

Synanthropes

Syn-an-thrope. Noun. \ˈsɪn-ən-thrōp\

- a) A creature which has evolved to survive in ecological niches created by humans (Ex.: Rats, cockroaches, crows, raccoons).
- b) Any of the various creatures commonly considered to be pests or vermin (Ex.: Rats, cockroaches, crows, raccoons).
- c) An animal which is just a little too human for its own good.

Synanthropes v. 2, released 6/19/2013. Changes made to this edition:

Added:

- Cane Toads exist now as playable characters. They are vile, awful bastards.
- Opposed rolls and combat rules have been added, in the event that not everyone agrees about everything.
- NPCs now have simple rulesets, to accommodate simple NPCs.
- Player Characters now have Careers outside of anthropology, which benefit the team as a whole.
- I talk about Synanthrope fashion a bit. Because why not?

Changed:

- Collecting Clues has been made less arbitrary; it's now something you luck across, and Clues may relate to your legends and mysteries and artifacts.
- Basic rolling has been made slightly more intuitive—using a trait is just worth an extra die.
- Passing Narrator privileges has been changed; whomever discovers a Clue is the next Narrator.
- Material which was “Optional” in the Game Chef edition has been rendered “Not Optional”.

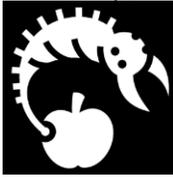
Still to come:

- The intended final Synanthrope: The House Gecko.
- Fiddling with hoard dice; making their use more intuitive for each species.
- Fussing with difficulty, making injuries a bit more common and increasing the risk of facing dangers, while still allow Clues to be discovered at a reasonable clip will be a balancing act to be sure.
- Altering/replacing some options on the Danger Oracle.

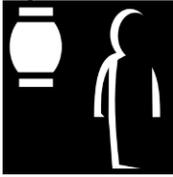
Synanthropes was originally conceived and written for Game Chef 2013, and uses the following elements:



A human figure with square eyes/glasses silhouetted in a double-sided arrow. I interpreted the figure as being an observer, with the arrows indicating a metaphorical distance—it is human and somehow not human. Additionally, it may represent a person literally moving up or down.



An insect with large mandibles emerging from a small apple. I interpreted this as representing mutation and change, with the strange insect indicating the unfamiliar emerging from the familiar.



A figure partially illuminated by a lantern. I interpreted this as representing discovery, as in a light being shined on something new. It also indicates the exploration of dark places.

The four synanthropes chosen—rats, crows, raccoons, and roaches—represent the most common synanthropic animals in the author's home city, and many of their legends are based on American media. Players in other areas of the world are encouraged to substitute their own local pests, as appropriate.

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Icons made by Lorc. Available on <http://game-icons.net>

Inspiration credit where it's due: Jake Richmond's *Ocean*, Vincent Baker's *Apocalypse World*.

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Thanks for reading/playing/sharing/not locking your dumpsters!

About

Synanthropes is a story game about representatives of the known sentient races of planet Earth: the Crows, the Rats, the Roaches, the Cane Toads and the Raccoons. Collectively, they may be referred to as the Synanthropes.

Sometime in the future, somewhere between one hundred and a thousand years from today, humanity disappeared, for reasons unknown. Long after that, synanthropes--those animals who live in ecological niches that humans created --evolved, becoming intelligent communities in their own right, aware that they live in Humanity's cast-off ruins.

You play representatives from these species, each player from a different one, who came together on a scientific expedition, the first major cross-species undertaking since the end of the Resource Wars. There is a building, a skyscraper in the center of an otherwise abandoned wasteland, which has never been explored by any of your people. Your mission is to climb to the top and search for information about the Humans, their Artifacts, and possibly an answer to the question you have all been asking for generations: Where did the Humans go, anyway?

But be warned... the peace among your species is a fragile thing and the Wars weren't just about resources, but about utter cultural incompatibility as well. Your species are just *different*. Your mission is as much about trust as discovery, and if it's a failure, then quicker tempers among your people may once again call for war.

What you need

- Three to five players.
- Several six-sided dice.
- A standard deck of cards.
- Three index cards or slips of paper, each with a question written on top:
 - “What was the purpose of this building?”
 - “Why was this building abandoned?”
 - “What message did the Humans leave when they left this building?”
- One character sheet for each species (available at the end of this document), plus pencils or other writing tools.
- Four or more Human Artifacts per player.

What’s a Human Artifact?

In this game, you will be playing non-human species who are encountering the remnants of Humanity. Thus, anything that Humans used would be a Human Artifact... plates, lighters, screwdrivers, cell-phones, soda bottles, anything. For your game, you can pick anything that you can put on the table in front of you and invite the other players to look at. Use what’s in your pocket, or what’s in the room, or something you brought from home. There are a few things to keep in mind:

1. No two Human Artifacts should be the same.
2. Human Artifact should function; Synanthropes have learned to reactivate long-dead electronics.
3. Your characters aren’t human, and shouldn’t know quite what their artifacts are. Interpret Artifacts through the lens of your species; what can YOU do with them, how do they relate to YOUR world?

What were the Humans like?

That is a question for the players to investigate and discover as they run through this ancient building. But it may help if you, the players, have a few ideas in place that you agree upon.

These are some truths about the Humans. Where you go from here is up to you.

The Humans disappeared in the relatively near future. No less than a hundred years from now, but no more than five hundred.

Human technology advanced in some ways. Perhaps the most obvious is the ability to build structures that would survive for thousands of years without maintenance, and power sources which last much, much longer than anything currently extant. In addition, the creation of robotic drones, semi-autonomous droids, and adaptive computer systems mean that there is still a presence in some old human ruins.

Human technology stayed the same in some ways. With a few exceptions, the room you're sitting in right now would be perfectly comfortable and familiar to the Humans before the disappearance. They never developed a true AI which might remain, and they still relied on paper to communicate, much of which succumbed to rot, fire, or other natural disasters.

Whatever the cause of their disappearance, the Humans never expected to be replaced. There are no guidebooks for the budding sentient, no how-to-be-civilized primer.

Humans were, and will always be, human. They fought amongst themselves, disagreed about anything and everything, suffered corrupt politicians and lowest-bidder construction and petty annoyances of all stripes. And they complained about it, loud and often, because that's humanity for you.

What are the Synanthropes like?

To some degree, that is for you to decide on your own. Your character sheet will give you some general details about your species, its physical traits and the broadest aspects of its culture, but it’s not

intended to be all-encompassing. Rats, for instance, idealize Humans, but does that make them religious zealots, militaristic conquerors, or philosophic ponderers? That's for the Rat player to ultimately decide.

One thing that they all have in common is that they are a bit larger than their ancestors¹; while they are still small by human standards—between the size of a cat and the size of a human toddler, on average—they have had thousands of years of evolutionary pressure benefitting the ones who could most make use of human-scale objects.

They are also able to speak to one another, vocally, as Humans do (although this is not necessarily the preferred form of communication for all of them). They don't quite speak the same language, as the construction of their mouths and voiceboxes are too radically different to allow it, but the player characters are trained in the languages of their companions, enough so that all can muddle through speaking a collective pidgin.

¹ With the exception of the Roach; an individual cockroach is still roughly the same size of its ancestors, but the sentient Roach hives have about as much mass as a single member of another Synanthropic species.

How to Play

This is a game about telling one specific sort of story: the journey of one group of very alien (but still very human) creatures through a dangerous landscape, in the hopes of understanding something about their past, and maybe preserving their future.

Creating your Character

First, distribute one character sheet per player, and fill it out, following the directions. These sheets cover the basics of Character creation in more depth. In brief, you will select:

- A name. Each Synanthrope has its own naming conventions.
- Three **Traits**, based on the physical attributes of your species.
- A **Grudge**, a reason that you hate the species being portrayed by the person to your left.
- A **Career**, which reflects your skills and expertise outside of anthropology.
- A cultural **Legend** which you believe deeply, that will inform your worldview.
- A **Mystery** you do not believe about Humans, which may affect how you see discoveries.
- A **Hoard**, a special die pool you create and use in a manner unique to your species.
- A **Human Artifact** you are bringing with you.

Choosing a **name** is straightforward; you may pick any of the suggested names, or one of your own devising that reflects your species's naming conventions (or, if you wish, breaks from it, marking you as something of an outsider from your own people.

Your **Traits** are based on the three most defining physical attributes of your species; each attribute has two possible Traits attached to it, and you will select one of those two to favor. The Traits you don't pick may still reflect areas that you excel at compared to the other species and suggest instinctive reactions to danger, but they aren't as reliable for you, personally, as the Traits you select. There are advantages both to selecting traits that work together well (running and hiding, for instance) and for getting a broad base (running and operating technology, for instance).

While your true vocation is as an anthropologist, a scientist-cum-historian who seeks to better understand Humanity and your place in their world, you do have an outside **Career** which reflects, for want of a better way to put it, your day job. There are seven Careers, drawn in very broad outlines. When you select one, think about how it would make sense for you, specifically, and as a member of your species:

- Soldier—Concerned with fighting and surviving; may be a mercenary or a front-liner on the Resource Wars or just a violent nut.
- Merchant—Concerned with crafting and selling; may be a travelling salesman or an artisan or just from a thrifty old family.
- Academic—Concerned with “pure” knowledge; may be a professor or experimental scientist or just a bookworm.
- Politician—Concerned with making decisions for the masses. May be the prince of a city-state or a clan head or just a minor rising clerk.
- Healer—Concerned with the repair of body and soul. May be versed in healing poultices, Human medical tech, or just kind words and understanding.
- Documenter—Concerned with the preservation of information. May be a journalist, or a poet, or just a gossip.
- Supplier—Concerned with where food comes from and where it goes. May be a quartermaster, a farm operator, or just a hunter with a family.

Your **Legends** and **Mysteries** are both cultural ideas that you grew up with, or without, as the case may be. Two legends about Humans are provided, and two mysteries that you can't understand about

them or refuse to believe about them. You will create a third of each, to help define your culture and yourself. For each, you'll pick one as the most important... the legend you really believe or the mystery you really can't imagine. You can select either the pre-generated ones or your own, whichever seems the most interesting.

As you're answering these questions, take some time to work into the mentality of your species. Read through the description at the beginning, and consider the implications of your Traits, Legends, Mysteries, and Hoard abilities. Remember: you aren't human. How do you move? How do you speak? What matters to you?

At the same time, remember that you are a *representative* of your species, not a personification of it. You may have interpretations of legends and Human matters that others of your clan or family find odd. Like all intelligent creatures, any individual Synanthrope is a variation on an abstract and impossible cultural norm.

When everyone has finished their character sheets and has some understanding of who they are, you may begin the first scene.

Setting up a Scene

Synanthropes is played as a series of scenes which represent the floors you pass through during your climb up a Human skyscraper. This doesn't mean there's a scene for every story of the building; most floors pass easily, but when you leave the staircase in order to camp down for a bit, find a new staircase when yours has become blocked or broken, or just engage in a little exploration, that floor will be the subject of a scene.

Determine fairly someone to go first; she will be the first Narrator, and set up the first scene, which takes place as the characters enter the lobby for the first time. This player will continue being Narrator until another player discovers a Clue (which is explained in more detail below).

The Narrator is the GM for each scene, describing what is on the floor; select one of the Human Artifacts you brought. This is the centerpiece, an unharmed piece of history worth looking at. There is also a Danger on this floor; the Narrator should draw a card from the deck, and consult the oracle at the end of this document to find out what, the danger is. Dangers come in four varieties:

- Decay (Hearts): invasive natural elements, including simpler tribes of animals.
- Devastation (Diamonds): massive structural instabilities, falling rafters and missing floors.
- Defense (Clubs): Things Humans left to ward off intruders and pests (of which you are both).
- Dissent (Spades): Arguments and infighting among the explorers, which the Narrator's character should be a part of.

It's the Narrator's job to describe the state of the floor, the presence of the Artifact, the specifics of the Danger and how they all fit together. It's okay to be loose in the connections; after all, your characters wouldn't truly understand the purpose of the floor or its artifacts. Likewise, it's okay to be very specific about the connections, but it's important to remember that just because the players know that they are moving through, say, a server farm and encountering an old wifi antenna, that doesn't mean the characters understand what's going on.

Some Dangers will appear right away, others may be included later in the scene, but every scene must include some interaction with the Danger on this floor and some contact with the Artifact... and do remember that part of contact with an Artifact will entail discussing if you are to bring it with you, and if so, who gets to carry it.

Once the Danger has been dealt with and the Artifact discussed, the Narrator is also responsible for ending the scene. This may take place right away, but if there are some lingering issues being dealt with, the Narrator should let the scene continue until they resolve themselves.

Challenges

When any character attempts an action which carries with it a serious risk of failure, the Narrator may call for a die roll to determine whether the character succeeds.

You should roll if one or more of the following is true:

- The character is attempting something which would be very difficult or against his or her nature.
- The character is directly confronting the floor's Danger.
- There is someone or something obstructing this character's action (however the obstruction isn't active enough to justify an Opposed Roll).

...AND one or more of the following is true as well:

- The Narrator can think of an interesting consequence for failure.
- The character could take an injury if he fails

...then the character must roll to succeed.

The character sets the stakes for his success; he describes what he is attempting to do, and what he'll achieve if he succeeds. The Narrator does have the power to veto an attempted action if she feels it is too outlandish to be possible... if the Rat wants to solve a situation by breathing fire on it, he is out of luck.

The Narrator will set the stakes for failure, describing the interesting consequence and, if it makes sense, cause of injury. Narrators are free to solicit opinions for failures, and the other players (including the one making the attempt!) are free to suggest them, but the ultimate decision is made by the Narrator. Note that, on the whole, interesting consequences are more fun than injuries, and it's recommended that Narrators give that option preference whenever possible, with injuries being reserved for combat and high-stakes actions (both described in a little more depth below).

Characters will roll a pool of six-sided dice; there are seven elements which affect this pool.

- **Effort**—All challenges start with a single die, just for making the effort.
- **Teamwork**—Add 1 additional die if two or more characters are working together in a meaningful way (both trying to push open a locked door or translate old writing, for instance).
- **Artifact**—Add 1 die if the use of a Human Artifact (either the one you brought with you or another you have picked up along the way) is a fundamental part of this action.
- **Hoard**—If you are able to add dice from your hoard, you may add as many as you wish. Each species has different situations in which they can use hoard dice, but they share this commonality: if you are able to use a hoard die, you can add as many dice as you have in your hoard, but you must discard them all after this use.
- **Traits**—If you are making use of one of your circled traits, gain an additional die.
- **Escalation**—Escalation dice are used only during opposed rolls and combats, and are described in more detail below.
- **Career**—Career dice are used only after failed rolls, and are discussed in more detail below.

Every die that rolls a 5 or a 6 is considered a success. In most cases, one success is sufficient to complete the task (there are exceptions, described below).

Opposed Rolls and Combat situations

In the event that two or more characters are actively competing with one another, either symmetrically (e.g.: both are racing to be the first to reach an Artifact) or asymmetrically (e.g.: one player is racing to the Artifact and the other is trying to hit the first with a bat), they will both be rolling. Combat between two player characters is a common example of an opposed roll; each character is attempting to injure or incapacitate the other.

Each player sets the terms for their own success, while the Narrator for this scene sets the terms for a mutual failure (whether a mutual failure in combat means that both players fail to injure the other or that both are injured equally is for the Narrator to determine based on the setup of the scene).

Both players roll as normal, counting any die that rolls six (counting the bonus from Traits) as a success. Whichever character gets more successes is the victor, and accomplishes their goal.

If both roll the same number of successes, however, or if in a conflict of three or more there is a tie for the most successes rolled, then the conflict ends in a mutual failure.

In the event that neither roll any successes, they are at an impasse; they may opt to back down, ending the conflict peaceably, or escalate. To escalate, both may alter what their terms for success are--though they do not need to--add one die to their pool and re-roll. If one player wants to back down, and the other would prefer to escalate, then the players are escalating (though the one who would back down may alter his terms to "successfully run away" or something similar). If the escalating players change how they are approaching a situation when they set their terms, they may need to roll a different number of dice and gain different trait bonuses, however any hoard dice will remain in their pool until the conflict is done, even if they no longer apply. If neither player rolls any successes on the escalation, they may back down or escalate one more time; if this last escalation generates no successes for the players, then the roll is considered a failure for both sides.

Raising the Challenge.

If, in the Narrator's opinion, a character is attempting an action that is incredibly unlikely--something that's not beyond his abilities but is pushing them to the limit--she may declare that this is an advanced challenge.

To beat an advanced challenge, a character must roll two successes, which makes it effectively impossible for a character who is acting on their own, unaided by their training, companions, equipment, or natural inclinations.

If absolutely necessary, a Narrator may decide that an advanced challenge requires three successes, though this indicates actions which are so far outside the realm of plausibility that the odds of success are incredibly low; a three-success challenge is meant to account for moments when the player and Narrator are in disagreement over whether a character can accomplish a task at all.

Career Dice

Once per floor, if you fail in a Challenge which relates somehow to your career (for instance, if you are a Soldier and you are defeated in a fight), you may opt to add your career die to the pool and re-roll it, potentially turning a failure into a success, or even an opportunity to find a Clue (more on Clues below). This applies to any sort of challenge; in an opposed challenge, the opposing character or characters do NOT re-roll when you do.

Furthermore, your Career is not only beneficial to yourself; if another character fails a roll, and your character is present, and willing and able to provide advice and assistance, you may allow them to reroll with an additional die. You may only invoke your career once per floor, whether it is to benefit yourself or another player.

Pushing Yourself

There is one additional way to gain successes during a roll: a character may describe how they have pushed themselves in this attempt, enough to bring harm to themselves, and take an appropriate injury. Voluntarily taking an injury during a roll translates to a free success; a character performing an advanced challenge may take two or even three injuries, if he is able, in order to succeed at a completely failed roll.

Injuries

When you are injured, mark one of the "Injury" boxes next to a set of Traits, and describe how you've injured yourself. You get no benefit from those traits until the injury clears. Injuries last two scenes before you can heal them.

To heal an injury, describe yourself finding something within the ruins you can use to recover. Using it is a Challenge; if you succeed the injury goes away, and if you fail it becomes permanent.

If at any point you take three injuries, your character is mortally wounded. You cannot participate in any challenges or heal for the remainder of the game, though you are still accompanying the rest of the explorers.

NPCs

The Humans are gone, and the ruins have yet to be explored by any of the Synanthropic species, but that doesn't mean that there's nothing to encounter there. From robotic remnants of Humanity to less-Human species of animal to entirely feral beasts, sometimes you may have to deal with characters beyond your own explorers.

NPCs are played by the Narrator, and in the event that an NPC follows the explorers for a way up the tower, ownership with transfer over to the next narrator. Mechanically, they operate much like the player characters, in that whomever is controlling them describes what they say and do, until such a point as there is disagreement over whether they should be able to accomplish a task, at which point, the Narrator will have to roll for the NPC.

NPCs don't have a hoard, nor do they have any traits; they roll a single die, plus one if they are using a Human Artifact, and one if they are escalating a conflict. They succeed on a roll of five or six

In the event of combat, NPCs should be able to take two injuries, at which point they will flee or be slain in some fashion.

How Human-like are NPCs? That's a question for the group to consider as a whole; as a useful rule of thumb, think of other small, urban animals as being akin to the "monster races" in a fantasy RPG... kobolds, orcs, and trolls are roughly equivalent to starlings, moles, and opossum in this world. Whether that makes them gruff and clannish but still viable companions and trading partners, or mindless brutes, or some measure in between will depend on the Narrator and the group. One thing is sure though: they are never as aware of Humans as the Synanthropes are.

As for robotic drones and other remnants of the Humans, remember that there are no true artificial intelligences. The robots might be marvelous, incredible to the eyes to the explorers, but they are still confined to doing a single task, without any measure of creativity. Even those capable of imparting information are only able to do so in very specific ways and must be coaxed into doing what the explorers want them to do.

Discovering Clues

While you journey through this building, you will happen across lots of interesting bits of human detritus hidden away; every bit of surviving text or old machinery will expand in some way on what is known about Humanity and paint a fuller picture of who they were and what they were like, but not all of it is a Clue.

A "Clue" is a partial answer to one of the questions surrounding this building:

1. What was the purpose of this building?

Several structures have survived from Human times, but this one is so large, so isolated, and in such good repair, it must have been important.

2. Why was this building abandoned?

The Humans would not likely have left such a building easily. Something must have pushed them out.

3. What messages have they left for us?

There must be a message, right? Surely! Implicit in the question is "Which race is the message for?" but you know that nobody will agree on that one.

Whenever you participate in a Challenge, there is a chance that you will stumble across a Clue; mechanically, this occurs whenever you roll more successes than you need to accomplish a task. In-

universe, this reflects a moment of good fortune... an discovery which is enough to make your character stop for a moment and say "Well, THAT's interesting." Note: you CANNOT take an injury for a free success and use that to find a Clue; other sources of bonus dice (including Career and Escalation dice) are allowed.

(The Narrator's character, unfortunately, cannot discover a Clue. Though her character is involved on this floor, participating in the interactions with Dangers and Artifacts, her job is to create interesting situations for other characters to find Clues, not to get them herself.)

If you roll one or more additional successes, you may announce that you have discovered a clue in the process of facing this Challenge; you are never required to. Let the others know that you've stumbled across something interesting; after all, these Clues are meant to be shared.

For every additional success you rolled, roll a die; this will determine how the Clue affects you and your worldview. Consult the following chart (reproduced on your character sheet) to see what effect the Clue has; if you are rolling multiple dice, you may select the option for whatever number you roll. Once you've used an option, cross it out; you'll never discover the same type of Clue twice.

1	This Clue relates to one of your Mysteries, and you will need help understanding it.
2	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that casts doubt on it.
3	This Clue causes you to reconsider the species you have a grudge against, for better or worse.
4	This Clue forces you to reconsider one of the Artifacts in your possession.
5	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that confirms or justifies it.
6	The details of this clue are entirely up to you to decide.

Take a moment to consider the Clue; you may talk (out of character) with the other players if you're looking for suggestions as to how you might incorporate an element. If you honestly can't figure something out, or if the only numbers you roll are those which have been crossed out, you can say something along the lines of, "No, never mind, it wasn't as interesting as I thought," and discard this Clue entirely.

When you figured out what the Clue might be, explain it to everyone else; you are allowed to jump into the Narrator's seat for a moment to explain how you stumble across it and what it looks like, whether it's an object, or some writing, or just a curious bullet hole on the wall, or whatever.

When you have discovered a Clue, you must select the big question you think it most relates to, and write down the clue on that index card. If you have three Clues on that card, you're ready to answer the question. No more Clues will be discovered on this floor.

Whoever finds a Clue will be the Narrator starting on the next floor, until another character finds a Clue.

When a question has its third Clue, take a moment to discuss what the answer to the question might be. Your characters should have this discussion before the scene ends, as they begin to climb the stairs to the next floor. If the building has a stash of weapons, some bullet-riddled walls, and an ancient human corpse as Clues for "Why was this building abandoned?" you might come to the conclusion that there was an invasion of some sort.

Your answer doesn't have to be specific and exact, and there can be some disagreement between the species. Write the answer you come up with on the bottom of the card.

The Final Scene

The final scene takes place when one of two conditions occurs.

- Your characters have answered all three questions, in which case the mission will be deemed a success.
- Your characters are all unable or unwilling to gather additional Clues, in which case the mission is a failure.

If the mission ends in failure, each player, in turn, starting with the current Narrator and moving clockwise, describes how their people hear of the mission's end, and how their species reacts. Each vignette should be kept brief and open-ended, but by the last player's turn it should be clear that the Synanthropes are again on the road to war.

If the mission is a success, the players should take a moment to discuss the questions they have answered. Each answer is, itself, a Clue for the greater question that they hope to answer: "What happened to the Humans?"

Certainly, they won't have a perfect answer. How could they, with such limited evidence? But it's all the evidence they have, and so they will use it to fashion some sort of guess. The characters need not agree at all, but each must come up with an interpretation he or she finds fitting.

Each player then, in turn, narrates a brief vignette describing NOT their arrival at the top floor, but their return to their own people, at which point they report what they discovered, and the reaction of their species. Start with the character who collected the fewest clues and move to whomever collected the most—in the event of a tie, the current Narrator takes precedence, followed by whomever is to his left, and so on, clockwise around the table.

These different vignettes shouldn't openly disagree with one another about what they discovered, but the players are free and encouraged to focus on different aspects of the top floor, and different interpretations of what they found there. Again, each should only take a minute or two. Remember that the purpose isn't to overwrite what the other players are creating, but to bring the joy of discovery back to your own people... focus on their reactions to your tale and, of course, yourself, who is a returning hero after all.

You are _____, a Crow

To hear the Crows tell it, the departure of Humanity was but a blip on the radar to their ancestors. They were masters of the skies, and in the West, where they dominated, they had already driven away countless competitor species. Certainly, without a Human presence, some of their hunting grounds would have been lost, but crows learn and adapt at an incredible rate.

Crows are planners, builders, and teachers. The great skyscrapers where they live are filled with countless intricate traps, as are the forests on street-level. While Crows tend to live in small, close families, every year there's a grand meeting, where Crows of note share their new traps and other creations for the benefit of the species as a whole (and the honor and respect that comes with it). Though Crows have grown much larger than their ancestors, and the adults have lost the capacity for true flight, they still glide from building to building, looking down upon the rest of the world.

Crow communication is very tonal, heavily dominated by the rhythm and length of its notes, though to most representatives of the other species it is considered discordant, grating, and overloud. Crowsong can be heard up to a mile away, if conditions are right. They can speak Human words and phrases, though their beak prevents them from making any labial consonants like /b/ or /m/, and they traditionally have difficulty constructing entire thoughts in this language. They have a written language of their own, and have a facility for reading Human texts as well.

Crows have no hands, but they manipulate objects with their talons and beaks with surprising deftness. Crows wear little over their black feathers, but strap utility belts to their lower legs. Often they accent themselves with anklets and necklaces that appeal to their in-built love of shiny things.

Choose a name. Your TRUE name is in Crowsong, untranslatable. To outsiders Crows usually name themselves after the Human streets they live over: Rodway. Sethenth Street. Thigaro. Altic Athenu. Sunset Oulethard.

Circle three Traits. Circle one Trait from each set; all start uninjured.

Pick your Career. Soldier, Merchant, Academic, Politician, Healer, Documenter, Supplier.

Create your Grudge. Crows have a special grudge against the species to your left. What did they do to your people to cause this hatred?

Create a legend. These are stories all Crows have heard, which define their worldview. Two are provided, create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find truly meaningful.

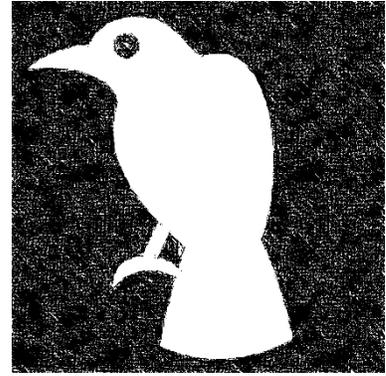
Create a mystery. These reflect aspects Crow culture just doesn't have, which make Humans baffling. Two are provided, create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find especially strange or impossible to believe of Humans.

Start your Hoard: Think of a special skill you have which will benefit you on this journey, like wriggling open an elevator door or disabling a guardian droid. Write this down under your hoard. A task you have written down is impossible for other players to achieve; you alone know the secret.

A Crow's "hoard" represents its skills, those which it has learned from its parents, the clever members of the Crow community, and especially those it developed for itself. Crows value education and sharing of skills, but they also know that the greatest good is to oneself, then one's family, then the Crow, in that order. When you spend a hoard die, you must reveal a skill you have kept to yourself; thereafter, all other players know how to do this (even if your attempt was unsuccessful), and you must cross it out.

Crows are inspired by Human ingenuity; when you get your talons on a Human artifact, you can write a new skill that it has taught you. Let the other players (but not the other characters) know what it is, and write it down to generate a new hoard die.

Pick a Human Artifact. You've brought a single Artifact with you. Keep it in front of you, and think about why you brought it and what it means to you.



TRAIT		Injured?
Your Binocular Vision lets you...		
Spot objects at a distance	Throw accurately	
Your Short but Functional Wings let you...		
Glide short distances	Quickly evade danger	
Your Straight, Strong Beak lets you...		
Manipulate objects	Break objects	

CAREER	
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GRUDGE	
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CROW LEGENDS	
Willar and Orrille, two Human brothers, together discovered the secret of flight... before this, all creatures lived on the ground, but the brothers opened the skies to Humans and their allies, the birds.	The greatest hero of Humanity was a man named McIyver, who could fashion tools and traps from everything around him, and fathered a foundation of phoenixes.
<i>Your own:</i>	

CROW MYSTERIES	
To a crow, the importance of oneself is followed by one's family, then one's community, then Crowdom as a whole, and THEN the world. The concept of hierarchy or servitude is foul, and something no Human would have believed in.	Sexual dimorphism, the tendency for males and females to look or act differently, is almost nonexistent in Crows outside of the laying of eggs. They can't believe the Humans could have such an absurd divide.
<i>Your own:</i>	

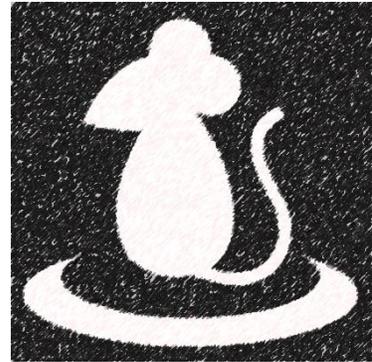
YOUR HOARD DICE:

CLUE TABLE	
1	This Clue relates to one of your Mysteries, and you will need help understanding it.
2	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that casts doubt on it.
3	This Clue causes you to reconsider the species you have a grudge against, for better or worse.
4	This Clue forces you to reconsider one of the Artifacts in your possession.
5	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that confirms or justifies it.
6	The details of this clue are entirely up to you to decide.

You are _____, a Rat

When Humanity left, the rats fared poorly at first. Even in the newest and cleanest cities, they had outnumbered the Humans; without exterminators as population control, their numbers boomed and then, as they quickly overtook and stripped bare the landfills and dumps of the old Human empires, dwindled.

The cycle of boom, bust, and migration might have continued until the rats went extinct; even as conflict and competition drove them to grow more intelligent, their communities weren't long-lived enough to thrive. It was, strangely, Humanity that saved them. A clan in the East, whose preoccupation with the Human ruins they lived in led to exploration, worship, and emulation, were the first true Rats. They discovered, in the Human texts, the secret of agriculture, from mushroom farming to keeping smaller animals for meat. Though the concept of having food NOW but eating it LATER scrapes unpleasantly against the Rat's DNA, the knowledge has kept them alive.



Rats have a language of their own, a private tongue of whispers and gestures that is unique to each clan and rarely shared. Publicly, Rats speak the language of the Humans as best they can, based on their understanding of old recordings, though their large front teeth mean that dental morphemes like /th/ and /f/ are quite impossible. To a modern human, they would be speaking an incomprehensible pidgin; the Rats don't seem to recognize different Human languages, and have added every word they come across to their lexicon. Rats have no written language, but can identify human writings.

Rats can see ultraviolet light and are especially sensitive to direct light. They often wear simple cloaks, attached at the neck by a decorative or clan brooch, with a hood they can raise as needed and a few deep internal pockets.

Choose a name. A Rat, by tradition, earns its name by venturing into Human ruins and returning with an ancient food label or other bit of human writing: Runchy. Eanut. Sheez-It. Nountain Dew. Coke (very common).

Circle three Traits. Circle one Trait from each set; all start uninjured.

Pick your Career. Soldier, Merchant, Academic, Politician, Healer, Documenter, Supplier.

Create your Grudge. Rats have a special grudge against the species to your left. What did they do to your people to cause this hatred?

Create a legend. These are stories all Rats have heard, which define their worldview. Two are provided; create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find truly meaningful.

Create a mystery. These reflect aspects Rat culture just doesn't have, which make Humans baffling. Two are provided; create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find especially strange or impossible to believe of Humans.

Start your Hoard: Turn to the player to your right. You know a secret about this character, something they told you or you saw, which any other characters don't know. Together, work out what it is. Then create a secret about yourself, something you're ashamed of. You may let the other players know it, if you wish. Write both of these down under your hoard.

Rats hoard many things... food, Artifacts, tools, currency. Anything they choose not to share with their community. But mostly what they hoard is information; information about the Humans, information about the others in their clan, and information about themselves. When revealing this information would be relevant or helpful, the Rat player may do so, and spend a hoard die; cross out a secret once it's revealed.

Whenever you discover a new secret about another character, or do something you must keep secret, write it down and gain a hoard die.

Pick a Human Artifact. You've brought a single Artifact with you. Keep it in front of you, and think about why you brought it and what it means to you.

TRAIT		Injured?
Your Sharp Nose lets you...		
Track someone	Sniff out food	
Your Strong Hind Legs let you...		
Climb vertically	Leap very far	
Your Sharp, Chiseling Teeth let you...		
Gnaw through barriers	Bite hard and hold fast	

CAREER	
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GRUDGE	
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RAT LEGENDS	
Humans were, themselves, the favored ones of an even more ancient species, the Titan. In the same way that Humans gave ancient rats homes and food and intelligence, it was the Titan Fromethius who gave Humans the freedom to run the world.	Humans were like Rats in that they sought to understand where they came from, and revered their ancestors. The Human explorer Indiana Yones was one such historian, who warned of the dangers ancient knowledge could have in the wrong hands.
<i>Your own:</i>	

RAT MYSTERIES	
Rats are social creatures, drawn to their clans and reluctant to leave home for long periods. The idea of a Human preferring solitude or privacy is unlikely in the extreme.	A Rat's instinctive response to danger is, quite rightly, to flee, with fighting as a last, desperate resort. Bravery is a sort of madness, one the Humans would not have suffered.
<i>Your own:</i>	

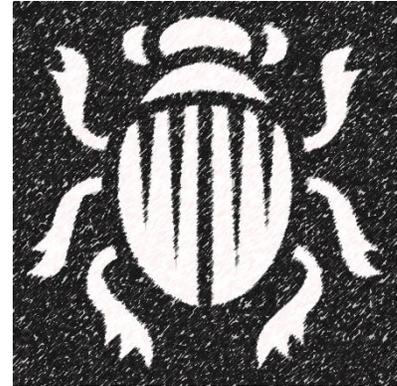
YOUR HOARD

CLUE TABLE	
1	This Clue relates to one of your Mysteries, and you will need help understanding it.
2	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that casts doubt on it.
3	This Clue causes you to reconsider the species you have a grudge against, for better or worse.
4	This Clue forces you to reconsider one of the Artifacts in your possession.
5	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that confirms or justifies it.
6	The details of this clue are entirely up to you to decide.

You are _____, a Roach

When the Humans left, cockroaches had been operating under the same basic body plan for three hundred million years. They haven't changed much since then. They continue to swarm, and wander, and eat the detritus that even the other synanthropes consider waste, and get stomped on for their pains.

But sometimes, rarely, a mutated genome expresses itself in an externally invisible manner, and creates a roach, called the queen by other species, which can think, and project its thoughts upon the worker cockroaches. The queen is the nexus of a hive-mind, a thousand or more roaches acting as its neurons and limbs and bodyguards at once, moving with a single thought. This entity, the queen and her entourage, is the Roach. And though Roaches can communicate, the queens sharing news and goods and even worker cockroaches happily, a Roach is generally a loner, wandering the most decrepit and irradiated Human settlements, consuming everything it can and ignoring the rest.



The means by which the queens communicate with both their workers and each other has never been understood by the other species, though it is believed to be a complex manipulation of pheromones. A full Roach can "speak" by rubbing its bodies together in specific ways. It is a language of hard consonants and clicks with very few vowel sounds, which other species can, with difficulty, learn to understand. Roaches cannot read, but a worker can be imprinted to store information in a specific spot for as long as it lives, to be accessed by every Roach that passes.

A Roach needs no clothing, but they recognize the value in recognizability, so many elect to have several dozen workers painted in vibrant and eye-catching hues. The remaining members of the Roach tend to stay relatively clustered, as the queen's reach is only a few feet; it's common for roaches at the periphery of the mass to wander away, and for wild roaches to be pulled into the fold.

Choose a name. Your name is an untranslatable chemical signal, but the Roach have developed a means of "speaking" by properly manipulating their member bodies to make consonant clusters: K'k't. Kr'T. D'rd. J's'p.

Circle three Traits. Circle one Trait from each set; all start uninjured.

Pick your Career. Soldier, Merchant, Academic, Politician, Healer, Documenter, Supplier.

Create your Grudge. Roaches have a special grudge against the species to your left. What did they do to your people to cause this hatred?

Create a legend. These are tales all Roaches have heard, which define their worldview. Two are provided; create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find truly meaningful.

Create a mystery. These reflect aspects Roach culture just doesn't have, which make Humans baffling. Two are provided; create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find especially strange or impossible to believe of Humans.

Start your Hoard: Start with two Hoard dice. Roaches have one true hoard: themselves. Their power stems from the ability to throw hundreds or thousands of tiny bodies at a problem until it goes away. When you spend a hoard die, you are sacrificing workers... many, many worker cockroaches will die in this action; to that end, you spend hoard dice during moments of extreme self-sacrifice, when you allow yourself to be wounded and hundreds of your member-selves to be killed for the greater good. These dead roaches are unmourned but not forgotten; write down how they died when it happens.

You can regenerate hoard whenever the queen feels that the collective is strong enough that she can tag some of her worker drones as "expendable." Whenever you heal an injury, you gain a hoard die.

Pick a Human Artifact. You've brought a single Artifact with you. Keep it in front of you, and think about why you brought it and what it means to you.

TRAIT		Injured?
Your thousands of Sensitive Antennae let you...		
Hear extremely well	Analyze chemicals	
Your Sturdy Carapaces let you...		
Resist environmental effects	Survive impacts and falls	
Your Seething Mass of Bodies let you...		
Stretch yourself	Flank someone	

CAREER	
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GRUDGE	
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ROACH LEGENDS	
In times of danger, Humans could become the worker bodies of an even greater protector organism. There are many such protectors, but they are commonly referred to by the Roach as V'ltr'n.	One of Humanity's most ancient heroes was, like the Roaches, a wanderer, doing great deeds wherever he went. His name was H'rc'l's, and his journeys were legendary.
<i>Your own:</i>	

ROACH MYSTERIES	
While the Roach cannot tell a lie amongst themselves, they have learned of falsehoods from the other species. Still, they don't believe a Human capable of such an unnatural act as lying.	Roaches live off of... anything. Really, it is hard for a Roach to starve, and though they know not all species are as resilient as they, they also can't believe creatures as rich and clever as Humans could have such a thing as starvation or poverty.
<i>Your own:</i>	

YOUR HOARD

CLUE TABLE	
1	This Clue relates to one of your Mysteries, and you will need help understanding it.
2	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that casts doubt on it.
3	This Clue causes you to reconsider the species you have a grudge against, for better or worse.
4	This Clue forces you to reconsider one of the Artifacts in your possession.
5	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that confirms or justifies it.
6	The details of this clue are entirely up to you to decide.

You are _____, a Raccoon

It's said that when Humanity left, the raccoons were the last to notice. Even when the garbage cans and dog bowls stopped being filled, early raccoons still knew how to catch fish and pick berries, and survived the first long winter. Some were lucky enough to find unhindered entry through old cat-flaps, and lived in some comfort.

While the other Synanthropes gravitated toward old Human cities, the Raccoons evolved on the outskirts, in the single-family homes and suburban tracks. Because no door remains locked and no box unopened where a Raccoon dwells, they were the ones who truly explored Human technology. Sure, a clever squirrel can turn on the lights and operate the boiler, but human high-technology... matter replicators, plasma weaponry, holographic communication rigs... only the Raccoons know how to activate them, and they charge highly for their expertise.

Raccoons developed a written language but not a spoken one. Their writings are tactile, resembling braille, albeit with patterns imprinted on tablets of clay or other soft materials. Raccoons are most comfortable communicating in this way, passing lumps of clay to one another. They have adopted a spoken language based on the Rats', consisting of Human words and terminologies, when they must communicate with others. They are also capable of reading human writing.

Almost all Raccoons carry with them a set of tools used to open up and use Human technologies; no two Raccoons use the exact same set of tools. Backpacks are especially fashionable among the Raccoons, usually stuffed to bursting with old batteries, lengths of wire, spare wrenches, and anything else the Raccoon thought would be useful or fun to have on hand.

Choose a name. A Raccoon's native language and given name is written, with no spoken form. Spoken names are self-given affectations based on favored technologies: Shamshung. Ford. Canon. Hewlett. Shony.

Circle three Traits. Circle one Trait from each set; all start uninjured.

Pick your Career. Soldier, Merchant, Academic, Politician, Healer, Documenter, Supplier.

Create your Grudge. Raccoons have a special grudge against the species to your left. What did they do to your people to cause this hatred?

Create a legend. These are tales all Raccoons have heard, which define their worldview. Two are provided; create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find truly meaningful.

Create a mystery. These reflect aspects Raccoon culture just doesn't have, which make Humans baffling. Two are provided; create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find especially strange or impossible to believe of Humans.

Start your Hoard: Look at the player to your right. Immediately before your characters embarked on this expedition, they did something which made your character look like a fool, perhaps by demonstrating knowledge or skill you SHOULD have, but didn't. Between then two of you, figure out what it was, write it down, and take a hoard die.

Raccoons excel where they aren't invited. Locks, bolts, unlabeled switches and deactivated machines... Raccoons love them all, because of their insatiable curiosity and natural inclination to show the heck off. When you spend a hoard die, it must be one such an act of discovery: opening a locked drawer or activating an unknown machine.

A Raccoon's curiosity has, tied to it, stubbornness. When you fail at a task in a way that doesn't hurt you, but DOES make you look foolish, write down what happened and gain a hoard die. You CANNOT gain a hoard die when you fail to gather a Clue, however.

Pick a Human Artifact. You've brought a single Artifact with you. Keep it in front of you, and think about why you brought it and what it means to you.



TRAIT		Injured?
Your Tactile Paws let you...		
Operate technology	Forage without looking	
Your Nimble Body lets you...		
Keep your balance	Run quickly	
Your Dark Stripes let you...		
Hide in shadows	Cause a distraction	

CAREER	
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GRUDGE	
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RACCOON LEGENDS	
Humans had a special hatred for the sea, and those who voluntarily lived on the waters were dubbed “pirate,” or non-Human. Their punishment was the most severe imaginable: their hands were cut off and replaced by hooks!	There was a Human hero, so adept with his mastery of technology that he became part machine in order to protect his fellow Humans. His Human name was Alex Murphy, but he was known to all as “RoboCop.”
<i>Your own:</i>	

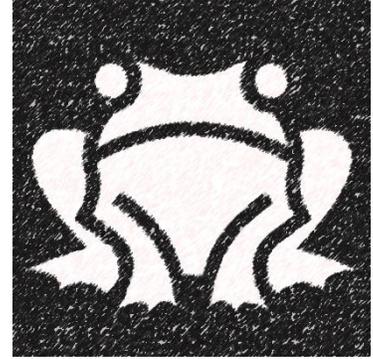
RACCOON MYSTERIES	
Raccoons test everything, and though they can’t understand it all, they try to, and will seek out an explanation wherever possible. Taking things on faith, that’s abnormal and certainly not Human.	Raccoons like to wander, spreading their expertise, collecting adulation from the multitudes, and rarely sleeping in the same place twice. That’s boring and, well, a bit dangerous. Raccoons just don’t get the appeal of permanent homes.
<i>Your own:</i>	

YOUR HOARD

CLUE TABLE	
1	This Clue relates to one of your Mysteries, and you will need help understanding it.
2	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that casts doubt on it.
3	This Clue causes you to reconsider the species you have a grudge against, for better or worse.
4	This Clue forces you to reconsider one of the Artifacts in your possession.
5	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that confirms or justifies it.
6	The details of this clue are entirely up to you to decide.

You are _____, a Toad

The Cane Toads maintain that their ancestors were pleased when the Humans disappeared. Indeed, there's a large contingent that suggests that they were somehow responsible for the disappearance. The ancient cane toads dwelled between Human settlements rather than within them, preferring the isolation and comfort of drainage ditches, gardens, and farmlands away from direct human contact. When Humanity disappeared, and the gardens expanded to cover the towns and cities, the Toads followed, cutting down anyone who got in their way.



The Toads are large, brash, and toxic. They are, quite literally, poisonous; their skin secretes a bofutoxin which is pleasantly hallucinogenic in small quantities and unpleasantly deadly in sufficient doses. They are not afraid of using this toxicity as an offensive weapon, and it was common during the Resource Wars for front-line troops to coat blades and arrows in their own secretions prior to a charge. This has given them a reputation as deadly warriors, something which is only enhanced by their wanton destructiveness, merciless battle tactics, and cannibalism.

The Toad language is loud and simple: a language of few nouns, fewer adjectives, and many, many imperative verbs. They make use of lots of loanwords from Human languages, though the placement of their tongue (attached at the front of the mouth, ready to be flicked out at prey) prevents them from correctly intoning human vowel sounds, which all end up as a flat /ə/. The design of the Toad's eyes prevent them from reading a written language, though they have a system of basic colored shapes based on Human road signs, which can preserve simple information.

Though the Toads remain quadrupeds who move by hopping, they have developed a capacity to swagger forward on their hind legs briefly, freeing up their arms for a few minutes before they tire out and return to all fours. Most toads wear clothing that covers their arms, shoulders, and bellies, but leaves their back (and the poison-secreting glands on it) exposed for ease of access.

Choose a name. Toads have two names; the first is a simple monosyllable which is given the them as soon as they are grown, and the second is a Human word of their own choice, selected to strike fear into others and shouted as a battle cry of sorts: Ker Vectory. Mer Bledé. Pek Deadly. Bem Destreyer.

Circle three Traits. Circle one Trait from each set; all start uninjured.

Pick your Career. Soldier, Merchant, Academic, Politician, Healer, Documenter, Supplier.

Create your Grudge. Toads have a special grudge against the species to your left. What did they do to your people to cause this hatred?

Create a legend. These are tales all Toads have heard, which define their worldview. Two are provided; create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find truly meaningful.

Create a mystery. These reflect aspects Toad culture just doesn't have, which make Humans baffling. Two are provided; create one of your own. Pick one of the three as something you find especially strange or impossible to believe of Humans.

Start your Hoard: Turn to the player to your right, and insult his character in as complex and vile a manner as you can. Start with "Bloated sack of shit-eating maggots" and work up from there; write it down, and take a hoard die. As a Cane Toad, you are an unstoppable force of environmental destruction; your ancestors destroyed entire ecosystems, and you keep that memory alive with more pride than other species consider to be appropriate. You love competition, so whenever you escalate in a conflict, you may deal a vile insult to your opponent, write it down, and gain a hoard die.

Likewise, you excel in conflict, if only because you are basically without fear... you're a poisonous sack of muscle. Whenever you are taking an action in order to provoke conflict or start a fight, you can spend hoard dice

Pick a Human Artifact. You've brought a single Artifact with you. Keep it in front of you, and think about why you brought it and what it means to you.

TRAIT		Injured?
Your Wide, Motionless Eyes let you...		
Track moving objects	See far to your periphery	
Your Long, Sticky Tongue lets you...		
Quickly grab an object	Pull something toward you.	
Your Secreted Poison lets you...		
Advance without fear	Intoxicate others	

CAREER	
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GRUDGE	
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TOAD LEGENDS	
Not all humans are truly Humans; the real Humans were few and far between, surrounded as they were by pale imitations which might have been cousins or larval forms. While mere humans are forgotten, the names of True Humans have passed down through the ages: Check Nerris, Ven Demme, Stev Segel, Jeck Chen, and more.	This world is a temporary place, a kind of canvas stretched over the real world, or the “Dremming.” The Humans understood their role as members of the Dremming dropped onto the world and tasked with painting it to their satisfaction.
<i>Your own:</i>	

TOAD MYSTERIES	
Toad tadpoles have a mortality rate of about 99%, due to their small size and insufficient toxicity, as well as the fact that Toads have few qualms about eating their own progeny. After all, they aren't really Toads yet until they can defend themselves, right? The concept of child rearing in any capacity is unsettling and strange.	While all Synanthropes have a... complex relationship with the natural environment, the Toads are far more dismissive of nature than the rest. They live to spread their influence, drowning out native fauna with gusto. Eco-friendliness is simply not sensible.
<i>Your own:</i>	

YOUR HOARD

CLUE TABLE	
1	This Clue relates to one of your Mysteries, and you will need help understanding it.
2	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that casts doubt on it.
3	This Clue causes you to reconsider the species you have a grudge against, for better or worse.
4	This Clue forces you to reconsider one of the Artifacts in your possession.
5	This Clue relates to one of your Legends in a manner that confirms or justifies it.
6	The details of this clue are entirely up to you to decide.

Danger Oracle

Draw a card and compare it to the element on this table; use that element to influence your description of the floor. You don't need to put it in right away (indeed, some Devastation and Dissent options, especially, are best left to fester for a few tense moments), but it should come into play before too long. If a Disaster is, in your opinion, extremely similar to something that has already happened, or illogical given the building you've created so far, or simply uninteresting, you may discard and select a new card.

HEARTS	An element of DECAY
A	A tribe of irate starlings don't welcome your arrival.
2	A jungle born of potted plants bars the way.
3	Leaky plumbing and water damage renders this floor a virtual swamp.
4	One lone, burly opossum holds an Artifact and fears you will steal it.
5	For some reason, the air on this floor is murky and hard to breathe.
6	A fire alarm, stuck on, is unbearable to creatures with sensitive hearing, like Rats and Roaches.
7	The entire floor is covered in... something sticky. Very sticky, enough to catch fur and bugs.
8	This floor is lined with mountains of rubble you must navigate.
9	Some predator—perhaps a feral dog or cat—is lurking on this floor.
10	There is a magpie residing on this floor, and it has an eye for shiny Artifacts (and shiny anything, really).
J	Wasps! WAAAAAASPS!
Q	The only obvious route to the next floor is jammed and inoperable.
K	Radiation on this floor makes everyone but the Roach extremely ill.

DIAMONDS	A bit of DEVASTATION
A	A fire is raging on this floor!
2	The flooring has entirely given out, leaving a massive chasm.
3	Whoever approaches the Artifact on this floor will have a beam drop from above them.
4	A section of the flooring has collapsed; this floor's Artifact can be found in the room below, among the rubble.
5	Passage across this floor is only possible by leaping across hanging light fixtures.
6	Heavy winds blowing in through a broken window.
7	As you creep along this floor, something, somewhere nearby, explodes!
8	There is an Artifact perched on the windowsill, about to fall to the ground far below.
9	Live electrical wires dance and weave all over.
10	A burst pipe overhead causes a deluge.
J	The stairs are destroyed. You'll have to climb a few floors.
Q	A wall begins to collapse, causing an indoor avalanche.
K	As you move in, the floor begins collapsing behind you!

CLUBS	The building's internal DEFENSES
A	A small, mobile droid that hunts and kills pests.
2	This floor is lined with motion sensing cameras and alarms which alert some threat on this floor.
3	Between you and the exit is a massive, locked vault door.
4	A laser grid, somehow still active after all these centuries.
5	A very, very bright light is distracting and painful to nocturnal creatures like Rats and Raccoons.
6	On this floor: voice-activated doors. Useful, if you can make yourself pronounce reasonable Human.
7	This floor's Artifact is locked in a case of seemingly impenetrable glass and metal.

8	On this floor: a huge Human machine, still active, taking up most of the floor. What does it even do?
9	One of your party is caught in a trap.
10	A button. A big, red, shiny button. It is OBVIOUSLY a terrible idea to push it... but you never know!
J	A droid or mechanism equipped with a motion sensor, a gun, and a hair trigger.
Q	The building's anti-pest protocols activate, and a poison gas begins to seep from the wainscoting.
K	A massive computer, ticking along, still active enough to communicate with if you dare.

SPADES	Things which may lead to DISSENT
A	You cannot bear for the species you have a grudge against to have or even touch this Artifact; it's too important.
2	A ceiling panel falls, splitting the explorers into two groups.
3	On this floor: something that suggests the legend you hold to be true isn't.
4	On this floor: something which directly relates to the aspect of Humanity you find mysterious.
5	The Artifact on this floor is something all the Synanthropes know about and find ESPECIALLY valuable.
6	In a thoughtless moment, you say something to remind your neighbor of the grudge he bears against your species.
7	You have made wrong turn, somehow, and find yourself twisted around, lost, and annoyed with one another.
8	It's called "Human Madness" and occasionally affects explorers of old ruins. It should only last for a scene or so.
9	You are 99% sure the character to your right stole the rations you were saving for later.
10	After all this climbing you are, quite simply, exhausted. The others may want to continue, but you want to camp down.
J	Your food rations have been lost or spoiled... you're going to have to hunt or forage.
Q	A burst of homesickness so strong you can't stand it.
K	It is dark, night falls. You should camp.