10 MILLION A.D.

It's been ten million years since the humans left this Earth. They left it polluted, exhausted, spent. Irradiated ruins, acidic oceans, scarred earth and mountains of waste.

While the humans floated through the ether, held in stasis in their hermetic capsules, the Earth has endured. She has lived on, transformed, evolved. Those same malignant forces the humans unleashed have shaped the Earth's development. And in ten million years we have evolved – the Sapients, the new masters of this old planet.

We are as diverse as we are intelligent. We are resourceful and adaptive. This Earth is not one the humans would recognize, but it is our home. And now, we must defend it.

After ten million years, the humans have returned. They have come to make a new home on a new Earth, to settle and expand and consume and conquer. Can the rag-tag, disunited Sapient coalition save the earth from humanity?

10 Million A.D. requires one MC and 3-5 players.

POWERED BY THE APOCALYPSE

SETUP

Decide together which Species of Sapients exist in your game. What are they like? Sapients can take innumerable forms. They can be mammals, insects, even a sentient colony of single-celled organisms. Briefly describe their appearance, and name them.

If the group discussion isn't creating a Species of Sapient that you'd like to play, create one yourself.

Decide together which Peoples exist in your game. A People is a cultural and political grouping, like a nation or tribe. Peoples can contain more than one Species, and a Species can belong to more than one People. Say where each People lives, how they are governed and how they live. Don't go into great detail - and don't compare to real life cultures, lest you create a crude stereotype.

You play a squad of Sapients assigned to dangerous missions supporting the war effort. Assassinations, sabotage, intelligence-gathering, raids, escorting strategic assets.

CHARACTER CREATION

Note: Stats and Trust cannot go beyond +/-3.

1. Pick stats

You rate your four stats as +2, +1, 0, -1:
   - Savage is used to <u>assault</u> and <u>make threats</u>.
   - Cunning is used to <u>avoid danger</u>, <u>operate covertly</u> and <u>sabotage</u>.
   - Gregarious is used to <u>study behaviour</u>, <u>make demands</u> and <u>source stuff</u>
   - Wise is used to <u>survey an area/force</u> and for <u>repairing, modifying and building</u>

2. Choose your rank

Everyone starts as a corporal. You may increase your rank (to lieutenant) if you forgo one trait/skill. At least one player should do this, and one of those who do is the squad leader.

3. Pick Traits and Skills

Traits are brief statements (they can even be just one word) that describe your Sapient's Species. Are they arboreal? Maybe they have an electro-chemical sensory organ, a well-developed social structure.

Skills are learned abilities. Are you a demolitions expert? Perhaps you're a negotiator or a quartermaster.

You can pick two Traits or skills (one for lieutenants). They work exactly the same way, but Traits define your Species as well as you. If anyone else is playing the same Species, you'll need to consult with each other.

Name your Trait or skill and choose from this list:
- Give you +1 to a stat or +1 to all your Trust ratings (May only be taken for each stat once)
- Choose a move. You roll a bonus die when you make that move.
- Your touch attacks are *deadly* <u>or</u> you are *tough* <u>or</u> you gain an additional "scratch" damage line.
- You can do X [even if Y] [except when Z]. (The bits in square brackets are optional.) You must negotiate the specifics with the MC and the rest of the group.
  *For example, you might take **camouflage** and say you can operate covertly even when there is no cover to conceal yourself, except if you move faster than a slow walk.*

3. Gear

Everyone gets a medi-kit, armour and a weapon with one tag of their choice.

4. Trust

Take turns to complete two of the following statements, naming one of the other player characters as X. That player writes down the listed Trust rating against your name, and answers the listed question:
- X saved my life. How did you save their life, and would you do it again? Trust: +3.
- I suspect X is working with the humans. What have you done to draw suspicion, and are you really working with the humans? Trust: -3.
- X has been with me for several missions and I know I can rely on them. What campaign have you been through together? Trust: +2.
- X has let me down and I am wary of trusting them. What went wrong to lose you their trust, and was it really your fault? Trust: -2.
- I want to win X's confidence. What do you think of them right now? Trust: +1.
- I've heard some bad things about X, but I'll judge them myself. What bad rumours are going around about you, and why? Trust: -1.
- X and I are more than just colleagues. What is the nature of your relationship and how did you get to here? Trust: +2.

- I'm going to show X that I'm better than them. Why are they treating you as a rival, and do you feel the same way? Trust: -1.

For everyone else, choose one of these:
- X seems competent and loyal. Trust: +1.
- I haven't yet got the measure of X. Trust: -1.

SAPIENT POLITICS

Take turns to complete two of the following statements for your People or Species, naming another People or Species as X. Apply the listed Trust modifiers. The player to your left answers the listed question.
- My Species hunted/was hunted by Species X. Characters of those Species reduce their Trust with each other by 1. What cultural remnant of the old enmity remains?
- Species X is so different from us, we struggle to understand their ways. Characters of Species X reduce their Trust with characters of your Species by 1. What catastrophic misunderstanding happened in your history?
- People X shares much in common with our culture. Characters of People X increase their Trust with characters of your People by 1. What significant custom or practice do your Peoples share in common?
- We have warred with People X in the past. Characters of both Peoples reduce their Trust with each other by 1. How recent was the war, and how did it end?
- We are trading partners with People X. Characters of both Peoples increase their Trust with each other by 1. What resources do you trade, and how has the war affected this?
- People X were a dominant power before the humans came. Characters of all Peoples reduce their Trust with characters of People X by 1. In what sphere did they dominate, and how did they maintain their dominance?
- People X are considered weak and inoffensive. Characters of all Peoples increase their Trust with characters of People X by 1. Why were they considered a pushover, and what sphere was the one exception to that?
- People X broke an agreement with our People. Characters of People X reduce their Trust with characters of your People by 1. What was the agreement, and why did they break it?

When the questions are finished, if there are any Peoples who don't have a defined relationship with each other, briefly say how they stand in relation to each other. Don't apply any Trust modifier.

PLAYER MOVES

The following moves are available to all player characters.

When you **assault a unit**, both sides take damage per the damage rules. Roll +Savage.
On a 10+ choose two, on a 7-9 choose one:
- You take control of something the unit was protecting or occupying.
- You do not have to abandon any defences or superior ground you were occupying.
- You inflict 1 more damage
- You pin down / cut off / drive away the enemy unit (subject to unit rules)
- You avoid fully engaging; both sides take 1 less damage

When you **operate covertly**, you act unnoticed. If you take risks that might attract notice. roll +Cunning. On a 10+: You remain unnoticed, for now. On a 7-9, Choose - You evade notice but give up on your current action, or you are discovered after you complete your current action.

When you **sabotage** something, roll +Cunning. On a 10+: you do it. 7-9: ...and the MC chooses one:
- Your efforts attract immediate attention
- It activates in the process, causing damage to you or your stuff
- It'll take time before the sabotage takes effect

When you **repair, modify or build** something, the MC applies the conditions below, and roll +Wise. On a 7-9, you do it. On a 10+: ...and you can choose a condition to ignore.
- If it isn't working, or if they're building from scratch, say what parts are needed and where they can be sourced
- If it's complex or advanced, say what skills are required and who can provide them
- If it's very large or small, or if they're messing with a power source, say what equipment is required and where it can be sourced
- If it is large or complex, it will take time; say how long

When you **study an unfamiliar technology**, roll +Wise. On a 10+, both; On a 7-9 choose one:
- You know what it does
- You know how to operate it

When you attempt to **source stuff** (supplies, equipment, support) from the Sapient coalition, roll +Gregarious. On a 10+ you get it, no problem. On a 7-9 the MC chooses one:
- It will take time. Say how long.
- Someone else has it, and has plans for it. Say who, and why they need it.
- You can't find it, but there's something else that might do. Say what.

When you **provide significant help to your People**, gain 1 hold. Spend your hold 1 for 1 to add a bonus die to a source stuff roll.

When you **survey an area or enemy force**, roll +Wise. On a 10+, ask three questions. On a 7-9, one question. Whenever you act on the answers, add +1 to your rolls.
- Where might an ambush be hidden?
- What is the most defensible ground here?
- How can I best achieve <goal>?
- What is the biggest risk if I do <action>?
- What are they preparing to do?

When you **study someone's social behaviour**, roll +Gregarious. On a 10+, ask three questions from the list. On a 7-9, ask one. You must be able to justify how you know. If you use the answers when making demands on an NPC, you add +1 to your roll.
- What are you really feeling?
- Are you telling the truth?
- Why are you doing/saying that?
- What do you intend to do?
- What do you wish I would do?
- What do you want?

When you **make demands on an NPC** above and beyond their duties (duties include obeying the chain of command for all but the most horrific or suicidal orders), you must supply an appropriate, credible threat or incentive, a persuasive reason, or emotional leverage. Roll +Gregarious (alternatively for threats you can roll +Savage).

On 10+, they do what you want. On 7-9, the MC chooses:

- They do it, but once your back is turned they'll renege
- They need something extra
- They need something concrete to show you mean it
- They offer you something else they think you want

When you make demands on a player, you'll have to hope your threat or incentive, reason or emotional leverage is enough.

When you must **avoid or overcome danger,** and no other move applies, roll +Cunning.
On 10+, you do it. On a 7-9 the MC will impose a cost, limit your success, or give you a difficult choice.

When you **help or hinder** another player, roll your Trust with them. On a 10+, add a bonus or penalty die to their roll. On a 7-9, the same, but you expose yourself to harm, danger, retribution or cost.

When another player does something that you feel:

- Significantly improves your understanding of them, add 1 to your Trust with them.
- Shows commitment or loyalty to you or a cause that you hold dear, over and above their duty, add 1 to their Trust with you.
- Significantly undermines your understanding of them, decrease your Trust with them by 1.
- Is a betrayal of you or your cause, decrease their Trust with you by 2.

When several people, working together, make the same move, don't roll that move more than once. Instead, the person with the best modifier rolls and everyone else helps. Nobody can repeat that move until the situation has changed. (The exception is combat, where making repeated assault moves is permitted.)

MCING THE GAME

Always do the following:
Make the game challenging. Create scenarios which require the players to be skilful and lucky. They should be difficult, but not overwhelming.
Make the world seem real. Breathe life into the characters and places of Earth, 10 million A.D. Follow the fiction before all else.
Play to find out what happens. Prepare, but don't plan. Allow events to play out as the fiction, the players' actions, the rules and the dice dictate, without fear or favour.

Let these principles guide you:

Fiction is king. The fiction has primacy over the rules. For instance, if the campaign meter is on zero but something happens that would clearly hand one side victory, they win. Follow the rules as closely as possible given the circumstances - which might be not at all.

The rules are law. The rules apply to everyone, especially the MC. Don't break them unless the fiction absolutely requires it. Follow them to the letter and be ruthless in enforcing their consequences.

Be honest. The players rely on you for information. Reveal as much as you can justify given the fictional circumstances. If the players misinterpret something you've said, clarify it. Never lie to the players.

Speak to the fiction. Call the players by their characters' names. Never name your moves, but say how they manifest in the fiction. When a player makes a move, always ask them what they're doing in the fiction, specifically.

Create situations, then let them play out. Create scenarios that you expect to challenge the players. Once you have created them, play them out according to their internal logic, the players actions and the rules. Do not plan specific scenes past the opening few.

Bring the Sapients to life. Describe the details of Sapient culture, technology and civilisation. Describe NPCs with colourful, vibrant narration. When a Sapient NPC becomes more than just a bit of background colour, name them and write down a motivation for them.

Test their loyalties. Note down the Peoples' interrelationships and make them real through exemplar NPCs and by revealing how they play out during the war. Draw the players into these conflicts and alliances.

Humanity is a monolithic threat. Describe their appearance and behaviour in broad brush strokes. Describe how their ways clash with those of the Sapients. Describe their frightening, advanced technology.

Display the consequences of war. Whenever something happens in the war, think about the consequences for ordinary Sapients. Provide exemplars of those consequences where possible.

MC MOVES

Make these moves when the fictional situation demands it, or when there is an uncomfortable pause in the drama:
- *Reveal a threat / opportunity*. Describe the world, rich with threats and opportunities.
- *Limit their options*. Say how their choices are limited by their environment, their position, and by the threats arrayed against them.

Make <u>any</u> MC move when the players fail to respond to a threat, or when they roll a 6 or less. Always choose something appropriate to the fictional situation.

Pin them down / drive them back / cut them off. Restrict their ability to act, especially their ability to move, for example through concentrated firepower.

Exhaust / seize / destroy their resources. Remove their ability to use equipment or other resources that they were relying on.

Pierce their camouflage / smash their defences. Take away their position of safety or superiority, force them into the open.

Redeploy your forces / Summon reserves. Change the position of a threat, or bring one in from reserve. You can merge or split units as part of this move.

Attack with caution / in force / by surprise. Have a threat commit itself, in part or in full.

Have someone make demands on them. The obvious choice is their People.

Commit to future action. Have someone take an irrevocable decision or set wheels in motion. Write it down, and trigger the moves that follow from it as soon as you can. <u>No backsies!</u>

Make a move off-screen. Have something happen now that the players can't see yet. Commit to it, and reveal it as soon as possible. <u>No backsies!</u>

OTHER RULES

UNIT RULES

In battle, military units are empowered by and limited by their size. Units are sized as follows:

Small: up to a handful of people
Medium: one or two dozen people
Large: several dozen people
Huge: scores of people, or more

A smaller unit cannot pin down, drive back or cut off a larger unit.

If a unit has its movement restricted by the environment (such as a narrow canyon), they must accumulate hold before they can redeploy or be summoned from reserves. You may give a unit hold instead of another move. While a unit has hold, it is redeploying and may not <u>attack in force</u>. If a unit has hold it can redeploy, regardless of size. Terrain is more likely to be limiting for larger units.

Larger units require more in the way of cover or other defences to provide any benefit, and find it harder to attack by surprise, as they're harder to hide.

A larger unit inflicts +1 damage on a smaller unit, suffers -1 damage from a smaller unit, per step of difference.

Units tags change these effects.
- A *mobile* unit behaves as though one size smaller for purposes of redeployment / summoning from reserves.
- A *cumbersome* unit has to accumulate 1 more hold than normal for purposes of redeployment /summoning from reserves.

When a unit is attacked, both the unit and any player characters in it take damage. Units have their own damage lines:
- Shaken. The unit inflicts -1 damage.
- Disorganised. The unit cannot move faster than a slow walk, and counts as one size larger for purposes of redeployment.
- Bloodied. The unit takes casualties, and counts as one size smaller for purposes of damage.
- Walking wounded. The unit takes heavy casualties, and is permanently one size lower.
- Routed. The unit can do nothing but flee, and scatters once it is clear of the battlefield.
- Annihilated. The unit are slain to a man.

Units heal all "shaken" and "disorganised" lines once the battle is over. "Bloodied" and "walking wounded" lines heal when medical attention is given in a field hospital. The "routed" line cannot be healed; some of the unit members will return, immediately or over time, some never return.

DAMAGE RULES

You must be within your weapon's range to deal damage. A weapon's range can be *touch*, *close* (say 50m or so) or *far* (anything else).

A standard weapon does 2 damage, at either touch or close range as appropriate. If unarmed you count as *weak*.

When a unit attacks in force, it inflicts 1 more damage, but lose the benefit of any superior position or defences.

A unit that is protected by defences suffers 1 less damage from attacks.

A unit that is *tough* or wearing *armour* suffers 1 less damage from attacks.

Weapons can have tags:
- Units armed with *volley weapons* counts as one size larger for purposes of pinning down, driving back or cutting off another unit.
- Units armed with *barrage weapons* count as one size larger when they inflict damage.
- Units armed with *deadly* weapons inflict +1 damage when they attack. Units armed with *weak* weapons inflict -1 damage when they attack. If you somehow have both tags, they cancel out.
- Units armed with *slow* weapons must take time to reload after firing.

When you take damage, mark off one of the lines below for every point taken. While a line is marked off, the effects listed apply. You mark off the lines in whatever order you prefer. The starting lines are:

- Dazed. -1 Wise.
- Shaken. -1 Savage.
- Limping. Can't move faster than a slow walk.
- Bleeding. Can't take any physically demanding action without taking another 1 damage.
- Unconscious. Can't act at all.
- Dead. This line cannot be healed.

Some characters have a "scratch" damage line that causes no penalties.

REFRESHMENT & HEALING

Any time that at least two players are in a place of relative safety and security, they may call a refreshment scene. In a refreshment scene, the normal rules are suspended; nobody can make any moves, including the MC.

If during a refreshment scene someone reveals something significant about their character which hadn't previously come up in the story, at the end of the scene they gain 1 EP and everyone heals one line.

Healing is also possible outside of refreshment scenes.

Characters may heal one "scratch", "dazed" or "shaken" line any time they can pause and recover their senses.

Otherwise, the use of a medical kit is required to heal. Use of a medical kit automatically heals one line of damage (except "dead"). Optionally, you may either heal an additional line, or attempt to heal the "dead" line. If so, you roll + the number of lines you had taken prior to healing, and:

For healing the "dead" line, on a 10+ they're permanently dead; on a 7-9, they temporarily mark their "unconscious" line; on a 6 or less the character temporarily marks their "bleeding" line (and the MC does not make a move).

For healing extra damage, on a 10+ the character temporarily marks their "unconscious" line; on a 7-9 the character temporarily marks their "bleeding" line; on a 6 or less, nothing extra happens (and the MC does not make a move).

Temporary damage lasts until the end of the next scene.

THE CAMPAIGN

The game is divided into campaigns. A campaign has a strategic target that's at stake - like a settlement or military base; it has a number of threats on either side; and it has a progress meter. Sometimes the players will be assigned resources for part or all of a campaign.
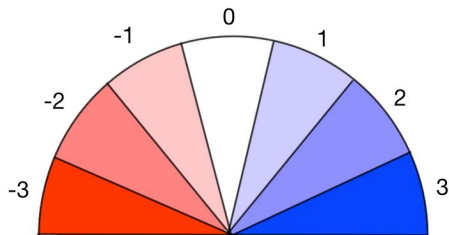
The progress meter runs from -3 (in the red, indicating the humans are winning) to 3 (in the blue, indicating the Sapients are winning). The meter starts at 0 at the start of a campaign. Adjust the meter when one side or the other suffers a serious setback, or conversely wins a major victory. That needn't mean a battle - it could mean sabotage, successful recon, capturing someone important, and so on.

When you adjust the meter, the MC describes how the immediate victory has affected the wider progress of the campaign. When it shifts to the left, the MC also describes the effects on the strategic target - buildings destroyed, civilians killed, crops burned and so on. These effects are irrevocable, even if the meter moves back rightwards.

Should the progress meter make it to -3, the campaign is lost. The humans overrun the target, taking control of it or destroying it as the MC prefers. Should the progress meter make it to 3, the campaign is won. You drive the humans off. Either way, it won't be at stake again.

THE PLANET

If you're playing over several campaigns, keep track of a separate planet progress meter, which works just like a campaign meter, except the stakes are the planet. Every time a campaign is lost, move the planet progress meter to the left, and every time it is won, move it to the right. The game ends with the humans victorious if the planet progress meter makes it all the way to the left, while the humans are driven away and never return if it makes it all the way to the right.

EVOLUTION

Sapients are ever-changing, ever-adapting. When the campaign progress meter moves to the right, everyone gains an EP. When you complete a campaign successfully, everyone gains 3 EPs.

EPs can be spent to grant yourself +1 to a roll, after rolling. You may not spend more than 1 EP at a time in this way.□□ However, if you collect 5 EPs, you may trade them in and become Altered, becoming fundamentally changed and taking an additional Trait.

Character sheet

Name:

Species:

People:

Look:

Stats: (+2, +1, 0, -1)

Savage:
(assault,
make threats)

Gregarious:
(study behaviour,
make demands,
source stuff)

Cunning:
(avoid danger,
operate covertly,
sabotage)

Wise:
(survey an area/force,
repair/modify/build)

Traits and Skills
+1 to stat; an extra option on specified move; +1 damage dealt or -1 damage
suffered; I can X [even if Y] [except when Z]

<u>Name</u>   <u>Effect</u>

Trust
Adjust when their actions increase or undermine your understanding of them, or show loyalty to/betray you or your cause.

<u>Name</u>   <u>Trust</u>   <u>Notes</u>

Damage

Scratch
Dazed -1 Wise
Shaken -1 Savage
Limping Move no faster than a slow walk
Bleeding Physical action causes more damage
Unconscious
Dead

Weapons

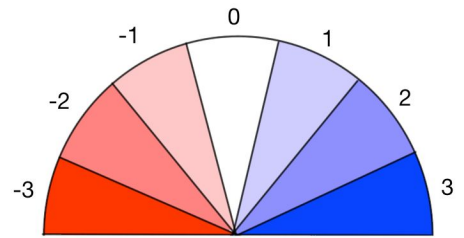| Name	Range	Damage	Tags

Gear & resources

MC reference sheet

Campaign

Location:

Stakes:

Threats:

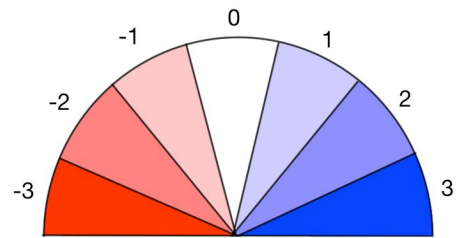Name   Unit size   Tags

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Campaign

Location:

Stakes:

Threats:

Name   Unit size   Tags