



The GRIND

Vast metal cubes drifting with dull malignity. The sky—above and below—is oppressive with dust and heavy with a coming storms' pressure. The dust is metal oxide powder, and impairs the visibility significantly, even totally when it forms thick hazy clouds.

Grind feels more claustrophobic than such an open space should.

Out of the haze comes booms, bangs, grinds and sudden animal noise. Regular enough to wear at you; irregular enough to make you jump.

The colours of the sky are oranges, reds, violets. All bruise colours, garish, yet dull and flat.

The cubes are crude aggregates of rotting metals, compressed machines, mangled, broken weapons and tools, and corpses, both petty and large.

Some of this was originally organic matter, as it will “ferrosify” here, turning into weak crumbling metal, like a steel wool pot scrub left forgotten outside. If not otherwise disturbed, it bonds to a cubes surface and there, progressively hardens to match the iron.

Esoteric trash and broken machines tumble down from Babel, and war waste from everywhere else.

It all combines into cubes which crash into each other, smashing themselves into red ruin, the dust eventually turning into something like a dirty rain, drifting out from above Heart of It All, then seeping through the dreary skies above the Plains of Revelation, before getting whipped up in erratic winds and thermals of the Flesh Rifts, to finally peter out at the base of Solitary, giving the rain a rust tinge.

What Draws Souls to Grind?

Conflict and the endless moment of battle. To conquer without care for what you seize, to kill so you know you exist, to reduce everything down to you and them. A freedom in obedience, a peace of hoping for nothing.

Mercenaries for whom money means nothing except a reason to kill, anyone whose only ambition is to find someone to hate more than themselves.

But not only these monsters, also the despondent and the lost. Hollowed out soldiers, former zealots who have only the fury but none of the faith. Orphans to everything but their brothers-in-arms.

What forms become the souls?

Soldiers. Then, as their identity corrodes, wounds barely heal with rusty scabs. With further erosion, they walk with killing wounds showing. The eventual end is their corpse turning to iron and fusing into the cubes.

Where can portals be found to it?

As Grind pulls towards it the things lost to war, look to the leavings of war to find its portals

1. At the bottom of a battlefield mass-grave. Look for one that hasn't bothered to be covered and where the bodies happened to fall in distinctive arrangements of arches and spirals, forming tunnels that can be crawled into. The tunnel of corpse will continue far deeper than should be possible. Once the light behind one can't be seen, the faint banging of Grind will be heard and then it's just one final, disgusting climb to emerge out of a fleshy wound on a cube.
2. Cairn Of Skulls: Either so fresh it's still surrounded by scavenger birds or long forgotten by either victors or victims. Either way, stand on top of it and fall backwards. A sudden gust of dust-bearing wind or a cacophonous rise of birds will whip the portal user out of sight and they'll crash down in The Grind.
3. The Only standing archway in ruined city. Every other structure must not be standing. Step through it but as you do attempt to strike the keystone as if to bring the structure down on your head. Instead you'll disappear and reappear at the bottom of a cube's trench
4. Forge: Must be one that hasn't made anything other than weapons since its construction. Put the flame out with blood and step into when the steam is thick. A correspondingly large crack in a cube will belch forth the same steam and the portal user with it.
5. Triumphal Arch: the cause for it must be celebrating an individual's military achievement and the individual must have been killed within a year of its construction. To activate this portal, the user must dress like this ill fated individual did customarily and then march through the arch, accompanied by a crude marching beat on a drum.
6. Ravaged Public Work: Canals, dams, aqueducts, bridges or the like. Either destroyed as a military action or as result of the neglect following a war. A bone then must be sourced of someone who lived in this area. The bone is used to scratch the outline of a door on the side of whatever remains of the work. If it is indeed a portal, the scratch will then bleed slowly but then speed up until the surface outlined by the scratch has become a thick glistening curtain of blood. Then, merely walk through this to emerge in a shallow pool of contaminated water on a cube's surface
7. Nameless soldiers grave: Someone who got politely buried a long way from home by people who didn't know their name and have marked the grave with a simple religious sign. Dig it up, take the soldiers uniform off, put it on and lie down in the grave. If it is a valid portal the dirt beneath them will collapse and they'll fall out and up to a cube. The portal will stay open for about a minute, so only one person is required to put on the corpses garments.

8. A certain catapult: if a catapult has killed at least 5 operators of it through accident and malfunction it sometimes will serve as a portal to the grind. To use one has to be fired from the catapult, and will disappear out of sight to arrive in the void in which the cubes drift with considerable momentum which will eventually disperse--if they don't manage to hit anything before.

USING THE GRIND

In order to run an exploration or journey through the Grind, you will need to make a map, generate some cubes, and then determine what's on them.

The Map

Get a blank piece of paper. The top of the page will exit to Babel. The bottom leads to the border of Heart of It All and the Plains of Revelation.

The sides wrap around, or if that feels like too much to consider, generate new maps for if the players leave via the sides.

Now get a handful of d6 (preferably ones with numbers rather than pips)

Drop/ roll them on the page with enough momentum to evenly scatter them without losing too much off the sides.

Note the cubes will be moving so if you are preparing this map in advance record where the d6s have landed, otherwise just leave them on the page so you can move them around later.

Take note of the orientation of the face (i.e which way was down in regard to the number on it).

This orientation will give the direction the cube is travelling. So if the number sat like this "e" the direction is ↓

If the number sat like this "ə", the direction is ↑.

To determine what kind of cube is the cube and what's on it you'll be rolling on d20 tables, so you could potentially speed things up by rolling d20s instead of d6s if you have a lot of spare d20s and can manage to not have them roll off the page.

Each dérive the cubes move about 3 centimetres on the page. This movement is irregular and difficult to follow so if how you run makes it seem like the cube moves in jumps and starts that's fine.

If this movement means cubes cross paths, roll for a **collision** (see below in hazards).

GENERATING CUBES

Roll D20 5 times to determine its size, what and who is on it and if there is anything valuable or useful to be found on it.

Consider each results effects on the other. If there's something valuable, are any occupants aware of it, looking for it or in possession of it?

OBVIOUS AT DISTANCE

10 or lower. A default battered metal cube 144x144x144 metres (and use these dimensions for any entries below if no other size is mentioned)

12. Smaller. 72 by 72 by 72 metres

13. Larger 288 by 288 by 288 metres

14 several cubes connected by chains and adhoc bridges

15. Damaged. Reduce one of its dimensions by half.

16. Ridges and ravines have created significant verticality to it, varying it of about a 3rd of its dimensions both higher and lower.

17. Hollowed out. Tunnels or Erosion have created a significant inner space. Roll for occupants and contents for inside as well

18. More compressed and stacked trash and ferrosified corpses than solid metal. More likely to be deviated, roll again or use result on nearest d20 to see

19. More than half its surface is hazardous

20. Roll twice or use results on nearest d20s to have 2 combined results. If get both smaller and larger treat as a cracked larger cube that will shatter into 32 smaller blocks if it takes a decent jolt.

BUT ON THE SURFACE HERE

Occupients :

1 to 5 unoccupied

6: Cube-pickers

7: Lost Legion

8: Lost Legion

9 Junk-Giants

10 Skuzzard

11 Jackalape

12 Wretched

13-14 CreeperCrow*

15-18 Millipede

19-20 Face-stealer monkeys

* if you roll one of these, roll again for an additional occupant

Are There Any Hazards?

10 or less, no hazard

11-13. Rust Hollows

14 Unstable Junk

15 Narrow crevasses

16 Jagged pits

17. Toxic waste, acid

18 Toxic waste, tar

19 Toxic waste, Volatile oil

20 Redrum

Rust Hollows have engulfment risk

Roll a d20, record that number, if it turns up in combat, saving throw or a stat check, then the roller falls through a crust and is trapped.

Unstable Junk:

same mechanic but 1d12 damage and pinned until strength check to get out

Narrow Crevices :

Unlikely to fall in these unless an appropriate fumble would indicate something like this.

Falling into means making saving throw or dex/str check or class appropriate skill. Success means they take 1d4 damage and catch themselves a rounds' climb from the surface. Failure means they fall half the maximum depth, taking 2d8, 3d10, or 3d20 dmg depending on if it's small, default or large cube respectively. To determine how deep the crevice is that they just pachinko-ed to the bottom of, multiple the damage taken by 5 , and that's how many metres deep the crevice is. Note that is possible the crevice is deeper than the cube is wide. In that case the crevice actually perforates the cube completely and the faller is now falling up and out the other side.

However If they take more than half their current hitpoints they are jammed in crevice and will require aid to get out.

Jagged pits

are 1d4X10 metres deep and like any other spiked pits. Assume anyone fumbling in combat falls into one

Toxic Waste :

Acid does 1d8 damage per round of exposure, then d6, then d4.

Toxic Tar:

If fall in, strength check to escape, will take 4 rounds to submerge entirely. Each strength check undoes a round of sinking

Toxic Volatile Oil

When it takes any amount of fire damage, roll a d20. If the d20 rolls equal to or less than the damage , it ignites, doing damage = to what was rolled on the d20 to anything in contact

with the oil. On the next round it does damage equal to the initial damage that got it to ignite to anything within 3 metres, before settling down to do 1d8 damage per round until it's all consumed. A puddle will burn for 1d6 rounds, a small ponds worth d6 hours , and a large pool of it d6 days.

Red-rum:

A thick diesel like semi-opaque liquid. Also known as cube milk or cube blood, it's found in pools and breaks in the cubes. A mixture of the oils cubes secrete when damaged, blood, rust, other oils and toxic products.

Falling into a pool of it results in a red stain, 1d6 poison damage, 2d6 if have already suffered damage, the inability to respond to magical healing for a Fugue, and if threatened or attacked, they will take 2d6 damage if they flee or attempt to peacefully resolve the situation.

It's flammable, but not that flammable, requiring 5 points of fire damage to get going, making thick smoke and inflicting 1d4 fire damage per round. It will stop burning if it rolls a 1 for fire damage but notably can't be put out with water.

Additionally it can be used for the following:

tan and impressively harden leather (leather armour that uses redrum in the tanning or boiling process of its construction will have +1 to its armour class modifier)

Adding a couple of drops to alcohol makes for a violent belligerent drunk

Drinking without alcohol causes berserk rage and 1d4 damage on a failed poison/con save. The victim gets a new save each time they injury someone or something, taking another 1d4 damage on a failed save.

Boiled down to a paste and added to weapons causes wounds that don't respond to magical healing.

A variety of grim reds and orange dyes

On Further Searching the Cube

1 to 10 there is nothing to be found

(next results are suggested location, consider if other entities are here, have they found this yet?)

11. Buried in the rubble

12. Partially ferrosified and obscured

13. At the bottom of a nearly drained oily pit, the sides of which are slippery and jagged.

14. Down a 2 metre shaft, that reaches the centre of the cube, and is lined with downward angled spikes and jags, easily pushed passed downward, but a formidable obstacle up and out again

15. Peeking out from the depths of a deep but narrow crack. The crack is barely a half metre wide at the most, widening it risks it suddenly propagating to the point of bisecting the entire cube

16. In a room sized metal chest, on its side, and sticking half out from the cubes surface. The lid is open a finger width but will not open further without considerable excavation or damage to the chest.

17. Scattered and concealed in a barely adequate fashion
18. At the end of what looks like an abandoned attempted at mining, the tunnels shored up and regular
19. Covered in the long ferrosified and crumbling corpses of prolonged and vicious battle
20. Partially revealed out of crumbling cairn of skulls

WHAT IS FOUND:

D40 (Use a d4 and d10. The d4 for the 10's column, the d10 is the 1's column. Treat 4's as zero unless you roll 0 on the d10, that is your 40.

1. A full length mirror with an ivory border, its relief carving depicting wars. Breaking the mirror causes duplicates of whoever is visible in the mirror (and whatever they were visibly equipped with) to appear. The duplicate will be dead however, seemingly slain from the last source of injury to the original. Of the garments, weapons and armour these will be identical to how they appeared in the mirror (so text will be reversed etc). If the original objects had enchantments, the duplicates will have a malign reversing of the enchantment.
2. 300 metres of half centimetre thick strong chain and multiple pulleys and tackles
3. A dozen bodies of soldiers, each a different cultural group, so varying armaments and armour. Mangled and ferrosifying. At least one of every armour type is recoverable and plenty of bits usable to repair others.
4. 1d6 bottles of a quicksilver like substance. If poured onto a damaged metal object, it flows into the damaged area, attaching, bonding and replacing as needed to return the metal to working condition. The cracks and fills will always be visible as bright silver though. It will return magic function to an enchanted object but only if used with a Bout.
5. 2 dozen litres of Water in rope wrapped glass bottles. 20 meals in canned foods. Odd garish paintings of smiling fat children on tins. Food is Salted. Is human flesh.
6. 1d8 Fire Bombs
7. Harpax (or other cube transversal method)
8. 1d20 assorted melee weapons (no two alike, all excellent quality)
9. a crown and sceptre worth 400 Sekem
10. Siege engine (1d4: 1-ruined, 2-damaged, 3-wonky, 4-fine)
11. Ornate obsidian idols, last vestiges of a particularly crazed murder god. Valuable, even more so to certain collectors. Will empower various remainders of the gods, like artifacts, sacred beasts, undead priests, etc.
12. A Usurper Crown. Appears as cheapish crown worth 20 Sekem. When used to crown a usurper, they take on the appearance of the "rightful" crown and the subjects of the usurper will always believe them to be the "rightful" king, even if they are a horse
13. 1d6 pottles of grease salve in cinnabar carved boxes. Carvings are of various herbs, fruits, and animal parts renowned for their curative power. However if used to treat an ill, it will go slightly too far. For example curing blindness will give sight that is hurt by anything other than dim light, a cure of paralysis will result in an unsteady drunken gait,

etc. Wounds treated with it heal but result in the skin becoming stiff and unfeeling. Limbs reattached always grow somewhat bigger and hearty than the rest of the body, seemingly sucking health from it.

14. Books detailing the theory and construction of a new machine, weapon, agriculture, or governance. Being of the type that historians tend to blame for whatever bloody and messy social upheaval followed. 50/50 it's not practical. However in this case certain temperaments reading it will become unshakably convinced of its validity and the vast potential it holds, leading to ruinous investments and zealous dedication.
15. A long scroll made from human skin, and listing the names of various deserters and traitors. If someones name is looked for here and they have strong intentions of desertion or treachery, it will be found. However every time after this there's a 1 in 4 chance that anyone whose name is looked for on the scroll will become aware of the scroll owners suspicion and distrust, and in such a way that it ferments a treacherous ill-will, even if there was none before.
16. History books detailing various battles but giving exact fatality counts and the names of slain.
17. Enchanted Gravity Hammer, when it successfully damages an entity, the number rolled on the dice is used for the next damage roll too, unless the second roll is higher than the first. If a 3rd damage roll happens, the highest value is used out of the new roll, the second roll and the first roll. A 4th roll starts the cycle again. The ball of it is carved like a gurning face. The teeth chatter after each "stored" damage roll, getting louder with each one. If combat is stopped while its teeth are chattering, the chatter will increase in volume for 4 rounds before randomly attacking someone (including the holder) in reach.
18. Enchanted Stinger, iridescent shine on it, like from the most fancy beetles. The user of it can add their Intelligence as an additional to hit roll modifier.
19. Enchanted OverSized Jawblade, requiring 16 strength to use. Does 2d8 damage Each tooth on it is from a different beast, elaborate stitching holding each one to a slab of obsidian, the red thread darting in and out of it like it was mere cloth. Any time the user fumbles one tooth breaks of, and their constitution is reduced by 1 until they replace the tooth with a new one. It must be from something carnivorous and at least 6 hit dice. There are at least 100 teeth on this blade.
20. A Spear carved out of frozen unmelting blood. If you know the first name given to someone, and attack them with this spear, it will never miss, and ignore any defences or immunities.
21. A full helmet with no eye slots. The face plate is a stylized screaming face and there's space for a lock to be attached. When worn, regenerates 3 hitpoints per round, but only for damage done while the helmet is on
22. A cauldron big enough to fit a man inside. Once filled with water and set to boil, any mortal slain in the last hour in battle that's dropped inside emerges whole and alive. If they ever speak of the cauldron, it will crack in half, and be ruined.
23. A clockman knight and horse, the devices that power them have been ripped from their chest. Still very valuable to anyone mechanically minded.

24. Arrow heads unusually small and heavy. A fletcher could easily craft them into arrow or quarrel. When used they ignore any non-magic armour or cover, punching through it like paper.
25. A Throwing axe made of a stack of 24 card-thin throwing axes. Each can be thrown as a +2 throwing axe or the stack can be thrown at once, resulting in everyone in front of the thrower and within their unpenalized axe range suffering a number of axe attacks. Specifically 1 axe attack for every 4 axes in the stack. Double this for large opponents, and triple it for huge.
26. A Soul Bell of the rarest quality and craftsmanship.
27. A cloak of human skin. If worn with no other clothing or protection, it protects as +1 full plate
28. A large pile of polished and blue stained bones. 2 dozen different animals are represented in the pile. Close inspection reveals a 3 rows of dots in distinct pattern of clustering and spacing. Tapping any 2 of these bones together in the rhythm indicated by the dots causes the bones to assemble themselves into a catapult. Arms from the catapult will load the nearest thing in reach that is closest to the weight and size of a catapult stone. Tapping the second pattern will cause it to fire at that next thing pointed at. Tapping the 3rd pattern causes it to assemble again.
29. A +3 Kite shield which attacks the user as vorpal blade if they attempt to flee in battle.
30. A dozen Bone nails. Can be used to nail incorporeal or gaseous beings or substances to objects. If used for this or nailing any solid entity the nails will not break regardless of the strength used to pound them in. Whoever is nailed cannot remove the nails
31. Saints preserved corpse, smelling like flowers, mounted upright to litter.
32. 6 pages, titled as for a mercenary contract. If used for such, only mortals can sign it. If they do so, breaching the conditions in the contract will cause them to be unable to ingest food or water, and upon dying, they animate as undead until they finish the terms of the contract. The same applies to the other party in the contract.
33. A single firebomb with the metals used in its construction oddly greasy. The initial fires it creates are unable to be put out by any means short of appropriate magics of level 3 or higher.
34. A Modron of undetermined amount of sides. Badly injured, and unable to move or speak unless repaired. If repaired will be uninterested in anything other than writing. Anything he writes will act as a Poison Axiom. Modrons of Babel will pay well for his destruction. Anyone within speaking range of him will suffer fumbles on 1,2, or 3 and have worse results. At least once a Fugue an incident of unusually bad luck will happen to his surrounding area, his companions, or his place of residence.

35-to 39 Poison Axiom

39-40/ Poison Axiom but adequately contained, i.e in a mirror lined box. Presumably cached for later retrieval? Roll for Occupants again, and if you get an intelligent being, then that's who shows up in a Bout

ROTTEN AXIOMS

A crystallized truth that is innately paradoxical and can't maintain a reality built on it. These are created somehow in Babel and then ejected down where they eventually drift down to Grind.

They look like someone has taken a photograph of whatever is in front of you and the photograph is large enough to take up your whole view of your sight. Then suddenly it's scrunched up into a tiny ball. Then unfolds a couple of seconds later, flickering between these states.

If you don't look at it directly, it will more or less behave like a normal object. If you are watching it, the flickering will cause the axiom to physical exist erratically, possibly falling through other objects, getting stuck in them or just shifting exact position by a few metres.

Anything sentient and not from the Terminal Torus and within 3 metres of a Poison Axiom that isn't safely contained in a mirror lined box will cause minor mental and physical disturbances such as the following:

Repeating themselves, sudden uncharacteristic behaviour, be unable to wake up from dreams, lose things and find them again in weird places, disproportionate emotional responses, vertigo, distorted time perception, and out of body itches and cramps (similar to phantom limb syndrome).

However anything being that's formed or been reformed by a realm (e.g Soulforms, and most current inhabitants of any realm) are affected differently.

Specifically if they are from Babel, Pinnacle of Virtue, Blazing World, Seether, Flesh Rifts, or Heart Of It All they are hurt by direct contact, visual study (i.e not just a glance) or even thinking too hard about a specific Rotten Axiom.

This does 1d8 damage per round and this damage bypasses any damage immunity or resistance the being might have. Beings from Babel and Seether are particularly affected suffering 2d8 damage per round.

If the Rotten Axiom is incorporated into a weapon, this damage is delivered even on a miss.

When first taking damage from a Rotten Axiom in the game session, Lawful beings must make a Will Resistance roll or be unable to reach a conclusion when analysing or considering anything in depth. They will have to make snap decisions or route actions, as if they consider anything longer for a moment they become trapped in thought, and will remain so until physically jolted or shook. This risk of "analysis paralysis" lasts for the remaining *dérive*.

Chaotic beings must also make a save when first damaged by a Poison Axiom, if they fail, then the memories created over the next *dérive* will be wrong. Each time they recollect these false memories they will be different. They will take another 1d8/2d8 damage if they make a prolonged effort to analyze the memory for accuracy.

In either of these above situations, if a 20 is rolled for their save, that axiom then disappears, reappearing somewhere else in meta reality.

Poison Axioms tend to not stay put, and if in a characters possessions they must mention it each game session or it will disappear, unless stored in a mirror lined box. If the character has a brief amount of knowledge about Poison Axioms, let their player know this mechanic is in effect.

Poison Axioms will also disappear from these boxes, just not regularly or often enough to matter for play. (1 in 10 chance of disappearing per year)

Beings that are from the Plains of Revelation, Solitary, Starry Night, or The Grind have no ill effects whatsoever around Poison Axioms

GENERAL HAZARDS AND MECHANICS:

MOVING FROM CUBE TO CUBE AND DOWN, IN

GENERAL.

The whole space of Grind has a weak downward force leading towards Heart of It all and the fringes of The Plain of Revelations.

This means terminal velocity and the rate of acceleration is lessened.

Fall damage kicks in after 25 metres and measured in units of 25. Then does the maximum amount at 100 metres.

So if you have fall damage be a d6 for 5 metre fall, instead it's after 25, increasing every 25 metres until a maximum of 4d6. Once the otherwise unnoticeable border is vertically crossed out of the bottom of the Grind gravity acts as usual.

The Cubes each have local gravity, each face being a "down".

Nothing smaller than the Smallest cube (72 by 72 by 72) seems to have specific gravity like this.

CUBE GRAVITY WELLS:

Small :

Distance that things fall more or less down as expected (the primary well) 2 metres.

Distance of that the cube pulls things towards it (the secondary well) 20 metres

Regular:

Distance that things fall more or less down as expected (the primary well) 4 metres

Distance that the cube pulls things towards it (the secondary well) 40 metres

Large

Distance that things fall more or less down as expected (the primary well) 8

Distance that the cube pulls things towards it (the secondary well) 80

Anything leaving the primary well but still the secondary well will fall back towards the cube at 10 metres per round, but rotating around the cube, effectively being over a new face each round.

Navigation between the cubes is commonly done with throwing or shooting grapples into a cube or near enough to it so it descends on to the surface. Then climbing the rope.

Additional methods include

Running off the edge with a glider (known as "man-kite") and angling your glider to swoop out of the gravity well. It requires a fair amount of skill to gain enough speed to whip out of the well.

So another method involves improving said glider with form of additional lift /push like a flapper, spinner, blower, or propellers. There is no standardized and reliable method of doing this and any explorer who has developed/stolen a method will jealously disguise how it actually works with additional contrivances.

Other solutions include using a trained flyer to set a grapple

POSSIBLE COLLISIONS

If the cubes seem to cross paths in the map. roll a d6

6 they miss but come close enough for missile weapons, or a powerful throw

5 near enough to jump

4 near enough that anyone not ducking gets smacked (2d12 damage)

3 scraps a side clean, knocking everyone into space, and inflict a 2d12 damage.

2 glancing impact, causing shudders and structural destruction

1 full impact, severe structural damage, everyone knocked prone or even off the cube, roll both cubes again and resolve new direction and distance

If something gets caught directly between two cubes colliding it's an instant death situation, survivable only with some context or factor extenuating enough for a dm to decide to just settle with damage rather than instant destruction.

INHABITANTS:

Intelligent

Lost Legions

The souls of those who held no values or identity higher than their life in a war and military unit come here.

With outsiders they are wary and opportunistic but not rapacious. A casual shakedown if they have advantage and their targets have something very desirable. With stronger forces they will trade intel for intel, and are willing to ally against other units of Lost Legion. Their existence involves around seeking out other units, defeating them, taking supplies and loot, and replacing any missing members with defeated and captured legionaries.

Once press-ganged into a new unit their identity and habits will change to conform with the others and they will have little recollection of their previous unit.

While they do not need food, water or Salt, they will feel the pains of hunger and thirst.

They heal steadily, restoring from even fatal injuries after Fugue. Their uniform and other insignia repair to some extent with them if with the body.

The remaining damage will be carefully repaired by the legionary.

As the materials may not be available to repair garments or equipment exactly, Legionary uniforms at close inspection often show a remarkable amount of clever improvisation and patchworking. Boots cut to fix leather armour, soft fabrics shredded and stiffened to make feather substitutes, a crest amateurally repainted by a legionary.

Using materials suitable for making repairs to bargain or trade with Legion is likely to result in a favourable deal. The materials don't even need be the ideal, merely better than what they have been making do with. Similarly artistic abilities or craft skills can be a valuable bargaining chip.

Despite their efforts the Lost Legions slowly and surely are ground down by this realm, degraded through several states until they resemble walking corpses.

If a legionary is extensively damaged to the point of an unrecognisable corpse they will come back lessened.

Being press-ganged, separated from their unit for lengths of time, losing uniform or insignia, their standard taken or damaged, being prevented from maintaining their normal habits, these all too erode them.

They start as Fresh, then Tarnished, then Corroded, then finally Ruined. Past this they will be incorporated into the physicality of the realm itself.

Fresh:

Their uniforms clean or under good repair, their standard firm and proud. They refer to each other by nickname and seem like the living, though with little awareness or interest in anything other than their existence in Grind, and an inability to grasp exactly what they are.

Tarnished:

Their uniform is stained, the repairs slightly insufficient, their skin taking on the tone of rust and ash. They still talk and laugh with each other but come across a little rehearsed or affected. They use only rank to refer to each other. A unit of only Faded has a 2 in 6 chance of treating anyone else as an enemy unit.

Corroded:

They show no little emotion, damage to their uniform or themselves goes unnoticed. If a unit is made up only of Corroded they operate together with no need for communication, and regard everything else as an enemy. If injured their blood is thick and dries into large scabs like the flakes on rusted iron. Their wounds never really close further than this, metal rot forming increasingly more and more of their form.

Ruined:

The last stage of the lost, animated corpses, obscured by layers of rust and metal scabs. If still part of unit not wholly they will obey and follow the others. If isolated or in a unit with only Ruined they will stay on their cube, hostile to anything else. They blend in perfectly with their surroundings, and have a perfect awareness of anything happening on the cube. They display military instincts in the location and the timing of their ambushes. If their bodies are destroyed and removed from the cube (or the cube is destroyed) they will not regenerate again.

This Legions has:

1. Furs, fancy plaits and beards. Glowing woad tattoo (Light armour) Axes and spears. Heroic. Morale 10. Numbering appearing 1d6 +6

2. Crested helmets, eagle, snake or sea monsters motifs on banner and shields. Towershields, short swords, javelins/plumbata, banners. Segmented plate breastplate or mail (medium) Formations. Commander. Morale 10 Number appearing d6+10

3. Elaborate costumes and masked helmets. Like predatory animals but with sweeping additional decoratives of feather, tassel or ribbons. Laminar armour. (Medium) Weapons are weird looking and awkward in anyone else's hands. 2-handed swords or mauls., take captives for sacrifices. Bolas.. Heroic. Morale 9 1d6+ 6

4. Street gang, rioters, revolutionary force, mismatched clothing and looted uniforms but wearing bright red or yellow scarves or full face cloth masks. No armour. thrown weapons (spears, rocks, pointy debris), mix of hand to hand weapons, mainly clubs, staves, spears and daggers. Mob. Morale 6 Numbering appearing 1d6 +20

5. Wearing sack like ponchos, covering in strips of rust coloured fabric to break up form and colour. (No armour) Stealth based commandos/deep penetration units. Face paint and camouflaged (so rust coloured). Bows or crossbows. Leader has 1d4 bombs. Commander, commando, hit and run, held positions 1d6+ 6

6. Bright coloured smart uniforms, big formal hats. Breastplates (medium armour) Leader has half a bird worth of feathers sticking out of his hat.. Halberds, crossbows, grendairs. Commander, formations, held positions Morale 8 Numbering appearing 1d6 +12

7. Simple dressed mountain people with grim turbans or hats. Leather vests decorated with braid work and stitching. (no armour) Fast runners and climbers, slingers + ranged of custom thrown weapons like bolas and improvised bombs. Machete or shortsword Hit and Run, commando. Morale 7 Numbering Appearing 1d6+9

8 Trophy-takers, 3 Leaders ornate headgear and facial grooming with quality heavy crossbows or cheiroballistra. No armour, rely on intervening subordinates. Remaining wearing simple costume. 2 scouts with slings and daggers with no armour., rest with spears and shields and leather armour (light)

Commanders. Fixed Positions. Morale 7 Number Appearing 1d6+8

9. Heavily armoured shock troops, with stylistic animal helmets and shoulder banners. Full plate or Full Chain, (Heavy Armour) 2 handed swords or polearms with warhammer sidearms. heroic, formations. Morale 9 Number Appearing 1d6+4

10 Little clothing, elaborate scarification. (No armour) spears, spear-swords (ixwa), or swords, + shields. Heroic, formations, Morale 9 Number Appearing 1d6+10

11-12: This unit is entirely ruined. (Medium armour due to lack of vital areas and metal encrustation) Disparate collection of melee weapons, exposed bones, big jags of rusted metal. Morale 12 Numbering Appearing 1d20

Lost Legions that are "commando" mean these legionaries will operate as a group when it is most effective to do so but will separate to flank, break off in different directions, have individuals off in separate areas or missions. Units that are not commando reduce their morale by 2 when alone.

Heroic also means these legionaries are effective solo, with no loss of morale. However while commando legionaries will be coordinated with the rest of their unit solo, heroic units tend to act as an army of one by themselves.

Formations means these Legionaries will form and stick to a formation and will always seek to preserve and maintain their formation. If they are heroic or commando they will use it when it most effective but not stick to it if its proven ineffective. Reduce morale by 2 when not in formation.

Some easily applicable formations :

Box : legionaries as close as possible. Shields held as wall for the front line and above for the middle. Resistant to small missiles and allows multiple legionaries to attack each opponent and prevents flanking

Loose: Standing apart from each other, to minimize targets to cavalry charges or large missile fire

Pincer/buffalo horns: As box but left and right edges will seek to advance to either side of enemy while the middle holds the line. Sides of enemy become flanked and their ability to maneuver is limited. Can result in complete surrounding enemy which is pretty ideal really. Ineffective if numerical inferior.

Wedge: A full charge in the arrangement of a V, the point bit towards the enemy. Roll damage twice and take best roll for attacks resolved when the charge first connects. Any

attacks on this unit with spears or similar are treated the same. Concentrates force on a single point, bisects enemy formation and forces a morale check.

Mob Mobs tend to react slowly, don't operate that effectively. They will throw insults and missile weapons before getting the enthusiasm for charge. They must succeed a morale check to initiate a melee

Commander: this unit has a leader or several leaders, who will make and direct all decisions and actions.

Reduce morale by 2 if leader or all leaders is/are incapacitated. Reduce morale by 1 if leader(s) is/are indecisive or conflicted

Held Positions: Will seek to fight from fortified or key positions. Unlikely to advance into open spaces, will seek higher ground, control bottlenecks or use barriers to protect their flanks. Resistant and unwilling to relocate or advance from these positions. Morale +2 when in favoured position.

Hit and Run: Preference to attack with missile weapons. If using melee they will attack only when an advantage presents itself and then retreat if an organised defense begins. With missile weapons, they will attack from range, then retreat (taking shots during a retreat if have the opportunity) to only return and then attack again.

Morale: If you do not use morale, consider using it for the Lost Legions.

To summarize : A morale check is done by rolling 2d6 and comparing it to the morale score. If it is lower than the morale score, the unit will break combat and seek to safely retreat. If another morale check is called for after this state is reached and they fail the unit panics and flees ignoring anything else. Morale is checked when a leader or half their numbers is/are incapacitated, when a third of them are defeated in single round or any other circumstances that seem appropriate.

Currently:

(if rolling for an entirely ruined unit just roll a d6)

1. Hidden and/or fortified position, ready for ambush
2. In combat with another lost soul unit
3. ""
4. About to close with or ambush another lost soul unit
5. "
6. Scouting/patrol
7. Made camp, doing repairs and maintenance, training new recruits.
8. Routed/Retreating (Half number appearing)
9. Recent Victory, celebrating and looting.
10. Camp, morose, bored, easily provoked.

Additionally (ignore, roll d10 or determine yes/ no with d20 with anything outside chart range as a no-result)

1. Drunk/intoxicated
2. Whoever has the most authority in decision making has become eroded
3. The lost soul who is making decision is Fresh, all over unit is corroded or ruined
4. At least 30% are new recruits and inexperienced with the weapons and tactics
5. Half numbers

6. Double numbers
7. Powerful weapon or resource
8. All exceptional units
9. Deluded, don't realise they are dead.
10. Want some form of redemption or meaning allowing them to go to another realm

Cube-picker:

The desperate, deluded, demented or determined. Adventurers and scavengers come here hopping from cube to cube, avoiding the inhabitants as best they can and hoping to find something worth something.

Poison Axioms being the most reliable and efficient earner, always having a market, and not being that heavy.

However the Modrons won't let you back on the train with them, and there's the risk of suffering ill effects from just being around the Axiom.

Red Rum is bulkier but more reliably found and is normally fallen back on if an expedition is running out of supplies and needs to bring back something.

Other toxic liquids are sellable but only worth lugging out to cover a failed trip.

As the grim detritus of a million wars blows into Grind, Cube-pickers are always hoping to stumble upon a lost crown or legendary sword that will result in an early retirement and end their desperate times picking through rust and ruin.

Method of traversal

1 Man-kite. One trained flyer to set the line.

2 Harpax

3 Single occupancy flying Contraption to set the line

4 Large Flying Contraption that they all pile on to and row/pedal/pump

5 Grapples (hand)

6 Trained flying animal to set the line.

Type and Numbers

1 Desperate, dangerously in debt 1d6+2 0 level

2 Almost more interested and excited by their transport method than treasure 1d4 0 level
+ 2nd level wizard

3 Vicious, paranoid, predatory 1d4 1st level fighter 1d4 1st level rogue 1 2nd level fighter

4 Green, terrified, out of their depth. Except leader, who is a little too confident and slick
2d4 0 level +1 2nd level rogue

5. Morose, seasoned and pessimistic 1D4+3 1st level fighter

6. Optimistic and partially intoxicated on adventure 2d6 zero level, + 2 first level fighters

7 Boisterous and competitive lads 1d6+2 0 level

8 Unhinged and shellshocked. 1d4+2 1st level fighter

The Scavengers fairs:

Cube-pickers and others who come here seeking sellable detritus will bring their finds to the following places:

Babel's Material Exchange Node:

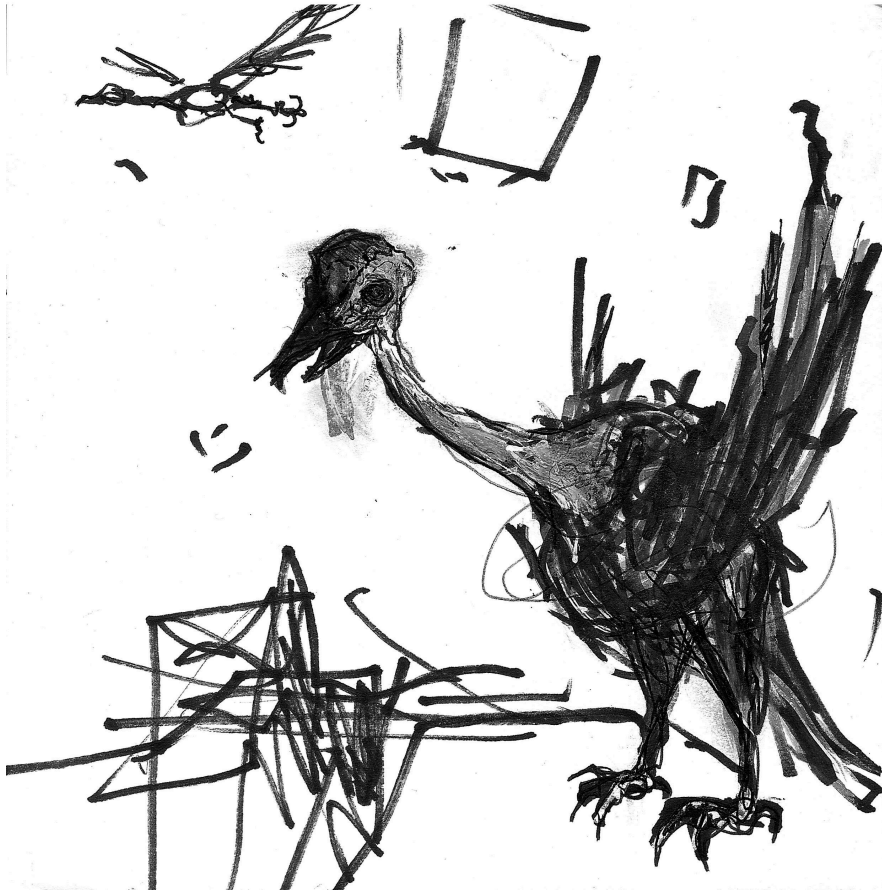
Located beside the Grand Station, The Modrons will pay Sekem for any unusual metals, devices or texts. They will not buy Poison Axioms and demand immediate removal of them, and ban their transport on the vertical train.

Three Hares in Pinnacle: Any finely crafted or cultural specific weapons or armour is best sold here. Poison Axioms, Red-rum + chemical products or unusual magics can be sold, but not for the prices featured at Heart Of It All. A regard for decent simple craft is not likely to be found elsewhere.

Heart of It All: Has a 12% tax on all scavenged goods sold here, 50% if you enter the city without showing the Scavengers Flag (a white hand on a black field. A real severed arm will do as well). Aerial mounted tax collectors make sure no one descends to the city without paying. Attempting to evade them means confiscation of all goods and additional fines to boot. Heart Of it All buys weapons and armour if they are enchanted, novel, or have a certain overdone or gaudy style to them. Unusual magics, Red-rum and chemicals fetch good prices here.

Yearning:

Dropping down from Grind onto the edges of The Plains of Revelation and then making the trek to Yearnings is worth it if you have Poison Axioms to sell. Buyers in Yearnings will pay a lot of for them. They pay well for Redrum, and okay for anything else except chemicals. Being near Flesh rifts exports of volatile oils and acids keeps prices for these low.



Bestial:

Skuzzard, Patchwork Vulture

Oversize vulture (Horse sized) with distorted natural healing. They suffer no infection, disease or poison yet are slow to recover from structural injury. They have learned to replace and enhance their bodies with junk, stolen metals and the body parts of others.

Appearance /ability

1.Primary wing feathers replaced with blades, can do a wing swipe, resolve their attack against a 3 metre line

2 Its feet terminate in spears, walking like a evil stilt walker. These give it a long reach and d10 damage

3.Plate patches. Improve its armour class by 2

4 Oversize beak. Its beak has been added on to until it looks like a junk sculpted crocodile maw. Its peck attack now does 1 dice size larger

5 partial blind but has hearing cones like vandalised brass instruments. Assume these more or less compensate for its eye sight, but if anyone or thing being especially quiet has the benefits that they would if they were invisible to it.

6 Helmet head. +4 armour class if you can only attack the head

7 One limb entirely rebuilt, clumsy but strong with it. -2 to attack with hit but upgrade the damage die with it

8 Tail feathers hooked chains. Can do a fly by entangle and drag attack

9 Gut full of sticky acid, will vomit it up

10 Coated in tar, giving it +1 armour class and preventing bleeding damage to it and forcing anything attacking it to make a strength check afterwards or get their weapon or limb stuck until they make a successful strength check on a subsequent round. It is flammable if take 6 or more points of fire damage from a single attack

This Skuzzard is

D12

1 a Mated pair

2 2d6 appearing, feasting on a big slaughter

3 Singular, wounded (half hitpoints) doing repairs

4. Singular, Starving and desperate

5. 1d4 appearing Have a particular tactic such as dropping burning things or knocking people into pits

6+ singular, slightly hungry, will attack easy targets or try and get stragglers. Will hang out if conflict looks like it could happen in the next while



Jackal Apes:

Neither jackal or ape but a large partially bipedal predatory opossum. Hunt in packs of 1d12. Capable of digesting bone and chewing through metal. About as smart as a crow. Often swallow bits of metal to help digest bones. Will scent out prey approach by stealth, assess strength if out number prey by at least 2 to one will attack immediately. Otherwise will follow out of sight until prospective prey is either weakened or fights and kills something else. In which case they will try and chase their former targets away from the corpses and eat them.

FaceStealer monkeys

Indistinct looking monkeys, their faces a furry blank with 2 holes and a slit. Always stealing uniforms and indicators of individuality and cultural connection. This habit contributes greatly to the erosion of the lost soldiers. Will investigate any noise or novelty but flee from aggression. Will return shortly but try to stay out of sight. Will try and steal any stray items of clothing or decoration. Braver monkeys will snatch and run.

They stash their spoils, but later get them out, dress up in them and compete with each other in maniac shows of mummery, each frantically displaying as many mannerisms and copied behaviours as it can.

Millipedes

The millipedes here are a metre long and stink like burning rubber. They eat anything, drinking even toxic waste which they store in their bodies to make them even more inedible. They are found in shambling mobs of 1d00 slowly grazing the crumbling bits of the cube. If they meander over anything organic they will eat it first.

If disturbed they will curl up into a ball and discharge a cloud of eye-burning choking poison gas. Tend to be a nuisance because when they are in the way they take forever to get anywhere else and they will happily eat things you might want

Creeper Crows

Possibly a relative of the night jays or tree creepers, can push themselves very flat and rarely take to the wing.

Odd gliding yet scrambling movement, tucking in and out of gaps and cracks. Beak is quite capable of snipping through soft metals.

You never know if they're there or how many there are until they emerge.

Will steal food, pick corpses clean, and mob the weak.

Junk Giant

. These giants are barely more than feral animals: leaping from cube to cube looking for meat, any meat, to cram into their maws. They are the same color as the terrain here, covered with the red dust that is everywhere.. They alternate this cannibal fury with periods of weird catatonia, huddled like weird rock shapes and perfectly camouflaged. Powerful leapers, capable of navigating from cube to cube this way.

Wretched

Parts of machines, modrons poisoned with paradoxes and poison axioms discarded from Babel, now with a pitiful existence scavenging and repairing themselves with anything they can get their implements on (noteable this includes flesh and bone). They scuttle around in groups (1d6), lead by the biggest, who will break bits off itself to make new Wretched if it gets lonely. If it gets hurt or hungry, however, it is not above cannibalizing its children.

Table: Wretched Generation

Rolled	HitDice	Main Components	Secondary Components	Connected with	Weapon	Special abilities
1	1	Horses	Broken Knives	Wire	Scissor	
2	1	Goblins	Rusted and seized chains	Melted Bones	Hammer	Fast Movement
3	1	Wagon Wheels	Lips	Hands	Nail studded whip	
4	1	Large Insect Shell	Fleshy bones	Nails	Blowgun	Takes 0-3 (1d4-1) actions each round
5	2	Cogs	Polyps	Coarse Stitching	Steamer	

6	2	Large Jaw Bones	Furniture Legs	Matted Hair	Needles	Weapon effects multiple people / area
7	2	Hides	Oversize Utensils	Rivets	Pike	
8	3	Worms	Steam Engine	Bolts	Rotating Saw	Can generate Ultrasound to create fear or nausea
9	3	Pipes	Insects	Jaws acting as clamps	Oversize club	
10	4	Arms, various	Bricks	Bespoke screws, various sizes	Barbs	Can discharge parts to use weapon at long range, lose a hitpoint until that part retrieved
11	5	Giant Skull	Clocks	Cloth /hide wrappings	Heat Ray	
12	6	Windmill Sails	Entrails	Tar	Acid squirter	Can consume any other wretched with less hitpoints to regain all its own hitpoints

APPENDIX N:

Planescape's Acheron

Floro Dery's concept art for transformers

Anything rectanglinear in a Zdzislaw Beksiński painting

Arnaldo Pomodoro sculptures

Early Attempts at aviation for the flying machines of the cube-pickers

(see designs by

Leonardo Da Vinci, Gustave

Whitehead, Jean-Marie Le

Bris, Thomas Moy, Otto

Lelienthal, Paul Cornu, Marquis

d'Ecquevill

