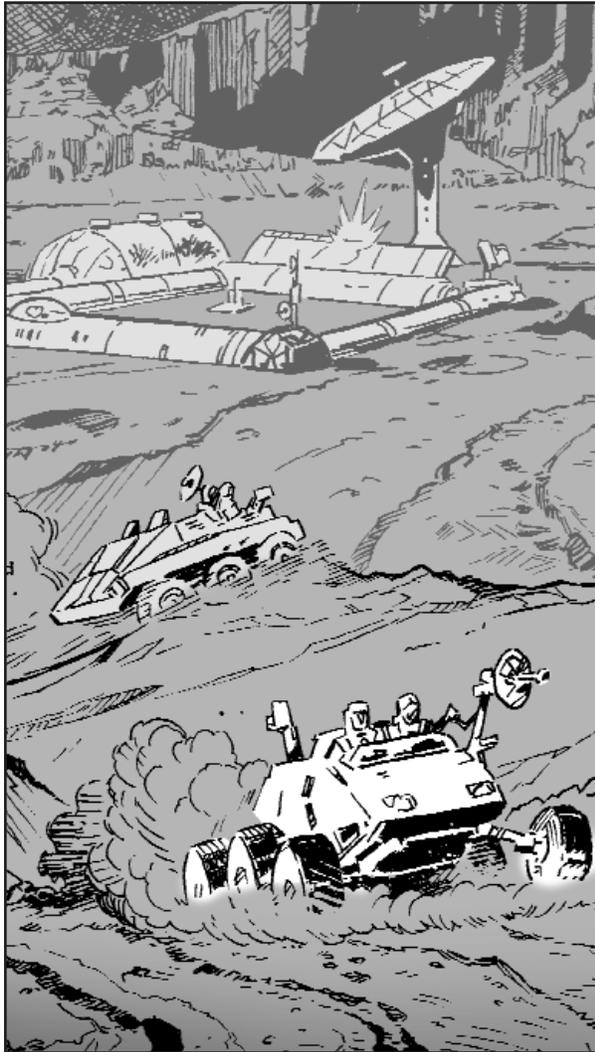


G U R P S

Rescue Mission



AN e23 ADVENTURE
for GURPS® from
STEVE JACKSON GAMES
FOR 3 TO 6 PLAYERS

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The year is 2050. Two days ago, Minotaur Station in Noctis Labyrinthus stopped responding. A rescue team – the PCs – has been sent to find out why.

As the adventure begins, the team is leaving Eos Station at the mouth of the Valles Marineris for the long drive up the canyon to Minotaur Station. Eos Station is a medium-sized base with about two dozen people on the staff. There are three crawlers and six open rovers, or “Mars buggies.” Sending out the group as a rescue team doesn’t strain the base’s resources very much, but sending a second party after them would cause problems. Since the Marineris canyon system is about as long as the distance from New York to Seattle, the team will be on their own once they reach Minotaur.

Players can either create their own 100-point characters or use the three sample characters included at the end of this adventure. GMs can also use the sample characters as NPCs to fill out the party.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This adventure uses the “Domed Mars” campaign setting described in *GURPS Mars*, with some slight variations – the hidden colony is Croatoan, located just north of the Argyre impact basin. All PCs have heard rumors about a secret colony, some of which use that name (others call the hidden colony “Shangri-La” or “El Dorado”).

The assumed tech level is TL9, with the “hard science” option. Much of the equipment used on Mars is older, more dependable TL8 gear, but there is no tech level penalty for any of the gear in use on Mars. Genetic engineering of

humans is possible, but most countries restrict it heavily. There are rumors that some countries on Earth have conducted secret genetic engineering projects, and lots of tabloid-style news reports, but no real facts.

International relations are generally peaceful, although China’s claim to sovereignty over a large chunk of Mars has caused some friction. The Chinese program to use genetically-engineered humans as colonists is a tightly-guarded secret unknown outside the Chinese colony, and would certainly cause the government in Beijing some serious embarrassment.

The Expedition

The rescue team has a Mars crawler, including all its onboard tools and gear (see p. 3). Each individual has a personal Mars suit, and special personal equipment is listed with each of the sample characters. If the team wants to bring along any additional equipment, they are limited by what is available at Eos Station – and there isn’t much. In particular, there are no weapons at the station, although items like rock hammers, laser torches, and other tools could be adapted for combat.

Driving from Eos Station to Minotaur Station takes a week. The terrain is charted, and marked by beacons at 10-kilometer intervals. The trip up Valles Marineris is mostly without incident. Players need make only one skill roll to avoid accident. On a failed Driving roll, the crawler jockey must make another roll and consult the table below.

Critical Success – Loss of control causes a minor skid; no harm done.

Success – Skid into deep sand; lose a day digging crawler out.

Failure – Hit a boulder; lose 1d3 days fixing the suspension.

Critical Failure – Crawler rolls into a chasm; proceed on foot.

Minotaur Station

After the long journey up Valles Marineris to the center of Noctis Labyrinthus, the party arrives at Minotaur Station. Minotaur is a small base – two habitats buried in the slope at the base of the cliffside, connected by a tube, with an inflatable greenhouse

and a radio mast. The station’s normal complement is eight, but when the rescuers arrive there is nobody around. The station is empty, and the crawler and two rovers that belong there are missing.

There is no difficulty getting inside; the airlocks are working and the power is on. The station is not obviously damaged, and everything seems to be in order at first. However, both the primary radio and the backup unit have been sabotaged very effectively – key components have been removed. Fixing them requires an Electronics (Communication Systems) roll at a -4.

The emergency food supplies have been opened, and about 100 ration packs taken. The sickbay has been looted; all portable medical gear and drugs are gone. Someone has even erased all the computer logs for the past three months. (An attempt to recover the lost data requires a Quick Contest between the would-be recoverer’s Computer Operation skill and Saburo Shima’s skill of 16. If successful, the computer expert can get a few weather records and a journal entry fragment reading “. . . has stolen one of the rovers. We buried poor Orlov this morning and are packing up as much as will fit in the crawler before we . . .”)

A careful search turns up some oddities. Rescuers outside who make a successful Vision roll can discover what looks very much like a gravesite, complete with a marker made of piled-up Mars rocks. (If they actually want to dig it up, they find the remains of Lt. Orlov, dead of a blow to the head.)

Team members exploring outside or nosing around in the greenhouse can make a Vision roll to spot some strange markings in the dust adhering to the outside of the dome. There are some handprints

EQUIPMENT

This is a list of some of the important equipment the team is likely to have with them. All weights listed are based on Mars gravity. GMs may allow any other equipment that might reasonably be found at Eos Station.

Electronic Binoculars

A versatile viewing device with 50× magnification, infrared and light-intensification imaging, and a built-in video recorder with 4 hours of storage. 2 lbs.

Laser Torch

A compact laser cutting and welding tool. If used as a weapon it has the following stats: SS 12, acc 1, RoF 4, damage 1d cutting, 1/2 damage 3 yards, max range 5 yards. Power cell is good for 60 seconds of use (240 shots). 5 lbs.

Mars Crawler

A large pressurized vehicle on six fat tires, powered by a nuclear-thermal generator. It can travel at 15 miles per hour over marked paths on the Martian surface, 5 mph over uncharted terrain. It has sleeping accommodations for four people. It has an inertial compass for navigation, a radio with 70-mile range, and an autopilot capable of avoiding obstacles and stopping if lost. The hull has PD 4, DR 50 armor and PF 2 radiation shielding.

Mars Suit

Everyone on Mars has a suit, and they are very rugged and dependable. The helmet is

PD2, DR3, and contains a radio, faceplate data display, and video camera. The suit chest and the life-support backpack are a single rigid unit with PD2, DR5; the limbs are PD0, DR1. Normal life support endurance is 20 hours. The suit weighs 7 kilos, and imposes a DX-1 penalty. Standard equipment includes a lamp, emergency patches, and a radiation meter.

Medical Kit

A compact cutting-edge TL9 emergency kit, including 20 plastiskin bandages, two injectors, foam splint spray, a small medical diagnosis sensor and computer unit, and revival capsules, stimulants, painkillers, coagulants, and antiradiation drugs. Weighs 5 lbs., and grants a +2 bonus to First Aid skill.

Onboard Equipment

The crawler is equipped with a tool kit for field repairs, a fire extinguisher, 100 yards of super-strong cable (can support up to 10 tons), two shovels, and a signal flare gun. If used as a weapon the flare gun has SS 12, acc 4, damage 1d (plus fire in an oxygen atmosphere), range 1800 meters, holds 4 shots, weighs 2 lbs.

Tool Kit

A durable case containing a set of tools all made to handle the Martian environment. Includes a tube of molecular glue, a roll of reactor tape, a diamond-tipped drill, and a small computer database of plans and schematics for all equipment on Mars. 10 lbs.

in the dust, and the word “CROATOAN.” On a successful IQ roll, the heroes may realize that the handprints appear to be bare, rather than gloved.

Finally, Dr. Braganza left a clue behind, in a form that he hoped would not be easy for the Chinese to figure out. On the door of his cabin are two Bible verses written in permanent marker: “For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat” (Exodus 30:19), and “And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation?” (Genesis 46:33). The chapter and verse numbers are the coordinates of the secret Croatoan colony: 46 degrees 33 minutes west longitude by 30 degrees 19 minutes south. That’s about 2,000 miles east-southeast from Minotaur, but only 75 miles south of Eos Station.

Another Rescue Party

After the heroes have been at Minotaur Station for about 24 hours, they detect another crawler approaching from the west. It is carrying a second rescue team sent from the Chinese government base at Olympus.

The commander of the Chinese team is Captain Zhao Zhu, and he has three others with him – Lt. Hong Lee, Sgt. Feng Hua, and Dr. Chao Shu. All are armed with gyro pistols and have Mars suits. They are not at all friendly. Captain Zhao acts suspicious and demands to know what the rescuers have done with the station crew. He tries to keep them unbalanced and on the defensive.

If one of the heroes makes a critical success on an IQ roll, he can notice that one of the Chinese team

looks almost exactly like one of the missing scientists from Minotaur Station. Chao Shu is a dead ringer for Dr. Saburo Shima, except that his hair is worn in a crewcut instead of a long ponytail. (Actually, “Chao Shu” really is Dr. Shima, and will do his best to remain inconspicuous.)

The Chinese team is under orders to find their escaped colonists (see below), and to prevent news of their existence from getting out. Consequently, their first goal is to discover what the other rescue team knows, and their second goal is to silence them forever. Naturally, Captain Zhao would prefer it if the rescue party’s deaths were considered an accident, and the next-best outcome would be if the heroes simply disappear mysteriously.

Zhao tries to make this happen by having his men sabotage the heroes’ crawler. If they can get access to the vehicle while the rescue team is away, the Chinese can disable the fuel sensors and drain the tanks of the power cells so that the crawler just runs out of gas halfway back to Eos. (Detecting this requires a Quick Contest of the heroes’ Mechanic skill against the saboteurs’ skill of 13; they also have to be deliberately checking out their vehicle.)

If that isn’t possible, Sgt. Feng will try to sabotage two of the crawler’s six wheels by cutting partway through the suspension with a laser torch. If he succeeds, the wheels will come off after the crawler has traveled 1d×10 miles.

And if sabotage doesn’t work, Zhao and his men will resort to direct action – if the rescue team leaves for Eos station, after half an hour they get an emergency distress call from Zhao, saying he has found survivors at Minotaur and asking the team to come back and help. If the heroes answer the call, Zhao and Sgt. Feng are waiting in ambush to attack them when they emerge from the crawler, while Lt. Hong and Dr. Shima are in the Chinese crawler ready to intercept a retreat.

What’s Going On

The Chinese government has started a test project at their Mars colony – genetically modified colonists who can survive on the planet without as much life support. If successful, the project will allow the Chinese colony to grow quickly, making good their claim to the entire planet and paving the way for normal human colonists and terraforming.

STATION PERSONNEL

Minotaur Station had a crew of eight before everything went wrong. The commander was Dr. Paolo Braganza, a Brazilian physicist. Braganza was married to Dr. Rachel Cohen (American biochemist/physician) during pre-flight training on Earth and the two of them shared a cabin. Sue Hatsuware (Japanese technician) and Lt. Yevgeny Orlov (Russian technician) were also a couple, and had moved into a double cabin soon after arrival. The remaining four crewmembers lived in single cabins: Dr. Wayne King (American planetologist), Diana Morris (British life support tech), Dr. Saburo Shima (Japanese meteorologist), and Feodor Vasiliev (Russian vehicle operator).

However, three of the engineered colonists decided they didn’t want to remain property of the Chinese government forever. They escaped, riding a rover as far as the batteries lasted and then proceeding on foot to Minotaur Station.

What they didn’t know was that the Chinese had placed an agent at Minotaur. Dr. Shima had been on the People’s Liberation Army Intelligence Service payroll for years, and was at Minotaur to make sure it was nothing but a scientific station. When the colonists escaped, he got a message from his handlers to make sure no word got out. Shima sabotaged the communications equipment at Minotaur, but was caught by Orlov. In the ensuing fight, Shima killed Orlov with a wrench and then fled by rover. He met up with Captain Zhao’s party at the western edge of Noctis Labyrinthus and explained the situation.

The Chinese expected to find everyone still at Minotaur, or possibly trying to reach Eos by crawler. Instead they found an abandoned station and the Eos rescue team. Captain Zhao must find out how much the rescuers know, and make sure nothing about the incident gets out.

Croatoan

There are two ways to find where the missing scientists went. The rescue team can work out the clues left behind by Dr. Braganza and learn the coordinates, or it may be possible to find the tracks left by the missing crawler and rover. Anyone searching for tracks rolls against Tracking skill, with a -1 penalty for each

day since the vehicles left the station. A new skill roll must be made every day the team follows the tracks.

However the rescuers find it, getting to Croatoan isn't easy. The journey takes a week, and goes over considerably rougher terrain than the drive up the floor of Valles Marineris. The crawler driver must make a Driving roll each day to avoid an accident, using the rules on p. 2 to determine the results of a failure.

The Croatoan colony is carefully hidden from orbital or airborne surveillance, but on the ground it's fairly easy to find. There are rover tracks and footprints for about a mile around the colony, so anyone who gets in the general vicinity can soon find the main complex.

The colony itself is only a little bigger than Minotaur Station. There is one habitat, built with parts from the dismantled lander the first colonists arrived in, and a large natural cave that has been lined with plastic film and insulation, then pressurized. Food comes from a hydroponic greenhouse screened by red camouflage netting.

There are currently 33 people at Croatoan, including the six scientists from Minotaur and the three modified Chinese colonists. Nine of the others are children, ranging in age from one month to nine years (Earth reckoning). The new arrivals have strained the colony's systems, but the Minotaur team isn't planning to stay and the equipment they have donated will make up for it.

The inhabitants of Croatoan are a mix of dissidents, survivalists, anarchists, and crackpots. The one belief they do share is that the governments of Earth should not carve up Mars. Their colony is intended to be the nucleus for a population of "indigenous Martians" who can provide an alternative to the bureaucrats and corporations of the mother planet.

The Croatoan group tries to resolve all disputes by consensus, but the unofficial leader is Philippe Hernaut, a maverick French software tycoon who vanished mysteriously along with much of his wealth about ten years ago. Hernaut was one of the founders of Croatoan and is still regarded as the leader by most of the others.

When the rescue team arrives at Croatoan, the Minotaur group is just preparing to leave, and the three Chinese fugitives have been welcomed into the new colony. Unfortunately, the heroes have been followed.

The Final Confrontation

Two crawlers from the Chinese colony have followed the rescuers. If Captain Zhao and his men are still alive, they are in one crawler, while the second has four more soldiers. Otherwise, each crawler carries four soldiers. They have followed the heroes' vehicle using cameras in orbit, and now they are determined to retake their people and if possible silence everyone at Croatoan.

The heroes can choose from several courses of action. They can fight, they can run, they can try to broadcast what they have found, or they can try to trick or persuade the Chinese into leaving without a fight. Undoubtedly, clever players will come up with possibilities of their own.

Fighting

If things come to violence, the Chinese have an advantage in firepower, while the Croatoan settlers have superior numbers and a knowledge of the local terrain. All the Chinese troops have gyro pistols, and the crew of the second crawler has a pair of gyro rifles. The colony has a single shotgun, plus a couple of picks, half a dozen prybars and shovels, and an infinite supply of rocks to throw. The Chinese will demand that the colony surrender, and won't waste time negotiating if the colonists refuse. Their tactics are simple: rush the habitat, cover the airlock while cutting a hole through the habitat wall using a laser torch, and charge in. This will depressurize the habitat, but in the event of a fight everyone will be wearing suits anyway.

Note that Captain Zhao isn't a fool, and his men are skilled in the use of things like covering fire, advancing under cover, and use of concealment. They won't blunder into obvious traps, and can come up with clever plans of their own.

Running Away

If the rescuers leave the colonists to their fate, the GM is justified in giving them a terrible load of guilt by having Zhao massacre the entire population. Perhaps some garbled video footage will get out, so the rescue team can be reminded from time to time of how they failed to help.

On the other hand, if everyone runs away, the Chinese will have a much harder time attacking.

With the available vehicles, it's possible to move everyone, but all the crawlers will be jammed full and the rovers will have suited riders. Getting the colonists to abandon Croatoan is the difficult part here – a good rousing speech (Bard skill) could sway the whole group, or Diplomacy could convince enough individuals to win a vote. The result can be an exciting “Road Warrior” chase across the surface of Mars, as the Chinese try to prevent the colonists from getting to within radio range of another base.

Broadcasting

Croatoan does have a powerful radio, and can send a signal to the communications relay satellites orbiting Mars. If the word gets out, the Chinese will cut their losses and recall the crawlers rather than suffer the additional bad press of a battle.

Of course, this would reveal Croatoan's location, so once again the rescue team must persuade the colonists to go along. There is also the technical task of actually sending out a message, requiring Electronics Operation (Communications). If the heroes want to make a really stirring video, have them roll against Video Production skill, and possibly Acting, Bard, or Performance.

Trickery and Persuasion

Trying to convince the Chinese that the modified colonists aren't at Croatoan is possibly the most difficult option. Captain Zhao will insist on a thorough search, and there just aren't very many hiding places in the colony large enough for even one person, let alone three. If one of the rescue team thinks of it, there is one very good hiding place, which only the engineered individuals can use – the caves. Beyond the pressure envelope of the colony there are literally miles of crevasses and tunnels, far more than the Croatoan group has ever been able to map. Normal humans would be limited by life support requirements, but the engineered Martians can stretch an air tank considerably longer. Coming up with an explanation that will convince Captain Zhao is the hardest part.

Of course, the modified colonists in the tunnels might just find something interesting or deadly, buried since Mars was young – but that's another story.

Conclusions

Depending on the outcome, the rescuers can be heroes, haunted outcasts, or corpses. If they success-

fully hold off the Chinese and get word out about the genetic engineering project, they can expect to suffer reaction penalties from Chinese officials (and even loyalists) who know of their role – all future dealings with such folks will be at a -1 reaction penalty. “Free Mars” advocates and the Croatoan group will naturally regard them as heroes, and the rest of the inhabitants of Mars will certainly respect them for accomplishing a very difficult job with limited resources.

If they fail, or worse yet help the Chinese troops recapture the fugitives, then the reverse situation applies – the Chinese government will look upon them favorably, other Mars pioneers will think they're wimps, and the Croatoan colonists (if they survive) will condemn them as lackeys of the corrupt nation-states of Earth and their imperial designs on Mars. Or something to that effect.

And complete failure ending in death does open the door to a follow-up adventure involving different characters. The “Minotaur Mystery” will be a tabloid sensation on Earth, and the disappearance of a dozen or more individuals will certainly prompt a second expedition sent from the main Mars base at Chryse Planitia. The second team (“Project Theseus”) will be large, armed, and very well-equipped. They will have to figure out the clues, hampered by the passage of time and any tidying-up done by Zhao and his men.

Characters and NPCs

Saburo Shima/Chao Shu

125 points

Dr. Saburo Shima has been working as a Chinese agent since about the time he joined Japan's space program. He has functioned as an “agent in place,” ready to be activated in the event of a conflict over colonization on Mars. He is motivated by a genuine admiration for China and its system, and a profound alienation from his own countrymen. During his stay at Minotaur Station he became attracted to Sue Hatsuware, and jealousy of Lt. Orlov was one reason Shima killed him. In addition to helping his Chinese employers, Shima is desperate to conceal his own treachery.

ST 10 [0]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 12 [20]; **HT** 12 [20].

Move 6.

Advantages: Combat Reflexes [15].

Disadvantages: Secret (Chinese agent) [-10]; Workaholic [-5].

Quirks: Admires all things Chinese; Attracted to Sue Hatsuwara. [-2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (Mars) (M/E) IQ [1]-12; Biochemistry/TL9 (M/VH) IQ [6]-12; Chemistry/TL9 (M/H) IQ [4]-12; Computer Operation/TL9 (M/E) IQ+2 [4]-14; Driving/TL9 (Mars Rover) (P/A) DX+1 [4]-13; Electronics Operation/TL9 (Sensors) (M/A) IQ [2]-12; First Aid/TL9 (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-13; Free Fall (P/A) DX [2]-12; Geology/TL9 (M/H) IQ [4]-12; Guns/TL9 (Gyroc) (P/E) DX+2 [2]-14*; Judo (P/H) DX [4]-12; Mechanic/TL9 (Electric Motors) (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Meteorology/TL9 (M/H) IQ+2 [8]-14; Navigation/TL9 (M/H) IQ [4]-12; Planetology (Mars) (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Research (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Stealth (P/A) DX [2]-12; Vacc Suit/TL9 (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-14.

* Includes +2 bonus for IQ.

Languages: Chinese (M/A) IQ [2]-12; English (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Japanese (native) (M/A) IQ [0]-12.

Captain Zhao Zhu 120 points

Captain Zhao is one of the People's Liberation Army officers in charge of the genetic engineering project. His particular job is security, and the escape of three colonists represents a disaster for his career. If Zhao can recover them and keep everything a secret, he may be able to weather the incident. But if word gets out to other countries, the least that will happen is an end to his career. He could wind up being made the scapegoat, or quietly eliminated by his shadowy superiors.

ST 10 [0]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 12 [20]; **HT** 13 [30].

Move 6.

Advantages: Imperturbable [10]; Military Rank 4 [20]; Strong Will +3 [12].

Disadvantages: Duty (PLA) [-10]; Intolerance (Non-Chinese) [-10]; Stubbornness [-5].

Quirks: Ambitious; Suspicious. [-2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (Mars) (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-13; Brawling (P/E) DX [1]-12; Computer Operation/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-12; Demolition/TL9 (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Driving/TL9 (Crawler) (P/A) DX [2]-12; Driving/TL9 (Mars Rover) (P/A) DX [2]-12; Electronics Operation/TL9 (Communication) (M/A) IQ [2]-12; First Aid/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-12; Free Fall (P/A) DX [2]-12; Guns/TL9 (Gyroc) (P/E) DX+2 [2]-14*; Navigation/TL9

(M/H) IQ [4]-12; Survival (Mars) (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Tactics (Land) M/H IQ [4]-12; Vacc Suit/TL9 (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-14.

* Includes +2 bonus for IQ.

Languages: Chinese (native) (M/A) IQ [0]-12; English (M/A) IQ [2]-12.

PLA Soldiers 75 points

These are soldier-taikonauts sent to Mars to guard China's territorial claim on the Red Planet. They usually work as technicians or vehicle operators in the colony, but do keep up their proficiency with gyroc weapons. They may not be privy to everything that is going on, but they are very unlikely to disobey Captain Zhao's orders.

ST 11 [10]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 10 [0]; **HT** 12 [20].

Move 6.

Advantages: High Pain Threshold [10]; Military Rank 1 [5].

Disadvantages: Duty (PLA) [-10].

Skills: Brawling (P/E) DX [1]-12; Computer Operation/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-10; Demolition/TL9 (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Driving/TL9 (Mars Rover or Crawler) (P/A) DX [2]-12; Electronics Operation/TL9 (Communication) (M/A) IQ [2]-10; First Aid/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-10; Free Fall (P/A) DX [2]-12; Guns/TL9 (Gyroc) (P/E) DX+2 [2]-14*; Survival (Mars) (M/A) IQ [2]-10; Vacc Suit/TL9 (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-11.

* Includes +1 bonus for IQ.

Languages: Chinese (native) (M/A) IQ [0]-10; English (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-9.

Philippe Herault 80 points

The eccentric billionaire founder of the Croatoan colony, Herault wants to establish a human presence on Mars that is free of the control of Terran governments. His ultimate dream is for Croatoan to be the nucleus of a Free Mars, where people can live according to their own ideals. He favors a particular school of Communitarian Anarchism, but recognizes that others are likely to have their own notions of an ideal society. Though he was once one of Earth's richest individuals, most of his fortune is now tied up in the Croatoan colony, or else is unavailable.

Most of the other Croatoan settlers have abilities about on par with Herault's.

ST 10 [0]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 12 [20]; **HT** 11 [10].

Move 6.

Advantages: Charisma +1 [5].

Disadvantages: Pacifism (Self-defense only) [-15].

Skills: Administration (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Agronomy/TL9 (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Area Knowledge (Mars) (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-13; Chemistry/TL9 (M/H) IQ [4]-12; Computer Operation/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-12; Driving/TL9 (Mars Rover) (P/A) DX [2]-12; First Aid/TL9 (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-13; Free Fall (P/A) DX-1 [1]-11; Mechanic/TL9 (Electric Motors) (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Navigation/TL9 (M/H) IQ [4]-12; Philosophy (Anarchist) (M/H) IQ-2 [1]-10; Planetology (Mars) (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Scrounging (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Vacc Suit/TL9 (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-14.

Languages: English (M/A) IQ [2]-12; French (native) (M/A) IQ [0]-12.

Modified Colonists 100 points

The three genetically engineered colonists are not capable of surviving on Mars without any equipment, but can live in conditions that would kill an ordinary human. In practice, the three Martians can live on the surface wearing nothing more than cold-weather clothing, and need only a breathing mask and oxygen tank instead of a full life-support system. Their low-pressure lungs and reduced need for oxygen means they can double the useful life of an oxygen tank.

They have HT+2 [20]; the advantages Breath Holding [2], Decreased Life Support (Halved oxygen requirements) [10], Early Maturation 1 [5], Filter Lungs (Filters CO₂ instead of particulate matter, +0%; Nuisance effect: Doubled Food Requirements, -20%) [4], and Temperature Tolerance-5 [5]. Their lungs are optimized for low atmospheric pressure, and their bodies are suited for Martian surface gravity. The total point cost is 46 points for the Mars package.

All three are short and heavily-built, with deep chests and very thick skin. Their color is quite dark as protection against ultraviolet light. Their names are Ba Xing, Ba Hong, and Si Ri. Xing and Hong are men, identical clones apparently about 18 years old (they are actually 12). Ri is a woman, seemingly in her mid-20s but really 16. All three are very naive about other human cultures, but they do know they don't want to remain in the Chinese colony as members of a permanent worker caste.

ST 10 [0]; **DX** 11 [10]; **IQ** 12 [20]; **HT** 14 [20].

Move 6.

Advantages: Martian package [46].

Disadvantages: Social Stigma (Valuable property) [-10]; Workaholic [-5].

Skills: Agronomy/TL9 (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Computer Operation/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-12; Driving/TL9 (Mars Rover) (P/A) DX-1 [1]-11; First Aid/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-12; Mechanic/TL9 (Electric Motors) (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13; Stealth (P/A) DX-1 [1]-10; Survival (Mars) (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Vacc Suit/TL9 (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-13.

Languages: Chinese (native)(M/A) IQ [0]-12; English (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-11.

Science Specialist 95 points

A general researcher assigned to Eos Station, this character can either be a PC or NPC member of the rescue team; the character stats are also appropriate for the Minotaur Station scientists.

ST 10 [0]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 11 [10].

Move 5.

Advantages: Versatile [5].

Disadvantages: Curious [-5]; Workaholic [-5].

Skills: Biochemistry/TL9 (M/VH) IQ [6]-13; Chemistry/TL9 (M/H) IQ [4]-13; Computer Operation/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-13; Driving/TL9 (Mars Rover) (P/A) DX+1 [4]-13; Electronics Operation/TL9 (Sensors) (M/A) IQ [2]-13; First Aid/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-13; Free Fall (P/A) DX [2]-12; Geology/TL9 (M/H) IQ [4]-13; Mechanic/TL9 (Electric Motors) (M/A) IQ [2]-13; Navigation/TL9 (M/H) IQ-1 [2]-12; Planetology (Mars) (M/A) IQ [2]-13; Research (M/A) IQ [2]-13; Science! (M/VH) IQ-1 [4]-12; Vacc Suit/TL9 (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-14.

Equipment: Electronic Binoculars; Mars Suit; Medical Kit.

Technician 95 points

Probably the most common character type on Mars, the Technician can be on the rescue team or one of the Minotaur or Croatoan personnel.

ST 11 [10]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 12 [20]; **HT** 10 [0].

Move 5.

Advantages: Manual Dexterity +2 [6]; Versatile [5].

Disadvantages: Bad Sight (Correctable) [-5]; Workaholic [-5].

Skills: Chemistry/TL9 (M/H) IQ [4]-12; Computer Programming/TL9 (M/H) IQ+1 [6]-13; Driving/TL9 (Mars Rover) (P/A) DX [2]-12; Electronics/TL9 (Communications) (M/H) IQ [4]-12; Electronics Operation/TL9 (Communications) (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-14; First Aid/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-12; Free Fall (P/A) DX-1 [1]-11; Mechanic/TL9 (Electric Motors) (M/A) IQ+3 [8]-15; Navigation/TL9 (M/H) IQ [4]-12; Research (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Vacc Suit/TL9 (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-14.

Equipment: Mars Suit; Laser Torch; Tool Kit.

Vehicle Operator 95 points

Vehicle operators are already developing a kind of “cowboy” mystique on Mars, as taciturn loners who pride themselves on self-reliance and open-mindedness. This character can be either a party member or one of the Minotaur Station personnel.

ST 10 [0]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 11 [10]; **HT** 11 [10].
Move 6.

Advantages: Acute Vision +2 [4]; Less Sleep-1 [3]; Night Vision [10].

Disadvantages: Overconfidence [-10]; Stubbornness [-5].

Skills: Area Knowledge (Mars) (M/E) IQ+2 [4]-13; Brawling (P/E) DX [1]-13; Computer Operation/TL9 (M/E) IQ+1 [2]-12; Driving/TL9 (Crawler) (P/A) DX+1 [4]-14; Driving/TL9 (Mars Rover) (P/A) DX+1 [4]-14; Electronics Operation/TL9 (Communications) (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-12; First Aid/TL9 (M/E) IQ [1]-11; Free Fall (P/A) DX-1 [1]-12; Mechanic/TL9 (Electric Motors) (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-12; Navigation/TL9 (M/H) IQ+1 [6]-12; Planetology (Mars) (M/A) IQ [2]-12; Survival (Mars) (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-12; Vacc Suit/TL9 (M/A) IQ+2 [6]-13.

Equipment: Mars Suit.



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