

# MUTANT CRAWL CLASSICS

## BLESSINGS OF THE VILE BROTHERHOOD

#5: A LEVEL 4 ADVENTURE  
BY HARLEY STROH



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**THE LOST  
MONASTERY**

PILGRIM WAY

ORTH

= 6 MILES

DIGEST  
MAGAZINE

# BLESSINGS OF THE VILE BROTHERHOOD

A LEVEL 4 ADVENTURE

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## INTRODUCTION

**R**emember the good old days, when post-apocalyptic adventures were full of super-science, robots that were there to be mastered, and the finale of every underground adventure was setting the fusion power plant to overload? Those days are back. Mutant Crawl Classics adventures take place in an ambiguous time period after a great disaster has ravaged the world, and it's up to your neolithic mutant tribesmen to go out into the hot house jungles and radioactive deserts of Terra A.D. (After Disaster) and collect the artifacts of the Ancient Ones in order to attain great personal power and savage glory.

When the tribe's prize possession — a functioning medi-bot — finally breaks down, the PCs are tasked with a holy quest: deliver the dead bot to the monks of The Holy Medicinal Order in hopes that their shamans can repair it. But the monks are not as the legends portray, and there is definitely something dark and dangerous going on in the holy monastery.

Blessings of the Vile Brotherhood takes the PCs into the foreboding mountains that ring the hothouse jungles of the post apocalypse. The PCs' quest leads them along the Pilgrim's Way, an ancient sacred path, in search of the Holy Medicinal Brotherhood. There, amidst the high peaks shrouded in gray rad snow, dread 'bots fighting a long forgotten war and the perverted beasts that have sought shelter in the wilderness, the PCs discover the truth of the holy order and its bloody fate.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In the savagery of the rad-glow future, devotees of the Holy Medicinal Order are revered above all others. Peaceful, wandering healers, the monks and nuns of the order offer a vision of a world that needn't be defended by a flint-tipped spear or maser rifle. The order ministers to all comers, regardless of the seeker's affiliations or past. Within the embrace of the order, the homeless are sheltered, the hungry are fed, and the wounded are healed.

While most of the order are holy vagabonds and wanderers, all have a retreat to call their home. The retreats are scattered throughout the wilderness, often seemingly at random, but a certain few serve a secret purpose: Concealing weapons of the ancient ones in the hopes that they can never again be turned against sentient beings.

So it was with the monastery. The monks and nuns of the order built their mountain fastness atop an ancient silo housing a war-bot, determined to hide its location from any that might try to awaken the slumbering AI.

Their dreams of peace were not to be.

## THE VILE BROTHERHOOD

Mere weeks before the start of the adventure a hyper-violent sect of the Vile Brotherhood overran the sacred monastery, slaughtering the peaceful monks and nuns. The

bloated bodies still hang from the high cliff walls, picked apart by vultures and clouds of black crows. Worse, the Brotherhood succeeded in awakening the Mongrel — a massive war-bot — that had lay dormant beneath the monastery since before the apocalypse. However, Morgander and her would-be captains utterly failed to override its command protocols. The buzzing war-bot flew off to do battle in a war that ended eons ago.

The attack on the holy order and the release of the Mongrel runs counter to every taboo and more of the post-apocalypse, a fact not lost on lesser members of the sect. The sect has splintered between two factions: the first, led by the darkly alluring Morgander, abbotess of the Vile Brotherhood; and Brother Lecho, a portly, small-faced deceiver.

The abbotess still hopes to rein in the war-bot, or failing that, return it to slumber. Brother Lecho for his part simply desires to end his exile, cut down Morgander and take command of the mutant reavers.

**Judge's note:** Brother Lecho and his exiles regularly break camp to avoid Morgander's agents. The camp can only be found through random encounters with Lecho or his scouts. In practice, this means that the PCs may never encounter the exiles. However, if fate favors the PCs (or if they wander the wilderness long enough) they can earn valuable allies in their bid against Morgander and her mutants.

## THE MONGREL

The rad-saturated mountains are host to any number of threats, from the reavers of the Vile Brotherhood to the mutant beasts, but one danger eclipses all others: The Mongrel, a massive, hovering war-bot, and its buzzing clouds of scout drones. Awakened from dormancy by the Vile Brotherhood, the massive walker now stalks the foothills and mountains, attempting to fight a war that ended eons ago — and mistaking the PCs as the forward scouts of an opposing army.

But not all is lost. Years of dormancy have weakened the Mongrel; with sensor arrays dimming and logic circuits failing, the Mongrel is entirely dependent on its swarm of slave drones to interpret the world. So while exceedingly deadly (and remorseless, ceaseless and dogged), the war-bot is nearly blind to the world. Daring and cunning PCs might not "just" use this weakness to simply defeat the Mongrel, but turn the ancient weapon against the Brotherhood.

The PCs first encounter the Mongrel in the Player Start. Presuming PCs survive the initial encounter, the war-bot deploys its slave drone swarm to home in on the characters' location. Its ability to find the PCs is largely a matter of luck and it is easy for the war-bot to incorrectly predict the PCs' location. Characters can improve their odds by traveling further distances and moving erratically between terrains.

The chances of the Mongrel locating the PCs are resolved as follows: Each day after the first encounter, the Mongrel rolls a search die (initially a 1d30) in an effort to predict the PCs' location. On a 1, the Mongrel discovers the PCs. The



die can never be larger than a d30, nor smaller than a d3. Factor in the party's best Luck modifier as a bonus / penalty to the roll. However, a natural 1 is always treated as the Mongrel discovering the PCs, regardless of Luck bonuses.

#### The search die is modified as follows:

-1d for each day that passes, as the war-bot is able to hone its predictive code.

-1d any time the drones encounter the PCs and are able to radio back their location (see below).

-1d each time the PCs end the day having traveled 5 miles or less.

+1d each day the PCs end their travels having moved from one path to another. (For instance, leaving the Pilgrim's Way for a game trail, or leaving a game path to begin bushwhacking.)

+3d any time the PCs travel by means other than overland travel (e.g. psychic teleportation, tunneling through the mountains, flight, or other unconventional methods).

The flying Mongrel covers an enormous amount of ground each day; it's not important to track the war-bots' specific movement, so much as where it ends its movement (always expecting to discover opposing forces).

Use the Mongrel search template on the Judge's map to determine where the war-bot ends up on the overland hex map in relation to the PCs. The PCs are always at the center of the template, in hex 1. The Mongrel ends its movement in a numbered hex that corresponds with the search roll.

For instance, on a roll of 8 the Mongrel ends its move in corresponding hex 8. On a roll of 2, it ends its move in hex 2, adjacent to the PCs.

In general, higher rolls are further away from the PCs,

though even near misses can produce deadly results.

When the Mongrel ends its move in the template's gray zone, the PCs are beset by 1d3 scout drones. The PCs have a 1d6+3 rounds to destroy or disable the drones before they radio back the location to the Mongrel (reducing the next day's search die by -1d as above).

If the towering war-bot ends its move in the PCs' hex, it has located the PCs and attacks with furious, earth-scorching wrath.

The search die is rolled once per day. Roll 1d8 on the following table to determine when the move is applied.

**Example:** The Mongrel is on its fourth day of tracking a band of mutant PCs – reducing the search die from d30 to d16. The judge rolls a 3 on the search, and an 8 for the time of day: In the dark hours before dawn the PCs are spotted by 3 scout drones! One of the drones radios back the PCs' location before it is destroyed, reducing the search die to a d14.

The following day (-1d for the passage of time; the search die is now a d12) the judge rolls a 1 – the war-bot will locate the party! The judge then rolls a 6 for time of day – evening.

#### MONGREL SEARCH TIME

d8	Time of Day
1	Dawn
2	Morning
3	Noon
4	Afternoon
5	Dusk
6	Evening
7	Midnight
8	Predawn