

ECOLOGICAL SCIENCE FANTASY RPG

CLOUD EMRESS



ECHOES OF MEMORY



FOR USE WITH THE
MOTHERSHIP
SCI-FI HORROR RPG

1E

SEBASTIAN YŪE



ECHOES OF MEMORY

LOCATION: [R5] Cloud Empress: Land of Cicadas

Content Warning: Echoes of Memory contains forced cloning and cult-like behavior.

Clones of the Rustbucket's inhabitants pour forth from a long-decommissioned laboratory. The clones comb the streets in search of their originals so they can destroy them and take their place. The PCs encounter Sorisha, a survivor of one of these clone attacks, who asks them to investigate the lab.

LABORATORY

From the outside, the laboratory appears a decommissioned husk. Its peeling exterior and sun-bleached plaster belie its age. Its doors lie on the ground, torn from their rusty hinges, and a stampede of footprints part the thick layers of dust on the floor leading inside. The first floor is at ground level and each subsequent floor is deeper down underground.

TIMELINE IF THE PCs DO NOTHING

Stages 1–3 happen over the course of a few days; stages 4–6 happen over a couple of weeks, and stage 7 happens over years.

1. The clones break out of the laboratory and attack the Rustbucket's residents.
2. The clones continue to spawn.
3. The clones interact with the outside world, rapidly adapting to the new environment.
4. The clones locate Detrix and congregate around them.
5. The clones return to the laboratory, and begin to clone themselves.
6. The clones attempt to completely overtake the Rustbucket, with or without Detrix' help.
7. The clones rebuild, revitalize, and remodel the settlement.



DETRIX

Leader of a Rustbucket Revitalization Sect
(they / them)

INSTINCT: 35 AP: 2 WOUNDS: 2

Belongings: Bag of data chips, ancient book, ceremonial staff (1d100 Damage), antiquated robes (2 AP).

Clad in a long, white cloak and loose, antiquated robes, Detrix' words ring out melodiously. Their speech is free from hesitations or qualifiers, and they believe every word they say. The people gathered around them exchange excited glances, their eyes lighting up as their mental gears turn with inspiration. Restoring the Rustbucket will be a long and difficult process but a necessary and glorious one. They will succeed in the end, and if they haven't succeeded, it's not yet the end.

Detrix sees stories in every artifact, feels the breath in every fragment of the past, and tastes the potential in every scrap of information they unearth. Along with their small—but loyal—following, they hunt for forgotten knowledge with a dangerous fervor. Their heart belongs to this place; the day they hear the Rustbucket's own heartbeat again is the day they can rest.

At present, Detrix is on their way to the clone laboratory, hoping to see the place for themselves. Detrix knows almost everything about the Rustbucket's history but the cloning facility is a new development and they have never seen anything like it before.



SORISHA

Relic Seeker (she/her/they/them)

INSTINCT: 40 AP: 5 WOUNDS: 3

Belongings: Waterskin, repair kit, spare batteries, climbing rope, digging braces (5 AP), excavation tools (2d10 Damage), differentiation scroll.



AEYANA

Eager Scientist (she/her)

INSTINCT: 29 AP: 2 WOUNDS: 3

Belongings: Homemade blaster pistol (2d10 Damage), unreliable + 1d5 damage radiation each day until treatment.

Those neo-cultist and scientist types don't know the value of what they're hoarding, Sorisha thinks. The Rustbucket is an ancient, crumbling monument of its former glory, rich in treasure; riches that Sorisha can take for herself. Her footfalls are heavy—deliberately so. They like to announce their presence wherever they go; if a confrontation is inevitable, then she'd rather deal with it upfront. There's less risk of damaging the merchandise that way.

Sorisha keeps a close eye on the movements of Detrix and their crew; if a location is interesting to them, it's sure to be profitable to Sorisha as well. She occasionally finds her own relic mines, but when there are others doing the scouting for you, why create more work for yourself?

Sorisha wrested a scrap of paper written in a cypher from her attacker. They want to know what it says but still find a reliable translator who won't attempt to take her bounty from her or lie about its contents. Unbeknownst to them, it's a spell that can identify clone and counterpart.

Scurrying around derelict buildings, decoding complex programs, tinkering with broken relics; these are the places Aeyana is most likely to be found. Her hair and clothes are perpetually messy—stained from tight spaces and brushes with machines.

Aeyana speaks quickly but she's never fast enough to express all the brilliant thoughts in her head. She asks questions and expects to answer them herself. As attentive as she is talkative, Aeyana has an almost perfect memory and can recite others' words back to them when least expected.

Although Aeyana shares knowledge happily in the name of progress, she knows how dangerous it can be in the wrong hands. Detrix' hands are always outstretched, hungry for what Aeyana brings them.

Aeyana can be found in the Intelligence Lab, moving from computer to computer searching for anything recoverable.



Roll one encounter every 15 minutes when PCs are on the First and Second Floors.

FIRST FLOOR ENCOUNTERS

1d4	Description
1	Sorisha arrives, asking the PCs if it's safe in the lab yet. She's hoping to resume hunting for relics
2	The characters spot Aeyana working at a computer terminal just as it fizzles out.
3	A hologram from an abandoned data disk in the library flickers. It projects an image of the lab in its former glory.
4	The characters hear a loud clatter. If they go to investigate, they find an unidentifiable person crushed under the metal stairs to the third floor. The elevator is the only way down.

SECOND FLOOR ENCOUNTERS

1d4	Description
1	Detrix arrives, having received a message from Aeyana. Detrix introduces themselves to the PCs and asks if they have found anything that might give a clue to the history of the laboratory or the reason for the clones.
2	The sound of glass shattering, followed by the sound of running.
3	A PC is attacked by their clone.
4	Part of the floor collapses and deposits the PCs on the second floor, in the corresponding place.

FIRST FLOOR

1. LIBRARY

Small booths equipped with reading lights populate this room. The data cartridges in the storage of the library glow with a faint blue aura and emit a dull hum. They contain petabytes and petabytes of books of all kinds; aerospace engineering textbooks; a series of crochet tutorials for beginners; legal documents from an ancient criminal court case; an assortment of romance novels; roleplaying game books.

Touching a data cartridge activates its hologram, opening a menu of book titles. Each cartridge has a clear subject area with some anomalous entries. One of the data cartridges contains a record of the ancestry of the population of the Rustbucket. It contains information on Detrix and Aeyana's lineages, as well as those of any PCs from the Rustbucket. One of Detrix' ancestors once led the Rustbucket in one of its prime periods; Aeyana can trace her roots back to the Thickwood. There is no data on Sorisha's lineage, which doesn't surprise them; their family comes from all over.

2. BATHROOM

The faint odor of antiseptic lingers in the bathroom. Water from the faucets is potable, but black specks swirl inside it nonetheless.

3. INTELLIGENCE LAB

A congregation of computers and a spattering of glitchy holograms show the remains of logic puzzles, reasoning tests, and ethical dilemmas. The computers can be powered on and each one requires biometric verification to use. All clones and their originals are able to access the computers. Aeyana does not yet have a clone; she overrode the system to get in. Each one is usable for 20 minutes before the meager power supply fails.

ELEVATOR

The rickety contraption is functional but extremely slow. Its overhead and button lights no longer work, leaving its riders in total darkness each time the door closes.

STAIRS

The staircases are orange with rust and threaten to crumble with the lightest step. The railings are equally unstable.

CLONES

INSTINCT: 35 AP: 0 WOUNDS: 3
Every 6 hours 2 clones leave their enclosures.

They take on the forms of various Rustbucket inhabitants. They all speak in the same monotone voice, but if exposed to their counterpart's speech, they adjust their voices accordingly.

Though they have the appearance of their original, the more questions that require independent thought that are posed to them, the more they develop their own personalities separate from their counterpart. They focus on finding and destroying their original counterparts and resist attempts to stop them. Magic is especially potent against the clones, doing twice as much damage or lasting twice as long.

SECOND FLOOR

4. COMPOUND FACILITY

A spacious room with several workstations. Each bench houses a set of glass beakers, various connecting tubes, and an assortment of attachments. Two of the benches have been recently disturbed.

Rows upon rows of shelves line the walls, holding congealed liquids in stoppered test tubes. Closer inspection reveals traces of organic material: flora, fauna, humanoid body parts. They twitch occasionally.

A dusty filing cabinet contains hundreds of records of experiments on different compounds organized by question.

*What can we do to strengthen it?
How well does it retain its form?
How does it respond to different artificial
and natural substances?
Does it change color over time?*

THIRD FLOOR

7. OPERATING THEATER

Steel gray walls and bright overhead lights close in on this room. Dark brown stains bruise the floor. The wheels on the instrument tables are stiff and creak if pushed. A sheet covers the remains of a rotted skeleton on one of the tables.

8. RECOVERY ROOM

Dusky pink blankets and pillows yellowed with age adorn the narrow beds. All the beds are made, save for one. Its covers are pulled back, as though someone just got up.

5. KITCHEN

A replicator sits on a center island. It can replicate three organic or non-organic items before it fizzles out on the last of its power. Small, stained greenhouses languish unoccupied underneath burnt-out grow lights. Thin tubes stemming from the greenhouses lead nowhere, as they have been cut. The room is devoid of utensils and crockery, but the pots and pans can be found in a cupboard.

6. GREENHOUSES

An earthen smell fills the arid air in the greenhouses. A tiny green tendril pokes out of the dry soil in one of the greenhouses. If the greenhouse is opened, the tendril uproots itself, revealing root systems that spread throughout the building, thirsting for moisture. It attempts to break out of the confines of the lab, questing for sources of water—even if those sources are inside the flesh and blood of others.

THIRSTING PLANT

INSTINCT: 15 AP: 0 WOUNDS: 20
3d10 Clutching vines (1d5 Damage,
Body Save or become ensnared).

9. NURSERY

Cylindrical glass enclosures large enough to fit a person are the main fixture in this room. A white glow provides backlight for each tube, and each contains a figure with closed eyes floating in a translucent liquid. All of the figures are a medium shade of brown and none have distinguishing features. If a PC approaches or touches the glass, the figure opens its eyes and it takes the shape of the PC who interacted with it. The liquid bubbles as it drains from the enclosure and there is a hiss as it unlocks. After a moment, one clone awakens for each PC in the room. The clones are capable of speech and rational thought, and matches their original. If Detrix is present, their clone tries to capture them and awaken further Detrix clones.

Credits:

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