**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.