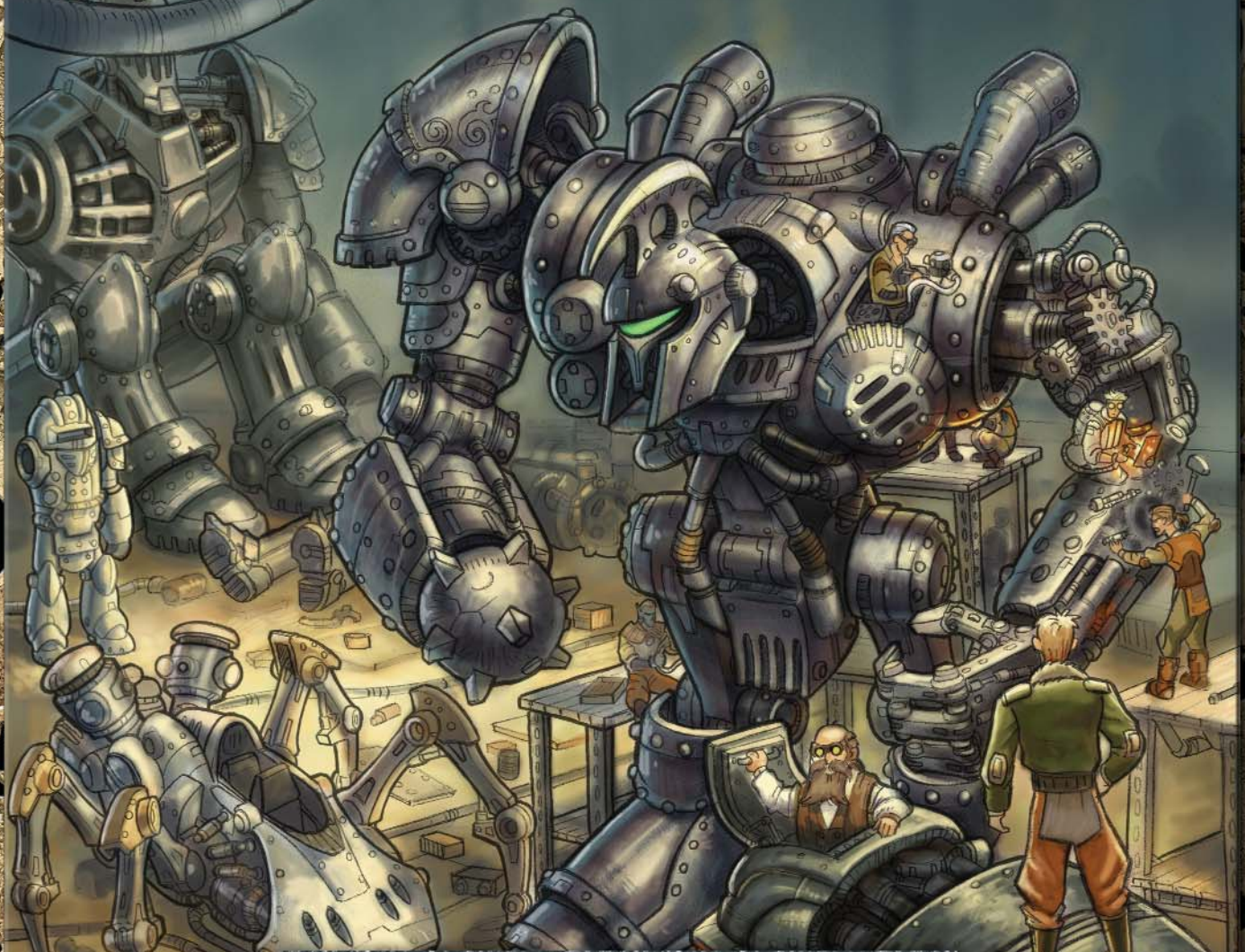


DRAGONMECH

MECH MANUAL



SWORD & SORCERY





UNIQUE AND UNUSUAL MECHS

The advent of mecraft has affected every culture on Highpoint, not just dwarves, elves, orcs, and humans. Though mechs appeared first on the sur-

face and have had their greatest impact there, the hundred-odd years since their creation have been more than enough time for knowledge of these new wonders to filter to all corners of the world. In recent years, strange mechs have been seen underground in the hands of the drow, derro, and even aboleths - not to mention unique adaptations above-ground by orders of monks, deranged

druids, and other groups. This section presents a variety of these unique and unusual mechs, often crafted for purposes far removed from those first conceived by the dwarves of Duerok.



TABLE I-14: UNIQUE AND UNUSUAL MECHS

MECH NAME	FACTION	SIZE	POWER	PRICE (GP)
Avenging Blade (unique)	Independent	Gargantuan	Animated	24,544
Brine Worm	Aboleth	Gargantuan	Clockwork	7,701
Cathedral (unique)	Independent	Manpower	Colossal II	4,032
Deep Spider	Drow	Huge	Manpower (clockwork hybrid)	5,201
Earthblood the Mighty (unique)	Independent	Animated	Gargantuan	160,018
Home	Mech tribe	Colossal	Steam (currently nonfunctional)	5,673 plus weapons
Lactrodectus, the	Drow	Colossal IV	Clockwork	478,912
Razid	Derro	Colossal	Animated	22,212
Sand Strider	Desert nomads	Huge	Clockwork	5,827
Shrine of Oon	Monks of Oon	Colossal IV	Steam	19,231
Steel Warlord	Various	Colossal	Clockwork	15,696
Sylvan Revenger (unique)	Independent	Colossal V	Animated	79,485
Thundercloud	Universal	Colossal II	Steam	21,245
Underbreather	Various	Large	Manpower (clockwork hybrid)	1,164

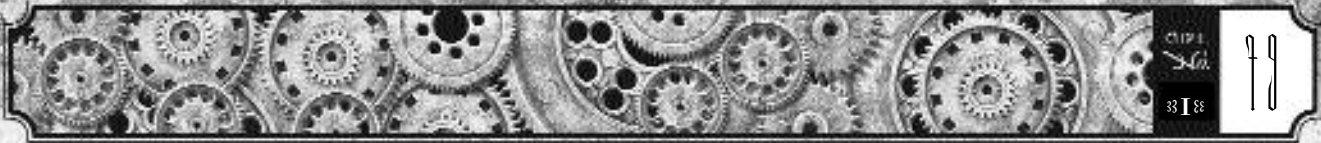
TABLE I-15: ONBOARD WEAPONRY – UNIQUE AND UNUSUAL MECHS

LOCATION	ARC OF FIRE	WEAPON (DAMAGE, RANGE IN FT., OTHER)	PU	CREW
AVENGING BLADE ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Right arm	Melee	Gargantuan <i>+1 sword blade</i> (2d12+10/19-20)	8	1
Total			8	1
BRINE WORM ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Front	90° forward	Huge steam breather (2d8, 30)	4	1
Front	Melee	Huge lobster claw (2d8/19-20)	4	2
Total			8	3
CATHEDRAL ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Head	360°	Huge ballista (3d6/x3, 120)	4	2
Total			4	2
DEEP SPIDER ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Left front leg	Melee	Huge barbed sword blade (2d8+1/19-20/x3)	4	1
Right front leg	Melee	Huge barbed sword blade (2d8+1/19-20/x3)	4	1
Total			8	2



TABLE I-15 CONTINUED: ONBOARD WEAPONRY – UNIQUE AND UNUSUAL MECHS

EARTHBLOOD THE MIGHTY ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Head	180° forward	Stone melter (special)	1	1
Right arm	180° forward	Huge shard launcher (3d6+3/x3, 50)	4	1
Total			5	2
HOME ONBOARD WEAPONRY (CURRENT)				
Right shoulder	180° forward	Huge nonfunctional springbow (2d6/x3, 60, ignores hardness)	4	2
Total			4	2
HOME ONBOARD WEAPONRY (FORMER; AS HORNET)				
Right arm	Melee	Huge buzzsaw (2d8/19-20/x3, ignores hardness)	4	1
Left arm	180° forward	Huge springbow (2d6/x3, 60, ignores hardness)	4	2
Left arm	180° forward	Huge net cannon (0, 30, captures as net)	4	2
Right shoulder	180° forward	Huge springbow (2d6/x3, 60, ignores hardness)	4	2
Total			16	7
LACTRODECTUS ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Abdomen	360°	Colossal II ballista (5d10/x3, 300)	32	3
Abdomen	360°	Colossal II ballista (5d10/x3, 300)	32	3
Left mandible	Melee	+2 <i>Colossal lobster claw</i> (2d12+17/19-20)	16	2
Right mandible	Melee	+2 <i>Colossal lobster claw</i> (2d12+17/19-20)	16	2
Total			96	10
SAND STRIDER ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Front	Melee	Large lance (2d6+4/x3)	2	1
Total			2	1
SHRINE OF OON ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Left side	180° left	Colossal ballista (7d6/x3, 250)	16	3
Right side	180° right	Colossal ballista (7d6/x3, 250)	16	3
Front	180° front	Colossal ballista (7d6/x3, 250)	16	3
Back	180° back	Colossal ballista (7d6/x3, 250)	16	3
Top	360°	Colossal catapult (6d6, 250)	16	5
Total			80	17
STEEL WARLORD ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Left arm	Melee	Huge buzzsaw (1d8/19-20/x3, ignores hardness)	4	1
Total			4	1
SYLVAN REVENGER ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Branches	360°	Colossal javelin rack (2d10 (x8), 200)	16	0
Branches	360°	Colossal javelin rack (2d10 (x8), 200)	16	0
Branches	360°	Colossal javelin rack (2d10 (x8), 200)	16	0
Branches	360°	Colossal javelin rack (2d10 (x8), 200)	16	0
Right arm	Melee	Colossal III sword blade (7d12+16)	64	0
Left arm	Melee	Colossal III sword blade (7d12+16)	64	0
Total			192	0
THUNDERCLOUD ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Right arm	180° forward	Gargantuan steam cannon (3d10/x3, 950)	8	2
Left arm	180° forward	Gargantuan steam cannon (3d10/x3, 950)	8	2
Right shoulder	180° forward	Huge steam cannon (2d10/x3, 1000)	4	2
Left shoulder	180° forward	Huge steam cannon (2d10/x3, 1000)	4	2
Total			24	8
UNDERBREATHER ONBOARD WEAPONRY				
Right arm	Melee	Large lance (2d6/x3)	2	1
Total			2	1



AVENGING BLADE (UNIQUE)

Size: Gargantuan
Power Source: Animated (dispel DC 26)
Payload Units: 10
Height: 25 ft.
Space/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.
Crew: 1 (weapons: 1)
Firing Ports: 10
Hit Dice: 18
Hit Points: 88
Critical Thresholds: Not subject to critical hits
Base Initiative: +3
Speed: 50 ft.
Maneuverability: Good
AC: 6
Hardness: 14 (steel, armor plating)
Base melee attack: +2
Base ranged attack: +3
Unarmed damage: 1d10+6
Trample: largest Medium; safe Small; damage 3d6
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +2, Will -
Abilities: Str 22, Dex 16, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -
Mechcraft DC: 36
Base Planning Time: 72 days
Base Cost: 1,431 gp
Total Cost: 24,544 gp
Labor Time: 2,400 man-hours
Construction Time: 24 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer) plus rituals (3 days)
Special: Armor plating, fast legs

PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	USE
1	Crew
1	Sleeping quarters
8	Onboard weaponry
10	Total

The paladin Melina Blue has dedicated herself to ridding the world of evil by whatever means are available. This includes building a giant wood and metal version of herself, having a cleric associate animate it, and forging one of the largest magical swords ever seen. She roams the land like her nomadic forebears, righting wrongs and slaying monsters, all the while using Avenging Blade as a way to start conversations about her faith.

Like the cleric Dulkan Tullerd (pilot of the

Cathedral mech described below), Melina firmly believes that worshiping the old gods is the only way to save Highpoint from the lunar menace. Unfortunately for Dulkan, Melina often travels with him, her strident and flashy style clashing with his more thoughtful approach. Melina is all hellfire and brimstone, convinced that the troubles afflicting her world are a test from the gods. The lunar deities are no better than demons, and it's the duty of all true Highpointers to take up arms against them, for dying in this fight is better than living with a changed earth.

This kind of zeal either inspires or frightens. A handful of people have taken Melina's message to heart, fostering a small revival of faith along the path of her travels. A larger number don't entirely agree with her, but they're glad to see Avenging Blade marching through their territory. Still others find the woman and her mech to be as dangerous as the monsters they battle, for where Melina goes, trouble follows.

So does attention. For one thing, her mech is a huge recreation of herself, down to the details of her armor. Many mechs look somewhat like living beings, but Melina treated Avenging Blade as a sculpture project. More than one person has mistaken the mech for a giant at first, especially when the light is poor.

Avenging Blade is also noteworthy for being an animated mech that didn't come from the elves. Melina and all of her craftsmen were human, making this perhaps the first such mech created by human magic. While Melina hasn't given this any thought, other people are realizing that the elves apparently no longer have a monopoly on this sort of enchantment.

While Melina isn't a fool, her approach to combat is straightforward. When she sees an enemy, Avenging Blade charges

toward it and swings its mighty sword. This might not seem like the best use of Melina's skills, as she is a powerful warrior, quite capable of fighting battles herself. Undoubtedly, though, the mech's sheer size and strength have a great psychological effect on foes. Melina is a skilled pilot by now, and in battle Avenging Blade is fearsome. In fact, Melina has found her mech to be a weapon of such power that she occasionally considers leaving the way of the paladin and training as a mech jockey, a notion that always fills her with guilt.

Melina Blue, Female Human Pal8: CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 8d10+8; hp 83; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +8; Mech Atk +8; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d8+5, +2 *longsword*) or +11 ranged (1d6+3, throwing axe) or +11



mech (mech weapons on Avenging Blade); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+5, +2 *longsword*) or +11/+6 ranged (1d6+3, throwing axe) or +11/+6 mech (mech weapons on Avenging Blade); SA smite evil (2/day; +2 attack, +8 damage), turn undead; SQ aura of courage, aura of good, detect evil, divine grace, divine health, lay on hands, remove disease (2/week), special mount; AL LG; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +7; Str 16, Con 12, Dex 16, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Handle Animal +6, Heal +7, Mech Pilot +13, Speak Language (Elven); Improved Initiative, Mech Weapon Proficiency (Avenging Blade), Mechanized Combat Practice, Mechwalker.

Languages: Common, Elven.

Possessions: +2 *longsword*, throwing axes (x4), pilot's armor, +2 *light steel shield*

Spells Prepared (2/1; save DC 13 + spell level; CL 4): 1st—*bless*, *magic weapon*; 2nd—*bull's strength*.

BRINE WORM

Size: Gargantuan

Power Source: Clockwork

Payload Units: 10

Height: 25 ft.

Space/Reach: 20 ft. by 15 ft./10 ft.

Crew: 1 (weapons: 4 or 1 aboleth; see below)

Firing Ports: 10

Hit Dice: 18

Hit Points: 99

Critical Thresholds: Green, Yellow 50,

Orange 25, Red 10

Base Initiative: +0

Speed: 40 ft.

Maneuverability: Poor

AC: 6

Hardness: 8 (steel-reinforced glass)

Base melee attack: +3

Base ranged attack: +0

Unarmed damage: 1d10+7

Trample: largest Medium; safe Small; damage 3d6

Saves: Fort -2, Ref +2, Will -

Abilities: Str 24, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -

Mechcraft DC: 48

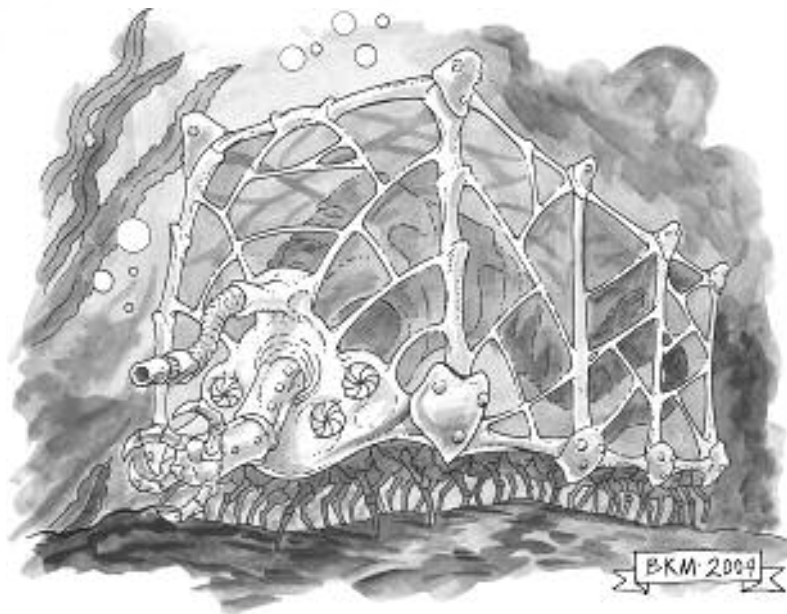
Base Planning Time: 96 days

Base Cost: 7,342 gp

Total Cost: 7,701 gp

Labor Requirements: 3,840 man-hours

Construction Time: 48 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer)



PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
1	Crew
1	Open
8	Onboard Weaponry
10	Total

The first aboleth to discover the secrets of mecraft in the mind of a newly enslaved dwarf was swift to put this new technology to use. Instantly developing and planting the command for the creation of a mech that would carry it from its seas of endless night, the first brine worm was created.

Brine worms are essentially enormous tanks, filled with murky green-brown waters taken from the depths of underground seas. Aboleths can comfortably fit within these tanks and manipulate a variety of controls set within the glass to move the mech at their will. The immense, usually rectangular tanks are supported by hundreds of tiny, centipede-like mechanical feet that allow the water-bound passenger a freedom of movement and speed on dry land like they could previously only imagine.

Marking the front of the creation is a single large claw, with four evenly spaced, pinching fingers. This appendage allows the creature inside to either manipulate things outside the mech or crush enemies in its way. Just above the claw is a steam breather nozzle that can easily scour the land before the mech. In addi-

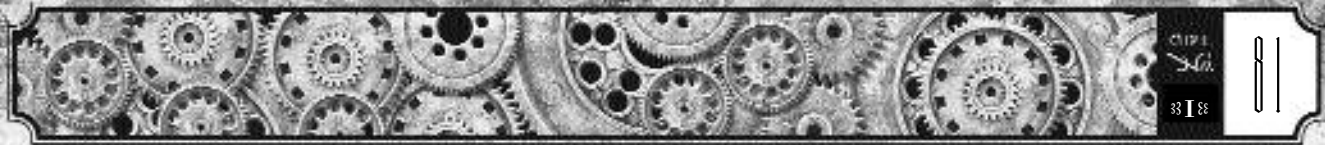
tion to these basic weapons, several brine worms also have watertight orifices at the front of their tanks. These openings can allow the creature inside to either be heard by those outside the tank or reach a tentacle outside to attack or draw something within.

Possibly the most important creation of the last dozen centuries for water-bound creatures, brine worms are simple and fragile creations compared to other mechs. Small with a form that is mostly constructed of glass, brine worms are encountered without a sizable contingent of guards only under the most dire circumstances. Being that their major form of transportation is so vulnerable, it's rare that an aboleth will take its mech into battle, preferring to use their considerable psionic powers or subtler methods of manipulation and persuasion.

Since the first appearance of brine worms and their strange passengers, larger variations have appeared in and around coastal areas. It's rumored that some aboleths were quick to make deals with kraken and intelligent races of the surface seas with which they might share similar goals.

SPECIAL RULES

Shattering the Walls: A brine worm is a lot like a walking aquarium. It is quite vulnerable to being shattered. The glass walls are reinforced with steel, and there are nested inner walls to prevent a hull breach from draining the entire



tank, but nonetheless it's a fragile creation.

Any critical hit against a brine worm causes the tank to begin leaking. A tank drains completely in 40 rounds. A second leak cuts the drain time in half, and a third leak cuts it further in half. A brine worm reduced to 0 hit points shatters in an explosion of glass, draining the tank completely in 1 round.

An aboleth stranded in a drained tank can still move per its usual land speed, but begins to "drown" in the air per the usual rules.

Aboleth Pilots: A single aboleth is treated as being 4 crew members for the purposes of piloting a brine worm and operating its weapons.

ABOLETHS, MERCHANTS OF LIVES

The creation of mechs has proven to be a revolution in survival, but not just for those creatures that live above the earth. Deep within the deepest of lightless underground seas lurk creatures as alien as any lunar creature. Aboleths are timeless beings, ancient and nearly immortal. Each one bears the memories of every generation that has come before it, all the way back to a chaotic paradise of endless briny oceans electrified with strange life. Highpoint thus holds more terror in its depths than its lunar invaders could ever realize. And, though few realize it yet, the beginning of the lunar rain sparked the events that have led to the aboleths' reawakening into a bold new age, as the creation of mechs has freed these nightmarish things from their murky confines.

With incredible powers over the mind and the ability to mutate those they touch into grotesque slaves, aboleths are insidious terrors. But what makes them most deadly are not their natural abilities, but their alien genius and their boundless ambitions. When the first aboleth encountered a creature with knowledge of mechs, it was intrigued and immediately put the creature to use. As knowledge of mechs spread, their enormous potential became clear to the dwellers in the deep seas. Soon, using the fruits of their slaves' labors and their own genius, the first aboleth crawled from the sea of its underground prison, into a new kind of mech that offered it a freedom unknown for hundreds of centuries. These mechs, known as brine worms, have allowed many aboleths to begin an exodus to the surface.

The world they found above was one they had previously only seen in the minds of their slaves. Knowing from creatures they

had encountered before that their forms would cause only fear and distrust, they began to act through intermediaries, hiding themselves within their strange mechs, offering untold knowledge and aid. Those that first allied with these curious benefactors, almost exclusively underground races such as deep gnomes, derro, and dwarves, were made into slaves en masse. With whole towns falling to their influence, either becoming monstrous slaves or serving the aboleths' wills through a corrupted leader, the ancient creatures began expanding their influence deep within the earth. As they moved closer and closer to the surface, they gained slaves, but worked more subtly, posing as merchants of ancient secrets, looted treasures, and slaves. Knowing that many mechs rely on manpower to run, their offer of completely subservient, mindless, uncomplaining workers has caused many to overlook their disdain for such dealings. Thus, aboleths have become known for their corrupt but profitable dealings and are greatly sought after as allies.

In recent months, aboleth brine worms have made their first appearances on the surface. Bringing with them the fortunes they have earned thus far, treasures from the depths, and armies of strange slaves for sale, they have been met with the same suspicion they have always expected. Currently, they serve merely as benevolent slave merchants, offering great manpower at ridiculously low costs, spreading their slaves onto the mechs of any who will buy them. With the money they gain, the aboleths buy influence and secrets, augmenting their knowledge of the depths and ancient lore with current rumors and secrets of modern power struggles.

However, the aboleths have remained secretive of their dealings in recent years. They have no intention of allowing their current business partners to know of the whole races they've conquered underground and turned into slaves or the vast breeding projects they've implemented in the depths to assure that they have wares to sell for years to come. An inquisitive creature that learns anything of the aboleths' secrets or seems to suspect greater evils either swiftly disappears or becomes a slave on a departing mech.

The aboleths' goals vary, and they have no coherent purpose and rarely ally with each other. But all seem to be using the same methods. Spreading their influence through their slaves and their works within the towns and city-mechs of Highpoint, there will soon

be no point on the planet's surface these aliens from the depths cannot reach.

CATHEDRAL (UNIQUE)

Size: Colossal II

Power Source: Manpowered

Payload Units: 32

Height: 50 ft.

Space/Reach: 25 ft. by 25 ft.

Crew: 16 (weapons: 2)

Firing Ports: 21

Hit Dice: 80

Hit Points: 440

Critical Thresholds: Green, Yellow 264,

Orange 154, Red 88

Base Initiative: -2

Speed: 40 ft.

Maneuverability: Poor

AC: 2

Hardness: 10 (stone, Colossal II)

Base melee attack: +0

Base ranged attack: -2

Unarmed damage: 3d6+8

Trample: largest Huge; safe Medium; damage 5d6

Saves: Fort -2, Ref -4, Will -

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 6, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -

Mechcraft DC: 41

Base Planning Time: 82 days

Base Cost: 2,782 gp

Total Cost: 4,032 gp

Labor Time: 3,840 man-hours

Construction Time: 24 days (20 avg. laborers plus 2 overseers)

PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	USE
17	Crew
4	Onboard weaponry
11	Chapel
32	Total

Duncan Tullerd is a cleric in a time when few still have faith in the old gods. Apprenticed to a coglayer as a child, he found the mechanistic life unfulfilling and instead turned to spiritual matters. He has grown to see steam technology as a threat almost on a par with the lunar rain.

Using his early training and funds donated

by a handful of believers, he has constructed a large man-powered mech that serves as a mobile temple. He and his faithful crew are always traveling, preaching the word of salvation through old faith and new self-reliance. He often finds the mech Avenging Blade traveling alongside him, to his chagrin. Dunkan is an educated and philosophical man, but his preaching pales next to Melina Blue's charisma and fighting spirit.

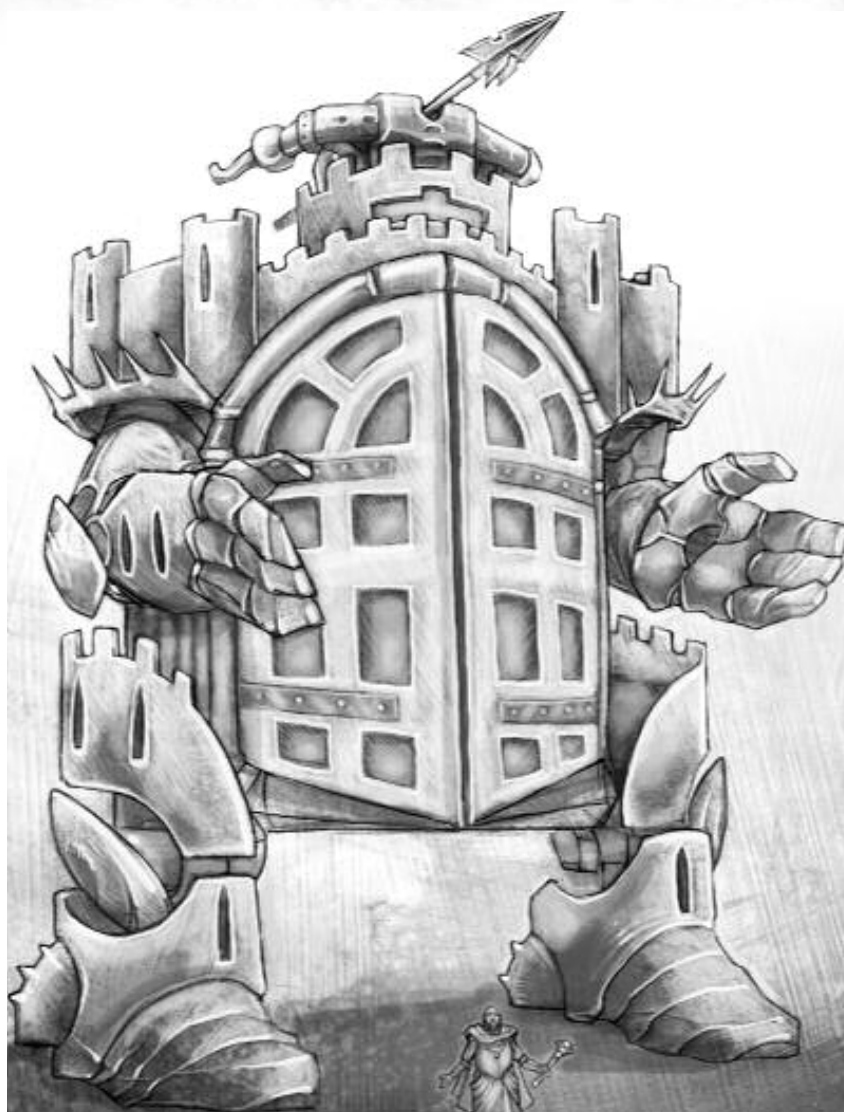
Cathedral is not a combat mech. It does have a ballista mounted atop its head, but the weapon is used as a deterrent, and then only when absolutely necessary. If faced with hostile mechs or other large foes, the crew simply rows harder and hopes they can outrun whatever chases them.

The mech takes its name from its intended purpose. Troubled by the dwindling faith among the people of Highpoint, Dunkan built a church on legs. The workings of his mech are crowded together, even by the standards of other manpowered mechs. Cathedral's crew work cheek to jowl with each other in the limbs so that most of the torso is free for a worship space.

Cathedral looks like a stubby barrel on legs, with two short arms and a cylindrical head topped by the ballista. The legs are designed with special knee joints allowing the mech to lower its body to ground level while not in motion. This process takes several minutes and requires a level surface, but the torso is flat at the bottom, permitting it to rest without being rocked by wind. Two large panels on the torso's front swing open like doors to show the worship area.

The chapel itself isn't large, accommodating at most two dozen worshippers in moderate discomfort. But Dunkan has outfitted it as best he can. The altar is at the back of the torso, and a tier of walkways circling the inner body 10 feet up allows a few extra souls to be present. If a large crowd gathers, Dunkan performs his rites on the ground just outside the doorway. When in the wild, the crew also uses this area as sleeping quarters, resting in shifts to maximize space.

Dunkan hopes that Cathedral will inspire the denizens of Highpoint to return to their traditional ways. He chose to make it a man-powered mech because he feels that people are turning their backs on faith and magic in favor of steam. This has troubled him more as he gets older, and he has a particular distaste for steamborgs and the assimilated. Worshipers of Dotrak also bother him, and after services he will often engage in long arguments with them about the nature of divinity.



Dunkan Tullerd, Male Human Clr8:

CR 8; Medium humanoid (human); HD 8d8; hp 52; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 10, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +6; Mech Atk +6; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d8+2 plus 2d6 vs. evil, +1 holy heavy mace) or +2 mech (any mech weapon; non-proficient); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d8+2 plus 2d6 vs. evil, +1 holy heavy mace) +2/-3 mech (any mech weapon; non-proficient); SA turn undead; AL NG; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +9; Str 13, Con 10, Dex 11, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +3, Diplomacy +9, Heal +9, Knowledge (religion) +6, Mech Pilot +3, Sense Motive +5, Spellcraft +3, Speak Language (Dwarven, Halfling, Elven); Combat Casting, Improved

Turning, Mechanized Combat Practice, Negotiator.

Languages: Common, Dwarven, Halfling, Elven.

Possessions: +1 holy heavy mace, leather armor.

Domains: Good, Sun.

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1; save DC 13 + spell level; domain spells marked by *): 0—create water, detect poison, mending, purify food and drink, resistance, virtue; 1st—bless water, command, detect evil, obscuring mist, protection from evil*, remove fear; 2nd—aid*, align weapon, augury, gentle repose, zone of truth; 3rd—continual flame, create food and water, dispel magic, searing light*, wind wall; 4th—divination, holy smite*, restoration.



DEEP SPIDER

Size: Huge
Power Source: Manpower
 (clockwork hybrid; see below)
Payload Units: 9
Height: 15 ft.
Space/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.
Crew: 1 (weapons: 2) (see below)
Firing Ports: 5
Hit Dice: Same as pilot (use 10 HD if targeted separately)
Hit Points: Same as pilot (use 55 hp if targeted separately)
Critical Thresholds: Green, Yellow 33, Orange 19, Red 11
Base Initiative: +4*
Speed: +10 ft.*, climb +20 ft.*
Maneuverability: Average
AC: +2*
Hardness: 15 (mithral)
Base melee attack: +1*
Base ranged attack: +4*
Unarmed damage: 1d8 + pilot's adjusted Strength modifier
Trample: largest Small; safe Small; damage 2d6
Saves: Fort +0, Ref -4*, Will -
Abilities: Str +2*, Dex +8*, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -
Mechcraft DC: 28
Base Planning Time: 56 days
Base Cost: 3,981 gp
Total Cost: 5,201 gp
Labor Requirements: 480 man-hours
Construction Time: 6 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer)

* These mechs use and augment the pilot's own initiative, AC, attacks, damage, saving throws, and abilities.

PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	USE
1	Crew
8	Onboard Weaponry
9	Total

While the Lactroductus was by far the first and most impressive attempt by dark elves to create mechs, it was not their last. Since their great mechanical spider has been sent to lay siege to the world above, the drow have refined their engineering skills and have sought to apply them to their everyday life in the underdeep. As a result, they have created



deep spiders: personal mechanized suits of armor useful for battle, traveling through the treacherous underground depths, and countless other utilities.

The shape of deep spiders was inspired by their namesake arachnids and as cruel parodies of the cursed drow cast-outs known as driders. Appearing as a monstrous, headless spider with a wide opening on top, a piloted deep spider looks like nothing so much as a drider with a metallic abdomen and legs. To use a deep spider, a single pilot kneels within the opened area and operates an exposed set of controls at the front of the mech. The lower half of the pilot's body is covered by the mech, but from the waist up he is exposed, except for a series of harnesses and restraints that hold him in place. While using the mech, the pilot has the full range of movement that a great spider would, allowing him to pick across the most broken terrain and even travel up walls with ease. The front two legs of these mechs bristle with barbs that have been filed to wicked points, allowing the pilot to rear on his back six legs and operate the front two in battle. Being that the pilot's upper body is exposed while in these mech armors, the pilot can forgo use of the deep spider's weapons and use his own (though he cannot control the mech and make use of his own weapons in the same turn). Thus, many deep spider pilots also arm themselves with spears, crossbows, and the other deadly weapons commonly used by their people.

Since the creation of deep spiders, the guards of most drow temples and noble hous-

es have been equipped with these mechanized armors. Their increased defensiveness and mobility has made them, already some of the most feared warriors in the underdeep, all the more deadly. Deep spiders have also been used with great success in drow raids on other underground communities, crawling up vertical crevices and along walls and ceilings en masse. This has already caused many of the drow's neighboring races to become cautious to the point of paranoia as these new mechs are allowing the dark elves to expand their realms as an unprecedented rate.

For non-drow races, there has been one benefit to the creation of deep spiders. Taking some kind of great racial affront to the creation of these mechs that so clearly mock their twisted forms, drider attacks on drow holdings have risen ten-fold. Banding together in groups and in numbers never before seen, the driders have worked to oppose drow expansion and engineering efforts at every turn.

SPECIAL RULES

Deep spiders augment the wearer's own abilities through a miniaturized clockwork engine, but still require the user to use his own strength to move the mech. Normally a Huge manpowered mech would require three crew members, but thanks to this clockwork engine providing partial power, deep spiders can be used with only one crew member.

MECHS AND THE WILL OF THE SPIDER QUEEN

The Spider Queen, the seductive and cruel goddess of the drow, has always been a deity of flesh and the countless debaucheries and perversions it holds. Her chosen people are lesser reflections of her will, delighting in torments and excesses of pain and lust, and have based much of their society on these vices. Even the Spider Queen's greatest blessings and curses come as physical sensations, whether it be the anointment of favored servants into her seductive embrace, or her surgical warping of those that have affronted her into driders and other monstrosities. In both extremes, the Spider Queen's touch is extremely personal, if often cruel, and no tool or intermediary is ever used to dilute the touch of her favor or fury upon her people. Currently, her servants' growing favor for and reliance on mechs and constructs of steel has piqued both her interest and distaste.

Ever an opportunist, the Spider Queen has no intention of allowing a potent new form of weapon go to waste, and mechs are indeed potent weapons, especially when shaped by the genius of the drow. However, she also has no patience for the blunt toils of the forge and engineering and will destroy her chosen people before she sees them become a new breed of exceptionally tall dwarves. The mechs her people have crafted, as strong and impressive as they have been, even to her, lack the personal nature of an assassin's envenomed blade or a torturer's needles. Thus, the goddess of the drow finds herself in divine conflict and has chosen a bloody path of patience before she makes a decision on her people's use of mechs.

To this end, she has appeared in the dreams of hundreds of driders, showing them the Lactroductus and deep spiders her worshippers now craft. Inspiring these accursed creatures with hatred, she promises that any who work to destroy these metal abominations and please her will be redeemed and regain their past drow forms. The vast majority of driders profess to hate the Spider Queen, yet few of them can resist the opportunity to be redeemed by her hand. Putting aside their loathing of their goddess and one another, driders throughout the underdeep have assembled to disrupt and put an end to the drow's mechanized efforts.

Though the Spider Queen has no intention of redeeming a single one of her accused drider servants, she sees them as expendable test subjects. Should they ruin her people's

devices of gears and steel, she will have proof of what she already suspects: that a cruel hand or bite can be far more deadly than any thing of forged steel. However, if the drow's new constructs can turn back her abominations, there may be potential for these weapons after all. She may then seek to impose her will upon a new age of sinisterly elegant mechs. But for now, the Spider Queen watches and waits, testing her traditions against the new innovations of her own vicious people.

EARTHBLOOD THE MIGHTY (UNIQUE)

Size: Gargantuan
Power Source: Animated
Payload Units: 6
Height: 25 ft.
Space/Reach: 10 ft. by 10 ft./10 ft.
Crew: 1 (weapons: 2)
Firing Ports: 6
Hit Dice: 32
Hit Points: 176
Critical Thresholds: Not subject to critical hits
Base Initiative: +3
Speed: 40 ft.
Maneuverability: Average
AC: 6
Hardness: 10 (enchanted crystal)
Base melee attack: +4
Base ranged attack: +3
Unarmed damage: 1d10+1d6+8
Trample: largest Medium; safe Small; damage 3d6
Saves: Fort 0, Ref +2, Will -
Abilities: Str 26, Dex 16, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -
Mechcraft DC: 36
Base Planning Time: 72 days
Base Cost: 3,632 gp
Total Cost: 160,018 gp
Labor Time: 2,240 man-hours
Construction Time: 28 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer) plus rituals (3 days)
Special: Combat spikes

PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	Use
1	Crew
5	Onboard weaponry
6	Total

Nobody in Highpoint, from the humblest worm farmer to the best-traveled dusk runner, has seen another mech like Earthblood the Mighty. Started by an ambitious psionicist and finished by a maverick conjurer/geomancer, Earthblood is the only crystalline mech known to exist. Several elemental spirits of earth are bound into its shell, giving it unusual strength and durability for an animated mech.

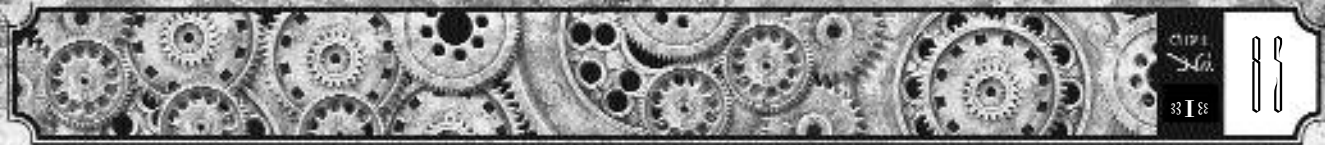
Earthblood looks unfinished but imposing. The entire mech is composed of rough blocks of crystal fused together, leaving many sharp spikes and jagged edges. Each block is a dark crimson hue. Its legs are thick and stumpy and its arms are powerful. The left arm ends in a hammerlike fist, while the right one terminates in a strange conical protrusion. Although crystal spires jut from every other surface of its form, Earthblood's head is perfectly flat on top, as if the peak were cut off with an axe. It has no face to speak of, although several of the panels that compose the head are thin enough for the pilot to see through readily.

The hammering fist is put to good use in combat, as Earthblood's strength compares well with mechs and creatures of its size. The other arm carries a shard launcher, one of the strange devices created by pilot Kinja Delmaak, a conjurer with an active imagination. He summons and binds spirits of earth to power his mech and its devices. The shard launcher shoots a stream of sharp crystal spikes, and Kinja uses this to soften up his enemies before closing in to batter them to pulp.

Another unique device, the stone melter, was installed in Earthblood's head. It allows Kinja to manipulate earth and rock in a variety of ways. He usually uses these abilities to trap foes, allowing him to either rain spikes on them or make his escape. Kinja is rather soft-hearted, and he has been known to use his mech and its unusual powers to help those he thinks are in need, whether they asked or not.

Nobody knows the beginning of Earthblood's story. Its outer shell, all joined together except for the head, was found by Kinja while he was escaping from a misadventure underground. Several human and dwarven corpses were also present in this cave, none of them showing external injuries but all having bled from the nose and ears. Kinja originally had no desire to linger, but the first thing he found when ascending to the surface was an angry lunar dragon. Wisely, he elected to investigate the mech.

In the days it took the dragon to leave the area, Kinja deduced several things. It wasn't hard to figure that the massive crystalline form



was intended to be a mech - all of the corpses had tools for carving rock, and a jumble of papers proved to be the thing's construction plans. The crew was obviously almost done with its labors, judging by the plans as well as the small supply of provisions left in a nearby cave. Ever practical, Kinja hauled the bodies to a different cave and helped himself to the rations while settling in with the plans.

He puzzled over the mech's power source for some time. Although he was no coglayer, Kinja had been inside several mechs, and he could tell that this one was unusual. None of the apparatus needed for a mechanical or manpowered mech could be found in the caves, and the design left little room for them anyway. At the same time, the usual ritual paraphernalia for animating a mech wasn't present. Finally, the fact that the mech was made of thick crystal rather than the available granite made it clear: The operator of this mech would need psionic powers.

Kinja didn't (and doesn't) possess psionics, but he recognized a good thing when he saw it. As soon as it was safe to emerge, he bolted for his home. Years of adventuring had left him with enough treasure to follow through on his latest plan. Three months later, he and a small team returned to the now rather fetid

cave complex. After giving the bodies a more dignified burial, Kinja led his crew in aligning the crystal shell so it could be animated by arcane means instead of psionic powers. Thus was born Earthblood the Mighty.

Since then, Kinja has adventured all over Highpoint. His great interest is exotic magic, especially new conjurations and summonings, and whatever else he acquires is usually shared with those who dwell nearby. Both the Legion and the Stenians have invited him to join them and share his knowledge, but so far he prefers to keep his exotic mech to himself. Although his hirelings understand the process that animated Earthblood, Kinja has kept the original plans in his possession, making it very difficult for anyone to duplicate his feat.

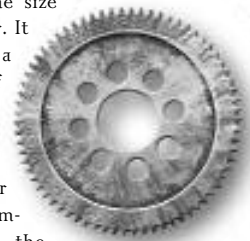
Two things trouble Kinja as he pilots his crimson creation across the land. First, he has no idea what became of the individual who first planned and built Earthblood. His best guess is that this unknown psionacist somehow came into contact with the mind of a nearby lunar dragon, sending that person into madness (and enraging the dragon). This would help explain how the construction crew died without struggle or injury. If that individual is still alive and at large, Kinja is

prepared for an intense discussion about who properly owns this mech now.

The other problem is that spirits of elemental earth are increasingly hostile to Kinja. He uses them to animate Earthblood and provide power to its unusual weapon systems. Kinja always believed that while this process might be exhausting for them, it didn't cause any lasting harm. Lately, however, he has had difficulty summoning anything related to earth, and he hopes to find a solution before something bad happens to him and Earthblood.

SPECIAL RULES

Crystalline Mech: Earthblood's unique construction makes it strong and durable, but also slow and awkward. A crystalline mech's Strength and hit dice are increased as if the mech were one size category larger. It also has a Hardness of 10. The animated crystal is capable of reforming after it suffers damage, granting the mech fast healing 1.



However, the bulky construction reduces the mech's Speed by 10 feet if smaller than Colossal, and 20 feet if Colossal or larger. Its Maneuverability is the next category lower. The mech's outer frame must be very thick to support its own mass, which reduces the starting PU by 40%, to a minimum of 1. The mech's base material cost is tripled.

It is possible for a psionically gifted character to use such a mech as an enormous focus. The details are intentionally left for the GM to determine, based on the role of psionics in the campaign (if any).

Weaponry: Kinja created two unusual weapons for his mech. Both draw power from elemental earth spirits that he summons. The shard launcher sprays needles of diamond-hard rock at targets, while the stone melter allows him to reshape earth and rock like putty. For each item to function, Kinja must summon 12 HD worth of creatures from the elemental plane of earth and bind them into Earthblood. If this ritual is not performed, the items won't work.

Damage done by the shard launcher is considered earth-based for the purpose of damage resistance and the like; therefore, lunar creatures are vulnerable to its attacks. One burst from it is similar to the effect of three castings

of magic stone, although the spiky shards are better at penetrating armor. Creating it cost Kinja 15,000 gp.

The stone melter, which cost 120,000 gp, is similar to a staff in that it has 50 charges that can be used to cast various spells. Each time Kinja binds new elemental spirits into Earthblood, the stone melter is fully recharged. Kinja hadn't expected this to happen, and he suspects it is connected to the increasing difficulty he has with earth spirits. The stone melter's powers are:

Move earth (2 charges)

Passwall (3 charges)

Stone to flesh (uses all remaining charges; minimum 20)

Transmute rock to mud (1 charge)

Elemental Powers: Earthblood has a strong connection to the elemental plane of earth, and it is considered to have the earth subtype. All of its attacks are considered earth attacks. If the mech and its opponent are both touching the ground, Earthblood gains a +1 bonus to its attack and damage rolls. If the foe is waterborne or airborne, Earthblood has a -1 penalty to attack and damage.

HOME, FORMERLY HORNET (UNIQUE)

Size: Colossal

Power Source: Steam (not functioning at present)

Payload Units: 20

Height: 35 ft.

Space/Reach: 15 ft. by 15 ft./15 ft.

Crew: 0 (weapons: 0; formerly crew 4, weapons: 7)

Firing Ports: 16

Hit Dice: 48

Hit Points: 80 (maximum 264; currently damaged)

Critical Thresholds: Green, Yellow 119, Orange 53, Red 13

Base Initiative: -1

Speed: 50 ft. (currently not mobile)

Maneuverability: Average

AC: 2

Hardness: 9 (stone, Colossal)

Base melee attack: +2

Base ranged attack: -1

Unarmed damage: 1d12+10

Trample: largest Large; safe Medium; damage 4d6

Saves: Fort 0, Ref -4, Will -

Abilities: Str 30, Dex 8, Con-, Int-, Wis-, Cha-

Mechcraft DC: 39

Base Planning Time: 78 days

Base Cost: 2,623 gp

Total Cost: 5,673 gp plus weapons

Labor Time: 3,840 man-hours

Construction Time: 48 days (10 avg. laborers plus 1 overseer)

Special: Extra weapon mounts (4 PU), Gearwright maintenance

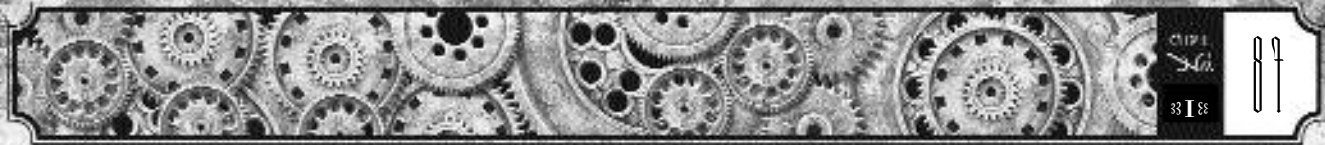
PAYLOAD USAGE (CURRENT)

PU	USE
16	Living quarters and storage
4	<u>Broken onboard weaponry</u>
20	Total

PAYLOAD USAGE (FORMER; AS HORNET)

PU	USE
4	Crew
16	<u>Onboard weaponry</u>
20	Total





The mech now called Home by its inhabitants is little more than an empty hull. It stands silently near the bluffs of the western plateau on the endless plains, a monument to the failed genius of its creator. It also has a more practical function, providing shelter and defense to a nomad clan that might otherwise perish in the lunar rain. And in the near future, it may well become the subject of intense interest in Glatek and beyond.

Once this mech was called the Hornet, and it was a unique design created by a dwarf named Hudie Toothless. Hudie, who got his last name from a revolutionary magnetic gear he designed, was a mercenary inventor. His specialty was weapons, and the Hornet was how he tested them in the field. Weapons could be added and removed fairly easily from its mounting brackets, and the Hornet was otherwise kept in top condition.

Or so Hudie thought. However, the relentless use of this field-testing mech caused several key boiler components to wear down. One day, while he was testing his new spring-bow and net cannon (see page 102), the entire secondary boiler array exploded. Hudie and his chief assistant were both killed instantly, and the Hornet was rendered inoperative. The other two technicians on board survived the explosion, but unwisely elected to head for Glatek on foot. The noise of the blast drew predators, who attacked them.

A nomad clan, also following the explosion, came upon the technicians. They drove the beasts away, but one technician was already dead and the other moments away from expiring. The latter one managed to gurgle a few words and point in the Hornet's direction before breathing her last. Believing that she had indicated where she wished to be buried, the nomads took both bodies and headed toward what they had considered a haunted valley (thanks in part to Hudie Toothless' occasional weapon tests).

Their first sight confirmed their superstitions - a massive humanoid figure, smoke and flames pouring from within as if it were a demon. But reason overtook their initial panic, and the more worldly of them realized that they were looking at a mech. Once the steam-driven cataclysm wound down, they took possession of it, making such repairs as they could to make it habitable. Getting the mech back in operating condition was beyond their knowledge, to say nothing of piloting it, but they managed to stabilize the inner framework. In a short time, what was once a cutting-edge research mech became a reasonably comfortable tower, complete with a small

sheepfold.

Turning Hornet into Home required the nomads to remove much of its advanced gear. Hudie's experimental weapons were designed to be easy to take out, as was the buzzsaw, and for a time the nomads simply stored them outside under a large sheet made of animal skins. The saw's blade they turned into a shrine of sorts, marking the spot where they buried their benefactors (the technicians, plus Hudie and his assistant). In time, much of the equipment was taken to Glatek to trade for practical goods. Even after the explosion and the following period of neglect, many of the components were valuable enough to interest traders.

In fact, the sharper minds who visit Glatek realize that these components can be put together to create unusual weapons. Some even recognize the work of Hudie Toothless, whose mysterious disappearance was noticed by his clients. Questions are being asked about these formerly humble nomads who have come into possession of such interesting technology.

And while the nomads are not skilled with machines, they aren't fools either. They know that these things scavenged from Home are starting to draw attention. While they are willing to sell what they have found, they believe Home was a gift to them for trying to save the technicians' lives, and they will fight to defend it.

This mech makes a good tower. Hudie designed it to be sturdy and dwarfish, and its armor is stone. When it was the Hornet, it was painted in alternating black and yellow stripes. After taking it over, the nomads have used it to tan hides, and the traveler who visits Home today sees what looks like a threadbare giant, its patchwork robe flapping in the wind. The broken springbow on its shoulder - which would fetch a handsome sum in Glatek or Edge, if it arrived intact - is the mount for a crude banner depicting a flaming humanoid figure, a symbol adopted by the clan after they found Home.



LACTRODECTUS, THE

Size: Colossal IV

Power Source: Clockwork

Payload Units: 256 (heavy payload; 128 reserved for cargo)

Height: 150 ft.

Space/Reach: 80 ft. by 80 ft./50 ft.

Crew: 13 (weapons: 10)

Firing Ports: 51

Hit Dice: 192

Hit Points: 1,056

Critical Thresholds: Green, Yellow 528, Orange 264, Red 106

Base Initiative: +4

Speed: 100 ft.

Maneuverability: Average

AC: 2

Hardness: 21 (mithral, Colossal IV)

Base melee attack: +7

Base ranged attack: +4

Unarmed damage: 5d6+15

Trample: largest Colossal; safe Gargantuan; damage 7d6

Saves: Fort -4, Ref +0, Will -

Abilities: Str 40, Dex 18, Con -, Int -, Wis -, Cha -

Mechcraft DC: 60

Base Planning Time: 120 days

Base Cost: 201,537 gp

Total Cost: 478,912 gp

Labor Requirements: 61,440 man-hours (plus magic items)

Construction Time: 110 days (70 avg. laborers plus 7 overseers)

Special: Fast legs, heavy payload, magical effects (see below), poison vents, spell resistance 20, steady feet

PAYLOAD USAGE

PU	USE
13	Crew
19	Open
128	Cargo
96	<u>Onboard Weaponry</u>
256	Total

The Lactroductus is one of the greatest elven fears come to realization: the return of the drow to the surface world.

The first confirmed sighting of the Lactroductus occurred two years ago, but even before that, tales of a spider of impossible size picking among the ruins of the elven forests were reported with shocking regularity. Only