

OVER THE WALL



# THE CONTENTS

OVER THE WALL 3

SKILLS 8

BITS 10

ADDING A NORMAL BIT 11

ADDING A SPECIAL BIT 11

PLAYING THE GAME 12

THE SET UP 12

THE HOUR 12

THE START 12

THE CLOCK CHIMES 13

USING SKILLS 13

THE MINUTES PASS 13

THE DAY ENDS AND RECOVERY 14

TAKING DAMAGE 14

THE HOUR TURNS 14

THE WORLD OF VATURDU 15

THE BAZAAR 15

THE TRAINS 16

THE STEAMWORKS 16

THE MAIZE 17

THE RECYCLING PLANT 17

THE CORE 18

FLESH ROW 18

THE DENS 18

THE LIFE CYCLE 19

## OVER THE WALL

by: Jonathan Lavalley

For Game Chef 2010

The Fonts used are Gill Sans by Eric Gill (1926) for the body text and Under Influence by Vic Fieger (2005).

The following people are listed as being greatly appreciated:

Amber, Fred, Brennan, Rob, Dave, dave, Geoff, Mary and anyone else who saw this and told me what for.

THE CROSSROADS	19
THE MINES	20
FIELD OF GOLD	20
THE UNDERGROUND	20
THE BOTS 21	
BUZZKILL	21
SPIDER BOTS	22
TRAITORBOTS	22
DOCS	22
FLESHBOTS	23
CHAUFFER	23

Get Over The Wall. It's in all the stories you hear as soon as you come into your creche. The ones that your keepers tell you to help you sleep at night when the monsters come out of the shadows, clacking their teeth and scraping their fingers against the windows. Over The Wall is the promised land. A place of sunshine, honey, dreams, hopes, and skin. As much skin as you had now, and how you would never be once you left the creche.

They love the flesh Over The Wall. They worship the skin and shun any metal that you might have needed to use to get there. Some versions of the stories even tell you that they'll replace the metal bits with your old parts that have magically reappeared, or someone else's parts. It doesn't matter where it came from, as long as it became yours and when you were whole again you would be richer than the richest of all the fleshbots in Vaturdu.

Vaturdu was what you would be born into, once you left the creche. It was the city of machines, where the skin you had was the only currency you could use to buy anything you needed. Work for food was a normal exchange, but if you wanted anything more than simple food and lodging, you needed to trade your skin in for something bigger and better. In fact, your first act as an adult was to pay the creche for their care with a piece of your body, a hand, a foot, your eyes. They replaced it with a functional part, that was easy since the mechanics were everywhere, and options were available for better pieces for a price.

When you take your first step outside of the creche and see the city before you, the first thing all new citizens do is look for the wall. Everyone says that they can see it, there in the distance and after a few days they most Creche kids want to make it Over the Wall. Life in Vaturdu is hard and the promise of paradise is tempting, but navigating the city is never easy for anyone. There are too many dangers, too many people jealous of the skin that you still have and want to take it from you. The stories all agree that in order to get Over The Wall you need to be at least a little bit real, or else you're cast out of paradise back into Vaturdu to become one of the robots that wait and watch for other creche kids who still have skin left to sell.

## CRECHE LIFE

*The Creche* was decreed invaluable by *The Core* as new beings were needed to keep the economy of Vaturdu from stagnating. The Bots of Vaturdu value skin above all other things, and while there can be barter that happens between two parties, only flesh makes doors open and options appear. The more flesh the Bots own, since they can't wear it anymore, the wealthier they are. Without *The Creche*, there would be no *Creche-kids* and the economy as the Bots know it would collapse on itself as their currency would decay and eventually destroy itself, as the *Fleshbots* would do everything they could to keep themselves in wealth. The other benefit to having *The Creche* was that the children born there would eventually replace the Bots that were falling further and further into disrepair. Because of these two things, no one violates the sanctity of *The Creche*. Some Bots will look longingly at all the skin on display between its metal bars, but the decree from *The Core* and all of the security measures that *The Creche* has implemented have stopped the most determined Bot enough times that the lessons have sunk in.

You knew none of this. You were born in *The Creche* with your Creche Brothers and Creche Sisters. All you know was your life your life of eating, sleeping, playing and learning. You lived, loved, laughed and ran about the place as children do, all under the watchful eye of the *governesses*, who would do their best to make sure that the children's skin remained unharmed. You never understood why destroying someone's room was worth a talking to, but actually punching them in the face was worth a week without supper.

While you were in *The Creche*, you learned how to do many things. All children learn how to *Run* and *Hide*, but your interests went beyond that. There was something that drew your curiosity onward and you picked up some extra skills.

Some kids were into *Robotics*, the learning of how their eventual bodies would work and so learned how to *Repair*, *Identify*, *Build* and *Improve* anything that had to do with machinery and parts. There were those other kids who knew how to get what they wanted, from the flesh kids and from the other machines. Those kids were *Traders* and figured out how to *Deal*, *Scrounge*, *Notice* and *Cheat*. Outside there were kids that were busy playing games and pushing each other around. They got called *Athletes* by the *governesses* and *Bullies* by the rest. They figured out how to *Hit*, *Break*, *Throw* and *Leap*. Which ever one you were helped define who you were when you left the *Creche*.

You and your *Creche Siblings* did everything together. You were grouped together when there was eating time, sleeping time and learning time. You mixed with the other *Creche* children during free time, but most of your time was spent with those who were cloned in the same vat as you were. That means you got to know them very well, and in some

cases too well. One of your siblings *Was Horribly Mean To You*. You hate them and secretly you want to get your revenge. Whatever they did, you know that the *governesses* turned a blind eye to what was going on. It may have been to toughen you up, make you grow in the face of adversity, but you certainly felt that you could have gone without it and still turned out able to face *Vaturdu* head on. Of course, your other siblings noticed this and one of them *Was Your Closest Friend*. Who were they and what would you do for them? Would you give them your skin to buy their own freedom? Would you jump in front of a *Buzzkill* to protect them from getting hurt? Would they do the same for you?

You talked a lot about what you wanted to do when you got out to *Vaturdu*. Most of you wished you could bypass it. Your *governesses* never spoke well of it, they talked about the *Buzzkills* and the *Dracos* and the checkpoints and the flesh markets and the never ending smell that permeated the place. It was a house of horrors that never seemed to end. You wanted to get *Over the Wall*, where you could just relax and not have to worry about the next bot coming behind you to take whatever they could off of your body. Some of you secretly thought it would be grand to be a *Fleshbot*, a bot with so much flesh that you could attach an extra limb here and there just to flaunt your own wealth. You would have an army of weaker bots at your command who would do anything for a hand, or a finger even. They just wanted to be close to you, to gain favour and wealth of their own. You'd rule sections of *Vaturdu* with an iron fist and no one would ever challenge you, or dunk your head in the water trough again. Of course, you never told anyone that. You had an *Open Goal* and a *Secret Goal*. Sometimes you were an honest child and they were one and the same, but even the most honest of children can harbour a secret desire for power and fame and wealth.

Then came that fateful day when you and your *Creche* siblings had to leave the protection of *The Creche* and make it to the outside world. Before you left, you had to pay *The Creche* for their tender loving care, as they put it. You had to give them something for their pains. Would it be a hand, a foot, your eyes? Don't worry, they had the standard replacement *Bits* which would work just a little bit worse than the old ones did. They had *Bits* that could make you better, but they were a bit more expensive. Would you trade in your *arm* in order to get a *hand* that would be able to crush anyone who got in your way, or your *hand* in order to get eyes that don't miss anything?

You were given a *Comm* with a *Personal Status Chart*. They had ranked what they saw as your *Skills* on a scale of 1 to 3. Those *Skills* were *Run* and *Hide* as well as your skills as a *Robitcist*, a *Trader* or a *Bully* and it seemed that there were only 8 points distributed among those *Skills*. Your new *Bit* was listed there as well, the price paid to *The Creche* in return for the years of care they had given you. Your whole life was plainly visible on this chart. It made you wonder as you stepped out into the harsh light of *Vaturdu* what secrets did you have left?

## SKILLS

Sometimes you don't know what a *Skill* does, by its name. You need a greater description, that's why *The Creche* has provide you with further details on how you have been evaluated for all these years.

You just liked the way your feet would touch the pavement when you would *Run*. It was such a satisfying smacking sound that you did it all the time in the creche, even when you weren't supposed to. You always arrived first, no matter what because if there was an option to run or walk you would always *Run*. The hallways were your racetrack and you always came in first place. Now that you're going out on the streets of Vaturdu, this should serve you well. Understand that some bots that might want to do you harm have wheels, engines and the ability to move faster than you can run.

Quiet time was at a premium inside *The Creche*. It was a luxury since the governesses had every minute regimented with activities, food and sleep. If you wanted a moment to yourself, you could always *Hide*, and you frequently did. The governesses always had to take that extra time to try and find you for your lessons, or your lunch. The peace was worth the scolding you got if they managed to find you.

When you get interested in *Robotics*, the first thing you did was tinker until you *Improved* on a piece of gear. You don't know how you managed to do it, but you were able to remove some of the problems that bot parts posed to people. The kinks were worked out and the machinery was able to flow faster and freer than ever before. This made you a favourite among the governesses who would take special care of you as you made their hands faster at chopping the food you needed to eat, or let their arms rotate 360 degrees, so they could stop the children from doing things behind their back. It didn't make you popular with the *Bullies* but you didn't care, you were making things better.

Instead of just tinkering, you started to learn more about how bots worked. You learned how to *Identify* parts and what they did and how they could be used. You also managed to get inside the library and find out about the different bots and what they could and couldn't do. It opened your eyes a little bit on how limited the governesses actually were and let you figure out weaknesses that they had. You also knew which ones were newer, which ones were older and which ones were going to be decommissioned soon.

Once you had spent your time doing your research and learning how things worked, you were ready to *Build* your own *Bits*. You built a small drone that would follow you around and clean your part of *The Creche* so you could read some more. You had a fake mechanical hand that gave the governesses a good scare, thinking that you had managed to sell your hand for the part, that someone had gotten into *The Creche*. It was awe-

some, you were able to build whatever you wanted.

Then your creations would break, and you had to spend your time with *Repair*. You'd fix what was broken, and learn even more from that. This endeared you to the *governesses* even more because not only could you make them better, but if they got hurt you could fix them too. You got special treats when they thought no one else was looking, but you couldn't help rub it in to the other creche kids when it happened. It just proved that you were special, better than the others. You would make it *Over the Wall* when they fell.

If you were interested in being a *Trader*, it became apparent the first time you managed to *Cheat* and not get caught. It was a heady feeling, and it helped that the kid you hated got in trouble for what you had done. It became something you did, you cheated all the time. Sure you would get caught now and then, but not enough to outweigh the benefits you reaped when it worked.

You were also good at finding what people wanted, you just seemed to *Notice* when others talked about their desires. There were subtle clues and hints that you just seemed to pick up on that explained everything you needed to know. It also helped that you had to pay attention to people when you were *Cheating*, because those too were clues. It let you know if people believed you, or if you might have to *Run*. This developed your eagle eyes that can notice anything at all. There's that piece of paper that everyone else overlooked that just happened to be the one that was needed. There was that extra bit of food that no one else saw. It made you happy every time it happened, because you knew that no one else would have seen it in a million days.

That led to you being able to *Scrounge* up things that no one else knew were there. From making food appear out of places your creche siblings never expected to getting toys that everyone thought were lost, you knew the best places to go to get what you needed. To your siblings, it looked like you were able to just pull stuff out of thin air.

Eventually you took your ability to *Scrounge* and *Notice* and *Cheat* and turned it into your ability to make a *Deal*. You traded things that you found for bigger and better stuff that you wanted. You always had whatever you needed, and you came out the better in any transaction that you were in, be it with your siblings or with the *governesses*. People wanted to avoid you for that reason, but you always seemed to have what they wanted or needed.

The rest of the kids were too busy playing sports and being 'Athletes' in front of the *governesses* and *Bullies* behind their backs. If you were a *Bully* one of the first things you did when you got out of the vat was *Hit*. You *Hit* the walls, your toys and most importantly your Creche Siblings. You *Hit* them a lot, in fact, so much so that you got used to being alone as

you got punished for it, a lot. Eventually you grew up and learned how to play games that required you to *Hit* things, rather than creche-kids, but that desire to hit your brothers and sisters stayed with you forever.

After the Hitting started, then came the *Breaking*. You couldn't have nice things because the urge to *Break* them was too tempting, and often you'd give in to it. Then, when you got older, you realized that you didn't want to *Break* your own things anymore, but your sibling's stuff was more than fair game. It doesn't take too much effort to *Break* things, just a lot of will and determination and you have plenty of that.

Part of *Breaking* is the ability to *Throw* accurately. You wanted to make sure objects that you tossed ended up exactly where you wanted them. A piece of pie in your creche sister's hair, that spitball on the back of your creche brother's neck. That kite, just in the right spot up the tree so people would have to break their necks to get it down. Your desire to *Throw* things even extended to putting that ball exactly where it needed to be, when you weren't busy showing off your skills on your creche siblings.

The last thing you picked up was your ability to *Leap* out of dangerous situations. You could climb a tree by jumping up and grabbing onto that branch that no one else could reach. The roof was your playground and the governesses did their best to try to make sure that you didn't break your neck up there, jumping around like a *Spiderbot*. You could *Leap* further than even some of the *governesses*, much to their frustration.

## BITS

*Bits* are what make up the bodies of all the *Bots*. However, because of the *Steamworks* producing so many *Bits*, they literally are everywhere in *Vaturdu*. *Bits* are used to make up some of the walls, and ground of *Vaturdu*. It is no uncommon to have a clawed hand stuck in the ground or a *Draco* Head stuck in the wall scaring you as you turn a corner. That's why, when *Bots* take *Parts* as payment they replace them with *Bits*. It's not like this is an extra cost, literally they almost scoop them off the ground to replace whatever they took in payment.

That means that most general *Bits* aren't very good. They'll have a flaw or two that makes things harder for you do what you are used to. They're clunky, new, and different which means that they'll end up slowing you down as you try to make your way to *The Wall*. Not all *Bits* are the same, there are some *Bits* that are extra special, and in turn extra expensive. They can improve anything and everything. They're just like your old *Parts*, but faster, stronger, sleeker, more powerful.

No matter what kind of *Bit* you have, there are also improvements that you can buy. Usually *Traitorbots* sell these, and they'll sell them to anyone for the right price. These improvements can only be added onto a

*Bit* that you already have, but that shouldn't be a problem since you start the game with a single *Bit*.

## ADDING A NORMAL BIT

When you add a *Normal Bit*, you have to come up with a *Description* and a *Flaw*. The *Description* is what the *Bit* looks like. It is a pair of dragon feet, which look cool but are harder to run in? *Flaws* have a direct impact upon the game. They can affect any mechanic and it will a negative impact. Here are a few examples:

- \* They can decrease a *Skill's Threshold*
- \* They can increase the number of encounters you need to get to the Wall
- \* They can make you draw extra cards, no matter what time of day
- \* They can give someone *Who Hates You*, the ability to add an extra card during any scene
- \* They can make you take double damage if you take damage during a scene
- \* A Particular Type of *Bot* can always find you.

This isn't an exhaustive list. Anything you can think of that's a penalty add it to your character, but make sure that it's an actual penalty. It has to be approved of by the rest of the group.

## ADDING A SPECIAL BIT

When you add a *Special Bit*, you have to come up with a *Description* and a *Benefit*. *Descriptions* here are all positive. *Special Bits* are sleek, powerful, and awesome. *Benefits* are the reverse of *Flaws*, they will take a mechanic and give you a benefit. The benefit is small, but it's still something positive that can happen. Here are a few examples:

- \* They can increase a *Skill's Threshold* (maximum is again 3)
- \* They can increase your *Healing Rate*
- \* They can make you draw extra cards, but you get to pick the one you want
- \* They can give someone *Who Loves You*, the ability to remove extra cards during a scene.
- \* They can take an extra point of damage
- \* You can always hid from a certain type of *Bot*.

This list is just the beginning. Anything that you can imagine might help your character can be an improvement. Your arm can have a laser cutter inside it that allows you to cut through walls, and *Buzzkills* trying to get you.

# PLAYING THE GAME

The Game will take place over a series of *Encounters*. You need 20 *Encounters* to make it *Over The Wall*, which represent the five days it takes to make it there on foot. There are ways around that might make that shorter, or longer, but in the end you will have to travel through the various areas of Vaturdu in order to make it *Over The Wall*. A standard deck of 52 playing cards will be used to help create the *Encounters*.

## THE SET UP

At the beginning of the game, the deck of cards is separated by suit and put in four different piles in the middle of the table. *Spades* are the *Bot Pile*, *Diamonds* are the *Location Pile*, *Clubs* are the *Complications Pile* and *Hearts* are the *Dangers Pile*. They are put in the middle of the table within ease of reach of all the players. This will help determine the shape of the *Encounter*.

## THE HOUR

The *Hour* is what a single *Encounter* is called. There are four *Hours* to a *Day*, and a *Day* is considered a single *Game Session*. The *Hours* go in the following order: *Morning*, *Noon*, *Evening*, *Night*. The *Hour*, as a game *Turn*, breaks down as follows.

## THE START

An *Hour* starts with the character who has the highest *Run*. That player will pick either *Their Love* or *Their Hate*. The time of *The Hour* will let you know what you may choose from when it comes to the encounter, and that may inform how you decide who to give the encounter too. Once the choice is made, the following cards can be drawn depending on the hour.

*Morning*: *Location and Bot or Complication*  
*Noon*: *Location, and Bot, and Complication and Danger*  
*Evening*: *Location, Bot and Complication or Danger*  
*Night*: *Location and Complication or Danger*

The person reading the cards becomes *The Bot* for this scene and the player that the card was played on becomes *The Creche-Kid* dealing with the encounter.

## THE MINUTES PASS

Once *The Bot* and *The Creche-kid* have established the *Encounter* and what they want to do with it, the remaining players can now get involved. Starting from the left of *The Bot* each player can add or remove an *Element* to the situation. These are not drawn from the piles, but thrown into the *Encounter* through the player's creativity. This can be designed to help either *The Bot* or *The Creche-kid* but both *The Bot* and *The Creche-kid* get to react to what the player did. If a player doesn't feel inspired, or think they want to do anything they can also *Pass*.

After *The Bot* and *The Creche-kid* react the next player on the left gets to do the same thing until each player not in the scene gets to add or remove an *Element* or *Pass*.

## THE CLOCK CHIMES

When every other player has had a turn the group has a decision: at the end of the *Encounter*, has enough changed that *The Creche-kid* or *The Bot* is going to come out on top.

If the *Creche-kid* comes out on top:

Then the *Creche-kid* gets to describe what they want to have happen as a result. Usually this involves the *Creche-kid* escaping in some way.

If the *Bot* comes out on top:

Then the *Creche-kid* has a couple of options. The first one is to let *The Bot* win and describe what's going on. This usually doesn't end well for the *Creche-kid* but they might be in a situation where if they use a *Skill* it will end up being worse for them.

The other option is that the *Creche-kid* can use a *Skill*.

## USING SKILLS

When a *Creche-kid* uses a *Skill* what they are doing is succeeding in escaping an *Encounter* in the matter that they choose. That means they might be able to get an upgraded bot part for the price of a single limb. They could also *Leap* across the top of a building to get away from the *Buzzkill* that's chasing them, or even hide from the *Draco* that's flying through the air, looking for a tasty snack.

However, the points that you associate with *Skills* at the end of character creation are the *Thresholds* for each *Skill*. Every time you use a *Skill* you get closer to the *Threshold*. If you reach the *Threshold* you still succeed, but now *The Bot* gets to determine some kind of bad effect that happens to you. You *Leap* across the top of a building, but you land awkwardly hurting your foot. You *Hide* from the *Draco* only to run into another encounter in the building that you were hiding in. Whatever it is, it's not going to be good.

## TAKING DAMAGE

Sometimes, things happen to the *Creche-kid* that aren't pleasant. They'll get their foot slammed and the door, they'll fall from a far height, they'll get their hand slammed between two metal plates. When that happens, they've *Taken Damage*. When a *Creche-kid* takes damage, they have to reference it on the sheet. Each *Part* can take 2 points of damage before it's *Mangled*, which could mean that it's been removed or just unusable. However, when it's *Damaged*, you can't sell that *Part* for anything. No one wants substandard payment.

*Bits* can take *Damage* too, but they can take 3 damage before they're unusable. At the first two points of damage the *Bit* will work at full capacity, but at the 3rd one it will stop working completely.

Now, if you lose your head or your torso, then your character isn't going to die. They will just wake up somewhere, with that body part, and all other parts that are considered attached to it replaced with *Normal Bits*. Losing your *Head* or your *Torso* is a big deal since if you lose your *Head* you will lose your *Eyes* and your *Ears*, and if you lose your *Torso* you'll lose your *Arms* and your *Hands*.

## THE HOUR TURNS

Once the scene is resolved then play continues to the player to the left of *The Bot* and they start at the beginning of *The Hour*.

*The Hour* doesn't change until every single *Creche-kid* has experienced an *Encounter*. This may make you place an *Encounter* on someone you neither *Love* or *Hate*, but that just means that *The Bot* isn't going to be as lenient or vicious as they can.

## THE DAY ENDS AND RECOVERY

Once the four *Hours* have passed, the *Day* is over and the session is done. Hopefully you've found a place to sleep without anything happening to you. Thankfully, most *Bots* don't work unless the sun is out. Once you've rested you can take a look at your *Comm* and it will show you how you are *Recovering*. When you *Recover*, you may *Heal* one *Damage* on a single *Part*, and gain an extra use of a single *Skill*. *Bits* need to be repaired by finding someone else to do it, unless you can *Repair* things yourself.

Sleep heals, but not nearly enough.

# THE WORLD OF VATURDU

Vaturdu is a city that is not built with comfort in mind. It is the city of *Bots*, where robots that used to be people live, work, and die often doing the rote jobs that they end up stuck with from *The Core*. It's a drab, colourless and imposing, with its lifeless buildings and unblinking citizens makes anyone who has flesh more than uncomfortable. There are bits all over the place, sometimes stuck in walls, sometimes they're the things you trip over, sometimes they're the things getting strapped to your arm. There are parts of Vaturdu that look like someone took a sledge hammer to a bunch of *Bots* and left them where they lay.

The city is so very old that no one, probably not even those that work in *The Core*, could tell you why Vaturdu was built and where it's going. It has a purpose, but those *Bots* that could remember it are laying down as part of the rust that makes up the red streets of Vaturdu. It is a place without real memory, and innovation. *Old Bots* just do what they were programmed to do by *The Core* and not much else.

It is a mechanical wasteland, built under the direction of *The Core*, but with little else in mind.

These are the *Locations* that you will encounter on your journey. They may repeat since none of the areas are really defined, and just when you think you might have escaped an area, you'll get thrown right back in. Here are some descriptions of the various *Locations* you'll encounter on your journey.

## THE BAZAAR

*The Bazaar* is a wide open space filled with various stalls run by *Traitorbots* that will sell anything and everything they can get their hands on. Upgrades are available, repair work can be done, and piles of food are used to tempt *Creche-kids* who are hungry. This is one of the more social places in all of Vaturdu, *Bots* go there to be seen and *Fleshbots* in particular go to show off their latest acquisitions. Things can get pretty tense if *Bots* who don't like each other arrive around the same time, which is why there are plenty of *Checkers* who walk about the place making sure that everything is as it should be. The only problem for *Creche-kids* who want to buy anything, is that anything purchased here only works in *Bits*. Unless you have an open *Bit*, this place is far more dangerous than helpful.

There are also those who specialize in nabbing *Creche-kids* and taking their skin. They'll be nice enough to replace it with a standard bit, some of the time, but they know that they risk the wrath of the *Checkers* so they will make sure that they can get as much as they can from you. It's not uncommon for a *Creche-kid* to vanish completely, their *Parts* taken and used to buy goods within *The Bazaar*.

## THE TRAINS

There is a train system in Vaturdu. *The Trains* are large, smoke belching behemoths that run on the rails that cover the whole city. You can easily get where you want to go on *The Trains*. There is a single stipulation, you can only use them if you are a *Bot*. Any *Creche-kids* that try to sneak on better hope that they don't get caught. Any stowaways caught by either the *Chauffers* that drive *The Trains* or the *Checkers* that make sure that every *Bot* pays to get on will get fined. If you get caught, it is best to hope that a *Chauffer* catches you. They will apply the penalty as written by *The Core*. *Checkers*, on the other hand, will fine you whatever they feel like and they never feel like being generous.

*The Trains* themselves are like little cities. There are some *Bots* that prefer them to living inside Vaturdu itself that they never leave. Their stop comes and they just say that they're going to wait for the train to loop around again. It doesn't matter to the *Chauffers* since there is plenty of space. All the benches are made up of broken *Bits* so there are frequently times that *Creche-kids* will find themselves face to face with sharp claws, seats with teeth sticking out and other things that can easily scare or hurt them.

The engine room is one of the few wide open spaces. There, *Chauffers* are busy pushing coal into the big furnaces that drive *The Trains* across the vast terrain that is Vaturdu. It's uncomfortably hot, and any *Creche-kid* that spends too much time there is going to feel slightly cooked.

## THE STEAMWORKS

The Steamworks is a huge building that tends to block the way through the city. It's so large that *Bots* also have to make their way through it rather than spend the extra day to go around it. Inside it's dark and filled with various *Bots* working at various stations. There are those that will refine the ore that's provided by The Mines into metal that then goes and gets poured into the moulds that make up the various *Bits*. There are giant machines that stamp down, and steam that vents from strange places. It is dusty, dirty and filled with the smoke from the smelting machines.

There are rooms where *Bots* will take breaks, sit around a room conversing. They don't eat, so there isn't anything in the way of food to be found in this place, but there are centres where *Bits* can get repaired. If you work in the Steamworks all repairs are free, but they do cost anyone else that tries to use the facilities.

Most of the workers are too busy to notice anything that comes through. The building seems to notice though, and it doesn't like intruders. Like much of Vaturdu it flows and changes its inside to make life difficult for those who shouldn't be there. Putting crushing machines in the

way, blocking off exits with metal doors and trying to mangle and maim anyone who doesn't belong.

## THE MAIZE

*The Maize* is where most of the food in Vaturdu is grown. Large patches of corn and soy which then goes to the processing plant where it is turned into food and sent out into the city to be eaten or rot. A large percentage of the food here is grown for *The Creche*.

Anyone entering *The Maize* will notice that it really is a labyrinth. There are twists and turns and the corn is grown so thick that it takes a lot of effort to try to break through the walls and make it to another row. The corn also grows so high that two *Creche-kids*, one standing on the other, can't see over it.

The biggest danger of the Maize is that it has the most *Buzzkills* of all the sections. This is what the *Buzzkills* were originally designed for, harvesting the food in *The Maize* so that it can be sent to the plant. There is nothing a *Buzzkill* likes more than to find a *Creche-kid* inside the corn. That way they can chase them through *The Maize* until their victims die of exhaustion.

## THE RECYCLING PLANT

*The Recycling Plant* looks very much like *The Steamworks* in that it is a large building that tends to get in the way. However, the feel inside is much different. Here you'll find rusting and broken *Bits* and *Bots* that are no longer useful. Some of them are still active, and they will complain and whine as anyone passes by, just asking for some help so that they can get back to what they were doing. Sometimes they will be mostly intact, other times it will just be a heard asking why no one cares that it was the best *Chauffer* in all of Vaturdu.

There are a few bots that work here do nothing but shuffle the parts closer and closer to *The Maw*, which is a giant hole in the middle of the Plant where something happens. No *Bot* is certain what happens once they fall into *The Maw*, and few are willing to even think about it. It's a fate that most *Bots* try to avoid at all costs.

This means that there are a large amount of *RBKTs* that live around here. These *Bots* will do anything to avoid going into *The Maw*, including taking *Bits* that are still working and new from *Creche-kids* that don't appreciate them.

## THE CORE

*The Core* is a mysterious place, even for most *Bots* that live in *Vaturdu*. It's a large series of structures that look like it was meant to house people, but no people live inside *The Core*. There are *Bots* that are performing their functions all over the place, but that's it. The walls are clean, there are these screens everywhere in a language you can't understand, and the *Bots* probably don't understand either, as if some sort of program is running.

When you wander around inside the buildings there are many, many doors within *The Core*. Some *Bots* have called it *The Core 'a Doors*, as they chuckle at their own cleverness. Many of them are locked, and if you ask who has the key the *Bots* will reply with a "No one." There are many secrets here, but if you want to make it *Over The Wall*, you can't stay here to figure them out.

The other thing is that everything is supernaturally quiet in *The Core*. The *Bots* that work there don't like a lot of noise and they will ignore anything being as quiet as they are. Unfortunately, anything that makes noise, and anything surrounding the noise maker, will be met with extreme prejudice and ejected from *The Core*.

## FLESH ROW

*Flesh Row* is the home of all the wealthiest *Bots* in all of *Vaturdu*. The houses of *Fleshbots* are very similar to the *Fleshbots* themselves. They are opulent, large, decadent and look like they are busy eating the houses around them. *Bots* who work for the *Fleshbots* will be constantly fighting a quiet war as they try to build on pieces of other *Fleshbot's* housing onto their *Master's* house while trying to dismantle work done by others.

This is a well of activity, with many *Checkers* watching to make sure that nothing gets out of hand. Despite their best intentions, things will escalate into riots as the various workers, who are all eager to please their *Masters*, will attack each other. When one group starts, it's nearly impossible for all the others to not get involved as well. Trampling the manicured spaces that they have just spent the previous few hours tending to.

## THE DENS

The *Dens* are a series of small caves, usually old *Mines* that have been abandoned where most of the *Anibots* live. *Hounds*, *Spiderbots* and *Dracos* are usually here when they need to sleep. The caves themselves are rank with the smell of dead *Parts*, *Anibots* don't have much use for them as currency. Pieces of dead *Creche-kids* can be found half chewed here and there. The *Anibots* don't get any sustenance from them, but they have been programmed to eat them anyway.

There are many ways into the Dens, usually most Bots and Creche-kids find themselves here because they managed to fall into one of the many concealed holes that are in Vaturdu.

## THE LIFE CYCLE

If there is a place in Vaturdu that can be said to be as safe as *The Creche*, it's *The Life Cycle*. Here, all *Parts* are kept, frozen, for the Bots to use when they need them. Security needs to be tight as there are many places where *Bots* could steal from each other. That means that there are *Checkers* at almost every single point looking for anyone who might be doing anything wrong. The least bit of suspicion is enough to make a *Checker* investigate, because they know that short of all the *Fleshbots*, the *Bots* that work within *The Life Cycle* can send them to the recycling plant for any mistake on their part.

That doesn't mean that there aren't a lot of *Bots* that do try things at *The Life Cycle*. With the city being a mess of *Bits* and a series of tightly cramped buildings there are plenty of opportunities for *Bots* that are desperate enough to try something to make off with *Parts*. Much like *The Bazaar* kidnapping a *Creche-kid* is a worthwhile endeavour, the only difference is that they have a greater chance of getting caught faster.

Also, there are *Checkers* who get a little too overzealous and any *Flesh* at all gets driven towards the inside of the *Freezers* at *The Life Cycle*. It doesn't matter that it's still attached to someone, they will do their best to make sure that all *Flesh* is protected and stored.

## THE CROSSROADS

Where the roads of Vaturdu intersect you'll find *The Crossroads*. A place of limbo that is nowhere and everywhere at the same time. It's confusing, and disorienting because when you leave, frequently it feels that you've come back to the same *Crossroads* instead of having arrived at a new one. There is a distinct sameness that is definitely an intended work rather than something that just happened.

It is easy for anyone, *Bot* or *Creche-kid*, to get lost in the *Crossroads*. That means they're just as likely to meet anyone or anything else as well.

## THE MINES

*The Mines* are where most of the coal and ore are gathered before being shipped to *The Steamworks* to be processed. Much like *The Dens*, you don't usually end up going there intentionally. There are many pits where the *Bots* have just dug up because there was something important to be had there and then broke through the surface. There are houses and places inside that have shafts that lead to *The Mines*. There is a benefit, sometimes they can cut down on the time it takes to get through *Vaturdu*.

Once inside, there are many dangers. There are the mining *Bots* who are working with their tools that can accidentally, or intentionally, destroy any *Part*. There are the gasses and the poisons that linger in the air that don't affect *Bots*, but can severely damage the lungs of any *Creche-kid* that walks through them. There are pits of water, cave-ins and mine carts that travel at high speeds that can all hurt.

## FIELD OF GOLD

Very few things in *Vaturdu* are as cruel as *The Fields of Gold*. Some enterprising *Bots* remembered the stories about going *Over The Wall* and decided that the best way to get *Skin* was to trick poor, naive *Creche-kids* into thinking that they had arrived. What happened is that they build a large wall, that spans several blocks and made it look like everything the stories ever said. That the wall was rough enough to climb, that it was made of yellow brick to show you the promise of a better day, that once you made it to the other side you were safe.

When you do climb the wall, what you find is more of *Vaturdu* and some *Bots* explaining that you need to pay a toll to get past the wall. Sometimes a clever *Creche-kid* will talk their way out of the toll. Sometimes there will be enough *Creche kids* that they can't get them all. Sometimes a *New Bot* will take pity on the *Creche-kids* it finds and tells them about the *Bot* entrance.

## THE UNDERGROUND

Underneath *Vaturdu*, besides the *Mines* and the *Dens*, there are a series of tunnels that can be used to get from one part of the city to another. There are whispers that there is a resistance movement trying to uncover the secrets to *The Core* and to help *Creche-kids* make it *Over The Wall*. They use *The Underground* to do everything.

Those of the Resistance try to make the entrance to the *Underground* more welcoming than the *Den* or *Mine* entrances. They can never label them, because when the *Checkers* find them, they storm down and arrest any and everything they run into. That means *The Maw* for those *Bots* and the *Creche-kids* end up being torn apart as a bounty.

# THE BOTS

*Bots* are the citizens of Vaturdu, and the antagonists to the *Creche-kids*. Most of them only want one thing from them, and those are their parts. There are thirteen different types of *Bots*, for now, that live in Vaturdu, but they also fall into two general categories. There are *New Bots* and *Old Bots*.

*New Bots* are the bots that have just recently made the transition from *Creche-kid* to *Bot*. They're still getting used to their new bodies, they're still getting used to their new role. *New Bots* remember all their old feelings, and desires, and dreams and ideas and wish that they could still make it *Over The Wall*. Sometimes that means that they'll be more than willing to help *Creche-kids* achieve the dream they never had. Other times that means that they're bitter and resentful and will do everything they can to crush the dreams of others.

After a while though, the brain that resides within the *New Bots* starts to get older and decay. They start to forget the other skills that they had and their dreams and ideas and what only is important to them is the job that they do. They still have personality, they still have a name, but in the end they forget things beyond the scope of their day to day activities. That means that a *Checker* will only remember being a *Checker* and a *Chauffer* will only be interested in driving the *Trains*. This happens to all *New Bots*, and eventually even *Old Bots* will rust out and get sent to the *Recycling Centre*.

Here is a description of the 13 *Bots* in Vaturdu

## BUZZKILL

There are few things more terrifying than a Buzzkill. One of them is meeting a Buzzkill in an enclosed space. Originally designed to help clear The Maize, Buzzkills are tall Bots, at least over seven feet tall, and have buzz saws for hands. Their heads are flat, squat things with thin slits for eyes. They can't see things very well, but they make up for their lack of sight with wanton destruction. Their bodies are solidly built, since they were meant to take on the physical labour of harvesting and transporting the corn in The Maize and aren't easily damaged.

When they see *Creche-kids*, most Buzzkills are filled with an intense loathing and hatred. Maybe it's because they're reminded that most certainly they are not going back *Over The Wall*, maybe it's because they tend to not be paid rather well since they're not considered all that bright. If a Buzzkill sees a *Creche-kid*, they will do whatever they can to take off a Part. They don't replace it either, they just clamp down with the clamps on their arms and use the Buzz saw the cut off the closest thing.

## SPIDER BOTS

*Spiderbots* are small creatures that have been rebuilt to look like Spiders. They build nests and webs as communities and act as if they are all small parts of an individual whole. They try to trap *Bots* and *Creche-kids* and take what they can and salvage it, so *Special Bits* and *Parts* are all fair game to *Spiderbots*. However, they tend to take *Parts* and spin them in a web and forget about them rather than actually put them in the *Life Cycle*. It could be an old instinct, but it could be programming from *The Core* as well.

Sometimes they will go chasing after their prey. The sound of little sharp bits hitting the ground of *Vaturdu* is enough to send everyone running for cover.

## TRAITORBOTS

*Traitorbots* are a slurred version of *Trader Bot*. Eventually it became closer and closer so that all *Bots* that deal with goods are called *Traitorbots*. They keep the name because they'll trade with anyone at anytime for anything. They're always looking for the best deal and a *Traitorbot* will do whatever they can to come out on top of a situation.

Out of all *Bots*, they look the most like the *Creche-kids* that they were. They tend to have humanoid heads and hands that look like they came out of the *Creche*, they're just made of metal. They try to use this when dealing with *Creche-kids*, because they feel more comfortable with those that look like the *governesses* that they just left.

## DOCS

*Docs* are the most compassionate out of all the *Bots*. They want to help *Creche-kids* heal and get better so that they can make their way towards *The Wall*. The problem they have is that they're programmed to expect payment, and if someone tries not to pay them they will take more than their due as a penalty.

*Docs* are very streamlined looking bots, they don't seem to have any creases or joints, like they were cast out of a single piece, but they can still move without any problems. *Docs* tend to work in teams, so once you get inside their offices there are many *Bots* that are looking to take care of you, and make sure that you pay for it.

## FLESHBOTS

*Fleshbots* have more *Skin* than they know what to do with. They have accumulated this wealth over time to increase their size and their allies making *Fleshbots* the largest out of all the *Bots*. They tend to have wildly different looks as they have paid for particular sculpts that they think are interesting. There is always a crowd of hanger ons that call the *Fleshbot Master*, as they want to do whatever they can to try to get rewarded from these creatures.

They are the most unique out of all the *Bots* in Vaturdu. Some have their extra skin grafted onto their bodies so that they can flaunt their wealth. Certainly it causes them to decay faster, but the *Fleshbots* don't care since they have such a large supply of *Parts*. Seeing a *Fleshbot* with three heads, and six arms flailing about is not an uncommon occurrence.

## CHAUFFER

*Chauffers* drive and maintain all the *Trains* in Vaturdu. That means their bodies are designed for speed and agility, with wheels that come out of legs and hands that can grip onto anything. They tend to be rather thin and reed-like so that they can fit into some of the most uncomfortable spaces. They love to go fast, and will drive to make sure that the *Trains* are early, let alone on time.

When dealing with a *Chauffer*, running is almost not an option. They love the chase and will be able to follow someone who is running away without any problems. While a *Buzzkill* might smash everything down to get at someone who is running away, a *Chauffer* will manage to get ahead of their target. With a knowledge of how the city actually works, as far as the design of it, they are impossible to escape.

## MAINTBOT

If there is a *Bot* that is the most ubiquitous in Vaturdu, *Maintbots* are everywhere. *Maintbots* are what work within *The Steamworks*, they are the *Bots* that run the *Recycling Centre*. There is no single look to a *Mainbot*. They're all humanoid, and they are never paid enough for what they do. They're looking to get ahead somehow, and they'll be more than willing to help or screw over a *Creche-kid* for their *Parts*.

They're also able to fix *Bits*, but very rarely will they do that for free. They do that enough in their regular jobs that doing it for some sort of *Creche-kid* for nothing isn't going to happen.

## DRACOS

*Dracos* are the *Anibot* that is the most feared. These Dragon sized and shaped *Bots* fly around Vaturdu looking for wealth that they can feast upon. They gain no sustenance from it, but they continue to fly over the area. They are as large as *Fleshbots*, and can shoot lightning from their mouths that destroy anything and everything that gets in its way. Their clawed hands can tear the metal off of a *Buzzkill*, and in the air can fly as fast as *the Trains*.

No *Bot* truly understands a *Draco*. They're like a force of nature. They will show up, change the city greatly and then disappear again with their loot.

## CRUMBLE

*Crumbles* are named after their special talent. No one can figure out how they do it, but they can assemble and disassemble at will, as if all their bits can just be pulled from the ground in Vaturdu and combined through some sort of magnetic force. That means that no one single *Crumble* will look alike from day to day, or from moment to moment. They will create themselves out of whatever parts are handy.

*Crumbles* are the tricksters of Vaturdu. They seem to derive a form of pleasure from helping people get some of what they want with a whole heap of things they didn't want. You can never wholly trust whatever comes out of a *Crumble's* vocal box, but you can't ignore it completely either.

## BANKERS

*Bankers* are the collectors of Vaturdu. They are the ones that control the *Life Cycle* and have a large amount of sway since they control access to all the *Parts* that have been put into storage. They also have their own collections, some *Bankers* are partial to *Eyes*, others are partial to *Feet*. Regardless of what it is, they're always looking to add to their collection and will almost never pass up an opportunity to get what they want.

## LIFERS

*Lifers* are *Creche-kids* that gave up trying to *Get Over the Wall*. They live a hard life, because they still need to eat in order to survive but they don't want to trade their *Parts* for it. Many of them live near the *Maize* so that they can try to grab food as it leaves the processing centre. Others have joined the *Underground* and do what they can to try to understand how Vaturdu works.

If there is a *Bot* that is interested in helping out *Creche-kids* without anything in return, it would be a *Lifer*.

## RBKT

Those *Bots* that no longer have a place in Vaturdu and are fighting the slow descent into the *Recycling Centre* are called *RBKT*. These *Bots* are not interested in flesh, it won't help them now, but any *Bit* that is shiny and new is what they want. They will do what they can to help replace the slowly rusting bits they own.

They are ugly, half rusted beings that might be better off being recycled but are too afraid of what lies underneath the *Maw*. That's what's causing them to fight for every single inch of metal they can get their hands on. For some reason, they're unable to comprehend that there are parts everywhere. They just have a driving need to grab from others so that they can avoid their fate.

## CHECKER

*Checkers* are the police force of Vaturdu. They, with their big, stocky metal bodies and baton like hands bash sense into those *Bots* that don't follow the rule of *The Core*. They are generally mean spirited and act a lot like the *Bullies* did when they were in the *Creche*. They hit first, and generally don't ask questions as they deal with the perpetrators as they see fit.

## HOUNDS

*Hounds* are the last *Anibot* and can be very friendly, in fact many *New Bots* will keep *Hounds* around to remind them that they once had *Creche Siblings*. *Hounds* can also be used to defend things and will attack relentlessly, not caring for the value of anything they damage. They will destroy *Bits* and rend *Flesh* equally.

# THE ENCOUNTER DECK

The Encounter Deck will give The Bot a series of keywords that they can use to help frame the Encounter. Nothing has to be literal, and can be interpreted or ignored as they see fit. It's to help give some structure as to what might happen to the Creche-kid.

## SPADES THE BOT DECK

Ace of Spades	Buzzkill
Two of Spades	Maintbot
Three of Spades	Traitorbot
Four of Spades	Checker
Five of Spades	Lifer
Six of Spades	Chauffer
Seven of Spades	Doc
Eight of Spades	Hound
Nine of Spades	Spiderbots
Ten of Spades	Fleshbot
Jack of Spades	RBKT
Queen of Spades	Crumble
King of Spades	Draco

## DIAMONDS THE LOCATION DECK

Ace of Diamonds	The Bazaar
Two of Diamonds	The Trains
Three of Diamonds	The Steamworks
Four of Diamonds	The Maize
Five of Diamonds	The Recycling Plant
Six of Diamonds	The Core
Seven of Diamonds	Flesh Row
Eight of Diamonds	The Den
Nine of Diamonds	Life Cycle
Ten of Diamonds	The Crossroads
Jack of Diamonds	Fields of Gold
Queen of Diamonds	The Mines
King of Diamonds	The Underground

## CLUBS THE COMPLICATIONS DECK

Ace of Clubs	loss
Two of Clubs	malfunction
Three of Clubs	dead end
Four of Clubs	hunger
Five of Clubs	blackout
Six of Clubs	spotted
Seven of Clubs	person you hate
Eight of Clubs	person you love
Nine of Clubs	greed
Ten of Clubs	stalked
Jacks of Clubs	sparks
Queen of Clubs	attention
King of Clubs	found

## HEARTS THE DANGER DECK

Ace of Hearts	explosion
Two of Hearts	pit
Three of Hearts	trap
Four of Hearts	accident
Five of Hearts	fall
Six of Hearts	blocked
Seven of Hearts	weather
Eight of Hearts	collapse
Nine of Hearts	fight
Ten of Hearts	riot
Jack of Hearts	break
Queen of Hearts	crush
King of Hearts	disaster