

...the Sorcerer Anaximander made the appropriate offerings to Bright Eyes and the False Man, and then he bound the living hearts of the slaves of the palace into panoplia of animate bronze. He did so according to the tablets retrieved by the King of Khthonios during his sack of [unintelligible].

They were each as heavy as two strong men, but had the strength of ten, and the speed of a horse at a gallop. They preferred to hunt at night, when they could see in total darkness like owls. Their exertions generated a great heat, so that water thrown onto their broad backs would immediately begin to steam. They sometimes moved on two legs and sometimes on four. Men who gazed on their faces went mad.

These automata marched forth from the gates of the palace and slew three thousand Dorians, thereby saving the city from destruction. Anaximander was then killed by the Tyrant of Telchinis, who feared his power. But the Tyrant failed in his ultimate objective to secure for himself control of the automata. The Mantis had buried his men of bronze in a hidden vault, pickled in pithos of strange spirits. This crypt was never found, and later the Isle of the Telchines fell to the Aegeans...

-The Mycenaeans, formerly attributed to Herodotus, more likely the work of Pseudo-Herodotus

SUMMARY

The Bronze Colossus is an ancient cyborg, made by a sorcerer using secret prehuman knowledge. A brain and vital organs, suspended in a bronze cauldron of blood and wine, mated to mechanical limbs of great power. A machine of war that slept four thousand years in a vat, and has woken up.

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

The pithos is eight feet tall, with a narrow base and a lid sealed with bands of wax and lead. On the pithos are images of a giant. In one, the giant has no face, and a group of hoplites flee in terror from it, abandoning their shields. In another, it holds a helpless figure in its arms, penetrating the victim's throat with its tongue. In a third, it drinks unmixed wine straight from the amphora. The name ANAXIMANDER is written on the pithos in Linear B, the writing system of the Mycenaeans.

The pithos is filled with a preservative spirit, somewhere between ethanol and vinegar. Inside, curled in a ball, is the Colossus.

The Bronze Colossus enters play when something disturbs its vat. Either it fell over accidentally and broke, someone opened it out of curiosity, or the creature was deliberately awakened. Perhaps...

The pithos is unearthed from an ancient Mycenaean site by curious archaeologists.

The pithos was kept in the basement of the D Stacks at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, until someone accidentally knocked it over and shattered it.

The pithos was kept in Club Apocalypse as a conversation piece. After Alzis' disappearance, it was stolen or broken during the scramble to loot what was left of the Fate.

The pithos was stuffed in a Green Box and forgotten about.

The pithos fell into the hands of a dangerous cult, who know how to "program" it and now use it as an assassin

THE BRONZE COLOSSUS

STR 26, CON 26, DEX 13, INT 9, POW 10

HP 26, WP 10

SKILLS: Alertness 40%, Athletics 60%, See Heat 75%, Stealth 50%

ARMOR: 15 points of bronze, or 10 on the FALSE HEAD, BRAZEN OWL and COOLING FINS

ATTACKS: Kopsis (55%, 2D6, 3 AP)

Feeding Probe (55%, See FEEDING PROBE)

Maddening Gaze (See MASK OF MADNESS)

SUPERHUMAN SPEED: The Bronze Colossus gets two actions per round instead of one. It takes one on Initiative Count 13 and the other on Count 1

KOPIS: The Colossus' manipulator claws can extrude large blades with a wicked forward curvature.

FEEDING PROBE: The Colossus can grapple a victim with its metal fists, lifting them up off the ground to its FALSE HEAD. The mouth of its mask extrudes a sharp metal tube, which it impales the victim on and sucks D6 HP of blood per round, replenishing its own HP by that amount.

MASK OF MADNESS: The Colossus' expressionless face lifts up like a visor, exposing a brightly flashing black and white blur that appears to "melt" outward toward the viewer. Viewing the blur causes *grand mal* seizures that incapacitate the victim for a round and cost 1/D6 SAN from Helplessness. The Colossus can use this ability in addition to taking another action, but while it's active it cannot see out of its mirrored eyes, and must rely on the BRAZEN OWL for vision.

FALSE HEAD: The Colossus' head does not hold any vital organs. It holds the FEEDING PROBE and MASK OF MADNESS. The "eyes" in the head are mirrors, which reflect light to the real eyes inside the torso. Without the head, the colossus can only see in the infrared using the BRAZEN OWL.

BRAZEN OWL: The owl on the Colossus' shoulder is a Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) pod. This lets it "see heat" and the infrared spectrum. Countermeasures against conventional infrared detection (flares, Hot Bricks, etc) also work on the Brazen Owl.

COOLING FINS: The Bronze Colossus is made of heavy bronze around a sealed vat of meat. It runs very hot, inflicting 1 damage per-round to anyone within hand to hand range. If the cooling fins on its back are destroyed, the Colossus is slowed significantly and can only take one action per round.

VITAL COMPONENTS: A called shot to the FALSE HEAD, BRAZEN OWL or COOLING FINS that does 5 or more damage through armor destroys that component, but removes only 5 HP from the Colossus.

It looks like a starving man, seven feet tall with spindly limbs and a distended belly. It shimmers in a heat-haze. It moves like a dancer on its impossibly tiny feet. Its sculpted, bearded face gazes at you with eyes like fleshy mirrors. It stinks of wine, vinegar, and blood.

It has a bronze owl perched on its shoulder, whose head rotates.

It has a set of cooling fins on its back.

(The distended belly stores the brain, vital organs and muscles, suspended in a mixture of wine and blood. Inside the limbs are [intricate but sturdy clockworks](#), which transfer motive force from powerful muscle groups inside the belly to the limbs)

MODUS OPERANDI

The Colossus needs blood and wine to replenish its stored matrix of chemicals. Its first priority after coming out of the pithos is to feed. It kills by grabbing people and carrying them off to a safe place to feed. It drinks wine by boring through glass bottles with its probe and sucking it out unmixed.

The Colossus is stealthy, for a giant bronze golem. It can move quickly and quietly, climbing and fitting into tight spaces, though its weight and high ground pressure limit its movement across some surfaces.

It is an expert hunter that observes prey before striking, attacks suddenly when its enemies are separated, and retreats from losing battles. It comes from the Greek Dark Ages and knows nothing of cars, computers, firearms or electricity.

What are its goals besides nourishing itself? There are a few options, based on how you want to use it in your game.

THE SILENT BRUTE

The Colossus is silent, except for wet breathing sounds like a coffee maker gurgling mindlessly to itself. It has no goals other than to defend its territory. Its territory is wherever it was removed from its pot, and it defends this territory by killing anyone it does not recognize who occupies it. It doesn't recognize anyone.

THE MAD BRUTE

The Colossus was barely controllable before it went in the jar. Centuries of dreaming have rendered it completely insane. The part that remembers it was once a person is enraged. Now it screams, in a wet voice that echoes from inside its bronze carapace. Agents with **Archaeology** can understand its mad ululations in Linear B, the language of the Mycenaeans.

WHERE IS THE WINE, ANAXIMANDER?

*WHO ARE THESE TALL, FAT CREATURES? WHERE ARE THEIR SPEARS AND LINEN CORSETS?
HAVE THEY LOST THEIR SHIELDS?*

YOU WILL HAVE YOUR HECATOMB ANAXIMANDER. TEN HECATOMBS. A THOUSAND.

WHERE IS THE LIBERATOR? FREE ME FROM THIS DREAM, FATHER

The mad brute kills and breaks things until destroyed. Speaking to it in its own language can distract it or make it hesitate, but it cannot be convinced to stop.

THE PROGRAMMABLE BRUTE

The Mantis Anaximander controlled the Colossus using sound. Whistled or played on pipes, the right tune can program it to attack or defend a location, kill or protect a person, wake up or go back into hibernation.

If you choose this option, the Colossus' Pithos has instructions written in Linear B, along with scales and chords in a primitive form of the [musical system of Ancient Greece](#).

If the Colossus is programmable, it is probably killing people in the service of a cult or wizard, who use it as an assassin or guard animal.

THE INTELLIGENT BRUTE

The Bronze Colossus is Anaximander. He escaped death by placing his own brain inside one of the cyborgs. He slumbered four thousand years and now he is awake.

He is insane, but not insensate. He will learn the language and customs of this new world. He will build a new Sacred Band of Bronze Colossi, brains pried out of living victims. He will make the appropriate sacrifices to The Goddess and The God That Comes. He will sculpt a new body of flesh for himself, grander than his old and grander still than his living sarcophagus of bronze.

CLUES

The victim was held in place by a large, heated vice or set of pincers, which cracked the ribs and left singed clothes and first degree burns. Cause of death was exsanguination, through suction exerted by a sharp metal tube traumatically inserted into the carotid artery.

The wine bottle is unopened, but empty. There's a circular hole in the glass, bored out by something. It reminds you of the holes conches leave in other gastropod shells when they burrow through them, to devour the delicious meat inside.

The footprints are small, angular, and scorched into the wood. Whatever left them was heavy, 400 pounds at the lightest.

You pause the footage when you see the face. You remember this from grad school - the Owl and the Bearded Guy are Athena and Dionysus. But these are the older forms. One of the precursor civilizations. Minoan, maybe? Mycenaean?

In the footage, the face slides up like a visor. The thing behind it must have flashed at a higher framerate than the video could capture, because it's just a blur, like scan lines on a CRT filmed with a video camera.

The thing is blazing hot in the infrared - radiating huge amounts of waste energy from cooling fins in the back. Its "belly" is filled with liquid, inside which float organs that pulse and spasm as it moves.

FIGHTING THE COLOSSUS

Breaking off the Colossus' head, fins and owl make it weaker and easier to fight.

Pistols and rifles do minimal damage to the Colossus' body, but a powerful enough weapon can kill it outright.

The Colossus' bronze body is a great conductor of both heat and electricity. Fire and electrical attacks ignore its armor and deal full damage. Electrical attacks are doubly advantageous because the creature has no knowledge of electricity, making it easy to trick and trap.

The Colossus can be poisoned with bait of either wine or a fresh corpse, into which something vile that dissolves the organs has been introduced.

If the Colossus is programmable, the instructions on the pithos allow Agents to control it. Playing or whistling the right tune under stress requires a musical **Art** skill, or the Agents can just input it into Sibelius and play a recording of it.