upper framework and nestles into the crawl space beneath one of the seats. Characters returning to the vehicle must Detect Danger to spot the monstrosity. If detected, the Slithering Ooze immediately attacks. If undetected, the creature secretly accompanies the player-characters to the standard universe, while using Weakness Detection on whoever is seated directly above it.

If the Micro-Craft is left unattended when the heroes return to Earth, the Slithering Ooze slips out and hides in the shrubbery (requiring a Det. Danger roll to spot). It will only be a matter of time, however, before it attacks a random bystander in the sculpture garden.

On the other hand, if the heroes stay with the vehicle, they may spot the Slithering Ooze as it initially approaches outside the enemy outpost.

### SLITHERING OOZE

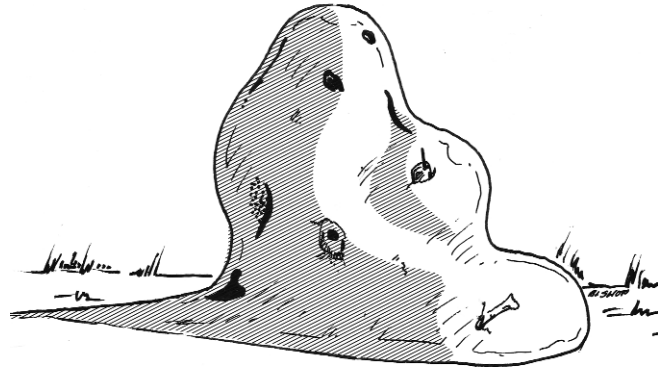
Identity: not applicable	Side: Evil
Sex: (Male)	Age: 24
Level: 4	Training: Intelligence

#### Powers:

1. Chemical Power: permanent defense. The creature can seep through cracks and slide across walls/ceilings at ground movement rate. It does not require food.
2. Heightened Agility B: +24
3. Weakness Detection: gains +3 to hit and learns one weakness after spending one action 1" away from its target.
4. Death Touch: attacks HTH. Opponents must save vs. Agility (d20) and Endurance (d20) to resist. PR = 10 if an opponent makes one saving throw and loses all Hit Points. PR = 20 if an opponent loses both saving throws and dies.
5. Absorption: The Slithering Ooze gains the memories and knowledge of anyone it kills with Death Touch. The creature does not gain the intelligence score nor the values of its prey, however, so killing a Good character would not make the creature switch sides.
6. Prejudice: All reactions are negative.

Weight: 70 lbs  
 Agility Mod.: +2  
 Endurance: 18  
 Intelligence: 9  
 Reactions from Good: -2  
 Hit Mod: 11.396  
 Damage Mod.: +5  
 Accuracy: +6  
 Carry Capacity: 207 lbs.  
 Movement Rates: 71" ground  
 Detect Hidden: 8%  
 Inventing Points: 3.6

Basic Hits: 2  
 Strength: 16  
 Agility: 37  
 Charisma: 16  
 Evil: -2  
 Hit Points: 23  
 Healing Rate: 1.0/day  
 Power: 80  
 Basic HTH: 1d4  
 Detect Danger: 12%  
 Inventing: 27%



**Origin and Background:** The Slithering Ooze spent most of its life living in the wilds outside of Naqlid City, defending itself against predatory animals. How it came into being, it doesn't know. The creature recently ventured inland and discovered Viberon's outpost. After killing a Beta soldier two days ago, the Slithering Ooze now thirsts for more knowledge.

**Combat Tactics:** The Slithering Ooze uses Weakness Detection before striking. The creature avoids using Death Touch against any opponent with Phobia/Psychosis or Low Self-Control (Type 3), for fear of absorbing a psychological weakness. When faced with three or more targets, the Slithering Ooze flees.

## 6.2 LOOSE ENDS

If the heroes do not bring Roy Newbeck's actions to the attention of the authorities, he confesses to his unauthorized use of the Micro-Craft and subsequent cover-up.

Because government funds paid for the Micro-Craft, federal officials are likely to confiscate the vehicle—but perhaps make it available to the heroes for special missions. Should super-villains on Earth learn of the Micro-Craft, they might come looking for it.

If the heroes are defeated by Viberon's forces, or the Micro-Craft is destroyed before they head home, the symposium full of theoretical physicists should be able to develop a one-shot invention to bring them back. Or Red Hawk could use his magic to send down help—if it's not too late.

Should any of the defeated player-characters seem strong enough to break out of the holding cells for interrogation (even with their super-devices removed), the Ipzin might place the incapacitated intruders outside as bait for the Slithering Ooze.

## 6.3 CHARISMA AND EXPERIENCE AWARDS

If Roy Newbeck dies in Part 2, each player-character should lose 1 point of Charisma, as it was their role to project him. Making an effort to find and rescue Naqlid survivors in Part 5 could offset this penalty.

Suggested experience rewards for defeating opponents appear below.

<b>Ipzin Soldier</b>	<b>Experience</b>
Alpha.....	360 each
Beta.....	228 each
Gamma.....	112 each

<b>Super-Villain</b>	<b>Experience</b>
Bugbear .....	1836
Replica .....	1000
Slithering Ooze .....	848
Viberon* .....	2808

# 7. THE IPZIN

## 7.1 BACKGROUND

The Ipzin are a militaristic species who work as laborers and guards on several planets in the micro-universe. Ipzin spend their early years as tadpoles before maturing into air-breathing bipeds. Adult weight for both males and females = 4d6 x 10 lbs.

Hierarchical by nature, the Ipzin allocate resources and make other provisions based on merit. The particulars vary from setting to setting, and they do not expect their allies to live by Ipzin rules.

## 7.2 SOLDIER STATS

The Ipzin soldiers in this adventure differentiate themselves as Alphas, Betas, and Gammas. Each rank (or level) wears a distinct uniform color and has different weapons privileges.

### ALPHA SOLDIER

Identity: by individual	Side: Evil
Sex: Male or Female	Age: 24 +1d4
Level: 3	Training: Agility

#### Powers:

- Amphibian Powers: Strength +2, Endurance +2, Agility -4
  - Heightened Agility: +7
  - Speed Bonus: +40" swimming
- Natural Weaponry Skill: +1 to hit, +2 damage HTH.
- Special Requirement: Must adhere to Ipzin rules or face punishment.

Weight: 140 lbs.	Basic Hits: 3
Agility Mod.: -	Strength: 13
Endurance: 13	Agility: 15
Intelligence: 10	Charisma: 12
Reactions from Good: -1	Evil: +1
Hit Mod: 2.688	Hit Points: 9
Damage Mod.: +1	Healing Rate: 0.9
Accuracy: +2	Power: 51
Carry Capacity: 245 lbs.	Basic HTH: 1d6
Movement Rates: 41" ground, 81" swimming	
Detect Hidden: 8%	Detect Danger: 12%
Inventing Points: 3.0	Inventing: 30%

**Combat Tactics:** Each Alpha soldier wears a red uniform and is authorized to use an energy rifle: range = 65", attacks HTH +3, 1d12 damage, 10 charges. If weapons are unavailable, an Alpha may fight HTH.

\* Unless the characters have Weakness Detection or conduct a telepathic probe, they will not know of Viberon's vulnerability—and he has no intention of telling them. So if the heroes return Viberon back to the standard universe, and he dies as a result, they should still receive full points for capturing the villain.

### BETA SOLDIER

Identity: by individual	Side: Evil
Sex: Male or Female	Age: 20 +1d4
Level: 2	Training: Agility

#### Powers:

- Amphibian Powers: Strength +2, Endurance +2, Agility -4
  - Heightened Agility: +7
  - Speed Bonus: +40" swimming
- Natural Weaponry Skill: +1 to hit, +2 damage HTH.
- Special Requirement: Must adhere to Ipzin rules or face punishment.

Weight: 140 lbs.	Basic Hits: 3
Agility Mod.: -	Strength: 13
Endurance: 13	Agility: 14
Intelligence: 10	Charisma: 11
Reactions from Good: -	Evil: -
Hit Mod: 2.184	Hit Points: 7
Damage Mod.: +1	Healing Rate: 0.9
Accuracy: +1	Power: 50
Carry Capacity: 245 lbs.	Basic HTH: 1d6
Movement Rates: 40" ground, 80" swimming	
Detect Hidden: 8%	Detect Danger: 12%
Inventing Points: 2.0	Inventing: 30%

**Combat Tactics:** Each Beta soldier wears a blue uniform and is authorized to use an energy pistol: range = 42", attacks HTH +2, 1d10 damage, 10 charges. If weapons are unavailable, a Beta may fight HTH.

### GAMMA SOLDIER

Identity: by individual	Side: Evil
Sex: Male or Female	Age: 16 +1d4
Level: 1	Training: Agility

#### Powers:

- Amphibian Powers: Strength +2, Endurance +2, Agility -4
  - Heightened Agility: +7
  - Speed Bonus: +40" swimming
- Natural Weaponry Skill: +1 to hit, +2 damage HTH.
- Special Requirement: Must adhere to Ipzin rules or face punishment.

Weight: 140 lbs.	Basic Hits: 3
Agility Mod.: -	Strength: 13



Endurance: 13	Agility: 13
Intelligence: 10	Charisma: 10
Reactions from Good: -	Evil: -
Hit Mod: 2.184	Hit Points: 7
Damage Mod.: +1	Healing Rate: 0.9
Accuracy: +1	Power: 49
Carry Capacity: 245 lbs.	Basic HTH: 1d6
Movement Rates: 39" ground, 79" swimming	
Detect Hidden: 8%	Detect Danger: 12%
Inventing Points: 1.0	Inventing: 30%

**Combat Tactics:** Each Gamma soldier wears an orange uniform. A Gamma may fight HTH but is not authorized to carry arsenal (even when spare weapons are available).

## 7.3 IPZIN NAMES

Through their association with Viberon, the Ipzin soldiers in this adventure understand simple English. But some of their personal names can be difficult for humans to pronounce. To assign names to individual soldiers, roll 1d100 or select an Ipzin name from the list.

01. Ac	54. Mt
02. Ag	55. Na
03. Al	56. Nb
04. Am	57. Nd
05. Ar	58. Ne
06. As	59. Ni
07. At	60. No
08. Au	61. Np
09. Ba	62. Os
10. Be	63. Pa
11. Bh	64. Pb
12. Bi	65. Pd
13. Bk	66. Pm
14. Br	67. Po
15. Ca	68. Pr
16. Cd	69. Pt
17. Ce	70. Pu
18. Cf	71. Ra
19. Cl	72. Rb
20. Cm	73. Re
21. Cn	74. Rf
22. Co	75. Rg
23. Cr	76. Rh
24. Cs	77. Rn
25. Cu	78. Ru
26. Db	79. Sb
27. Ds	80. Sc
28. Dy	81. Se
29. Er	82. Sg
30. Es	83. Si
31. Eu	84. Sm
32. Fe	85. Sn
33. Fm	86. Sr
34. Fr	87. Ta
35. Ga	88. Tb
36. Gd	89. Tc
37. Ge	90. Te
38. He	91. Th
39. Hf	92. Ti
40. Hg	93. Tl
41. Ho	94. Tm
42. Hs	95. Xe
43. In	96. Yb
44. Ir	97. Zn
45. Kr	98. Zr
46. La	99-100. Roll 1d6,
47. Li	or choose from below:
48. Lr	1) Uuh
49. Lu	2) Uuo
50. Md	3) Uup
51. Mg	4) Uuq
52. Mn	5) Uus
53. Mo	6) Uut

and . . . a sequel

# RETURN TO THE MICRO-UNIVERSE

## AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

For everyone who enjoyed *Escape from the Micro-Universe* and wants to go back, here's your chance. This sequel picks up several weeks or more after the end of *Escape*, building on the world that lies beyond the subatomic barrier. Like many sequels, some sections of *Return to the Micro-Universe* refer back to the earlier adventure. To avoid confusion, this follow-up adventure begins with Part 8.

The micro-universe is a vast place. What the heroes find this time around may surprise them!

James Satter



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## 8. THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES

### 8.1 SINCE LAST TIME...

After the scandal surrounding Roy Newbeck in *Escape from the Micro-Universe*, Shannen Aimes became president of the Subatomic Physics Society. With federal funding, she now oversees a new research facility to continue the work begun at Project Zacchaeus one decade ago (see Section 1.3).

The hero Red Hawk works as a security guard at the new facility, which now houses the Micro-Craft. If that vessel was destroyed in

*Escape*, engineers constructed a new vehicle matching the original schematics (see Section 2.5). The general public is unaware of the new research station's whereabouts, which could be anywhere that fits within the campaign.

## 8.2 SCENE OF THE CRIME

At 6:00 AM this morning, a costumed thief known as Pillager broke into the new research facility, bypassing all security locks, and making his way to the sub-basement. There he encountered Shannen Aimes (known for her relentless work ethic). Drawing his sword, Pillager threatened Dr. Aimes, forcing her to take him to the Micro-Craft.

Just as Pillager forced Aimes into the docking bay, Red Hawk arrived. Before any blows were exchanged, Pillager shrank down to subatomic size, leaving the Micro-Craft untouched. As he escaped, Pillager boasted, "You'll never catch me where I'm going. You'll never find me on the planet Erdoon!"

When Red Hawk was a boy, his father told him many bedtime stories that he now believes were true accounts of the micro-universe. He remembers hearing that the planet Erdoon lies in a remote region of the micro-universe and is reported to be cursed.

Shannen Aimes has not heard of Erdoon and shrugs at all notions of curses. She does not believe in magic, and never uses terms such as mysticism, spell, or supernatural. As a result, Aimes and Red Hawk have a neutral working relationship at best.

After Pillager's disappearance, Aimes promptly contacted the player-characters for assistance, while Red Hawk guarded the area.



## SHANNEN AIMES

Level: 1

Age: 43

Strength: 10

Agility: 11

Charisma: 14

Power: 51

Accuracy: -

Movement: 33" ground

Side: Good

Weight: 120 lbs.

Endurance: 12

Intelligence: 18

Hits: 6

Damage: +1

Carry Cap.: 132 lbs.

HTH: 1d4

Most scientists working with Dr. Aimes have Intelligence scores of 16-17, with other ability scores around 10-11.

## 8.3 THE CRIMINAL AGENDA

Pillager heard rumors of the Micro-Craft months ago when he and Bugbear were partners. After tracking down the Micro-Craft's current whereabouts, Pillager had intended to force Aimes to pilot them both into subatomic space, then sell the vehicle (and perhaps Dr. Aimes) on the micro-universe black market. By the time Red Hawk intervened, Pillager felt too drained to fight. So he revealed his next destination to lure heroes to follow him to Erdoon. Pillager expects that the trio of villains already on the planet will defeat any do-gooders and allow him to steal the Micro-Craft just the same.

## 8.4 SUB-BASEMENT

Unless stated otherwise, the walls of the sub-basement are marble (Structural Rating 7) and the doors are hard wood (Structural Rating 4). The ceilings are fifteen feet high.

**A. Mezzanine:** This room is located one-half level above the rest of the sub-basement. Computer consoles along a rectangular table (300 lbs., SR 4) control the doors to the safety hall and docking bay. Several chairs (50 lbs., SR 2) around a large table (500 lbs., SR 5) serve as a briefing area. In one corner, a statue of the Greek philosopher Democritus rests on a stand (50 lbs., SR 3). Shannen Aimes half-heartedly refers to Democritus as the "patron saint" of the facility because of his early theories about atoms. Bullet-proof windows (SR 12) in the mezzanine and ramped hallway provide a clear view of the docking bay.

**B. Docking Bay:** All walls and doors are titanium (SR 13). This room holds the Micro-Craft.

**C. Safety Hall:** The air-tight, titanium doors (SR 13) electronically lock. This corridor prevents someone from walking directly into the docking bay.

**D. Offices:** Shannen Aimes uses office D1, and other top scientists working at the station use offices D2-D6. Each office has two leather chairs (75 lbs., SR 3), a large desk (500 lbs., SR 4), personal computer, and routine personal belongings.

**E. Elevator:** The passenger elevator can carry 4000 lbs. Stairs along the south wall also lead to the upper levels.

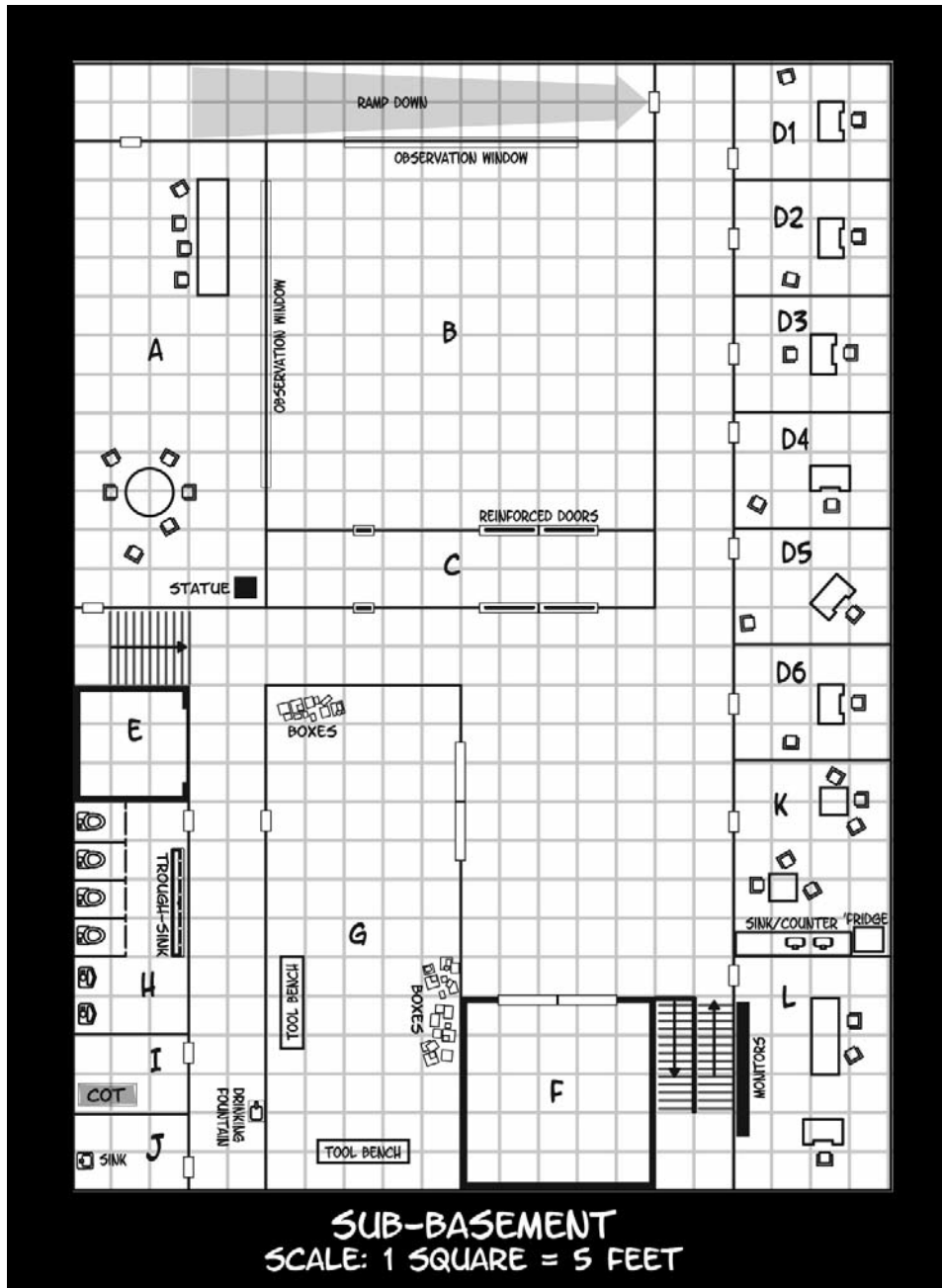
**F. Freight Elevator:** This reinforced elevator can haul 20,000 lbs.

**G. Maintenance:** The room stores tools to fix broken office equipment. There are two long tool benches (300 lbs., SR 4), and sealed boxes holding spare parts for the Micro-Craft (30-60 lbs. each).

**H. Unisex Restroom:** The room has three stalls and two urinals. Sinks are along one wall.

**I. Sick Room:** A first-aid kit hangs on the wall. A cot (400 lbs., SR 3) allows staff to rest when they aren't feeling well—or working around the clock. There is a drinking fountain outside this room.

**J. Custodial Closet:** Shelves hold standard cleaning supplies. There is a sink along one wall.



**K. Break Room:** This area includes a sink, refrigerator (900 lbs., SR 10), two tables (200 lbs., SR 3), six chairs (20 lbs., SR 2), and plastic trash/recycling bins (20 lbs., SR 3).

**L. Security Office:** Mounted security monitors look into every hallway and public area of the sub-basement. Keys to each room are locked inside the desk (500 lbs., SR 4). There are three leather chairs (75 lbs., SR 3) and a meeting table (300 lbs., SR 4).

## 8.5 PLANNING THE EXPEDITION

When the heroes arrive at the research station, Shannen Aimes greets them in the first-floor lobby. The main level of the building holds

administrative offices. Junior scientists and engineers work on the basement level, so Aimes takes the player-characters directly to the sub-basement to meet with Red Hawk and brief them on the background from Section 8.2.

Aimes did not intend to send anyone into the micro-universe for some time. But following today's break-in, she now hopes the heroes will use the Micro-Craft to apprehend Pillager. The GM should roll Aimes' reactions to the player-characters to gauge how confident she is in their abilities. And if her reactions are hostile? Well, that could explain why she's willing to send the heroes on a dangerous mission.

Red Hawk does not accompany the player-characters, but rather holds position in the security office. The latest research on subatomic travel suggests that if Pillager returns to standard space, he will materialize at the spot in the docking bay where he was last seen. Roll Red Hawk's reactions to any heroes he did not meet during Escape.

# 9. OFF TO ERDOON

## 9.1 ONE SMALL STEP

Because the Micro-Craft has never been to Erdoon, there are no pre-set coordinates to follow (as there were in Escape). This time around, there is no free ride.

Shannen Aimes can give the player-characters a crash course on piloting the Micro-Craft before they shrink to subatomic size. Willpower A allows a character to memorize the instructions during the mission (PR = 1). At the GM's discretion, characters with knowledge areas in Communications, Military, Research/Technology, Transportation, or as a Scientist in a related field, automatically grasp Aimes' piloting directions during this mission.

Others must save vs. Intelligence (d20) to understand Aimes well enough to act as temporary pilots. As a last resort, Aimes could accompany the heroes to pilot the Micro-Craft herself. Learning how to navigate the vessel without outside assistance requires further training or an Inventing Point.

Upgrades by Aimes and her colleagues now allow up to six qualified pilots to work together while navigating the Micro-Craft. When traveling to Erdoon or any other unfamiliar subatomic planet, the base chance of a successful arrival equals the combined Intelligence scores of everyone piloting the vehicle. (Multiply a character's Intelligence score by 4 when traveling to a planet that character previously visited.) Add 1% for each Power Point any of them spends while navigating.

If more than six player-characters take part in this adventure, using the Micro-Craft may require two trips. Or Red Hawk can cast his Diminish spell, relying on his own Intelligence score plus any available Power Points to determine the chance of successfully steering a player-character to the right location. (For more details about the experience of micro-travel, see Part 3.)

Should a navigational roll fail, the GM may place the lost character(s) anywhere in the micro-universe. One option is to send an off-course Micro-Craft through a subatomic vortex. The vortex makes a fourth-level attack against the Micro-Craft and everyone inside, attack type = Vibratory Powers, damage = 3d6 (matching the Tornado effects of Weather Control). The vortex then propels the characters to their intended destination.

Returning to standard size automatically takes the player-characters back to the science station where they left.

## 9.2 TOO COLD FOR COMFORT

Located in a desolate region of the micro-universe, the planet Erdoon is an anomaly, as winter persists almost year round. The player-characters arrive on Erdoon in the midst of a freezing windstorm and immediately take 1 point of damage from the biting cold. Characters continue to take 1 point of damage between turns while outside. The GM may consider the following exceptions and make other provisions based on the characters' abilities.

- Astral Projection and Non-Corporeality automatically protect against these cold winds.
- Flame Powers protect a character when the "whole body" defense is active. This also applies to some variations of Chemical Powers.
- Ice Powers protects a character when the defense is active. Ice

Armor does not melt under these conditions.

- Armor A and B require rolling 1d100 to see if the Armor takes the damage (and loses 1 point of ADR) or if the character takes the damage.
- Invulnerability protects against damage each turn following normal rules.
- Life-Support protects the character unless the device is damaged (with the 1% chance of that happening with each point of weather damage incurred).
- Force Field costs ½ Power Point to defend against 1 point of damage from the freezing winds. Multiply the PR cost by the number of characters directly shielded from the cold winds each time.
- Adaptation protects at a cost of 1 Power Point per hour.
- Willpower A as a defense against this weather costs 1 Power Point every 2 turns (instead of 1 point each turn).
- Vulnerability to getting hit by the cold/ice causes a character to take double damage under these conditions.

The following defenses are unlikely to protect against the cold winds: Android Body, Bionics, Disintegration Ray, Gravity Control, Light Control, Lightning Control, Magnetic Powers, Power Blast, Sonic Abilities, Stretching Powers, Telekinesis, Vibratory Powers, and Heightened Defense.

Because of its open-frame structure, the Micro-Craft does not defend characters from the climate. In fact, the vehicle itself takes damage under these freezing conditions. The GM should alert characters that if the Micro-Craft is disabled, an Inventing Point is needed to repair the vehicle. If the Micro-Craft is destroyed, two Inventing Points are necessary to make the vessel operable again.

Characters with Weather Control should treat the current conditions as a Blizzard if they attempt to affect the weather.

## 9.3 ON THE RIGHT PATH

When the heroes arrive on Erdoon, their default landing point is the spot where Pillager arrived: 200' away from the entrance to the cave where the other criminals sought shelter. The GM should move the player-characters 1" closer to the cave for each point of Intelligence and each Point used during navigation in Section 9.1. Because of the heavy snowfall, ground movement outdoors is cut in half (rounded up).

Each hero requires a successful Detect Hidden roll to spot Pillager's tracks in the snow moving toward the cave. Each character also has a Detect Hidden chance to spot the cave entrance at a distance. The entrance is visible to everyone within 60" (while telescopic vision or other scenes might extend this range). If for any reason the heroes head in the wrong direction, the GM may send Amphibia to scout the outdoors after 1-2 turns, prompting an encounter.

## 9.4 THE CAVE OF CRIMINALS

**A. Entrance:** The villains concealed much of the cave opening with small boulders weighing 500 lbs. to 1400 lbs. The rocks and cavern walls have Structural Rating 4. There is still plenty of room for the average hero to enter, but clearing space to shelter the Micro-Craft



requires moving 6000 lbs. of rock out of the way. Each action that a hero spends moving boulders gives each villain inside a Detect Hidden chance to hear them.

Characters take no damage from the outside winds once they are inside, and characters with Weather Control should treat the default indoor conditions as Clear. The inside passage slopes downward several feet. The caves are approximately fifteen feet high. Bioluminescent fungus growing on portions of the cave walls provides adequate light inside. The fungus is harmless.

**B. Common Area:** Several flat-topped boulders act as chairs and small tables (1000 lbs). Gathering in this area are Pillager, Torrid, Understudy, and Amphibia (unless she was defeated in Section 9.3). Understudy is in the form of Bugbear (as he has been demonstrating his powers to Pillager). If any player-characters remained in the sub-basement on

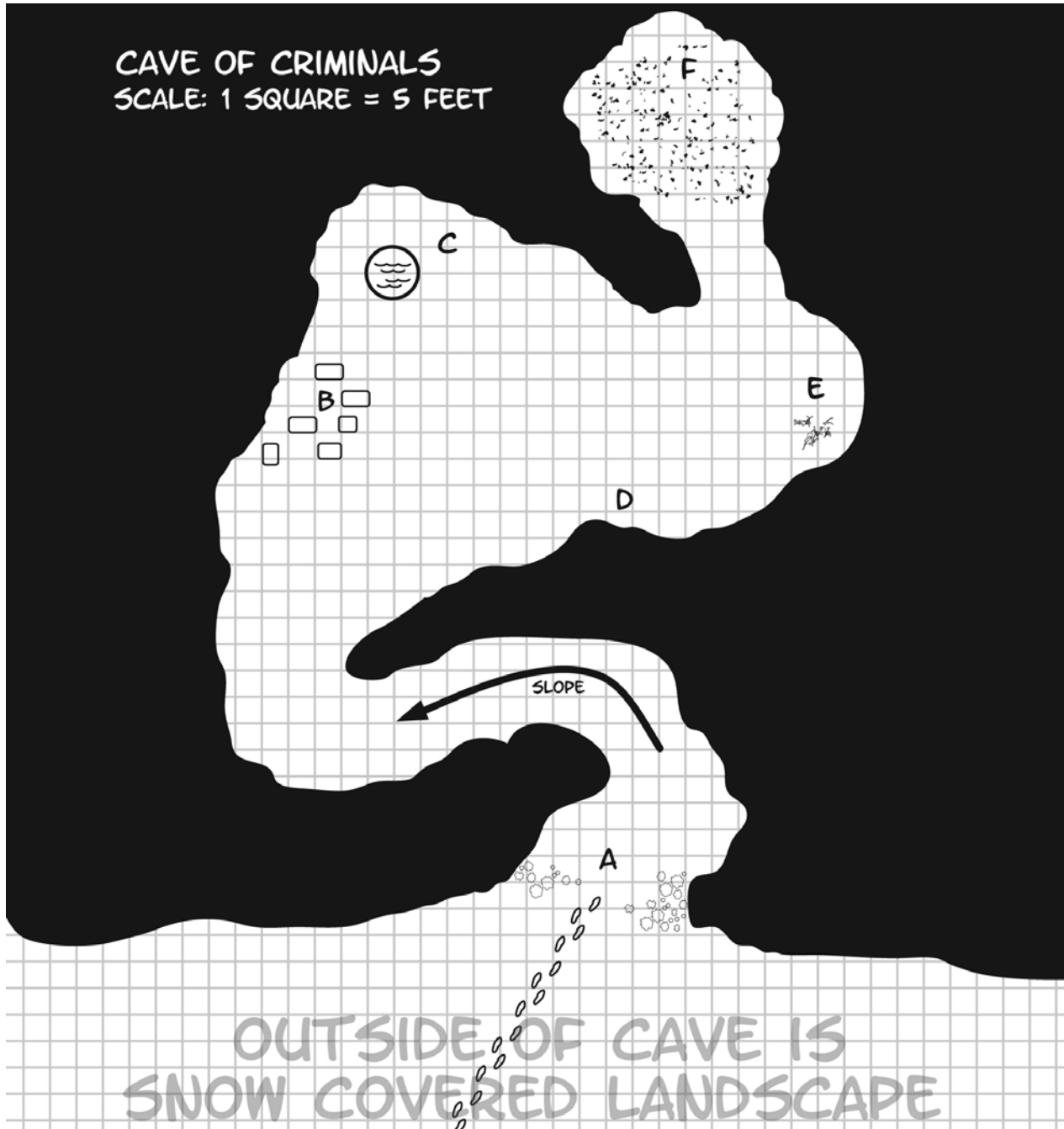
Earth, the GM should send Pillager back there as a form of retreat as soon as any other the heroes arrive at the cave. If all of the player-characters are on Erdoon, Pillager stays in the cave and fights.

**C. Shallow Pool:** Torrid periodically melts blocks of ice to provide drinking water for the others. The pool is knee-deep. Crescent-shaped rocks by the edge serve as cups.

**D. Marked Wall:** When the villains first arrived on Erdoon, Understudy began using a sharp rock to mark on this wall how long they had been on the planet. He stopped counting after 53 days. At night he sleeps by this wall, lying on a cushion retrieved from one of the escape pods.

**E. Bone Alcove:** Amphibia keeps a pile of bones from animals she has hunted. She usually sleeps on the floor nearby.

**F. Trash:** Scraps from the escape pods litters the floor. There is nothing of value here.



# 10. HOME AGAIN

## 10.1 IF THE VILLAINS WIN

If Pillager remained on Erdoon during the battle, he spends an Inventing Point to figure out how to use the Micro-Craft. He plans to travel to Earth, then immediately head back to subatomic space to sell the vehicle on another planet. Understudy might use the Micro-Craft to go to Earth, disguised as one of the heroes.

Left to their own devices, Amphibia and Torrid are inclined to destroy the Micro-Craft and relocate to another cave. If the heroes are marooned, Red Hawk will eventually send down help (at the GM's discretion).

## 10.2 IF THE HEROES WIN

Of the villains, Pillager is the only one wanted on Earth, and authorities are likely to have technology that prevents him from shrinking away. As for the other villains, the player-characters have several viable options. They may decide to bring the micro-universe criminals back with them to the standard universe, leave them on Erdoon, or deliver them to the authorities on the planet Thaul.

An Earth-like planet with inhabitants who closely resemble humans, Thaul was a cultural and trading center within the micro-universe until a deadly plague wiped out much of the population over the course of a generation. The economy is now in recovery, and officials might welcome the opportunity to establish connections with adventures from the "outer-verse" and perhaps seek their help in the future. Many regions of Thaul speak a language similar to English.

## 10.3 CHARISMA AND EXPERIENCE AWARDS

Suggested experience point awards for defeating the villains are as follows:

Villain	Experience
Amphibia .....	.840
Pillager .....	.800
Torrid .....	.1240
Understudy .....	.576

The GM may give each player-character an additional 100 experience points for weathering the cold in Section 9.2. Successfully piloting the Micro-Craft to Erdoon and minimizing damage to the vehicle could warrant a bonus point of Charisma or additional experience points as well.

## 10.4 THE CURSE OF ERDOON

Who says curses aren't real? To make the adventure more memorable, the GM may add this surprise twist. Upon leaving Erdoon and returning to standard space, the Micro-Craft is its usual size but the player-characters stand only one-foot tall. Treat them as having Size Change/Smaller, Height Factor = 6 (dividing movement and ranges by six). At this height, each character's Weight Factor = .004 but the GM may opt to use their standard weight when determining Basic Hits and Carrying Capacity. The characters remain the relative size of action figures until after their next adventure—whatever it may be!

# 11. WANTED IN THE MICRO-UNIVERSE

While escaping from the subatomic planet Thaul months ago, the super criminals known as Bugbear, Amphibia, Torrid, and Understudy jointly hijacked a space freighter and fled that microsystem. Bugbear dispatched an escape pod in the direction of the Naqlid homeworld (from Escape). The others proceeded to the frozen world of Erdoon,

hoping that an alleged curse on the planet would dissuade authorities from following them. Now accompanied by Pillager, the assorted criminals on Erdoon tolerate each other out of necessity, but do not work together as a team.

## AMPHIBIA

Identity: Lw  
Sex: Female  
Level: 5

Side: Evil  
Age: 26  
Training: Agility

### Powers:

1. Heightened Defense: -4 to be hit when aware of attacks.
2. Wings: +3 Agility, max. flying speed = 108 mph, PR = 1 per hour.
3. Amphibian Powers: Strength +2, Endurance +2, Agility -4
  - A. Heightened Agility: +7
  - B. Natural Weaponry: +3 to hit, +6 damage with claws.
  - C. Speed Bonus: +100" swimming.

Weight: 140 lbs.  
Agility Mod.: -  
Endurance: 16  
Intelligence: 12  
Reactions from Good: -1  
Hit Mod: 6.0192  
Damage Mod.: +2  
Accuracy: +3  
Carry Capacity: 593 lbs.  
Movement Rates: 53" ground, 153" swimming, 477" flying  
Detect Hidden: 10%  
Inventing Points: 6.0

Basic Hits: 3  
Strength: 19  
Agility: 18  
Charisma: 14  
Evil: +1  
Hit Points: 19  
Healing Rate: 1.2/day  
Power: 65  
Basic HTH: 1d8  
Detect Danger: 14%  
Inventing: 36%



**Origin and Background:** The Ipzin named Lw showed no unusual traits at birth, but her unique genetic makeup became evident as she matured from tadpole to adult. Sharp claws and webbed wings gave her a distinct place among her people, exempt from most Ipzin regulations. Amphibia has worked with several groups of Ipzin raiders over the years, but she is too individualistic to stay with any group for long. She is something of a folk legend among her people.

**Combat Tactics:** Amphibia singles out the opponent who looks the most defenseless, then strikes. Fighting on the ground or in the air makes little difference to her.

## PILLAGER

Identity: Isaac Leopold  
Sex: Male  
Level: 4

Side: Evil  
Age: 47 (looks 27)  
Training: Strength

### Powers:

1. Heightened Agility A: +8
2. Heightened Senses Skill: x4 Det. Hidden.
3. Heightened Expertise Skill: +4 to hit with swords.
4. Special Weapon: The Blade of Thieves attacks HTH + 2, damage = HTH +1d6. The enchanted sword holds a Magical Spell that unlocks any ordinary door, gate, or chest by commanding it to "open." Casting the spell requires one action, range = 1", PR = 4. A successful Mind Control attack is necessary to open magical or computer-controlled locks, PR = 20 when applicable. This spell does not remove physical barricades or obstructions that might block exits. Pillager "trained" the sword to recognize only his commands.
5. Body Power: +20 Power Points. Pillager consistently looks 20 years younger than his true age.
6. Size Change/Smaller: Pillager shrinks from standard size to subatomic size (without stopping in between). Shrinking costs 2 Power Points and requires movement. Returning to standard height costs movement only. Pillager can transport as much cargo as his Carrying Capacity allows, but he cannot bring other people to and from the micro-universe.

Weight: 170 lbs.  
Agility Mod.: -  
Endurance: 13  
Intelligence: 15  
Reactions from Good: -2  
Hit Mod: 4.4688  
Damage Mod.: +3  
Accuracy: +3  
Carry Capacity: 459 lbs.  
Movement Rates: 47" ground  
Detect Hidden: 48%  
Inventing Points: 6.0

Basic Hits: 4  
Strength: 16  
Agility: 18  
Charisma: 15  
Evil: +2  
Hit Points: 18  
Healing Rate: 1.2/day  
Power: 82  
Basic HTH: 1d6  
  
Detect Danger: 16%  
Inventing: 45%



**Origin and Background:** On his 42nd birthday, Isaac Leopold quit his job at the county library and set off in search of adventure. He scoured the Earth for a longevity potion (adding 20 years of youth) and an alchemic elixir granting him the power to shrink into subatomic space. After uncovering the fabled Blade of Thieves, he partnered with the villain Bugbear for about one year until the stretchable strongman argued that Pillager wasn't pulling his weight. Since then the swashbuckler has continued to work solo as a smuggler within the micro-universe.

**Combat Tactics:** Pillager evades with his first action, and then attacks with his magic sword. At the GM's discretion, Pillager's sword strikes living opponents like a blunt object (inflicting damage but preventing bloodshed).

## TORRID

Identity: son of taur'r-id                      Side: Evil  
Sex: (Male)    Age: 21  
Level: 5    Training: Heat Wave damage

### Powers:

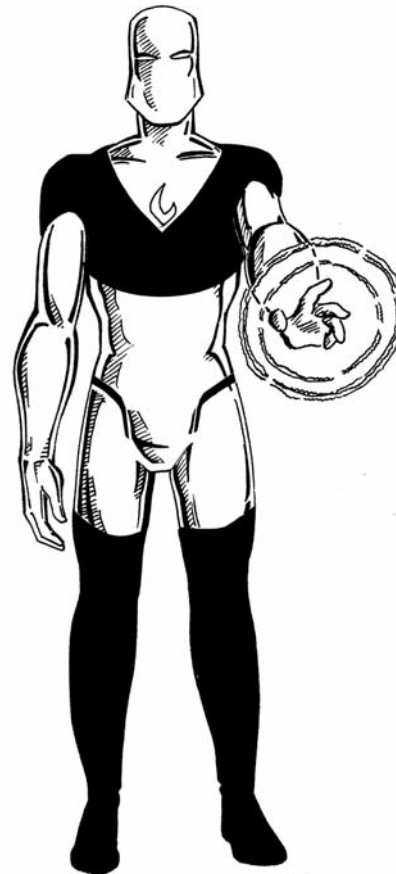
1. Android Body: 60% human appearance, 32% internal repair (heals the first 18 points of damage).

A. Heightened Endurance: +18

B. Body Power: Weight x 2, but still looks approximately 200 lbs.

2. Magical Spells:

A. Heat Wave: Summoning a heat wave requires one action, consulting the expanded Weather Control chart below. Torrid can use the burning temperatures to attack as Flame Power, range = Strength x 3, damage = 1d12 (+1 from prior training), PR = 2. A heat wave follows V&V rules regarding the duration and Power cost of Weather Control. Characters with standard Weather Control cannot summon or attack as a heat wave.



CURRENT WEATHER	WEATHER DESIRED									
	Heat Wave	Clear	Cloudy	Rain	T-Storm	Tornado	Hurricane	Snow	Blizzard	
Heat Wave	—	02	04	06	08	10	12	14	16	
Clear	02	—	02	04	06	08	10	12	14	
Cloudy	04	02	—	02	04	06	08	10	12	
Rain	06	04	02	—	02	04	06	08	10	
Thunderstorm	08	06	04	02	—	02	04	06	08	
Tornado	10	08	06	04	02	—	02	04	06	
Hurricane	12	10	08	06	04	02	—	02	04	
Snow	14	12	10	08	06	04	02	—	02	
Blizzard	16	14	12	10	08	06	04	02	—	

3. Willpower B: Torrid's power of concentration prevents others with Weather Control from modifying his heat wave conditions.

Weight: 400 lbs.                                      Basic Hits: 8  
Agility Mod.: -2                                      Strength: 16  
Endurance: 30                                        Agility: 12  
Intelligence: 10                                      Charisma: 13  
Reactions from Good: -1                            Evil: +1  
Hit Mod: 6.916                                       Hit Points: 56  
Damage Mod.: +1                                    Healing Rate: 7.2/day  
Accuracy: +1                                         Power: 68  
Carry Capacity: 1420 lbs.                        Basic HTH: 1d10  
Movement Rates: 58" ground  
Detect Hidden: 8%                                 Detect Danger: 12%  
Inventing Points: 4.0                                Inventing: 30%

**Origin and Background:** In an attempt to fuse magic with machinery, the sorcerer taur'r-id bestowed an android with the power to cast spells. The experiment backfired, however, when the so-called son of taur'r-id murdered his creator and went on a violent rampage.

Should the two ever meet, Torrid will recognize the markings on Red Hawk's arms as the same markings on a sorceress who died trying to stop the android eighteen years ago. That sorceress was Red Hawk's mother. Todd Kaster (now Red Hawk) was only a few months old at the time, safe on Earth with his father.

**Combat Tactics:** Torrid pays most attention to opponents who show signs of weather control or magical powers. He may greet them by offering a "warm welcome." The android seldom evades.

## UNDERSTUDY

Identity: Xzoktnol  
Sex: Male  
Level: 4

Side: Evil  
Age: 28  
Training: Agility

### Powers:

1. Heightened Endurance B: +6
2. Transmutation: Range = touch, turns the target into iron pyrite (Structural Rating 10), PR = 8 per attack. Transformed opponents keep their Hit Points but are unconscious. A successful wake-up role is necessary to shake off the effects. Transmuted objects must be no larger than 2" x 2" x 2"; objects return to normal after 2d8 turns.
3. Transformation/Shapeshifter: Requires one action to disguise as another humanoid (including Ipzin, Naqlid, Thaulian, and similar species). Understudy's approximate size can vary from 80 lbs. to 320 lbs. (although his actual weight is unchanged). Any weaponry or body powers he assumes are ineffective (e.g. Armor offers no protection, Wings do not fly).
4. Low Self-Control: If he is paralyzed or incapacitated, Understudy reverts to his true physical form.

Weight: 160 lbs.  
Agility Mod.: -  
Endurance: 16  
Intelligence: 16  
Reactions from Good: -1  
Hit Mod: 3.3696  
Damage Mod.: +2  
Accuracy: +1  
Carry Capacity: 304 lbs.  
Movement Rates: 42" ground  
Detect Hidden: 12%  
Inventing Points: 6.4

Basic Hits: 4  
Strength: 13  
Agility: 13  
Charisma: 12  
Evil: +1  
Hit Points: 14  
Healing Rate: 1.6/day  
Power: 58  
Basic HTH: 1d6  
  
Detect Danger: 16%  
Inventing: 48%

**Origin and Background:** The mysterious figure known as Understudy worked as a double-agent between two warring worlds in the micro-universe until both sides found him out. He has been on the run ever since. Understudy's true form does not resemble any known species. Is he a genetic offshoot of a known race? An artificial life form? The last of his kind? Or just one of many shapeshifters living incognito within the micro-universe? With only vague memories of his real identity, not even he knows for certain.

**Combat Tactics:** Understudy likes to lure one of his opponents away from the others, so he can turn them to metal and assume their form discreetly.

