**STALKING CRAWLROLLIES**: A PLOT OUTLINE BY CHAPLET

PROLOGORRHEA: Gordo looks back to how it all began.

I. BROWN UNIT: An introduction to the five members of the Unit and their daily life at

Boot Camp Tower, up to and including the first time they learn the Jig.

II. IT BEGINS: Foreboding: why is the Chief nervous? Before Brown Unit plays the

Jig, the Tower is evacuated; soon afterward, it is attacked. The Unit does not

understand by what; the Chief, who seems to have expected this development,

goes through a terrifying transformation, and falls immobile to the ground.

INTERLUDE: HAIL TO THE CHIEF: Gordo takes a moment to hail the fallen Chief.

II & A HALF. IT RESUMES: The attack continues, bringing with it a series of rather

intoxicating hallucinations. When it is over, the Chief revives; he is now seven

years old, and the drill room clock is running backward. The Unit freaks.

III. MEET THE DOC: Brown Unit is assigned to assist Dr. Helga Dorn, a U.N. scientist,

who is on a Greek island, analyzing green mold left by a Crawlrollie attack. She

appears to be nine years old; had she not discovered how to slow Crawlrollie

Chronoregressions to a halt by the application of such molds, she would already

have regressed to a fetus and died. She is accompanied by two Squilks, Galumph

and Gruntle, survivors of an apocalyptic Crawlrollie invasion of their own planet.

IV. DOC EXPLAINS: Doc tells how the crashlanded Roswell Aliens fled on learning

of a Crawlrollie presence on our moon. But they left behind a vast store of useful

information, and “bugsprayed” the moon, to retard the Crawlrollie progress. 100

years later, the R.A.s returned to find the infestation about to go out of control.

Doc led a lunar expedition, and was Chronoregressed. She tells how Crawlrollies

carry with them their entire temporal histories, have access to the temporal

histories of those they meet, and infect their prey with temporal dislocation in

physically unpredictable ways. The members of Brown Unit, however, are

special: they are genetically immune.

V. CYCLONE: Oscar has a fit of drunken bigotry, and sets off a terrible Crawlrollie

attack. Galumph is killed, Doc is half-killed (the left half), and Gruntle is turned

into a Cloud Hog, a mysterious species which has been around the action since

Boot Camp Tower without anyone much noticing.

VI. GRUNTLE’S TALE: Gruntle tells Gordo and Lil how her planet was destroyed by

the Crawlrollies, despite the gallant intervention of the mysterious Cloud Hogs.

VII. SHERWOOD FOREST: Doc and Gordo collect green mold. Doc is dying, but since

the most recent Crawlrollie attack has a mystical understanding of the shapes left

by the green mold (the so-called “Green Writings”). Gordo has had a vision of his

own death, which will occur during the upcoming lunar mission.

VIII. FRIDAY TO THE MOON: Together with a pilot who quotes *Star Trek* and

*Babylon 5,* Doc and Brown Unit leave for the moon, where they will rendezvous

with the Cloud Hogs and engage the Crawlrollies in battle. All of Brown Unit are

now experiencing visions; Gordo’s continue to be of his own terrifying death.

X. FIRST SKIRMISH: Brown Unit single-handedly demolishes two Crawlrollie scout

squadrons. Gordo, beset by visions alternately seductive and terrifying, has a flash

of insight, concerning moon pollen, and swampflax, and the source of the

Crawlrollies’ lunar strength. He hurries off to the very shuttle in which he has

foreseen himself dying.

X. OSCAR’S TALE: The first of the chaplets in which Gordo writes from the

perspective of Oscar. The Crawlrollies have now gauged Brown Unit’s strength,

and launch their counterstrike. It comes also against the Cloud Hogs, whom the

allies were holding back in what they thought was secret reserve. Doc orders

Oscar to join the Cloud Hogs, so that she can pass on via his comm. pager her insights (drawn from her knowledge of the Green Writings) into the Crawlrollie attacks. Lil insists on going with; Will and Carlos stay to protect Doc.

INTERLUDE: AN EDITORIAL EMENDATION: Oscar and Lil delete a few scabrous

stanzas Gordo has inserted about them, and wish him an affectionate farewell.

XI. MEANWHILE, AT THE SHUTTLE: Gordo, in the shuttle, is writing [t]his poem; in

the last moments of his (conventional) life, he wishes to get his personality down

on paper; far more importantly, however, he is proving a case. His heightened

vision (possibly granted to him by the Dice Tossers, as a "fair play in wagering"

strategy) has enabled him to understand how the Crawlrollies operate; also to

know what is happening elsewhere on the moon, and what will happen once he

launches his shuttle at the Crawlrollies’ cache of swampflax. He reveals all!

XII. SNOWSTORM, FIRESTORM: Oscar reports that the war is going badly. In the sky,

the Cloud Hogs are hypnotized by a Crawlrollie snowfall, against which Lil and

Oscar, with the help of Gruntle and Ganmela, barely make headway. Below, Doc,

Will, and Carlos are running on fumes. At this low point, Gordo smashes his

shuttle into the Crawlrollies’ hidden swampflax power source, setting up a chain

reaction Crawlrollie bonfire—and unleashing a chaos of unmoored time and

dream consciousness. As the fire quietens, the survivors visit the site of the shuttle

wreck. It is encased in crystal, and luminous; the Cloud Hogs explain that Gordo

must have died locked in phase. And (witness the creation of Earth atmosphere

and Earth landscape on the lunar surface around him) lucidly dreaming.

XIII. FUNERALS AND SOIRÉES: The “predictions” chaplet. Gordo pictures two

principal scenes set in the near future: one, after Doc’s funeral, with Oscar and Lil

in bed, as a band plays and fireworks crackle on the lawn; and a second, at

Gordo’s memorial service, in the course of which the remaining Crawlrollies

launch one last attack… Which Brown Unit, the crowd, and a visitation of Cloud

Hogs resist, until the last Crawlrollies in our solar system are destroyed.

DOCUMENTARY INSERTS: Not many plot details are dropped into the documentary

passages (inserted between the chaplets), but we do get hints about the future lives

of the characters, future conditions on the moon (especially in relation to Gordo’s

shrine), and possible future pursuit of the Crawlrollies by both the Cloud Hogs

and humans (such as Will) who wish to develop temporal technologies. Mostly,

the documentary inserts serve to deepen the portraits of the characters, to enliven

our grasp of the settings, and to enrich the complexities of tone.