

# MUTANT CRAWL CLASSICS

## THE APOCALYPSE ARK

#6: A LEVEL 5 ADVENTURE  
BY BRENDAN J. LASALLE





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*This book is for Maria Melendez. I'm dedicating  
ONE book to you . . . or perhaps TWO.*

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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.

## BACKGROUND

The Ancients called it Beta Collection Unit NC-787. Its mission – to find, collect, and categorize animals, plants and, in some instances, human beings, recording DNA and, in some cases, stripping invasive mutant DNA from extant creatures to create genetically pure stock.

Then the Great Disaster came. Beta Collection Unit NC-787 sat dead and inert for ages while the world evolved around it for thousands of years.

A powerful mutant discovered the NC-787. Her name was Bluma, and she was a simple child of one of the remote villages from the lands near the Monster Sea. She died of an uncontrolled fever at an extremely young age, and doing so discovered her mutation – she had the extremely rare gift of Cognitive Immortality, and with her last conscious thought in her original body she forced her personality into the brain of an unconscious reptile and left her village, never to return. Since then she has lived the natural lifespans of many dozens of creatures, learning more and more about the blighted world and its inhabitants.

In her thirteenth life cycle Bluma had epiphany – the perfect world would be one where the natural world would progress without advanced cognizant thought, except for one being: herself. She longed to be the only intelligent creature in a paradise world, a world that would constantly strive for perfection as it sought to create intelligence, but which would become a paradise because she herself would stop intelligent life from evolving, forcing evolution to create amazing plants and animals instead.

This dark notion would have remained a daydream if she had never discovered NC-787. Bluma was awestruck by its majesty, and decided to explore every inch of it. During this exploration, she encountered the AI EVE and, through guile, managed to trap it in a shunted computer. She covered the computer in duct tape and hid it away, planning to eventually harness EVE's power for her own ends.

It took the lives of a dozen bodies, but Bluma eventually explored the ancient husk and learned its secrets. She has forsaken the name of her birth and adopted the name of one of the engineers of the NC-787, the one who saw its potential to create the perfect being. The mutant formally known as Bluma shall evermore only answer to Doctor Zeigarnik.

Now in control of NC-787, rechristened The Apocalypse Ark, Doctor Zeigarnik created a terrible pathogen, B-17, and now roams the world, infecting intelligent creatures with the terrible disease, an act of genocide that is just the opening gambit in a pogrom designed to erase sentient life from the world.

Only two things stand between Doctor Zeigarnik and her dreams of genocide – the AI known as EVE, currently trapped with access to only a fraction of its power, and the brave seekers that dare invade the Apocalypse Ark.

## NOTE ON USING THE APOCALYPSE ARK

The adventure comes with a built-in hook – a swarm of optimized injectors attack the PCs' village, who then likely go and investigate the source of the attack. However, it might better serve your campaign to simply have the player's come across the Ark in their travels, or to hear a story about the horrifying "smart metal" from a lone seeker, or even receive a transmission from a patron AI, telling them to go and find/ explore/ destroy the thing. Use this adventure however best serves your campaign, and don't feel obligated to use every bit as writ.

## ENCOUNTER 1: THE SURVIVOR

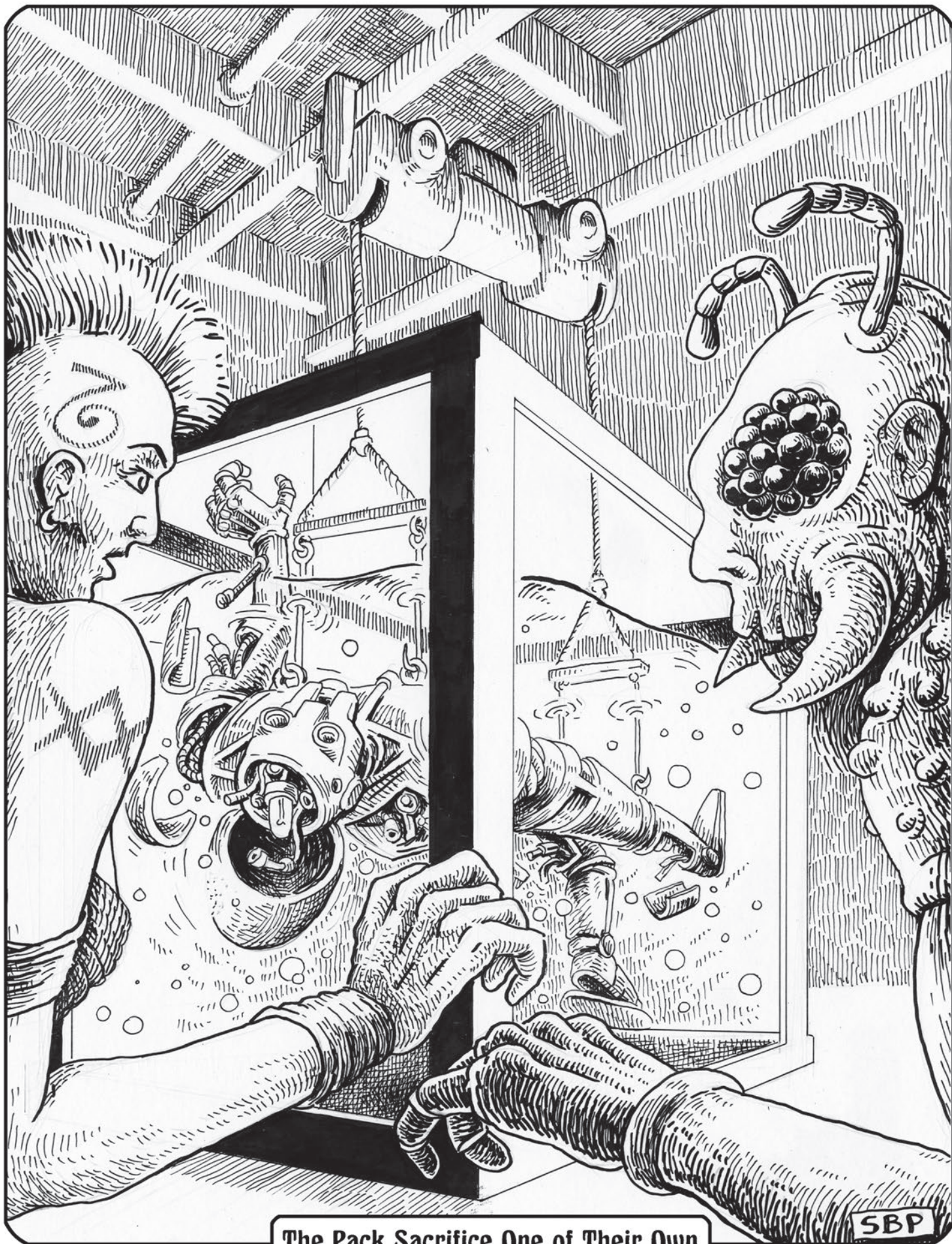
In the dark hours before dawn, Klig, a member of a rival tribe runs into the village, sick, exhausted, and bedraggled, screaming for help. Klig is infected with the B-17 pathogen (Stage 2, see below). Klig tells a tale of a mountain of "smart metal" rolling into his village and releasing a swarm of terrifying winged creatures, each shining a beam of intense light. He ran, with the creatures in pursuit. Eventually he managed to dive into a river and swim underwater for a while to throw them off his scent; he thinks they lost him, but the creatures found his trail and are not far behind.

Less than 5 minutes later the swarm flies into the village and attacks. Unless he is stopped, Klig runs away, never to be seen again. Each creature attacks exactly three times and then flies back to the Ark. Each one attempts to sting one individual, then moves on to a different target, making no distinction between the PCs and other tribesmen. After three rounds, they retreat, flying back to the Apocalypse Ark.

**Optimized Injectors (13):** Init +2; Atk sting +4 melee (1+disease); AC 14; HD 1d8+1; hp 9 each; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP biological combat light, injector, imperfect life form; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will+3.

At a glance, Optimized Injectors appear to be small flying mutant birds – one huge eye that shines a bright light, oversized wings, tiny underslung tail with a needle-like stinger. They are actually mammals, created from recombined human DNA and vat-grown tissue, perfectly optimized to do one thing – track and inject enemies. They have keen eyesight and hearing, and are master jungle trackers. Optimized Injectors also sense radio signals, and are directed via radio by Doctor Zeigarnik.





The Pack Sacrifice One of Their Own

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