

» And one day, when the stars align and great powers older than our Cosmos gaze onto our swirling galaxy, then, the great Astrodea will again rule our empire in splendid magnificence! «

SOMETHING STIRS within a mountain on a forgotten planet somewhere in the Cosmos. Legends talk of a God living in the mountain, a God that has recently woken up again. Some of the inhabitants of the abandoned planet instead whisper of a mad wizard who has returned to the area. And among the elders there are still some who remember the disappearances and abductions many, many years ago.

In the dark woods on the mountain there is a strange clearing surrounded by ancient statues, that only bold adventurers dare investigate. What will they find?

Through the Gate is a science fantasy adventure for old school roleplaying games, intended to be used with low-level characters. It details a wizard's biomechanical laboratory filled with odd objects, peculiar creatures and weird monstrosities to interact with.

THROUGH

the
GATE

THROUGH the GATE

WRITING & LAYOUT

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ILLUSTRATIONS

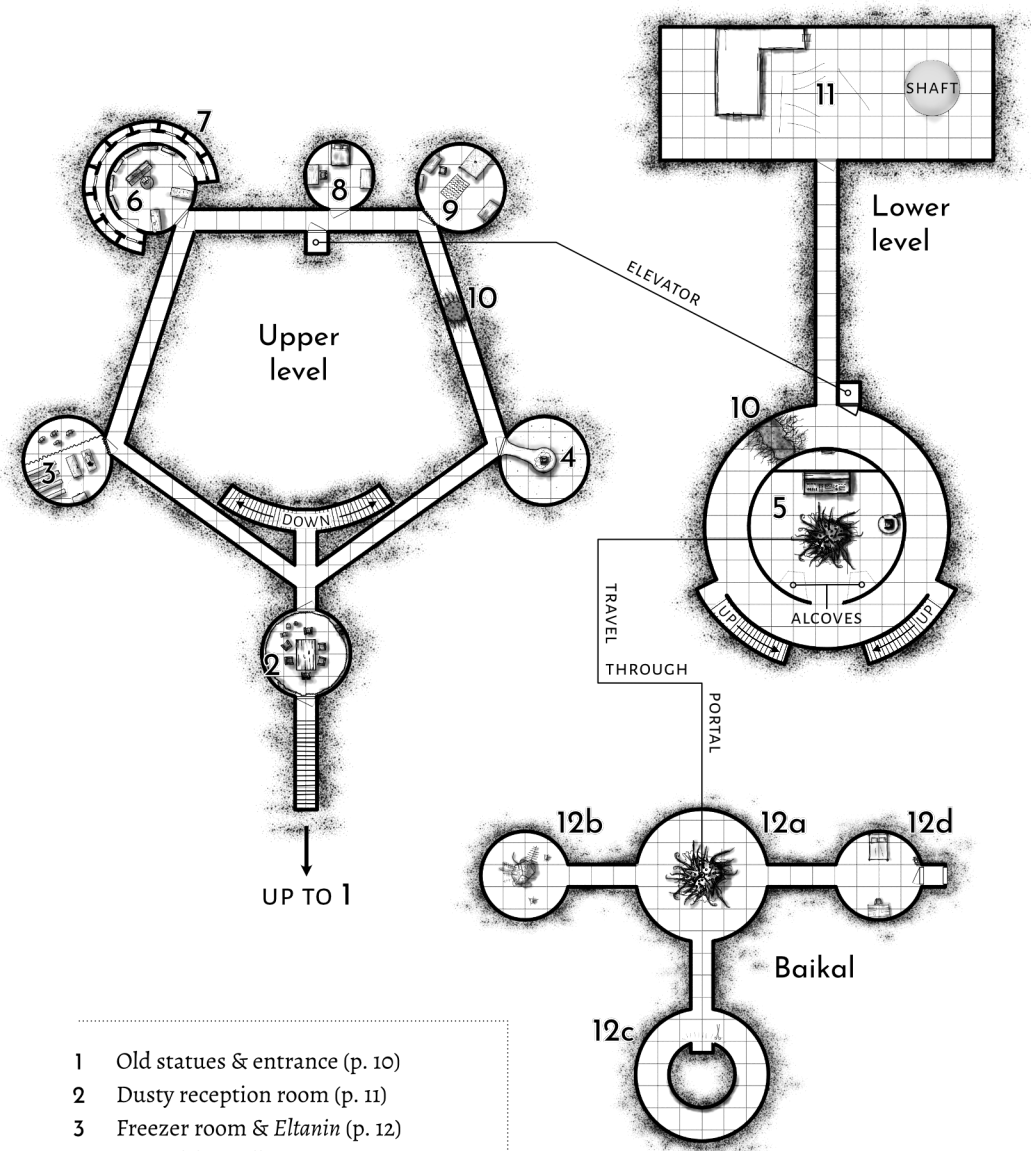
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Playtesters at GothCon XLII

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NPC & MONSTER REFERENCE

ASTRODEA – *cordial, vengeful, megalomaniac*

HD 10 AC 12 MV 40 ML 10 ATK ceremonial dagger (1d6)

PREPARED SPELLS *teleport, charm monster, dimension door, clairvoyance, haste, hold person, audible glamour, invisibility, levitate, mirror image, comprehend languages, mending, sleep, summon*

ASTRODEA, TRANSFORMED – *giant, forceful, power-hungry*

HD 10 AC 14 MV 80 ML 12 ATK 4 dark tendrils (1d20) or dark wave (all in 10' circle save vs magic or receive a random mutation)

SPECIAL Half damage from physical attacks PREPARED SPELLS As before transformation

CLONES – *pale, confused, apathetic*

HD 1 AC 12 MV 30 ML 5 ATK unarmed (1d4)

ELLIPSOID – *intelligent, observing, weird*

HD 2 AC 14 MV 50 ML 7 ATK tentacles (3×1d6) or energy ray (1d10)

ELTANIN – *cyborg, idealistic, pleading*

HD 4 AC 15 MV 40 ML 6 ATK scalpels/wrench (1d8) or eye laser (1d8)

PREPARED SPELLS *ESP, magic missile, sleep*

GRUNTS – *small, robotic, relentless*

HD 1 AC 15 MV 50 ML 12 ATK railgun (1d8) or hydraulic spike/chainsaw (1d6)

MAJOR ABOMINATION (EXAMPLE) – *insectoid, biting tongue, energy ray*

HD 4 AC 16 MV 50 ML 9 ATK energy ray (1d10) and tongue bite (1d8)

SPECIAL *Mind devourer*: Absorbs 1d4 intelligence from one PC each round

MAJOR ABOMINATION (EXAMPLE) – *eel-like, gaping maw, magnetic*

HD 5 AC 12 MV 40 ML 9 ATK bite & swallow (1d8, victim swallowed, 1d4 damage per round until escape)

SPECIAL *Plasma breath weapon*: 2d6 damage to all in 20' cone (save for half dmg, twice per day)

MINOR ABOMINATION – *demonic, devouring*

HD 2 AC 12 MV 20 ML 8 ATK tentacles (2×1d4) or bite (1d6)

PAXILLOS – *cyborg, responsible, loyal*

HD 4 AC 12 MV 40 ML 7 ATK glowing pliers (1d8, additional 1d3 burn damage on failed save vs paralyze)

PREPARED SPELLS *hold portal, mending, sleep, stinking cloud*

SPACE PIRATE – *brutal, opportunistic*

HD 2 AC 14 MV 30 ML 6 ATK blaster (1d6) or vibrablade (1d6)

TUNGUSKA SLIM – *bluesman, pirate, cruel*

HD 5 AC 14 MV 30 ML 9 ATK blaster (1d8) or sledgehammer (1d10)

SPECIAL Once per day, if reduced to zero or less HP, may rise again after one round with 1d10 HP.

U – *absent-minded, hungry, confused*

HD 1 AC 12 MV 20 ML 6 ATK fist (1d4)

INTRODUCTION

THIS OLD SCHOOL ADVENTURE is a take on the “wizard’s tower” type of adventure, with the “tower” here in the form of a science fantasy laboratory filled with oddities to investigate, wherein a vengeful portalist with an interest in biomechanics is preparing for a magical power grab. The adventure should be easily usable for any OSR retroclone.


Formatting and game statistics

Room descriptions are given in **bullet points** to simplify use at the table. Additional **indent** on a bullet point indicates that the content provides more details on a less indented bullet point before it. Therefore, give the information from the least indented bullets first, going into more indented bullets when players ask for details. The following format is used:

! Immediate **dangers** or **obvious** things about the room.

 Objects that can be **tinkered** with in some way.

 **Details** revealed by specific searching.

 Indicates presence of **treasure**.

NPCS or MONSTERS are indicated with small caps (stats can be found at the beginning of the adventure). *Names* are written in italics.

Rules-wise, statistics for monsters and NPCs use ascending AC. Regarding experience points, a silver standard is used, so that 1 silver piece (sp) is equal to 1 experience point.

BACKGROUND

CENTURIES AGO, THREE PORTALISTS reigned over a great empire that spanned several stellar systems in the great, yawning Cosmos. The oldest one of them, *Astrodea*, was famed for their expertise in biomechanics, excelling in the creation of incredible abominations of nature.

As time passed, the three divided the empire between them and ruled ruthlessly over their respective realms. But then one day, the two younger portalists conspired to betray *Astrodea*, conquering their kingdom and leaving them powerless to die on a distant planet on the edge of the galaxy.

Astrodea retreated to one of the portalists' long forgotten biomechanical laboratories situated deep within a mountain in the woods on the edge of civilization on the forsaken planet. They brooded in the darkness, performing terrible biological experiments over the years, always with only one goal in mind—revenge.

Aided by the constructs *Paxillos* and *Eltanin*—their “children”—*Astrodea* planned for their vengeance, aiming to exploit the magical force that the rare alignment of the stars brings. Many years ago they sent *Paxillos* to the distant planet *Baikal* by the star *Aldebaran* to build a beacon that will magnify the ritual's strength on the day the stars are right. *Astrodea* then went into hibernation to gain strength until that day.

A few days ago, they awoke and began preparing for the day of their vindication. They are now nearer their goal than ever before.

IMPORTANT CHARACTERS

A PART FROM *ASTRODEA* THERE are a few other important characters appearing in the laboratory. These are *Astrodea*'s creations—*Eltanin* and *Paxillos*—and the pirates and their captain.

Astrodea and the cyborgs do not have to eat as they are continuously feeding on energies harvested from the magical web that spans the Cosmos.

Astrodea

Vengeful portalist, absorbed by the idea of revenge against their former allies.

GOAL – To once again **rule the galaxy**, with their creations *Eltanin* and *Paxillos* as their close advisors.

- Appears **cordial** and **calm**, but as the time of the ritual approaches, the **lust for revenge** shines through.
- Convinced of their own **greatness** and **destiny** to rule the galaxy.
- Would like *Eltanin* to stop their resistance, will immediately forgive them if the opportunity arises.
- Treats *Paxillos* just like the loyal servant they are.
- Usually **accompanied** by 1d6+4 mindless CLONE assistants.

Eltanin

Self-loathing half-machine, half-human, with a glowing red eye.

GOAL – To **stop the ritual** and if possible all of *Astrodea*'s experiments.

- **Disgusted** by how *Astrodea* creates and destroys life at their own whim, and with themselves for being neither machine nor human.
- **Revolted** against *Astrodea* a long time ago, but failed and was trapped in the freezer room.
- Tries to convince *Paxillos* to stop helping *Astrodea*.
- Not against allying with the **pirates**.
- Has only **fleeting memories** of the lab, and a dark, skull-shaped room with some form of control panel. Knows almost nothing about the **portal** or how objects in the lab work.

Paxillos

Responsible and loyal cyborg, following their mother-creator's every order.

GOAL – To **help Astrodea** reclaim their rightful reign over the galaxy.

- Landed long ago on the barren planet *Baikal*, to build a **beacon**.
- The beacon, when finished, will **strengthen** *Astrodea*'s ritual.
- Loathes *Eltanin* for their treachery.
- Fully **loyal** to *Astrodea*.

The Tundra Crew & Tunguska Slim

An infamous group of notorious no-gooders who roam the galaxy and stop for nothing in their hunt for treasure.

GOAL – To **plunder** any valuables they can find.

- Heard about the lab while hiding from the *Galactic League* in a shady dive bar on a nearby asteroid.
- Landed their **spaceship** in the woods, and **descended by rope** down the shaft to the space port (room 11).
- Led by *Tunguska Slim*, a twisted brute most known for his habit of cutting out the teeth of his defeated enemies, wearing the teeth on a leather string around his neck.
- *Slim* often sings bluesy tunes with a raw, growling voice.
- The crew might try to **recruit** the PCs, or become their mortal **enemies**, depending on the PCs' actions.



The Laboratory

*

DEEP UNDER A MOUNTAIN in the forest is the laboratory where *Astrodea* has lived since the betrayal of their former allies. It is a cold and dark place, carved out of the mountain, where dusty rooms are connected by dark stone corridors.

The corridors in the lab are 10' wide and the doors are solid metal. The doorways of rooms 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 9 can be **blocked** with magic force-fields that block all physical objects. These fields are controlled with the **control panel** in room 5.

There is an **elevator** which connects the two levels, specifically it goes between the northernmost corridor of the upper level and the hall outside the portal nexus (room 5) on the lower level. It simply goes up or down at the press of a button.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

FOR RANDOM ENCOUNTERS, roll 1d6 at the end of each exploration turn. On a roll of one, the following turn starts with an encounter. If the PCs make excessive **noise** it triggers an immediate roll. **Stats** for most creatures can be found at the beginning of this booklet.

1d6 Encounter

- 1 *Pyk*, a local adventurer, afraid, in search of an escape from the lab [HD 2, AC 14, MV 40, ML 5, ATK sword (1d6) or rapier (1d6)].
- 2 1d4 idle and weak-willed CLONES, wandering around confusedly in the laboratory
- 3 1d6 MINOR ABOMINATIONS from one of the pools (room 10).
- 4 One MAJOR ABOMINATION from one of the pools (room 10)
- 5 1d6 exploring SPACE PIRATES headed by captain *Slim*.
- 6 *Astrodea*, accompanied by 1d6+4 CLONES. On their way to or from the library performing the last preparations (reroll before turn 6 if using timeline)

1. STATUES & ENTRANCE OUTSIDE

Quiet clearing, avoided by the locals. Smells of flowers and herbs.

- **Spherical statue** in centre.
 - 5' diameter, depicts old **night sky** map.
 - Three positions are marked with **small bronze disks**.
 - ☞ **Pressing** them simultaneously raises statue 5' and exposes dark opening with staircase leading down 300', ending at the **reception room** (room 2). Old air, smelling of moss and dirt, wells up.
 - Sphere **returns** to original position after 1 turn. Lever in room 2 can raise it from inside the laboratory.
- **Five statues** in pentagonal pattern face the sphere.
 - Depict robed figures holding scientific **tools**.
 - **Paths** lead from them to the sphere.
 - Overgrown **flowerbeds** between paths.
 - ☞ 10% chance per turn to find a rare herb with some beneficial effect.



2. DUSTY RECEPTION ROOM

Dust-covered furniture in a dark room smelling of mold. Dead quiet.

- Six **armchairs** stand around a **metal table**.

- Once beautiful, now ragged and decayed. Table is rusty and very heavy.

- A couple of **boxes** and barrels next to the table.

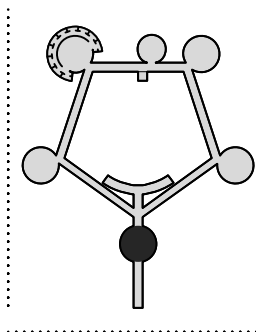
- ♀ Inside are tattered pieces of clothing, metal tools and some bottles of spoilt wine.

- **Curtains** line the walls, with gaps for the doors.

- Tattered red satin.

- 🖐 Hidden behind, next to the south door on the west wall, is a **lever** that **raises** the spherical statue in the clearing on the surface.

- 📦 Behind curtains by the east wall is a box containing a few rolls of **gold wire** (500 sp).



3. FREEZER ROOM AND ELTANIN

A dark semi-transparent barrier of energy covers the entire door opening. Hints of furniture behind.

! Soon, *Eltanin* approaches the doorway, their red eye glowing in the darkness.

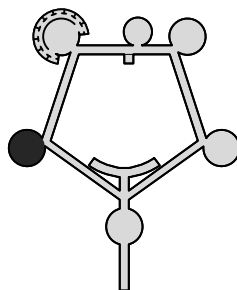
- They beg for help, after being trapped for so long.

! Nothing, including magical effects, can pass through the **force wall**.

- 👉 **Disabled** by turning a lever on the control panel in room 5 (p. 14).

• Room is kept at constant **freezing temperature**.

- **Shelves** with sheets of skin, vials of frozen blood. Various organic objects and body parts hang from the ceiling. Storage for biological experiments.
- Thick, transparent **drapery** divides room in two.
- North of drapery are four frozen and **deactivated CLONES**.



ELTANIN – *cyborg, idealistic, pleading*

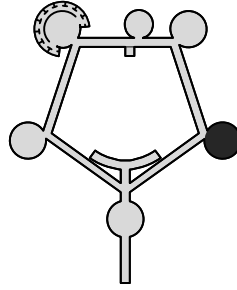
HD 4 AC 15 MV 40 ML 6 ATK scalpels/wrench (1d8) or eye laser (1d8)
PREPARED SPELLS *ESP, magic missile, sleep*



4. CRYSTAL-LIT STELLARIUM

A chilly chamber, completely spherical.

- Narrow **bridge** leads to **platform** in centre.
- Glistening **crystals** on the walls form a replica of the night sky.
 - 400 sp worth of crystals can be **plundered** per turn, up to a total of 2400 sp.



The chair on the platform

Armchair with helmet, mounted in gyroscope-like frame.

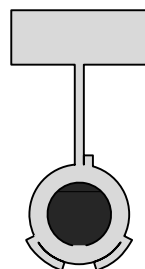
- Chair can rotate in all directions, **controls** on armrest.
 - Currently pointing towards **Aldebaran**.
- There are **belts** to strap someone to the chair.
- Jumble of shiny **wires** on back.
 - If **removed**, chair ceases working. Wires worth 600 sp, takes 2 turns to scavenge with 50% risk per turn of a shock for 1d4 damage.
- Sitting in chair and **pressing button** contacts a **celestial entity** from the direction that the chair points. Spikes shoot into neck and spine of seated person (1 damage).
 - Can ask the entity 1d10 questions. Entity may answer falsely, *Aldebaran* has a 75% chance of true answer per question.
 - Tapping into the cosmic web comes with risks—there is a 10% risk per question to become **possessed** by a demonic entity from beyond.

5. PORTAL NEXUS AND LIBRARY

A fleshy abomination dominates the room, smelling horribly. Tentacles probe. Walls are covered in a mural and bookshelves.

! The **portal nexus** (see facing page) is in the center of the room.

- The room is on the inside of a huge **metallic skull**.
- **Mural** along the wall, from floor level to 20' height.
 - Three robed figures in a barren landscape beneath a starlit sky with an eclipsed sun. One holds a cylinder-shaped object towards the sun.



👉 **Pressing the sun** reveals a **secret space** behind the control panel on the north wall.

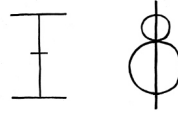
- An **armchair** with **controls** on its armrest is by the eastern wall.
 - Dark metal, red satin seat. Extendable **mechanical arm** connects it to the wall.
 - Tangled mess of shiny **wires** on its back.
 - ♻️ Wires can be scavenged for a total value 600 sp, which wrecks the chair, takes two turns and has a 50% risk per turn of **electrical shock** (1d4 damage).

👉 **Controls** move chair around the room, reaches the entire room.

- **Control panel** on the north wall behind the portal nexus (see facing page).
- **Bookshelves** cover the walls from 20' to 40' height.
 - Topics include anatomy, biology, portal magic, flora and fauna of other planets and similar.
- Two **alcoves** with reading tables are in the eyes of the skull.
- From the domed **ceiling** hangs an antennae-like contraption.

The portal nexus

20' abomination of flesh, like a hundred persons torn inside out and merged together. A pedestal is next to it.



Baikal **The lab**

- Horrible **smell**. Dozens of glimmering **eyes** scan the area around it, **tentacles** probe constantly.

- On the **pedestal** is an ornate knife and a metallic plate with two etched **symbols** (see right).

☞ To go **through the portal**, carve a symbol corresponding to the location into its flesh. An **opening** appears. Crawling through, one emerges from an identical fleshy mass on the other location, covered in alien fluids.

- If the symbol does **not** correspond to a connected location, faint atonal music from horrible alien instruments are heard when crawling in. The portal leads to **the dark void**, near the great swirling mass that is the demonking *Varhu*, where the portal's powers are drawn from.

Control panel on north wall

Levers, controls and other buttons.

☞ **Six levers**. Four leftmost point down, two rightmost up. Control force barriers that **block doorways**, upwards means barrier is active.

- Control from **left to right** on the panel: this room, the reception room (p. 11), the Stellarium (p. 13), the workshop (p. 16), *Astrodea's* room (p. 19) and the freezer room (p. 12).

☞ **Controls** to move the **movable chair** around the room.

- **Secret space** (opened by pressing sun in **mural**) behind the control panel.

- Inside, a **box is mounted on the wall** 30' up. Wires lead from the floor through the box to the ceiling.

♂ **In the box** is a 2' platinum cylinder (5000 sp, p. 28). Strengthens the power of *Astrodea's* ritual when in place.

! If the **cylinder is removed**, an alarm sounds in the lab. All persons in the secret space are instantly **teleported** to a locked cell (room 7, p. 17). Alarm stops only when cylinder or similar object is reinserted.

6. BIOMECHANICAL WORKSHOP

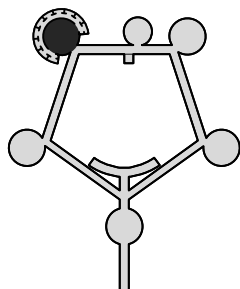
Shelves and large tables littered with odd scientific instruments, tools, unsorted notes and mounds of rubble. Faint chemical smell.

- **Suit with helmet** on rotating platform, seemingly cut in half vertically, so user can put front of torso, arms and head in it.
- Large **machine** in front of the suit, littered with switches, levers and buttons.



When **turned on**, machine hums and a screen in the helmet lights up, showing the selected cell. Arms

control tools in the cells (room 7, p. 17) that can be used for diagnostic and surgical purposes on cell specimens. Cell and tools are **selected** with **controls** on the machine.



When taking a turn to **search through the room**, roll on the following table:

1d10	Object
1	An energy crystal, powering the mind-switching helmets (p. 18, p. 27), worth 500 sp.
2	1d3 test tubes of substance that regenerates organic material, each healing 2d3 hit points.
3	10' of metal wire, worth 100 sp.
4	In total 10 pounds of magnetic space ore pieces, stuck together.
5	A piece of space-time mineral (p. 27).
6-10	Nothing of interest.



7. EXPERIMENTAL SPECIMEN CELLS

Ten sterile cells circle around the workshop.

- **Locked.** Each is unlocked from outside with a button next to the door.

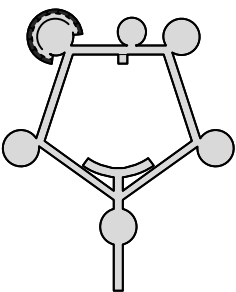
- A large set of diagnostic, surgical and other types of tools are **hidden behind panels** in the walls. **Controlled** with the suit in room 6 (p. 16).

- All cells are **empty except two.**

- One cell contains an unconscious, pale-skinned **humanoid** with pitch-black eyes.

- Wakes up if **touched**, begging for food. This is U, *As-trodea*'s first CLONE. Unlike other CLONES, it has some sense of self and a weak will.

- Another contains the **ELLIPSOID**, an alien creature with seven tentacles attached to an ellipsoid central body.



U — *absent-minded, hungry, confused*

HD 1 AC 12 MV 20 ML 6 ATK fist (1d4)

ELLIPSOID — *intelligent, observing, weird*

HD 2 AC 14 MV 50 ML 7 ATK tentacles (3×1d6) or energy ray (1d10)

ELLIPSOID * Hyper intelligent * Quickly learns complex tasks * No consciousness, acts like a biological machine * Communicates through changes in skin color * Severely malnourished * Feeds on electromagnetic fields * Interprets most acts as attempts at dominance or warfare *

8. PAXILLOS' PRIVATE QUARTERS

Dust swirls when the door is opened. A well tidied room, with a weak metallic scent.

🔑 Underneath a **neatly made bed** is a **locked wooden chest**, electrically **trapped** (1d8 damage to the careless).

👉 In the box is an *energy crystal* and the *mind-switching helmets*.

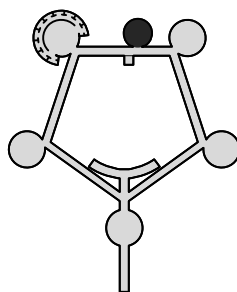
- Stack of meticulous **notes** on **desk**.

- **Drawings** and **instructions** for building various electronic equipment.

- **Diary entries** describe the greatness of *Astrodea* and of the power they will soon wield, and an *Eltanin*, referred to as a “shameful traitor” who does not “deserve to serve their great mother”.

- Sturdy, big **cabinet**.

- A few dark **robes** hang inside.



Mind-switching helmets

- A **pair of helmets** that are connected to a small box by larynx-like transparent tubes.

- 🔑 Upon close inspection, sharp needles can be found on the inside of the helmets.

- 👉 The helmets can **switch the minds** of the people wearing them when powered by an *energy crystal*.

- For **details**, see p. 27.

9. ASTRODEA'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

A dark semi-transparent barrier of energy covers the entire door opening. A bed and desk vaguely made out behind it. There is a ticking sound.

! Nothing, including magical effects, can pass through the **force wall**.

✎ **Disabled** by turning a switch on the control panel in room 5 (p. 14).

- Four-poster **bed** opposite the door.

- ✎ **Switch** behind one of legs open a hatch leading to **secret space** below the room.

- **Clock-like object** on wall above desk, ticking silently. Three hands all point very near what is usually the noon position.

- ✎ **Does not show time**. Strange symbols on its face, in place of numbers. Each turn, one hand **moves slightly** towards the noon position. The other two hands move to **slowly** to see in less than **ten turns**. The device shows the **time remaining** until the alignment of the stars.

- **Desk** along western wall.

- **Bookcases**, next to desk. Handful of books.

- *The Chronicle of Astrodea the Great* tells the story of a great and benevolent ruler named *Astrodea*, betrayed by their close assistants (their names covered in ink) in a despicable coup. The book then describes how *Astrodea* will “soon get their revenge” and “once again, rule the galaxy in splendid magnificence”.

The secret space below the room

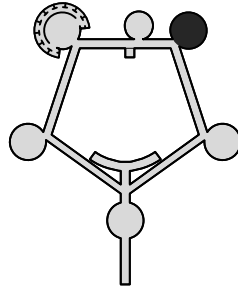
- Below the center of the room, **opened** with a secret switch under the bed.

- Set against a wall is a **necrocapsule**.

- Handled correctly, one can **hibernate** in it in an undead state for centuries. Handled **incorrectly**, one risks being trapped inside, slowly suffocating.

- On a **pedestal** is an old **book**.

- *Astrodea's spell book*. Contains all her, *Eltanin's* and *Paxillos'* currently prepared spells and 1d10 additional random spells.



10. OOZING ABOMINATION POOLS

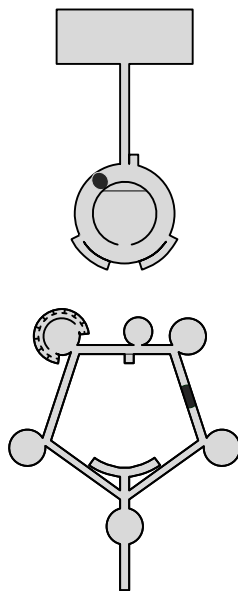
Cover corridor from wall to wall, with waist-tall edges. Unfamiliar smell, at the same time sweet and rotten. Slow bubbling noise.

- Vein-like **roots** extend into the walls and ceiling, creating the feeling of being inside the belly of an alien organism.
- Inside the pool, a **thick, oily fluid** bubbles slowly.

! When by the pool, immediate **50% risk** (and for every turn after) that **ABOMINATIONS** come crawling out of the pool.

- **Roll 1d6**, on 1–4, 1d3 **MINOR ABOMINATIONS**, on 5–6, one **MAJOR ABOMINATION**.

! Pools are **acidic**, 1d6 damage when dipping body-part. This also **automatically attracts ABOMINATIONS** as per above.



The origin of the pools

The pools have appeared in the years when *Astrodea* was hibernating. When the portal nexus was left unsupervised, the hellish nether-plane ruled by the great demon sultan *Varhu* gradually leaked into the laboratory. The pools are the embodiments of these leaks.

MAJOR ABOMINATION (EXAMPLE) – *levitating, slithering appendages, poison sting*
HD 5 AC 14 MV 40 ML 9 ATK pseudopods (2×1d6) and poison sting (1d6, additional 1d6 on failed save vs poison)

SPECIAL Magnetic pull: Magnetic objects in a 10' cone are pulled into the monster's body (save allowed to prevent). 1d4 crushing damage to break free the object or self.

MINOR ABOMINATION – *demonic, devouring*

HD 2 AC 12 MV 20 ML 8 ATK tentacles (2×1d4) or bite (1d6)

11. SPACIOUS SPACE PORT

Vaguely lit by distant sunlight from a hole in the ceiling in the eastern half of the room. Distant murmur of voices.

! 1d6 **SPACE PIRATES** from the *Tundra Crew* **stand guard by the hole**. 50% chance that captain *Tunguska Slim* is among them.

- Among roots and vines, a **rope hangs down** from the shaft.

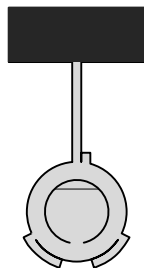
- ☞ Leads after 100' climb to the woods above the lab. *Tundra Crew* **spaceship** parked nearby.

- **Floor** around hole covered in roots, fungi and moss.

- Large **platform** in western part of room.

- Wires and tools scattered on the floor.

- ☞ **Scratch marks** in floor reveal that large vessels have been dragged along the floor (the room has been used as a hangar for *Paxillos'* spacecraft).



SPACE PIRATE — *brutal, opportunistic*

HD 2 AC 14 MV 30 ML 6 ATK blaster (1d6) *or* vibrablade (1d6)

TUNGUSKA SLIM — *bluesman, pirate, cruel*

HD 5 AC 14 MV 30 ML 9 ATK blaster (1d8) *or* sledgehammer (1d10)

SPECIAL Once per day, if reduced to zero or less HP, may rise again after one round with 1d10 HP.

*

OUT IN THE COLD Cosmos, the rocky planet *Baikal* revolves slowly around the red star *Aldebaran*. It was chosen by *Astrodea* as a good spot for a beacon that will amplify the strength of the ritual.

Therefore *Paxillos* was sent to *Baikal* many years ago to construct the beacon. Out of the spaceship they built a small space station on the planet's surface and with *Astrodea*'s help a portal nexus was constructed to allow travel to the laboratory.

If you are running with the time-line, ***Astrodea is on Baikal*** in the beginning of the adventure, to check that all is in order before the ritual. To **finish the beacon**, *Paxillos* is in dire need of **magnetic material**, something they will not dare tell *Astrodea*. 10 pounds is sufficient. If they obtain this, they will immediately melt it down in the plasma chamber and construct long, spindly metallic arms that they mount on the beacon in room 12a (p. 23). This takes three turns.

The walls, floor and ceiling of the space station are constructed of a transparent material that looks like glass but is almost **unbreakable**. The only door to the planet outside is the **airlock** in room 12d (p. 24).

The beacon on Baikal



12A. THE OTHER PORTAL NEXUS

Dominated by a tentacled fleshy mass. Thick corpse smell. Eyes scan constantly.

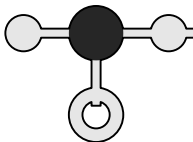
✎ **Travel through the portal** (identical to the one in room 5, p. 14) is performed in the same way as described in room 5. However, there is **no knife or metallic plate** with symbols present here.

! Six GRUNTS are in the room, guarding the portal.

! **Follow** and observe PCs if they leave the room.

GRUNTS — *small, robotic, relentless*

HD 1 AC 15 MV 50 ML 12 ATK railgun (1d8, ranged) or hydraulic spike/chainsaw (1d6)



12B. ALMOST-FINISHED BEACON

In the middle of the room is the beacon—a large machine with spindly antennae reaching for the ceiling.

- The **beacon** consists of a clutter of wires, antennae, cables and boxes both made of metal and of organic material.

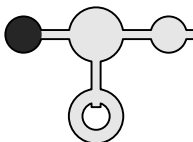
- If it is **destroyed**, the strength of *Astrodea's* ritual is **weakened**.

! Four GRUNTS are in the room at all times, **guarding** the machine.

- Conical ceiling, extending into a funnel-like top.

GRUNTS — *small, robotic, relentless*

HD 1 AC 15 MV 50 ML 12 ATK railgun (1d8, ranged) or hydraulic spike/chainsaw (1d6)



BAIKAL— An uninhabited ice-cold, rocky place with large areas covered in methane lakes and rivers. The atmosphere is hostile and unbreathable. During the day, *Aldebaran* shines across the planet's surface with a reddish glow, providing some relief from the freezing cold nights. The planet is often covered in greenish clouds that every now and then release a rain of methane upon the barren landscape.

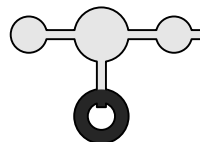
12C. PLASMA CHAMBER & PAXILLOS

Intense heat and flickering light emanate from a room that circles around a glowing red oven in the centre.

- The **plasma chamber** is a magically powered **oven** that melts most materials.

! **Paxillos** stands by the oven in a thick heat suit, holding a piece of metal into the glowing plasma chamber with a pair of large tongs.

- Very interested in obtaining all **magnetic material** that the PCs might have (needed in order to finish the beacon).



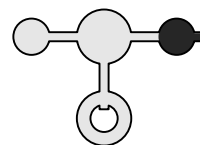
PAXILLOS – *cyborg, responsible, loyal*

HD 4 AC 12 MV 40 ML 7 ATK glowing pliers (1d8, additional 1d3 burn damage on failed save vs paralyze)

PREPARED SPELLS *hold portal, mending, sleep, stinking cloud*

12D. SIMPLE BEDROOM

- **Airlock** leads out onto *Baikal*.
 - A **space suit** hangs next to the airlock.
- Simple **bed**, neatly made
- Small **desk** with stack of **notes**.
 - **Drawings** of the beacon in room 12a (p. 23). Scrawled in frantic, underlined letters are the words “need magnetic material!”.





Additional material

OPTIONAL TIMELINE

The timeline below is optional, and a suggestion for when certain events in the adventure take place. If anything is done to hinder any event, the appropriate changes should be made.

Turns	Event
-6	<i>Astrodea</i> goes to <i>Baikal</i> to check that all is in order.
-3	The <i>Tundra</i> Crew arrives.
0	The PCs enter the laboratory (room 2, p. 11).
6	<i>Astrodea</i> returns from <i>Baikal</i> .
12	<i>Paxillos</i> returns from <i>Baikal</i> .
18	The stars align. <i>Astrodea</i> performs the ritual (see p. 26).

THE ALIGNMENT OF THE STARS

A few turns before the ritual, *Astrodea* stays in room 5, double-checking some books, that wires are correctly connected to the platinum cylinder and that the antenna is properly calibrated. They try their best to remain unimpeded in the room, assisted by *Paxillos* and *CLONES*, using the force-field to block the room's entrance if necessary.

The ritual

At the **time of the ritual** *Astrodea* levitates up between the portal and the antenna, which shoots sparks as the ceiling starts to swirl. A **vertical ray** of compact darkness shoots from the antenna into *Astrodea*. The ray annihilates the rock above the lab and shoots up from the mountain, visible many miles away.

At the same time a **wave** of dark energy spreads out in all directions at a rate of 100' per round, oblivious to any matter in its way. Those **hit by the wave** are affected by a *charm person* spell towards *Astrodea*.

Effects of the ritual

If the **beacon on Baikal** is **working**, the **platinum cylinder** is **in place**, the dark wave continues for millions of miles, with the result that *Astrodea* starts to form an empire filled with friendly slaves in the local stellar system and begins preparing for revenge against their former allies. Those opposing *Astrodea* are sent to the prison mines on the ice-cold planet *Yagavar* at the edge of the stellar system to dig for precious minerals.

If either the **beacon on Baikal** is **not working** or the **platinum cylinder** is **removed**, the wave's effect is much weaker and the *charm person* now only goes out to a radius of 1000'. *Astrodea* may cause some problems in the local area but can not defeat their enemies. *Astrodea* naturally blame the PCs for the failure and redirects their desire for revenge towards them.

When hit by the dark energy, *Astrodea* **transforms** into a 20' tall hooded figure with a head in the shape of a metallic skull, with tendrils of dark energy probing constantly around them. They can still cast spells.

ASTRODEA, TRANSFORMED – *giant, power-hungry*

HD 12 AC 14 MV 80 ML 12 ATK dark tendrils (4×1d20) or dark wave (all in 10' circle save vs magic or receive a random mutation)

SPECIAL Immune to physical damage

PREPARED SPELLS As before transformation

OTHERWORLDLY OBJECTS

Mind-switching helmets

- Two **helmets**, connected to a single **box** by larynx-like transparent tubes. Thin, sharp **needles** on the inside of the helmets. Box has a **button** and a small **compartment**.
- Inserting an **energy crystal** into compartment and pressing button **activates helmets**. Needles pushed into users' heads while bodily fluids are pumped through the tubes.
- One *energy crystal* is enough for **three transfers**.
- Activation results in violent **pain** (save vs magic device or become unconscious for 1d6 minutes). After a minute, the helmet-wearers have switched minds.
 - **Physical abilities** (strength, dexterity, constitution) change to those of the new body, **mental abilities** (wisdom, intelligence, charisma) stay the same.
- If only **one person** uses helmets, their mind is **trapped** (save vs magic device to resist). The person becomes a mindless drone.
- **Trapped mind** occupies the body of whoever uses the helmets next alone. If **two persons** use the helmets while a mind is trapped, one of them gets the other user's mind and the other gets the trapped mind.

Space-time mineral

- Transparent, resembles an emerald green piece of carbon.
- Drawing a **closed curve**, e.g. a circle, on a surface and another closed curve on another surface, creates a **portal** between the curves that stays open for **1d6 turns**.
- The surfaces inside the curves becomes wavy and diffuse and some of the things on the other side of the portal can be glimpsed.
- **Multiple portals** can be connected but in that case, random choice determines which portal one exits from.
- One piece is large enough for **10 human-sized curves**.

Platinum cylinder

- 2' long, covered in strange markings.
- Catalyst of magical effects. If held when **using a spell** or similar magical effect, it **doubles** (or similar) the **spell effect**.
- **10% risk** per use that *Varhu's* cosmic gaze focuses on the user, leading to **nightmares** and **visions** of a huge, swirling mass centered on a black void.
 - User is plagued by hallucinatory **spiral patterns** (especially if the cylinder continues to be used). If unhindered, a user eventually succumbs to the spirals and becomes a slave to the will of *Varhu*, unable to serve any other higher purpose.
- For each use there is a **20% risk** that an oozing **pool** similar to those of room 10 appears near the user. Stays open for **1d6 days**. Continuously **spawns** MAJOR and/or MINOR ABOMINATIONS.

BESTIARY

GRUNTS – Small, roughly dog-sized, semi-autonomous robots, constructed by *Paxillos*. Parse orders through an advanced voice recognition system, and only *Paxillos* can order them around. Typically armed with melee weapons, such as hydraulic spikes or chain saws, and ranged weapons like rail-guns or lasers.

CLONES – Pale, naked humanoids. *Astrodea's* more primitive constructions. Often disassembled for use in other experiments, resulting in some of the **CLONES** lacking limbs or skin. Unintelligent, only rarely speak. Have no conscience, acting like biological machines.

POOL ABOMINATIONS – The things that slip through the pools from the nether-plane are monstrous, mindless creatures that drone through the Cosmos in search for warm flesh to consume. Most are of a minor variety but occasionally larger, more lethal creatures slip through. Each is uniquely designed by the great *Varhu* to spread corruption throughout the Cosmos. Some are mindless, slime covered creatures with suckered pseudopods that long for pulsating bodies to ensnare while others glide through the air or crawl forth with a snakelike slither. Generate MAJOR ABOMINATIONS with the tables on the facing page.

Generating major abominations

Roll **form** and two **attacks** and modify the base stats accordingly. Note any additional **special effects**. Starts out with:

MAJOR ABOMINATION, BASE – monstrous, life-draining, spiraling

HD 6 AC 12 MV 30 ML 9

1d4 Form

1	Crawling, eel-like.	3	Shapeless slime (HD +2, AC -2).
2	Insectoid, multiple arms/legs (MV +30, AC +5, HD -1).	4	Levitating (AC +4, H +20).

1d4	Attack (1)	Attack (2)
1	Gaping maw (1d8, swallow on successful attack, 1d4 acid damage each round until escape, starting next round).	Magnetic pull (save vs breath weapon, on failure magnetic object(s) in a 10' cone are drawn into monster's flesh). 1d4 damage to retrieve or escape.
2	Large mandibles (1d8, grapple on successful attack, automatic crush next round for 1d6).	Poisonous sting (1d8, save vs poison or additional 1d6).
3	Slithery pseudopods (2×1d6).	Beaked appendages (2×1d6).
4	Energy ray (1d10).	Bite with sharp teeth on wriggling tongue (1d10).

If two or three of the d4's show the **same result**, there is a **special effect**:

	Special effect (two equal)	Special effect (three equal)
1	Telepathic, demands servitude to the great Varhu.	Breath weapon (1d4: 1. plasma, 2. fire, 3. gas, 4. slime). 2d6 for all in 20' cone (save vs breath weapon halves damage), twice per day.
2	Can shoot out 2d3 acidic body parts (ranged attacks, 1d6 each), twice per day.	Regenerate HP equal to damage caused after successful attacks .
3	Ensnares a PC in its body on a successful attack, the pc becomes grappled.	Successful attack transforms random body part into dark slime (victim loses 1d4 constitution).
4	Mind devourer, can absorb 1d4 intelligence from one PC each round.	Levitating (AC +2, MV +10).

NOTES

NOTES

