

# CHAPTER 1

# THE MACHINE'S REGULAR ARMY

*Worlds were made full of  
monsters and demons*

*- Anaïs Nin -*

Shown and described in this chapter are those creatures that The Machine currently builds and produces in Dravenor, as well as some that have been used in the past and became obsolete. Not all of these creatures are common in every field of battle, some are, in fact, quite unusual to find, but all can be considered part of The Machine's regular army. These are the creatures that one must be ready to face in Dravenor, lest they find death in battle.

While this section mainly focuses on The Machine's troops found in Dravenor, this doesn't mean that these creatures (or some variation of them) can't be found elsewhere in Gaia. With the exception of some particular cases, such as the Alpha Hounds, or specific adaptations of some creatures, most of these monstrosities can be found in a lethargic state all over the world, awaiting the awakening of the Mother that they are linked to.

It is important to point out that Drones, Technocrats, Carriers and Praetorians, while all extremely common in Dravenor, have the same abilities described in *Those Who Walked Among Us*, thus they do not appear in this book.

But, as we always say, the main objective of this book is inspiring you. These creatures represent the most common models, but they can have variations and adaptations beyond the scope of this book. It is not impossible to find Husks with unique abilities, or specialized versions (not necessarily more powerful) of Ground Spiders, Smelters or Colossi, to name a few, or even unique creations. Each and every creature can be special in their own way and can conceivably have abilities different to the ones shown here if you so choose.

## KNOWLEDGE OF DRAVENOR

Alongside each creature's description, you can find a section indicating some pieces of information that the people of Dravenor might know of that specific creature. These pieces of information are applicable only to the people of Dravenor, as they are far more used to fighting them.

This knowledge is divided in three different categories, as shown below.

**Generic Knowledge:** These are pieces of trivia that are known by the general population, be they soldiers, survivors or simple refugees. This is information that can be learned by merely living in Dravenor, as it is common knowledge, even if a given person hasn't personally seen that creature.

**Intermediate Knowledge:** This is information that is typically only known by soldiers or survivors with a great deal of experience against the Machine. This information is less widespread, and not common knowledge.

**Advanced Knowledge:** This is usually classified information, known only by some elite soldiers, high command and researchers employed by the army. This degree of knowledge isn't necessarily available about all creatures, as for some there's simply not enough data available to high command.



# GROUND SPIDER

THE MACHINE (LESSER VARNA)

**Level:** 2 **Category:** Between Worlds *Special*

**Life Points:** 130

**Class:** Acrobatic Warrior

**Str:** 8 **Dex:** 8 **Agi:** 10 **Con:** 8 **Pow:** 4 **Int:** 3 **Wp:** 8 **Per:** 6

**PhR** 45 **MR** 0 **PsR** 45 **VR** 45 **DR** 45

**Initiative:** 95 Natural

**Attack Ability:** 100 Serrated Limbs and 80 Serrated Limbs

**Defence Ability:** 100 Dodge

**Damage:** 50 Serrated Limbs (CUT/THR)

**AT:** Natural Cut 4 Imp 4 Thr 4 Heat 4 Cold 4 Ele 4 Ene 0

**Essential Abilities:** Physical Exemption, Psychological Immunity, Pain Immunity.

**Powers:** Natural Weapons; Serrated Limbs (Natural Weapons, -2 AT, Additional Attack -20), Natural Armor Physical AT 4 *Open*, Increased Initiative +10, Spider Movement, Restructuring, Core (*Vulnerable Point*), *Vulnerability to Magic*.

**Size:** 10 Medium

**Movement Value:** 10 (12 Jump)

**Regeneration:** 2

**Fatigue:** *Tireless*

**Secondary Abilities:** Acrobatics 80, Jump 70, Notice 40, Search 30, Stealth 40, Hide 40

Similar in looks to the creature they are named after, these fully mechanized beings are, so to speak, the ground forces counterpart to the ubiquitous Drones. While they cannot fly and are slightly bigger, usually around a meter tall, they retain most of the abilities that make their "siblings" so lethal in combat. Thus, they can be deadly when encountered in big numbers, even more so if controlled by a Technocrat or directly by the Mother.

These agile creatures move with horrifying coordination. They can usually be seen walking on walls in great numbers, like a unified mass of mechanized monstrosities. When they are near their target, they jump to it, hacking and slashing using their serrated limbs.

Their behaviour is entirely robotic, following their assigned orders without questioning. They are unable to make any kind of plans, always reacting according to the direct orders of other creations of The Machine of a higher hierarchy. Without any new orders, they will just continue repeating their last order, until they deactivate and enter a lethargic state a few days later. Despite this, they have a greater autonomy than drones, as they do not need to disconnect daily to run system checks, which they can run while still active making them truly tireless creatures.

Ground Spiders are sometimes used as shock troops, but when they really excel is during indoors combat in buildings or caves, where they are much more mobile than Drones, which would have trouble flying indoors.

The reason for the similarities between Spiders and Drones is that the former were originally a modification of the latter, made with the explicit objective of saving the materials used to build their flying systems. This is why, aside from some small differences, the general structure of both creatures is functionally the same. In a bit of irony, it seems that in Dravenor corpses are easier to find for the Machine than some common metals.

## MODUS OPERANDI

On their own, these creatures have a very simple battle plan: full-on frontal attacks. Beyond that, their strategic abilities are non-existent. However, when within the control of a Technocrat or Praetorian, these creatures instead follow their orders, which are usually far more able to take full advantage of their abilities. In these instances, Ground Spiders can be especially dangerous for anyone who underestimates them.

Ground Spiders shine brightest when fighting in enclosed spaces, where they have a much greater ability to manoeuvre than Drones, as their winged cousins lose a lot of their effectivity as troops when they do not have enough space to fly.

**Serrated Limbs:** Beyond their spider-like limbs, Ground Spiders also have two humanoid limbs that end in saws and serrated edges. They can perform two attacks with them, suffering only from a -20 penalty to their second attack, and both of these ignore 2 points of their objective's AT.

**Spider Movement:** As long as it has somewhere to stand, a Ground Spider can move over any surface, even face down on the ceiling. Furthermore, it counts as having Inhumanity when measuring how far away it can jump, and its Movement value for jumping is 12, which would allow it to jump up to 10 metres without rolling for Jump.

**Core:** If a Ground Spider suffers 30 points of damage in attacks specifically against its core (Which have a -60 penalty to them, although the Spider has no armour on this location), the creature is completely destroyed, unable to use Restructuring. This core is also considered a vulnerable point for the purpose of critical damage.

**Restructuring:** When Ground Spider's Life Points reach 0, it falls to the ground, visibly broken. This, however, is a trap. If the creature's core is not destroyed, it rises again after four to six turns, fully repaired and combat-ready.

**Vulnerability to Magic:** Ground Spiders have the same vulnerability towards Magic that Drones do. Not only does their MR have a value of 0, but every mystic attack causes double damage to them.

## KNOWLEDGE OF DRAVENOR

### Generic Knowledge

Everyone knows of them.

They look like spiders made of flesh and metal.

Alongside Drones, they are the most common of The Machine's troops.

### Intermediate Knowledge

To destroy a Ground Spider, one must destroy their core after dealing incapacitating damage to their bodies.

It is possible to distract them or get their attention by making loud noises.

### Advanced Knowledge

With enough numbers, Ground Spiders can act as a swarm that acts as one being.

There is an advanced, more powerful version of the Ground Spiders, which uses psychic threads that can cut like monomolecular edges.

# HOUND

THE MACHINE (LESSER VARNA)

**Level:** 3 **Category:** Between Worlds *Special*

**Life Points:** 110

**Class:** Shadow

**Str:** 8 **Dex:** 9 **Agi:** 10 **Con:** 7 **Pow:** 4 **Int:** 5 **Wp:** 8 **Per:** 10

**PhR** 45 **MR** 10 **PsR** 50 **VR** 45 **DR** 45

**Initiative:** 95 Natural

**Attack Ability:** 130 Bite and Claws / 130 Enhanced Bite and Claws + 100 Bladed Tail

**Defence Ability:** 120 Dodge

**Damage:** 60 Bite and Claws (THR/CUT), 80 Improved Bite and Claws (THR/CUT), 80 Bladed Tail (CUT)

**AT:** Natural Cut 4 Imp 4 Thr 4 Heat 4 Cold 4 Ele 4 Ene 0

**Essential Abilities:** Physical Exemption, Psychological Immunity, Pain Immunity.

**Powers:** Natural Weapons; Bite and Claws (+10 Damage, -1 AT), Natural Armor Physical AT 4, Infrasound Communication, Adaptations, *Regeneration Core* (Regeneration 14, *Conditioned*, *Vulnerable Point*), *Magic Vulnerability*.

**Size:** 14 Medium

**Regeneration:** 0/14

**Movement Value:** 10

**Fatigue:** *Tireless*

**Secondary Abilities:** Acrobatics 60, Notice 105, Search 105, Track 55, Stealth 100, Hide 100

Creatures of a vague wolf-like appearance, these creatures are used as scouts, fast assault and assassination troops by The Machine, and were designed to have a lethal efficiency for these operations. Hounds first appeared on the battlefield a few years ago, with the war already in a mature state, as a consequence of The Machine's need to adapt and create new troops that could effectively fight the army of Dravenor.

Hounds are extremely swift and can heal their wounds by themselves at an astounding rate. Like many other of The Machine's creations, they have special cores, but their function is not to restructure the Hound, instead, the core of these creatures is what manages their regenerative abilities. Thankfully for those that must face them, in order for the core to work, it must be exposed somewhere on the surface of their bodies, usually on the front of the torso, creating an exploitable vulnerability.

Hounds are the most intelligent and independent of The Machine's lesser creations. As assassins, they are prepared to think and take autonomous decisions in order to fulfil their orders. Furthermore, they can use infrasound frequencies, almost inaudible to anything that is not another Hound, which they use to communicate amongst themselves if their connection to the Hive Mind or assigned superior is interrupted. They can even use this form of communication to create and share their own effective strategies.

While far from scarce amongst The Machine's troops, Hounds are nowhere near as ubiquitous as Drones or Ground Spiders. The reason for this relative scarcity is their origin. They are created using a Vetala's body, two larvae and a series of multiple chirurgic procedures. The Machine simply does not usually have the required resources at hand to mass produce these creatures.

For some reason, perhaps the influence of the creatures used in their creation, these creatures show a ferocity not found in any other troops, and can sometimes even seem malicious when it is time to kill their prey.

## MODUS OPERANDI

Hounds are perfectly able to act independent from the rest of The Machine (though they will follow their last assigned orders), and can evaluate threats that they must face on their missions, without the need for external input by Technocrats or Praetorians. Should they decide that they are able to eliminate their opponent swiftly, they have no problem in engaging in a pitched battle. Otherwise, they will try to get any possible advantage using their sneaking abilities to overcome unfavourable odds. If unable to communicate through The Machine's hive mind, they can even coordinate amongst themselves through infrasound and elaborate complex strategies.

**Bite and Claws:** The Hound's natural weapons have a damage value of 60, attacking on Cut and Thrust, and ignoring 1 point of the enemy's AT.

**Infrasound Communication:** Hounds are not only able to act independently from other Machine forces, following their last orders, but can also communicate amongst themselves up to a distance of one kilometre through the use of infrasound. Only certain animals and creatures with a Perception value of 11 or better can hear these communications, and even then, they have to pass an Almost Impossible Notice check or a Very Difficult Search check to notice that it is more than just background noise. Any Vetala can automatically hear these infrasound communications, and the check to notice that it is an attempt at communication is two degrees easier.

**Regeneration Core:** Hounds have a Regeneration value of 14. This value, however, depends on an exposed core visible on their abdomen, and any attacks against it (which are at a -80 penalty) are an automatic critical hit. A critical result of more than 50 on this location destroys this core, leaving the Hound at a Regeneration value of 0 until the core can be repaired at a special facility or by a Crab, in a process that requires around five minutes.

**Vulnerability to Magic:** Hounds not only possess a fairly low MR of just 10, but any mystic attacks causes double damage to them.

## ADAPTATIONS

Despite their relative scarcity due to the materials required, Hounds possess many different varieties depending on their adaptations to their assigned role. Usually, advanced models can choose one of the options from the following list.

- **Thermo-optic Systems:** This is a special camouflage and vision system to enhance the subterfuge abilities of these creatures. Their surface is covered by thousands of miniature fibers that adapt their colour and texture to that of their surroundings, giving the Hound a Chameleonic Camouflage. At the same time, their eyes are enhanced with infrared lenses, that allow them to see without penalties in natural darkness, while halving the penalties from supernatural darkness.

- **Enhanced Combat Systems:** These Hounds are used as fast assault troops, and their claws are made of better materials, while their tail is increased in size and ended in blades that it can use to make more attacks. This adaptation increases the damage of the Hounds attacks by 20 points, allows it to ignore up to 3 points of the enemy's AT and gives it an additional attack that it can use with only a -30 penalty on the extra attack.

- **Ultrasonic Adaptations:** A Hound with this adaptation can, as a full turn action, howl in ultrasonic frequencies, causing great pain to any organic creature that can hear it. Those creatures within 30 meters of the Hound will have to roll PhR against 100 or suffer

Pain for as long as the Hound keeps howling. Creatures with a Perception score of 11 or greater have to roll against 120. Failing this check by more than 60 points can cause temporary deafness for several days. Effective methods to muffle the noise don't invalidate this effect, but allow for a new roll with a +20 bonus. In order to keep howling, the Hound must not perform any other action, active or passive. Thus, if it moves or it is forced to defend itself, the effect will end.

## KNOWLEDGE OF DRAVENOR

### Generic Knowledge

It is said that there are wolf-like creatures amongst The Machine.

### Intermediate Knowledge

They are the most beast-like troops of The Machine, and can be distracted by blood.

Moving targets are more appealing to them than those that remain stationary, so remaining fully still while other targets are moving might make them only attack you as the last target.

There are several versions of these creatures, and they do not share all of the same abilities.

They communicate through almost inaudible frequencies of sound, so one must be wary if they start to hear these strange whispers. Having guard dogs is a good idea, as they start to get nervous when they hear these sounds.

### Advanced Knowledge

When they attack in packs, look for any of them that remains away, preparing to howl, and attack them first.

They are created using Vetala corpses.

## ALPHA HOUND

THE MACHINE (INTERMEDIATE VARNA)

**Level:** 6 **Category:** Between Worlds *Special*  
**Life Points:** 165  
**Class:** Shadow  
**Str:** 8 **Dex:** 10 **Agi:** 10 **Con:** 10 **Pow:** 4 **Int:** 6 **Wp:** 10 **Per:** 10  
**PhR** 70 **MR** 10 **PsR** 70 **VR** 70 **DR** 70

**Initiative:** 160 Natural  
**Attack Ability:** 200 Metal Bite and Claws + 170 Bladed Tail  
**Defence Ability:** 150 Dodge  
**Damage:** 120 Metal Bite and Claws (THR/CUT), 80 Bladed Tail (CUT)  
**AT:** Natural Cut 6 Imp 6 Thr 6 Heat 6 Cold 6 Ele 6 Ene 2

**Essential Abilities:** Physical Exemption, Psychological Immunity, Pain Immunity.

**Powers:** Natural Weapons; Metal Bite and Claws (+40 damage, -4 AT), Bladed Tail (Additional Attack -30), Increased Initiative +30, Exoskeleton (Natural Armor: Physical AT 6, Energy AT 2), Improved Regeneration, Thermo-optic Adaptations, Infrasound Communication, Occultation Systems, *Vulnerability to Magic*.

**Size:** 18 Medium **Regeneration:** 16  
**Movement Value:** 10 **Fatigue:** *Tireless*

**Secondary Abilities:** Acrobatics 120, Jump 80, Notice 180, Search 160, Feats of Strength 40, Stealth 160, Hide 180, Ki Occultation 195

These creatures have only been seen on the battlefield within the last year and a half, and are a much more powerful version of the Hound. They have a similar wolf-like appearance to Hounds, but are bigger and have more muscle mass, with a size somewhat bigger than that of an adult lion. Their whole body seems to be covered by a smooth, grey, metallic exoskeleton, covered by vein-like tubes. Its knife-like fangs can be seen even with its mouth closed, and its tail ends on a bladed appendage.

These "Alpha", as they are known, are also built using Vetala corpses, but these are then combined with the dead remains of uncommon supernatural creatures. Given their modifications, their bodies are much more advanced, and their core is hidden within their body, which effectively nullifies the traditional weak point of their brethren.

As the more advanced version of the Hounds, Alphas behave in a similar way to their predecessor model, but show a higher intellect and can come up with more refined strategies. While any of them can act as an independent operative, hunting valuable objectives, their most usual role is that of a leader for a small pack of Hounds, leading them in special operations. Having said that, their improved armour and enhanced weapons allow them to act in many roles within The Machine's organization, being both devastating shock troops and assassins with a chirurgic precision. In many ways, each of these beings is the end result of decades of adaptations by The Machine to create a highly specialized soldier, honing their effectivity to the limit.

Given the short time they have been operative, and their rarity, the army of Dravenor has little information about them, but they have already learned to fear them for their effectivity.

## MODUS OPERANDI

Moving with both precision and speed far above that of standard Hounds, Alpha Hounds are nightmares made real when in battle. These creatures are fully aware of how to maximize the effectivity of their abilities, and have an instinctive knowledge of when to perform a frontal assault and when to use subterfuge to hunt their prey.

**Metal Bite and Claws:** Having both and extremely powerful jaw equipped with deadly metal fangs and claws made of this same material, these make for the Alpha Hound's primary way of attack. Not only do they have a high damage value, but the high vibration of their weapons makes their attacks ignore 4 points of the enemy's AT.

**Bladed Tail:** At the end of their tail, Alpha Hounds have extremely sharp blades. They use these blades alongside their normal attacks. This grants them an extra attack with only a -30 penalty, but it does not benefit from the extra damage and AT reduction of its main attacks.

**Exoskeleton:** While all Hounds are given a metallic body made of extremely durable alloys that grants them a high AT, Alpha Hounds are notable in that theirs is not only much denser, but in combination with their improved generator, it grants them some measure of protection against supernatural attacks.

**Improved Regeneration:** The surface of an Alpha Hound's body is covered by almost life-like fibers. These grant the Alpha Hound a Regeneration value of 16, which allows it to heal 10 Life Points each turn.

**Infrasound Communication:** Just like with standard Hounds, this ability allows Alpha Hounds to communicate at long ranges. However, it has an improved range of up to 5 kilometers.

**Thermo-optic Adaptations:** This ability works in much the same way as the one that some standard Hounds have. However, instead of granting Chameleonic Camouflage, Alpha Hounds making use of this ability cannot be seen unless an Impossible Notice check or Almost Impossible Search check is passed. The difficulty for both checks decreases by one degree if the Alpha Hound is currently moving.

**Vulnerability to Magic:** Alpha Hounds share the exact same vulnerability to magic as Hounds.

## KNOWLEDGE OF DRAVENOR

### Generic Knowledge

None. Their existence is unknown by the average person in Dravenor.

### Intermediate Knowledge

About two years ago a new model of Hound started hunting, much more powerful and dangerous than the standard model.

### Advanced Knowledge

Alpha Hounds have enhanced versions of most of the adaptations found in standard Hounds.

These creatures show a cruelty that is almost human, and have been seen intentionally causing pain in their victims before killing them, as well as observing the reactions of witnesses to their actions.

These creatures seem to understand the common languages of mortals.

## CRAB

THE MACHINE (INTERMEDIATE VARNA)

**Level:** 7 **Category:** Between Worlds *Special*  
**Life Points:** 315  
**Class:** Weaponmaster  
**Str:** 13 **Dex:** 10 **Ag:** 6 **Con:** 13 **Pow:** 4 **Int:** 6 **Wp:** 10 **Per:** 6  
**PhR** 85 **MR** 15 **PsR** 75 **VR** 85 **DR** 85

**Initiative:** 75 Natural  
**Attack Ability:** 200 Pincers + 180 Tentacles / 200 Psychic Discharge  
**Defence Ability:** 200 Force Field / 100 Pincers  
**Damage:** 125 Pincers (CUT), 80 Tentacles (IMP), 100 Psychic Discharge (CON)  
**AT:** Natural Cut 6 Imp 6 Thr 6 Heat 6 Cold 6 Ele 6 Ene 0

**Essential Abilities:** Supernatural Physical Characteristics, Physical Exemption, Psychological Immunity, Pain Immunity, Inhumanity, Energy Charges.

**Powers:** Natural Weapons; Pincers (Damage Energy) and Tentacles (Multiple Random Attacks 1d5, Attack -20, Grapple, Special, Reduced Damage), Force Field (Mystic Shield 1500 LP), Steel Plating (Natural Armor Physical AT 6), Psychic Discharge (Special Attack: 150 meters range, Base Damage 100, 10 meters radius, Special), Walking Factory, *Artificial Body (Regeneration 0)*, *Vulnerability to magic*.

**Size:** 26 Enormous **Regeneration:** 0  
**Movement Value:** 7 **Fatigue:** Tireless

**Secondary Abilities:** Swim 80, Notice 100, Search 100, Feats of Strength 120, Hide 40

*“Yes, I know they look nothing like crabs, but it makes sense when you know the story. First guy to ever see one and live to tell the tale was hiding in a building. Only thing he ever saw was a pincer taking down a wall and snapping his captain in half like a twig. The building eventually went down, and he was lucky enough to not be found by any other enemies under the rubble. By the time we found him, post-traumatic stress had taken its toll, and the description he gave turned out to not be exactly accurate.”*

**Sergeant Null Nos Aurion**

While the most common mental image the people of Dravenor have of The Machine is one of death and indiscriminate destruction, the truth is that not all of its creations are mere meatgrinders. Crabs are the example of this: enormous artifacts that, rather than being mere weapons, are actually more akin to walking factories. In the field of battle, their primary function is to walk around, picking up corpses and other raw materials, that their internal systems will turn into the components necessary for the creation of new troops. These creatures rarely spawn troops more complex than Drones or Ground Spiders, but it is known that some Crabs only pick up specific types of corpses, such as Vetala, presumably for the creation of Hounds or other advanced creatures. Sometimes they only wander the battlefields after the battle is ended, picking up corpses like carrion, and bringing them to more advanced facilities.

Truly these beings look nothing alike the crustacean that they take their name from, with their only similarity being their oversized pincers. Their bodies look like deformed geometric shapes made of flesh and metal, with flattened faces on their lower body, and ten spider-like legs. On their belly is the opening where they introduce the raw materials, alongside their pincers and a number of metal tentacles that they use to pick up corpses.

Crabs can produce troops at an astounding rate: as long as they have enough raw materials, they can spawn Drones, Ground Spiders or Husks at a rate of one per minute. To see one of these creatures break out, covered in blood and amniotic liquid, is a truly horrifying display.

Their numbers are very small, from which it is deduced that either the procedure to create them is very complex, or the materials needed are scarce (They are built using the corpses of Jayans and Turaks of great size, both of which are not exactly common in Dravenor).

## MODUS OPERANDI

Unfortunately for the people of Dravenor, while fighting isn't the main objective of Crabs, they are very much capable of doing so. Crabs, however, rarely go into combat, as their main priority is supplying The Machine's forces with new troops in the thick of battle. While their pincers are not primarily intended for combat, they are still a formidable weapon that can snap a person in two, and its tentacles can be used in a way similar to whips.

A Crab's main defence is quite unique: when attacked or in danger, a psychic force field activates around the creature, which stops any attacks. Without this system to defend itself, a Crab has no effective means of defence, as its limbs are not prepared for this purpose and it is a relatively fragile creature. Thus, should the force field be destroyed, a Crab's structural integrity becomes highly compromised.

Crabs will not usually look for combat, preferring to provide more troops to ongoing attacks by The Machine. Only in very specific circumstances, or if they are attacked, will they focus on destroying their enemies, after which they will again return to performing their main mission. If the enemy is nearby and the Crab

can't feasibly flee, it will use its pincers and claws to defeat their enemies, one by one, focusing its efforts on one opponent at a time. If enemy numbers are overwhelming or they attack from a distance, it will instead try to use its Psychic Discharges. Lastly, and only if under real danger of being rendered inoperative, it will use its Energy Charges to try to end the fight as quickly as possible, trying to flee if given any chance, as they are too valuable for The Machine to be risked without it being absolutely necessary.

**Pincers:** A Crab's main weapon are its enormous metal pincers, which they will use against opponents in close proximity. These weapons are loaded with psychic energy, allowing the creature to damage energy, but against intangible objectives and other similar enemies they only deal 40 Base Damage.

**Tentacles:** Crabs have a number of metal tentacles that they can use in a fight to attack, although they are less accurate than its pincers. In game, as part of their attack action, a Crab can perform 1D5 extra attacks each round with its tentacles, rolling at the start of the round

Optionally, instead of causing any amount of damage, the tentacles can be used to grapple someone with no extra penalty (Which it tends to do with corpses and the dying before introducing them in its birthing chambers). This grapple attempt has a Strength value of 10, but each extra tentacle devoted to the same grapple attack gives it a +2 to its Strength check: a grapple attempt using 3 tentacles (one for the grapple attempt and two to reinforce it) would use a Strength value of 14, rolling as if it was one attack. If a Crab keeps someone grappled in later rounds, it sacrifices a number of its random attacks equal to the one originally used.

**Steel Plating:** The durable alloys used in the creation of Crabs grant their bodies a high physical AT value.

**Energy Charges:** Even though Crabs are tireless creatures, they have inside them a special battery that provides them with psychic energy. This energy is what allows them to build new troops for The Machine, as well as being used to activate some of its special capabilities. Each Crab possess 15 Charges as a maximum number, and they must be recharged at Machine facilities once spent. These Charges can also be used to temporarily increase the capabilities of a Crab. Each Charge provides a +20 bonus to a specific physical action, or +1 to an attribute, and up to 2 charges can be used in a single round. It is important to note that these charges are not what keeps the Crab active, and even if it reaches 0 charges, it can still move and act normally, though it won't be able to spawn more troops.

**Force Field:** Crabs can deploy a psychic shield that allows them to defend themselves using the rules for supernatural shields, with a resistance of 1500 life points before it is broken. The design of the Crabs is such that this is their only effective method of defence, and should the shield be broken, its defence value will be greatly diminished. This shield can only be repaired or replaced at one of The Machine's main facilities, and as such a Crab will always prioritize fleeing if it thinks it is in danger.

**Walking Factory:** For each corpse introduced into its birthing chambers, a Crab can build a single Husk, three Drones, or three Ground Spiders. The process is quite fast, and it only takes a minute to spawn a functioning creature. As a general rule of thumb, Crabs leave The Machine's facilities with enough materials and larvae to spawn about 200 Husks, Drones or Ground Spiders, spending one Energy Charge per every 20 creatures it creates.

**Psychic Discharge:** Crabs can accumulate and discharge the psychic energy stored in their batteries in such a way as to be able to attack enemies at range using it. To do this, they use one Energy Charge, which allows them to make an attack up to 150 meters away, with a radius of 10 meters from the center of impact. This attack is not a direct hit, but rather an indirect parabolic attack, which goes up in the air and then falls down on its objective, similar to a mortar. Anyone hit by the attack, even if they suffer no damage, is affected by an Impact of Strength 12, pushing them in the opposite direction of the center of impact. This attack deals half damage against intangible creatures. This attack cannot be used against enemies that are under a roof, although it could potentially bring down said roof.

These attacks are considered the equivalent to a Psychic Power with Almost Impossible Potential. Thus, any effect capable of eliminating powers with said Potential could prevent the attack from ever taking place. In a similar way, any effects that reduce the attacks Potential, such as Nemesis, reduce its range by 10 meters and its damage by 10 per every -10 penalty to its Potential. Should the penalty be of -100 or greater, the attack is fully nullified.

**Vulnerability to Magic:** As all other of The Machine's troops, Crabs have a very low MR and all damage dealt to them by mystic means is doubled.

**Artificial Body:** While Crabs cannot heal their damage by themselves, and they must go back to special facilities in order to be repaired, if they find the destroyed bodies of other crabs, they can use whatever pieces are still in workable condition to repair themselves, healing anywhere from 50 to 100 life points, depending on how damaged the destroyed Crab was.

## KNOWLEDGE OF DRAVENOR

### Generic Knowledge

These creatures are corpse collectors, and they can be found after battles, collecting the dead.

### Intermediate Knowledge

While there are enemies nearby, they will often hide within empty buildings or ruins.

Sometimes they come out of piles of rubble, throwing rocks everywhere and creating huge clouds of dust.

It is very rare to see one while a battle is still ongoing.

### Advanced Knowledge

It is entirely possible to extract the psychic generator out of a destroyed Crab. However, one must be careful while manipulating them, as even though they are a valuable source of energy, physical contact with them for long periods of time can drive people mad.

It is thought that there might be more advanced models of Crab, able to produce more advanced troops than the standard model.

One of the most common strategies of these creatures is to hide behind a hill or inside ruins without a ceiling. Once installed there, it will spawn troops that it will throw against any enemies, while supporting them with its Psychic Discharges.

# COLOSSUS

## THE MACHINE (GREATER VARNA)

**Level:** 8 **Category:** Between Worlds *Special*

**Life Points:** 6.485

**Class:** Weaponmaster

**Str:** 15 **Dex:** 8 **Agi:** 5 **Con:** 14 **Pow:** 4 **Int:** 5 **Wp:** 8 **Per:** 10

**PhR** 120 **MR** 25 **PsR** 75 **VR** 120 **DR** 120

**Initiative:** 60 Natural, 10 Psicannon, 30 Discharge Batteries, 50 Automatic Firing System

**Attack Ability:** 210 Limbs / 210 Psicannon / 210 Discharge Battery or 210 Limbs + 190 Discharge Battery, or 190 Discharge Battery + 190 Discharge Battery / 210 Artillery Cannon / 210 Automatic Firing System

**Defence Ability:** Damage Resistance

**Damage:** 90 Limbs (IMP), 150 Limbs with Ram Equipment (IMP), 200 Psicannon (ELE), 120 Discharge Battery (THR), 200 Artillery Cannon (HEA), 80 Automatic Firing System (THR)

**AT:** Natural + Frame Cut 12 Imp 12 Thr 12 Heat 12 Cold 12 Ele 6 Ene 6

**Essential Abilities:** Supernatural Physical Characteristics, Physical Exemption, Psychological Immunity, Pain Immunity, Zen.

**Powers:** Natural Weapons; Limbs (-1 AT, *Limited*), Solomoniac Frame (Natural Armour Physical AT 8, Limited, Damage Barrier 160, PhR +30), Complete night vision, Colossal Weapon Systems, *Artificial Body (Regeneration 0), Vulnerability to magic.*

**Size:** 29 Gigantic

**Regeneration:** 0

**Movement Value:** 7

**Fatigue:** *Tireless*

**Secondary Abilities:** Notice 140, Search 120, Memorize 110, Feats of Strength 180

Colossi are amongst the most fearsome of The Machine's troops. Giant creatures of flesh and metal created using huge numbers of corpses and armed with the deadliest weapons, Colossi are extremely effective shock troops, able to resist absurd amounts of damage and, at the same time, take down even the most tenacious defence with a mere charge.

They look like vaguely humanoid creatures between eight and twenty meters tall, fully covered by a heavy and thick metallic frame. Their arms are slightly longer than would be expected, and that, alongside their extremely thick neck, gives them a monstrous appearance. Their enormous arms are already a deadly weapon, but they tend to have gigantic cannons, or even other more specialized weapons, attached to these limbs, making them even more lethal in combat.

The creation of each Colossus is very costly for The Mother, as, similarly to Carriers, their construction requires the assembly of hundreds of corpses in a complicated structure of metal and wires. Then, a huge metal frame resembling an armour is set on top of their bodies, sealing it and increasing their already unnatural resistance to damage.

Colossi aren't particularly intelligent, nor do they act independently, limited as they are to follow whatever orders they are given in the most direct way possible. The Machine rarely deploys them without good reason, and tends to save them for the biggest battles. Their dark silhouettes, usually visible above

the horizon of the battlefield, are an overwhelming sight: few are those that, having seen one of these creatures and survived to tell the tale, have been able to sleep soundly for a long time. Rarely, sometimes one or two Colossi can be seen in a support role for a less important mission, usually under the direct supervision of a Technocrat.

## MODUS OPERANDI

Due not only to their ability to withstand great amounts of damage, but also to how destructive their attacks are, Colossi can often be found where the battle is fiercest, constantly unleashing its attacks. Although they do not have the ability to formulate the most complex strategies, these creatures are able to understand the best uses for their particular weapon systems, and will always take advantage to the fullest of their equipment. Thus, those equipped with long range weapons will try to keep their distance, or start their bombardment as soon as they can see the enemy within their range, while those with closer ranged systems will attempt to close the distance towards their objectives.

Given their high cost and the value that the Colossi bring to The Machine, The Mother tries to preserve them as much as possible, and she is more than willing to sacrifice some of her other troops if that will keep these titanic monstrosities safe from supernatural attacks.

**Limbs:** While Colossi aren't particularly made for melee combat, their size, strength and weight make their limbs into very effective improvised weapons. Thus, their melee attacks ignore one point of AT, and always provoke Impacts with a Strength value of 12 against Big and smaller enemies.

**Frame:** The oversized structure of the Colossi is covered by a metallic exoskeleton, which give these creatures a high-tech look. This grants the Colossi a Damage Barrier against attacks with a damage value lower than 160, an increment of +30 to their physical resistances (already taken into account on their sheet) and a physical AT of 12. However, the composition of the alloy, which is highly conductive, makes its armour ineffective against electricity, as it easily reaches its inner components. Electric attacks only apply half the AT and Damage Barrier that Colossi have.

**Artificial Body:** A Colossus' body needs the use of specially prepared facilities in order to recover from damage, otherwise, it cannot heal by itself.

**Vulnerability to Magic:** Colossi share the same vulnerability as all other creatures of The Machine. Not only is their MR only 25, but they suffer double damage from all magic attacks.

## COLOSSAL WEAPON SYSTEMS

Being shock and siege troops, Colossi are always equipped with specialized weapon systems depending on what mission they are expected to perform, and in fact it would not be wrong to call them "mobile weapon platforms". Each Colossus is armed with one of these Weapon Systems, which they know how to use as an instinct. It is theoretically possible to replace one of these systems with a different one, but that is something that can only be done at some of the most important of The Machine's assembly lines. The following are the most common configurations, but there could be many others that are currently unknown.

• **Psicannon:** Colossi armed with this system replace one of their lower arms for this enormous weapon, almost twelve meters long. Once every two turns, this allows for a shooting attack to be made with the weapon. The attack has a maximum range of 1 kilometre, a damage value of 200, ignores 3 points of AT, can damage energy (although the damage against intangible creatures and the like is reduced to only 50) and has effect on a 10 metres radius from the point of impact. This attack takes the shape of a thundering electric arc that is generated within the barrel of the weapon, which has to be handled using the Colossus' free arm, thus Limb attacks cannot be done in the same turn the Psicannon is used. The attack is considered to be a Psychic Power with an Impossible Potential. Were this Potential to be lowered, by Nemesis or any other similar ability, it loses 10 points of damage and 100 metres of range per every -10 to its potential, being unable to fire if it ever goes down to an Absurd value. Thanks to the Colossi's targeting systems, this weapon suffers no penalties when attacking moving targets, and no minimum difficulty is required on the attack roll to hit enemies beyond a certain range.

• **Discharge Battery:** This weapon system is composed of number of metallic pylons along the arms of the Colossus, which they fire towards their enemies by accelerating them using electromagnetic pulses. These weapons allow for a ranged shooting attack each turn, with a damage value of 120 and a maximum range of 100 metres. Furthermore, the Colossi gain an extra shooting attack with these weapons every turn, with only a -20 penalty to their attack, which they can use in combination with their Limb attack or with their first shot from these weapons. If they use two shots, both shots suffer the penalty, but if they use a Limb attack and a shot from this weapon, only the shot suffers the penalty. These attacks only suffer half the normal penalty for shooting at moving targets, and suffer no penalty for firing at very small targets.

• **Artillery Cannon:** Usually only seen on the biggest Colossi, these gigantic artillery pieces are attached to a Colossus' back, which must then stand on its knees and stabilize itself by positioning its hands on the ground in order to fire them. These weapons have a maximum range of 10 kilometres, and a minimum range of 1 kilometre. The attack has a damage value of 200 and each attack affects an area of 50 metres of radius from its point of impact, ignoring 3 points of AT. In order to fire this weapon, the Colossus carrying it must stand still, unable to perform any other action, for between 3 and 5 turns, depending on how far away the target is, although this targeting process does allow the Colossus to ignore the difficulty requirements to fire beyond a certain range. Colossi equipped with this system possess a much more powerful psionic connection to The Machine's Hive Mind, being connected to all troops nearby, as they need a spotter in order to fire accurate shots. Thus, unless there's a creature of the Machine within 75 meters of the objective that can transmit coordinates, the shot takes a -100 penalty. Having a spotter, however, allows them to ignore penalties for firing at very small targets and moving targets. Each Colossus is usually equipped with enough munitions for six shots, the process for loading more shots being quite complex, taking around 10 minutes in specially prepared Machine facilities or 20 minutes in the field.

• **Automatic Firing System:** Taking the shape of two twin cannons on the shoulders of a Colossus, this weapon system automatically fires flak shots at any objectives within 800 metres radius, with a damage value of 80 and ignoring up to 4 points of AT, not requiring a minimum difficulty to fire beyond a certain range. This weapon fires at up to two different targets each

turn, not applying any penalties because of this. These attacks also halve any penalty for firing at moving targets, and what is more, it applies a +20 bonus when firing at targets that fly, against which it is specially calibrated. This weapon cannot be used while the Colossus is using its Limbs to perform melee attacks.

• **Battering Ram Equipment:** Maybe the simplest, but not any less effective, of all of the Colossi's weapons systems. This equipment takes the shape of a reinforced frame and oversized, heavier limbs, which make the Colossus an even more formidable opponent in melee combat, especially against creatures of great size. This increases the damage of their Limb attacks by 40 points against creatures of Enormous or greater size, and its Impacts now have Strength 13. In addition, charges by these Colossi become devastating, and they double their Strength bonus and apply an extra +20 bonus to their attack roll when charging.

The cannons used by these beings, and all other weapons systems of their variants, bear a resemblance to the technology of the ancient and long fallen Empire of Solomon. These were the first signs that made Dravenor's High Command arrive to the now widely accepted theory that somewhere in the archipelago there must be a place teeming with Solomon's technology that The Machine has, unsuccessfully, tried to assimilate and emulate.

## KNOWLEDGE OF DRAVENOR

### Generic Knowledge

These metal giants are the most fearsome creatures one can encounter in battle.

### Intermediate Knowledge

Colossi are especially vulnerable to electricity.

Being observant, one can recognize the speciality of each Colossus by the weapons they carry.

Colossi are usually brought to the battlefield by Carriers, which lift them using hundreds of chains and wires and then let them fall when they are in position. Seeing them fall on their knees and hands only to then rise up slowly in the distance is terrifying.

### Advanced Knowledge

Psicannons can be nullified by using anti-psychic measures.

If you see a lesser creature of the Machine just observing while there's a Colossus in the distance, it is imperative to destroy it as soon as possible: it is in the process of transmitting coordinates to the titan so it can fire at your position.

