**DIGGING UP THE PAST NARRATIVE ACTIVITIES**

# INTRODUCTION

The following are six narrative shorts designed to provide flavor for the Digging up the Past narrative downtime action.  Each narrative is designed to provide an adaptable scene to introduce additional elements of the story with each subsequent scene revealing more exciting lore elements. While they aren’t likely to answer many of the PC’s questions, they are likely to create some.

Some of these are based off of descriptions in roll tables provided in the module, one was provided by another GM on PilotNET.

My suggestion is to provide Leads equal to the number of segments filled on the digging up the past clock and let the PC conducting the action follow one or two leads per downtime after resolving the roll.

Map

Description automatically generated

| **LEADS** | **ROLL 1D6** |
| --- | --- |
| | **1** | Just a Hole | There was a hole in the ground a few miles south of Evergreen.  The tracks of several subalterns were found nearby, as well as one larger set that seems to meander off to the East.  I swear there was an old mech partially buried there the last time I went through though. | | --- | --- | --- | | **2** | Reclaimed Bunker | In the wide-open river valley West of Evergreen there is an enormous blocky concrete structure - perhaps a bunker - now piled over with earth.  Trees are growing through the rubble, slowly breaking it apart. | | **3** | Battle Damage | Heard from a Davenriche patrol that there were some slagged mechs in the native forest east of Merricktown across the River Landmark.  Old rusted out heaps.  Some of 'em are so old the trees have grown up and through 'em. | | **4** | Janitorial Supplies | We were on patrol and took a wrong path, ended up in a valley north of tower 2.  Came across an old bunker half buried in the side of the hill.  We forced our way inside and found some old subalterns. They were inactive and just... standing there.  Shortly after our lookouts reported movement and we came under fire from some of those bastards...or bugs...whatever they are.  Never saw 'em, had to fall back. We're probably lucky they didn't pursue. | | **5** | Memorial for the Lost | We found what looks like a tunnel entrance bored into the West face of the hills south of Evergreen.  There were wooden posts hung with bright strips of cloth arranged in some kind of shrine. | | **6** | Open Doors | Something real strange in the hills south by southwest of Liu Maize. Came across a Mech, abandoned on the side of a big hill. Thing was damn near new. Markings on it I haven’t seen before. Then our rad sensors tripped warnings. Gave me the creeps. Everything felt wrong. | | |

# JUST A HOLE

Trekking out to the location indicated in the lead, it takes a bit of time to locate the hole.  There's no GPS available here after all, and you're literally looking for a hole in the ground.  You're pretty sure you've found it though, as it's just what the lead described.

It is densely forested here.  Massive Sequoias loom high above you, their needles making a fine bed below you that has helped to keep the undergrowth here to a minimum.

Before you is an oblong hole, roughly six feet deep, 8 feet wide on the narrow side and maybe 15 feet wide on the long side.

After a cursory inspection you see that the dirt has been recently disturbed, there's piles of it around the perimeter of the hole.  You can also clearly see the tracks described in the lead.  Most of the smaller subaltern tracks have faded but the tracks of a mech are unmistakable.

After a closer look at the hole you find a few small heavily corroded shards of metal buried just a little deeper in the hole.  You also find a few bits of shredded fabric, synthetic.  You've seen the subalterns in Evergreen wearing clothes made from this fabric.  Taking a closer look at the tracks and analyzing them against your database of mechanized chassis you determine that the footprints match either a BREACHER or a BERSERKER class mech.

# RECLAIMED BUNKER

Following the River Landmark upriver to the Northwest, It's not hard to spot the bunker just east of the major fork. The copse of large conifers stand in stark contrast to the grassland you've been walking through for the last several kilometers.  huge chunks of  duracrete are covered in moss and lichen, wrapped by tree roots and slowly breaking apart into what you'd expect to be a rocky overgrown field in another few hundred years.

Looking about you can surmise the strategic importance of this location, the river flows deep and fast from the north, and forks to flow east and west. To the north you spot Mount Cooper and its counterpart that form one valley.  To the southwest a low ridge peters out into flat grassland for several kilometers before the terrain starts rising again, and even back the way you came is a distinctive valley.  This was obviously a strategic choke point.

The duracrete chunks are large and the footing is uncertain.  Navigating through here in a mech will be a challenge...

As you begin to pick your way through the rubble you can tell that the ground is sunken several feet towards the center of the rock formation. Acrid, filthy water rests in the low ground.  Walking through these fetid pools you're up to your waist in water, your feet sink down at least a foot into the muck before you can feel something providing a firmer footing below.

### OLD RADIO

There's an old radio system in one corner of the bunker, barely visible above the water line and it's far too corroded to be reactivated, however taking a closer look at the device will reveal a data plate bearing Union markings and a model number that hasn't been in production for centuries.

### ANCIENT GRAVEYARD

Just north of the bunker ruins are more stone tablets, roughly 2 feet by 3 feet, placed at odd angles but equidistant to each other.  These are gravestones, their markings worn away by time.  If a PC chooses to disturb any of these graves, they will eventually find the skeletal remains of Union troops, still clad in hardsuits bearing SecCom markings.

### SUBMERGED BARRACKS

In the very center of the bunker the floor has collapsed to the level below leaving a large hole completely invisible to the naked eye, an open barracks entirely submerged in the water and muck.  A PC might fall down here if they aren't careful, but won't be hurt as long as they have a hard suit.  If they have a helmet they can search this barracks, though the muddy water will make it **difficult**.  There isn't much down here besides old bunks. **An old and heavily corroded assault rifle, an ancient ration package**, entirely decomposed within its still sealed plastic wrapping and **a sealed metallic folio case**.

Bringing the folio case to the surface, a PC will likely be able to open it without too much effort, its hinges and locking mechanism are so badly corroded that they will easily break apart.

Within the case is a sealed all-weather bag with a single sheet of paper.

>// CENTCOM ORDER 1/TBK C/O UEF1::

>// ATTEND:: ALL UNITS HEREBY ORDERED TO EVACUATE TO NEAREST FORWARD OPERATING BASE IMMEDIATELY.  UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS DELAY AUTHORIZED.  FAILURE TO COMPLY WILL RESULT IN NEAR CERTAIN DEATH.

>//ATTEND:: IF EVACUATION IS NOT POSSIBLE >> SHELTER IN PLACE INSUFFICIENT >>  LOCATE CAVE OR TUNNEL COMPLEXES.  BRING AMPLE SUPPLIES.  YOUR SACRIFICE WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN.

# BATTLE DAMAGE

Getting to the site detailed in this lead takes you east down the road to Merricktown before crossing the River Landmark.  Ahead of you the jungle grows thick, overgrown with unfamiliar fauna.  Thick underbrush makes progress difficult.  You suspect it would be near impossible without the mobility afforded by your mech.  Your briefing contained some imagery of the native flora, but as you enter this remnant of native forest the scale finally hits you.  Even the Sequoias around Evergreen are dwarfed by these trunks.  These trees, if you can really call them that, grow at angles toward each other and intertwine to twist upward.  Vines thicker than the torso of your mech snake their way upward, wrapped around the massive trunks. Flowers and fungus as big as a man dot your view.

It's slow going, even for just the few kilometers it takes you to reach the site.  It's a wonder Davenriche's men found this at all.

Even as you reach the area described to you, you don't immediately see the wrecks.  It's only after stopping to survey your surroundings for several moments that the half decomposed, half buried and vine strangled metallic corpses finally register.  Two mechs, long at rest in this tangled wood.

The two mechs here are long abandoned casualties of the Hercynian Crisis.  They are badly corroded, their electronic equipment long since rendered unusable by humidity damage and decay.  Their paint long ago decomposed into nothing.  You don't recognize either chassis, one is approximately size one, bipedal and armed with an assault rifle and more than half consumed by a giant root.  The other is quadrupedal, size one, and armed with a larger chassis mounted weapon of some sort.   Close inspection of either mech will reveal data plating identifying various parts of the mechs as being manufactured by GMS.

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### BIPEDAL MECH

The cockpit is the armor. and the left arm is missing entirely.

### QUADRUPEDAL MECH

The mech is mostly buried under the dirt.  The torso is pocked with  jagged holes, a variety of insects now inhabit the guts of this thing, filling it with dirt and refuse.  Looking closely at the torso reveals that the pock marks are most likely bullet holes, long corroded into a jagged mess.  The cockpit sits open and empty, the controls and pilot's seat are little more than dirt on the floor at this point.

### LOOKING AROUND

A growth of fungus catches your eye, something bulbous, with hooked protrusions beneath a head sized pustule.  Clearing the fungus away reveals a huge shell or exoskeleton of some kind as big as a sedan. It is studded with dozens of sharp protrusions ranging from a few inches to nearly two feet .  Like everything else here it is badly decayed and crumbles at your touch.  It appears to be hollow within the shell.  Looking closely, you find bones.  A few bits of the bones are particularly interesting, they appear to be engraved with intricate carvings of some sort...Unfortunately, it too crumbles away at the slightest touch.

# JANITORIAL SUPPLIES

As you trek to the northwest, towards the mountain making up the western edge of this northern valley, the forest gradually gives way to open grassland for the next several dozen kilometers.  The occasional copse of trees or shrubs breaks up the view of the gently waving grass.  As the land begins sloping upward the trees become more prevalent.  In a few more kilometers you're walking through dense forest once more.  A short time later you find your site in a small clearing on the side of the slope.  It looks like a recent landslide has exposed the duracrete bunker's opening,  a long slender gray tunnel capped with a rusted out metallic door standing part way open just several feet away from the hillside, looking like a pipe jammed partway into the hill..

This position affords a great panoramic view of the valley below while remaining moderately easy to defend.

### FOYER

The base of the tunnel door is at roughly waist level, requiring you to climb or jump up to it.  Inside it's dark, there's not a single window.  On one wall is a row of rusted out lockers, the other wall is bare duracrete.  The hallway continues back a short distance before ending in another bunker door, also partially open.

Inside the lockers there isn't much that remains after all this time, things are a little preserved as the door has only recently been opened.  There's a pair of boots that probably go to a hard suit in one locker.  In another there is most of a CBRN suit, not rated for combat.  In a third locker there is a necklace carefully hung between two hooks.  There is a pewter pendant hanging from it, it's hard to say for sure, but it looks like a person, hand raised with a cave entrance behind them.

### COMPUTER ROOM

Continuing beyond the foyer the bunker opens up into a roughly 16'x20' room with computer terminals covering most of the wall in front of you and to your right. To your left is another door, to your right, further down the same wall you came in is another door.  Just outside this door a subaltern lies in a heap on the floor.

The computers are worthless.  They are so corroded that there is little chance that anything could be salvaged.  As you inspect them you see a few dozen squarish holes piercing the casings and extending through to the electronics within.

### SUBALTERN CLOSET

Inside the room with the subaltern collapsed outside of it are four other subalterns, inactive and standing in a neat formation.  The door to this room was environmentally sealed until the militia patrol came through and opened the door.  At the back of the room is a subaltern control terminal.  It is possible for a PC to reactivate the terminal if they can provide power to it.  If able to reactivate it, the subalterns will activate and begin cleaning the facility.  They are badly in need of service however, and will have extreme difficulty moving.  They will begin verbally logging service requests as they make their way around.

### LIFE SUPPORT

Through the door on the left is a short hallway with two doors, the door on the left contains a decrepit generator unit, a water pump and filtration system and an environmental control unit, none of which is operational.

### LIVING QUARTERS

On the right is an open living quarters, maybe 20'x20' with a few dozen bunks, a kitchenette along one wall with familiar amenities.  On the opposite side  a wall extends part way up to the ceiling, maybe five feet high and terminating maybe four feet from the wall on both sides.  Behind this stubby wall is a latrine, complete with the amenities you'd expect.

The room has been entirely cleared out.  There is nothing in any of the foot lockers, the kitchenette is cleaned out.  Along the back wall there are pockmarks and chips in the duracrete wall, ochre stains on the floor nearby.  Smeared on the wall you can read the words, "TRUST ST TELLUS"

# MEMORIAL FOR THE LOST

The cave entrance described to you is on the west face of the mountain peak about 100 clicks south of Evergreen.  You set out through the woods and trek up a narrow valley along the ridge line extending from the mountain to the northwest. On the back side of the ridge there are much fewer tall trees and the underbrush flourishes.  It's a little slow going, but nothing your mech can't handle.  It still takes you several hours to reach the site.

Tucked into a natural gully between two spurs of the mountain you see what was described to you.  Thickets of brambles, shrubs and small trees obscure the entrance.  Making your way through the growth you find yourself just a few meters from the cave entrance.  equally spaced on both sides of the cave mouth are old carved wooden stakes, light blue strips of cloth fixed to the end of each one, gently waving toward the mouth of the cave in the early evening valley breeze.

The entrance to the cave is stuffed full of branches, vines, scrub and other undergrowth.  Looking upward, the terrain rises abruptly all around, sheer cliffs on both sides of the tunnel rise dozens of meters straight up.

Getting into the cave will require the PC to clear the growth from the cave mouth, which extends about 10 meters into the tunnel.

Clearing the tunnel was an arduous process but the way ahead is clear now.  The tunnel ahead winds gently back and forth as it slopes downward.  You walk for several hundred meters  before the tunnel finally opens up.  Its pitch black, your light reflects off huge boulders just ahead, blocking the path forward.  Aiming the light upward  you pause for a moment as what you AREN'T seeing takes a moment to register.  There's nothing close enough for your light to reflect off of.  Where's the ceiling?

Climbing over the boulders affords a better view, in the distance you can see the faint light of a Hercynian sunset streaming through a gash in the ceiling, illuminating a massive field of boulders ahead of you.  You hear the soft sound of rushing water in the distance.

### FLOOR

As you tread forward across the boulder field you occasionally catch a glance of something flat and reflective below the rocks.  Clearing away a thick layer of dust and dirt reveals that the floor appears to be a black glassy smooth rock.  Obsidian perhaps.

### RIVER

Following the sound of the flowing water as you make your way over and around the massive boulders you eventually find yourself at the banks of a rapid underground river.  It is extremely turbulent as several massive boulders interrupt its flow through this cavern.

### CEILING

small stalactites grow from the ceiling.  As you search above you, you see what might be a long pathway midway up the cavern wall extending in either direction as far as you can see.  Depending on the PCs gear it could be difficult to get up there, but it could afford a better view

### MECH

Light plays across something, sending a shadow flicking across the boulder behind it, your lizard brain registers a threat, you sweep your light back and see a large blocky mech, its entire side crushed nearly flat.   much of the rest of it is shredded, its armor torn in jagged rusty sections.  Its cockpit has been entirely dug out, the armor peeled back like a tin can.  Investigating further reveals that this is a Genghis Mk I.  Looking around reveals components strewn about the floor.  It seems to have fallen from a great distance.

### PILLAR

At first you think it's an exceptionally large boulder, but as you train your light upward you see that it's a pillar of some sort, dozens of meters high and wide, gently tapering inward as it extends toward the black abyss above.  You're in the very center of the chamber now.  Looking more closely reveals evenly space protrusions winding their way upward, it might be possible to climb.  As you stop onto the top of the pillar a heavy gloom falls upon you.  There is a large dais of some kind, maybe ten meters in diameter at the center of the pillar. You can tell that a pattern of parallel circles had been carved around the upper lip of the dais, though now they are barely visible, worn away by time.

# OPEN DOORS

 Getting to this site means following the road through Merricktown and back towards the Chau farm.  After a while the road ends and you’re trekking through farm land, and then through thick woods as you follow the terrain upward.  You continue through a wide pass between two peaks, following the directions you were given towards a nook in the smaller peak on the east side of the pass.  The terrain rises sharply here and the trees become fewer and further between.  Before long you come upon the mech in question.  Your radiation sensors ping normal levels.

This frame is unfamiliar but true to the report it doesn't look nearly as old as the other wrecks you've come across.  The insignia on the shoulder is familiar to you...The Albatross...

### ACCESSING THE COCKPIT

The cockpit is sealed but its safety mechanisms are disabled, triggering the latch is enough to open the hatch.  As the hatch opens you are greeted with the foul odor of death and the view of a badly decomposed corpse still in the cockpit.

### INSIDE THE COCKPIT

The floor and back of the mech is covered with a blue gel of some sort.  The systems are non-functional.  Popping open any of the panels reveals that the electronic components have been fused together, as if by heat.  Behind the pilot's seat there is an access panel labeled NHP storage.

### THE CORPSE

There's not much left of the body.  It's wearing an albatross hardsuit, going through the pockets all you find is a single printed photograph, you can tell it's of a woman but it's too faded to be able to tell anything else.

### NHP CLOSET

There's a casket here, you surmise it is the source of the blue gel all over the cockpit as it appears to have leaked from popped seams at the corners of the casket.  Whatever NHP this was is as dead as the pilot.  Its dataplating reveals its identity as RINGDOWN-001.  Adjacent to the casket is a hardened orange box labeled flight data recorder.

### THE FLIGHT DATA RECORDER

The recorder can be plugged directly into a hardsuit or mech.  Frustratingly, the data on the recorder is scrambled and makes no sense.  All you are able to get from the recorder are two dates.  The date of manufacture and the current date.

CURRENT DATE: 05-3035

### LEAVING

As you turn to head back to your mech you see...There's a door...It's just...well it's a door between you and your mech  Double steel doors with standard bulb handles.  Opening the door is unremarkable...you see your mech through the other side, except where your hand pushes through the door is suddenly very cold.  Also, you hear a rapid ticking sound, you realize it's the geiger counter in your suit, indicating elevated levels of radiation, not unsafe but higher than they were a moment ago.

### STEPPING THROUGH

Tundra....as far as you can see, dirty gray ice and snow almost the same color as the sky.  You turn back toward the door and...it's gone.  There's just more ice.

Shape

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

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